Photo courtesy of Gordon Taylor/Tourism Saskatoon

City of Saskatoon

2011 Report on Service, Savings and Sustainability:

How the City of Saskatoon is Improving Productivity

Presented to City Council, August 2012

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INTRODUCTION

For several years now, the annual Report on Service, Savings and Sustainability has highlighted the many ways City of Saskatoon employees are improving productivity and finding innovative ways to provide service to residents of our growing city. It is a report about how the City is improving service, increasing savings, and growing our city in a sustainable way.

In 2011, we continued to improve our service to citizens through innovative initiatives such as partnering with the Saskatoon Provincial Correctional Centre where Urban Camp workers cleaned up and maintained boulevards, alleys, and crosswalks.

We saved just under $7 million to the taxpayers. This was through projects that ranged from using bar codes to reduce errors (saved $2,000) to refurbishing used buses (saved $6.6 million).

We continued to grow our city in a sustainable way by reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 140,000 tonnes CO_2e (carbon dioxide equivalent) annually. This is the equivalent of removing 27,000 cars from the road annually.

The 2011 Report on Service, Savings and Sustainability is also a report about our achievements, what others are saying about us, and the many projects that are underway that will better serve the citizens of Saskatoon.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

"Providing an open and accountable government is a key element of a new business and planning model in Saskatoon's day-to-day operations." - City Clerk Janice Mann

The City of Saskatoon's Community Engagement process has become an integral part of civic planning. This process is applied when the Administration or City Council want to gather input or inform the public on specific initiatives, projects, bylaws, or other civic matters during early design stages and/or prior to final recommendations, approval, or endorsement.

Saskatoon Speaks Community Vision Complete

In June 2011, the *Saskatoon Speaks* Community Vision was completed, bringing to a close the eight-month-long *Saskatoon Speaks, Shape Our Future* community visioning process. Between 7,000 and 10,000 citizens representing a full spectrum of Saskatoon's diverse population were involved in the process. They told us what matters to them, what they value about Saskatoon, what they want to improve, and what they aspire to achieve as Saskatoon grows over the next 50 to 70 years.

The final document summarizes the community perspectives that emerged during the process, captures the shared values and aspirations, and presents potential strategies related to eight inter-related themes: Social Well-Being; Parks; Recreation and Community Safety; Arts and Culture; Moving Around; Shaping Growth; The City Centre; The Environment; and The Economy. The Community Vision provides input into the City's Strategic Plan and other City plans (e.g. Culture Plan, City Centre Plan) to ensure alignment with broad community values and goals.

Saskatoon Speaks was the beginning of an ongoing process of planning collaboratively for growth and change. As new initiatives are undertaken, the City will continue to engage the community and encourage public input, building on the success of *Saskatoon Speaks*.

Saskatoon "Most Open" Municipality in Canada

In 2011, the City of Saskatoon was praised for access to public information. Newspapers Canada conducted a national freedom of information audit of local, provincial, and federal government agencies in every province and territory except Nunavut. Requests were made for employee policies, departmental budgets, contract details, and credit card expenses. The audit found the City of Saskatoon to be the "most open" municipality in Canada. This included being among the quickest municipalities to respond to an information request, and the most open about how it spends taxpayers' money.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT . . .

Building Standards / Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services

"This is a letter far overdue, as Miners Construction has enjoyed a positive working relationship with the various branches of the City of Saskatoon over our 100-year history. However, we personally want to acknowledge the extraordinary effort that a number of the City staff (Building Standards and Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services) provided to get the doors open to Saskatoon's newest care home, Samaritan Place. … Look forward to working with you and your exceptional team for years to come." - Jason Brockman, P.Eng., Vice President, Project Manager.

The People Who Answer the Phone

"I recently became a Saskatoon utilities customer and signed up for ebilling. Though not new to ebilling in itself, I am new to reading my own meters. I've had to call a few times to verify something about doing that and called when the 2012 calendar for refuse pick-up didn't match the 2011 calendar for the month of December. Each time that I have called I was so pleased with the patience and tolerance of my perhaps goofy question. Thank you for that, all of you who answer the phones, thank you muchly, it is greatly appreciated!" - A Saskatoon resident.

Involving Students in the Green Energy Park Project

"Thank you for supporting the learning that these students have the pleasure of experiencing. This process truly captures inquiry-based learning, connection to life-long learning, and responsibility to Education for Sustainable Development. I am excited about the continued potential that you provide and the "synergy" to think beyond. We are lucky to have you working with our Saskatoon Public Schools." - Brenda Green, Superintendent of Education, Saskatoon Public Schools (responsible for Aden Bowman Collegiate).

Courteous Bus Drivers

"I have been going to school and riding the bus for three years now and ran into the absolute best bus driver today. I didn't catch his name, but he was driving the 60 Lakeridge. … This driver was dealing with an extremely overcrowded bus and I can honestly say that I don't think one person was mad about it. The driver was friendly to everyone and explained to people the situation of how they were working on getting another bus on the route at that time. I saw the driver personally communicate with young women and men as well as adapt to an elderly lady's needs … if I was not pushed over the edge impressed with him, I would not be taking the time out of my day to write this." - Kody O.

Environmental Sustainability Efforts

"One important aspect behind all of Saskatoon's green efficiency, is that it is the only municipality in Canada participating in the Smart Energy Research Network - which allows for various organizations and groups to collaborate on ideas and information related to net-zero buildings and other sustainable measures." - BusinessReviewCanada.ca, December 2011.

Helpful Bylaw Inspectors

"Recently I was required to bring the basement suite in my property up to code. Ms. Reynolds was the Bylaw Inspector assigned to inspect the work … Judy was thorough, firm, cheerful, polite, patient, respectful, and very professional. She is a wonderful ambassador for her Community Services Department in particular and the City of Saskatoon in general." - Maxy O.

City Support for the United Way

The City of Saskatoon continued to support the United Way's Annual Community Campaign. The United Way thanked the City for providing a Loaned Representative for the campaign.

A staff person was able to be accommodated at the United Way, which reduced the impact to their sick leave and was a welcome addition to the United Way team.

"Your gift-in-kind of a loaned representative… allowed the United Way to continue to keep costs low and invest more donor dollars back to the community." - Jocelyn Zurakowski, Director of Operations, United Way of Saskatoon & Area.

Culture Plan

"It is really excellent. I think it's the best Culture Plan I've read. I've read two other Culture Plans from other Canadian cities prior to Saskatoon's project. And Saskatoon's Culture Plan is really well done. It's creative, has good detail in actions, and actually gets at a multi-stakehold culture shift (inside City Hall across branches/departments, but also outside of City Hall, with communities and major organizations in culture and tourism…) that I think will inspire people in Saskatoon. It's a great balance between big ideas and the practicalities of implementation." - Dr. Ryan Walker, Regional and Urban Planning Program, University of Saskatchewan.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Nine Out of Ten Think Saskatoon is a Great Place to Live

In the 2011 edition of Canada's Pulse, a nation-wide Global News/Ipsos Reid poll exploring people's opinions on a wide range of issues, nine out of ten Saskatonians (94%) said their city is a great place to live.

First in Population Growth

For the second consecutive year, Saskatoon ranked first in adult population growth in RBC's annual *Canadian City Trends*, published in February 2012. The City also ranked first in MLS housing sales and fourth in non-residential building permits.

First in Business Friendliness

In the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) annual *Communities in Bloom* survey, Saskatoon was ranked Canada's number one most business-friendly city. This is the third consecutive top three ranking out of 100 Canadian cities, and it demonstrates Saskatoon's growing recognition as an "entrepreneurial hot spot."

Third Most Entrepreneurial City in Canada

Overall, Saskatoon ranked as Canada's third most entrepreneurial city in the annual CFIB *Communities in Boom* survey.

"We're pleased the CFIB has once again singled out Saskatoon as a place where entrepreneurs will find a positive atmosphere to set up shop." - Mayor Donald Atchison.

Broadway Avenue Rated Canada's Third Greatest Street

Broadway Avenue was rated the third greatest street in the country in the Canadian Institute of Planner's first-ever Great Places in Canada Contest.

Top 20 "Canada's Best Places to Live"

In the 2011 listing of Canada's Best Places to Live at MoneySense.ca, a personal finance website, Saskatoon moved up to 15th place from 22nd in 2010, and 40th in 2009. The list was based on data from 180 Canadian cities and towns with populations over 10,000 people. Cities were rated based on home affordability, climate, prosperity, crime rates, access to health care, lifestyle, and more.

Environmental Sustainability Efforts Recognized

Saskatoon tied with Victoria for fourth place on the World Wildlife Fund's first-ever 2011 Earth Hour List of Canadian cities. And in the annual Corporate Knights ranking of Canada's Most Sustainable Cities, Saskatoon placed second in the small city category. Two magazines, *Business Review Canada* and *Energy Digital Magazine*, published articles on the City's efforts to enhance energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

City Projects Win Prestigious Design Awards

A number of municipal projects have won provincial and national design awards:

> The design for the new Remai Art Gallery of Saskatchewan won a prestigious 2011 Canadian Architect Award of Excellence. The striking design overlooking the South Saskatchewan River is a collaboration between Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects and Smith Carter Architects and Engineers.

> The River Landing Project won two Design Council of Saskatchewan awards. Crosby Hanna & Associates received the Premier's Award of Excellence in Landscape Architecture for River Landing Riverfront - Phase One, while Stantec Consulting received the Premier's Award of Excellence in the Collaborative category for the River Landing Pedestrian Linkage. The City of Saskatoon has worked with both consultants over the past seven years.

> The City's Public Space, Activity and Urban Form Strategic Framework: Phase One of the City Centre Plan won the Design Council of Saskatchewan's Premier's Award of Excellence in the Community Planning category. The project is a collaboration between the City of Saskatoon, U of S Regional and Urban Planning Departments, and Sweeny, Sterling, Finlayson and Co. Architects.

> The Storm Sewer Rehabilitation Project at Preston Avenue and Taylor Street was named 2011 Northwest Trenchless Project of the Year by the North American Society of Trenchless Technology, Northwest Chapter in Calgary.

Award of Merit for Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement Program

In August 2011, Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services (SFPS) received a Fire Service Award for Excellence from the International Association of Fire Chiefs. This Award of Merit was presented in recognition of the Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement Program, introduced in 2005, for special contribution to the advancement of fire protection. This Program enables SFPS, in partnership with the Provincial Government, to significantly improve the quality of rental property in Saskatoon, and decrease the number of house fires in targeted neighbourhoods by 43%. Rental income supplements are given to Social Assistance recipients after their rental property passes an inspection ensuring that it meets minimum fire and life safety standards.

Evergreen TV Commercial

The City Land Branch received the 20th Annual Bridges Award for the best TV commercial for the Evergreen Neighbourhood that began airing on local TV stations last fall.

United Way Award

Linette Nelson received the United Way 2011 Community Campaign Volunteer Award for her volunteer efforts as City Co-Chair, representative for IBEW Local 319 and Saskatoon Light & Power, and member of the United Way 2011 Campaign Cabinet.

2011 MAJOR PROJECTS

The City continued to advance major projects in 2011 with innovation and creativity, meeting the changing needs of the community. The result is a thriving city that continues to provide a quality of life second to none.

The Blairmore Water & Sewer Project

The Blairmore Force Main and Lift Station Project is one of the largest water and sewer projects ever undertaken by the City. The lift station, outlet structure, and 13 km main pipe will move sanitary sewage from the northwest corner of the city to a location near the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The estimated project cost is $30 million. Construction began in spring 2011, with expected completion by fall 2012. When operational, the project will allow for:

> development of two new neighbourhoods on the city's west side;

> additional housing and density in core neighbourhoods; and

> extra sewage capacity to help lower basement flooding risk in the Confederation Drive area.

Automatic Irrigation Management System

The Infrastructure Services Department, Parks Branch, in partnership with the Utility Services Department, Water Treatment Branch, purchased and installed a central computer control system in 2011 that operates and controls more than 300 automatic irrigation systems (approximately 600+ irrigated hectares of turf area) throughout Saskatoon. This system provides the Parks Branch with the ability to effectively manage the amount of water utilized in the parks, reducing "peak" demands for treated water; and allows for an immediate shut down within minutes of receiving a call, either for an emergency, for unplanned watering restrictions, or in the event of vandalism. This ability to completely shut down all systems, within minutes of a call, can be an important factor in saving property and lives. In addition, the central control is able to shut down, and subsequently reactivate the systems when the recommended amount of moisture for the plant material, through rainfall, has been received.

Solar Powered Controllers

The Parks Branch, in an effort to provide further environmental sustainable practices, is now retrofitting smaller irrigated parks and open spaces with solar powered controllers. This has removed approximately 25 smaller irrigated sites off the "grid", saving electricity, maintenance, and money.

The Circle Drive South Project

Construction on the Circle Drive South Project began in spring 2010 and the project is expected to be open to traffic by fall 2012. The project involves a new six-lane bridge, five new interchanges (Idylwyld Drive, Lorne Avenue, Valley Road, 11th Street West, and Preston Avenue South), 10 km of freeway/expressway from Clarence Avenue to Clancy Drive, access requirements of

surrounding lands, three railway grade separations, sound attenuation walls, relocation of utilities, and pedestrian and cyclist facilities.

> Traffic modeling indicates the new South Bridge will carry approximately 30,000 vehicles per day when Saskatoon reaches a population of 250,000. Primary benefits include shorter commuting distances for residents and a 35% reduction in traffic using the Idylwyld Bridge at afternoon rush hour.

> City Council decided on a design/build contract, in which the contractor (Graham Flatiron Joint Venture) designs and builds the project. This establishes costs up front, improves scheduling, and shortens the construction period. Total budgeted cost is $295.1 million.

New Mayfair Pool

Opened in 1959, Mayfair Pool served the community for half a century. Construction on a new outdoor pool began in May 2011, with the facility expected to be complete in 2012. The $5.5 million facility includes a lane pool, leisure pool, landscaping, basketball area, mechanical room, and change house with rentable community room, and is being funded from the City's Land Development Fund as a re-investment in older neighbourhoods.

The River Landing Project

The River Landing Project has reclaimed Saskatoon's downtown riverfront and turned a once neglected area into a community focal point.

> In December 2010, Victory Majors Investment Corporation of Saskatoon took over the development of the River Landing Village by purchasing the land from the City. In September 2011, the City held a come-and-go open house at the Saskatoon Farmers' Market to gather public feedback on the project design proposed by Victory Majors, specifically amendments to the existing zoning to permit greater building height and density. The preliminary design contemplates a hotel, condominium, and office building all anchored by the urban plaza.

> In April 2011, sod was turned on the River Centre, a new office building at the southwest corner of 2nd Avenue and 19th Street being developed by Tonko Realty Advisors Ltd. The office tower is being designed to a Gold LEED standard (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and will provide over 77,000 square feet of rental office space and retail space on the ground floor. Estimated completion is late 2012.

Police Headquarters

Planning for the design and construction of a new Saskatoon Police Service Headquarters facility on 25th Street East, moved forward in 2011, with site preparation and some underground work associated with the 25th Street Extension Project. The new headquarters will consolidate Saskatoon Police Service in one location, support operations with a long-term, purpose-specific facility, and increase overall space in-line with accepted "best practices" in Canada. Total project cost is estimated at $122.9 million, and is expected to be completed for occupancy by the Saskatoon Police Service by the end of October 2013.

The Remai Art Gallery of Saskatchewan

In May, City Council unanimously approved the concept drawings for the future Remai Art Gallery of Saskatchewan (Remai Gallery), to be located at River Landing. The Remai Gallery is designed to wrap around the existing Remai Arts Centre and will include a community gallery, Mendel Salon, lecture theatre, 500-seat multipurpose room, gift shop, café/bistro, permanent collections gallery, exhibition space, and two levels of underground parking.

In June, the Frank and Ellen Remai Foundation stepped forward with a $30 million contribution to the new Remai Gallery. City Council renamed the gallery in honour of this generous gift.

Water Intake and Water Reservoirs

A growing population means growing demand on Saskatoon's water treatment and storage capacity. A number of projects are underway or have been recently completed. Examples include a new $45 million raw water intake, which also involves a river-crossing pipeline and pump station. This project will supply the City's Water Treatment Plant with river water, and has been designed to ultimately supply the city well past the 500,000 population mark.

Two major water reservoir projects are in progress as well. The reservoir, pump station, and ultra-violet treatment facility under construction at the corner of Avenue H and 11th Street will be complete in 2014. Design work for the expansion of the 42nd Street reservoir is currently underway. Work is expected to commence in late 2012, and will be complete in 2014. The combined budget for these two reservoir sites is approximately $65 million.

Kinsmen Park and Area Master Plan

In response to declining user numbers, the Kinsmen Park and Area Master Plan was completed in 2011, and provides a framework for the evolution of the park over the next 25 years, ensuring sustained revitalization of the area. In planning for users from across the city, while creating a neighbourhood park for downtown residents, the Master Plan supports increased density and sustainability through improved green space amenities in the city centre area. The plan for the area proposes to:

> Provide a place for children in the city.

> Rehabilitate the riverbank.

> Integrate the Mendel with the Park.

> Integrate Spadina Crescent into the Park.

> Provide a future amenity to meet the city's growing needs, such as replacing the existing intersection with a roundabout farther south to improve traffic movement, as well as free up land for public programming that is currently dedicated to be roadways.

> Provide a winter activity hub in the city.

IMPROVING OUR SERVICE

The City of Saskatoon provides high quality services to meet the dynamic needs and high expectations of our citizens. We focus on continuous improvement and providing the best possible services using innovative and creative means.

Building Permits Hit All Time High

In 2011, 4,651 building permits were issued, the highest number ever issued in the City's 104 year history of issuing permits. Plumbing permits issued were also at an all time high. The Building Standards Branch reached the milestone despite staff shortages, while also continuing to maintain an acceptable level of service to the construction industry. Staff were recognized for their "team first" approach toward ensuring the best customer service possible.

Aboriginal Training Partnership Continues

The City of Saskatoon, in partnership with Gabriel Dumont Institute, Saskatoon Tribal Council, and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology, celebrated the graduation of students from the Aboriginal Heavy Equipment Operator and 1A License Pre-employment Training Program. The program trains Aboriginal men and women for employment opportunities in the local and provincial labour market.

Alice Turner Library Expands to Serve Growing Community

In 2011, the newly renovated and expanded Alice Turner Library on Nelson Road opened to the public. The $2.8 million project added approximately 7,000 square feet to the library. The extra space enabled the addition of a resource room, meeting room, and administration area.

Civic Service Review Completed

The City completed the Civic Service Review and published the results online for public access. The review was conducted to ensure that the City is delivering the programs and services its citizens want and need as efficiently and effectively as possible, while encouraging continuous service improvement. The City is using the results to better inform the public about budgeting and decision-making processes.

City Negotiates New Deal in Bus Passes

Saskatoon Transit negotiated an increased provincial contribution towards the Discounted Bus Pass Program in 2011. The Province also agreed to negotiate with the City on a longer-term agreement for this program.

Improved Utility Consumption Estimates

Programming enhancements to the utility consumption estimating process led to more accurate water and electric consumption history of the user. This allows the City to provide more accurate estimates to customers on their utility bills between actual meter reads.

Meter Reading Brochure Designed for Newcomers

Saskatoon's growing population is increasingly diverse, with newcomers from around the world calling the city home. Through the City of Saskatoon's Immigration Action Plan, we want to ensure that our services are responsive to the customers we serve. To enable meter readers to communicate with newcomers with limited English language skills, a brochure was developed that communicates through pictures and a simple phrase: "I work for the City of Saskatoon. I am here to read your water and electrical meters." The Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration supported translation of the message into 18 different languages.

Trenchless Technology Used to Rehabilitate Storm Sewers

The Storm Sewer Rehabilitation project at Preston Avenue and Taylor Street used a trenchless technology called Cured-in-Place Pipe (CIPP) to rehabilitate two large-diameter storm sewer trunks, both of which are critical components of the storm water management system in east central Saskatoon. The trenchless process involves installing a CIPP lining inside the existing trunks rather than digging up and replacing them.

Clean Up of Public Areas

Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services and the Saskatoon Provincial Correctional Centre Urban Camp partnered on the "Project InnerCity Cleanup" where Urban Camp workers cleaned up and maintained public property such as boulevards, alleys, and crosswalks. Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services purchased nine push lawn mowers, nine whipper snippers, and numerous garbage pickers, ice scrapers, and ice chippers. At the beginning of each day, the work crew comes to Fire Station No. 1 (125 Idylwyld Drive South) to pick up the tools needed and any special instructions. The crew mowed, weeded, and had garbage picked up from 510 blocks of boulevards and alleys; 1,407 crosswalks; curb cuts have been cleared of ice and snow; and 10 km of freeway interchanges throughout the city have been cleared of garbage.

Saskatoon Zoo Animal Records Web Application (SZAR)

The SZAR web application was designed to allow veterinarian staff at the University of Saskatchewan to access detailed animal records for those animals in their care. This web application is a secured website that is only available to the veterinarian staff. The Zoo staff maintains the information which contains detailed lineage, health, environmental, and dietary data. Making this information available to veterinarian staff is an important part of the accreditation requirements for the Saskatoon Zoo. The animal caregivers can view this information without an intervention from City staff ensuring no delays and freeing staff for other tasks.

Building Permit Drawings Microfiche Conversion Project

The Building Standards Branch converted building permit drawings and documentation from 1906 to 2001, from microfiche to an electronic format. Since 2001, these documents have been stored electronically. The work includes scanning microfiche into an image file and indexing. Once in an electronic format, the information is more readily available, searchable, and can be shared with other areas. Staff have the ability to access building drawings much more quickly and easily for research purposes. Public viewing of microfiche files is easier and quicker since finding digital files is faster than searching through microfiche. Also, customer service for the public can be provided at a computer, rather than public having to go through files on an old microfiche reader.

New Point-of-Sale System for the Three City Golf Courses

A new integrated Membership Management and Point-of-Sale system was implemented at the start of the 2011 golf session. The new point-of-sale system replaced the aging system developed over 12 years ago, allowing the City golf courses to respond to changing market and business conditions in a cost efficient and timely manner. It will allow for additional service offerings, help streamline operations and revenue handling, and provide cost savings.

Online Golf Tee Time Booking System

The three City golf courses introduced the ability for customers to book a tee time online at a time and location of their choosing. This new service offers customers the ability to book a tee time and check course availability for any City golf course. This makes it more accessible and efficient for people to book tee times and results in fewer phone calls to the golf course. Fewer calls to the golf course frees up staff to focus their attention on the customers at the golf course.

Drop-In Program

The Leisure Services Branch responded to customers' needs by providing them with a tool to access drop-in class information in more ways than ever before. A new online system, known as Drop-in Online, was developed and launched as an efficient way for our customers to access the most up-to-date class information in this digital and mobile world. No additional dollars were spent on this project - it was developed in-house capitalizing on existing systems and staff resources. There are many efficiencies and savings gained from this system, including considerably less administrative and turnaround time required to update the class information, and helping to make Saskatoon a greener city by cutting down on the paper waste versus the former method of distributing drop-in class information.

INCREASING OUR SAVINGS - APPROXIMATELY $7.6 MILLION SAVINGS AND $15 MILLION IN DEFERRED COSTS

"This level of unprecedented activity demonstrates Saskatoon is growing like it never has before . . . every building permit creates jobs." - Bob Baran, Building Standards, Branch Manager.

Saskatoon Transit Buys 12 Used Articulating Buses - Savings - $6.6 Million

You know you live in a big city when you see articulating buses on the streets. To serve the City's growing population, Saskatoon Transit purchased six used 40' articulating buses for a cost of $17,500 per bus, and six 60' low-floor articulating buses for a cost of $39,100 per bus. Additional costs of approximately $270,000 for shipping, painting, retrofitting, inspecting, and licensing brought the total to $610,000 for twelve buses. In comparison, a new 40' bus costs in excess of $400,000 and a 60' articulating bus costs in excess of $750,000. The total cost of purchasing the twelve buses new would have been $7.2 million. Transit saved approximately $6.6 million in capital costs through this initiative, achieved a fleet improvement that customers will notice, and maintenance costs are expected to be only marginally higher than they would have been had new buses been purchased.

Bar Coding Reduces Errors, Saves Time - Annual Estimated Savings - $2,000

Every year, the City sends out thousands of paper questionnaires to gather market information from commercial property owners. Every response must be reviewed, the data entered into City databases, and the returned questionnaires manually filed. The Assessment Branch introduced digital imaging of questionnaires in conjunction with bar code recognition to reduce the possibility of error and save time.

Computer Server Virtualization - Estimated Savings - $104,000 - $156,000

Corporate Information Services (CIS) has been deploying virtual servers for almost four years. Virtualization is a method of running multiple independent virtual operating systems on a single physical computer server. It is a way of maximizing physical resources to maximize the investment in hardware. This has resulted in reduced physical hardware acquisition and maintenance costs and significant savings for the City. There are 127 virtual servers in production, with 26 of them being set up in 2011. Each virtual server saves the City approximately $4,000 to $6,000 when compared to the cost of a physical server.

Electronic Funds Transfer - Estimated Savings - $5,000

The Finance Branch allowed the City's vendors to sign up for electronic funds transfer (EFT). This option enables the City to pay invoices through EFT instead of by cheque. Five percent of our active vendors signed up for the EFT program in 2011, with an objective of 25% by the end of 2012. Efficiencies include reduced envelopes, postage, printing, and labour costs to produce the cheques, while labour savings are being realized for ordering cheque stock, printing, signing, stuffing, and mailing of cheques.

Self-Directed Work for Information Technology Services - Annual Savings - $43,000

A Self-Directed Workday Pilot was implemented in 2011 where Systems Analysts and Programmer Analysts were able to work two days per month over a period of six months to provide opportunities for technical staff to work on innovative solutions for technology needs.

The annual savings are based on the savings that have been identified in a number of the projects that were completed. Additional savings will be realized once all of the opportunities have been completed and implemented. No estimate has been provided for the future savings.

Projects include developing a custom debugging tool where staff have been able to reduce the amount of time it takes to diagnose a problem by up to 80%, automated processing of business permits to reduce staff processing time, and developing a process to automate the decommissioning of computers at work stations to clear the old data and retrofit so they are prepared for new programming.

All of the work was undertaken by internal staff and savings were based on estimated costs to outsource to consultants.

There were approximately 930 hours of work at a cost of $37,000 for internal staff, in comparison to approximately $80,000 for outside consultants, for an annual savings of approximately $43,000.

Automated Sundry Accounts Receivable Processing System (ASPS)

The ASPS application allows Community Services and Revenue staff to easily manage the process of preparing charge transactions from four different systems. These include charges from the Building Information Abstract, Building Permit, Plumbing Permit, and Property Information Disclosure Systems. Prior to the introduction of the ASPS application, each of the four systems had a unique manually intensive process to prepare the information that was sent to and received from the Revenue Branch. The introduction of this system helped streamline the process of saving staff time and allowing for easier tracking and reporting.

Bypass Pumps Installed at Spadina Lift Station - $15 Million Deferred

The Water and Wastewater Treatment Branch installed bypass pumps, complete with force main, adjacent to the Spadina Lift Station to increase pumping capacity to handle sanitary sewer peak demand in the interceptor during rainfall events. Due to the addition of the bypass pumps and minor upgrades to the lift station, construction of a new $15 million lift station has been deferred indefinitely.

Reduced Work Related Injuries - $800,000 in Three Years

Over the past few years, there have been significant improvements in health and safety and substantial reductions in the number of work-related injuries. The corporate lost-time injury frequency (the number of work-related injuries resulting in one day or more lost time per 100 workers) has decreased from 6.67% in 2009 to 4.30% in 2011. The reduction in work-related injuries results in fewer employees seeking medical attention away from the workplace, and has also resulted in a much shorter duration of time away from work due to injury. In 2008, the number of days lost due to work-related injury was 7,437. Over a three year period, that number was reduced to 3,121 days in 2011. Reducing the number of days lost due to injury has a direct positive impact on the workplace, and has a direct impact on costs due to overtime, training, medical treatment, etc. Reducing the number of injuries also contributes to an improved quality of life for employees. The impact of these improvements has also resulted in a reduction in WCB costs from $1.9 million in 2008 to $1.1 million in 2011. The number of lost-time injuries, duration of injury, and WCB costs all contribute to the WCB premium that the City pays annually.

As a result of the significant improvements in health and safety, and the reduction in all three of these categories, the City will receive a 3% discount on the WCB base premium rate in 2012, and an 8% discount on WCB premiums in 2013. The WCB premium is calculated as a percentage of overall payroll, and this discount has allowed the City to hold fairly steady in the amount of WCB premiums paid, despite the fact that the number of employees continues to increase annually.

GROWING OUR CITY IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY

The City's various environmental programs help reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by approximately 140,000 tonnes CO_2e (carbon dioxide equivalent) annually, the equivalent of removing 27,000 cars from the road.

City Departments Work Together to Create Win-Win Solution

Landfills are one of the largest sources of human-caused methane emissions; as solid waste decomposes, gases are produced and emitted into the atmosphere. A collaborative effort between the City's Utility Services Department and the Circle Drive South Project team led to a win-win solution for the City's Landfill Gas Collection System Project, the Circle Drive South Project and the environment.

> A clay cover was being installed over part of the existing landfill to prevent gases within the waste from being emitted into the atmosphere. At first, soil for the cap was hauled from a site north of Martensville. A suggestion led to testing of soil from the earthen river berm used in the bridge portion of the Circle Drive South Project. The soil proved appropriate for use as landfill cover.

> Over a 14-day period, approximately 12,000 cubic meters of material was hauled from the river berm, saving more than 47,000 km in travel, which in turn reduced fuel consumption. The total reduction in greenhouse gas emissions was approximately 40 tonnes CO_2e - the equivalent of taking eight passenger vehicles off the road.

Growing Our City in a Sustainable Way - Reduced Annual GHG Emissions of 8,403 Tonnes Equivalent to 1,648 Cars

Evergreen Neighbourhood: The promotion of sustainability is a priority of the City Land Bank Program. In the development of the Evergreen Neighbourhood, the Land Branch has worked closely with other City departments and industry professionals to investigate and implement relevant green building and sustainability practices. Some of the practices include:

> The use of dark sky compliant LED street lighting.

> The use of natural features in landscaping.

> Alternative storm water management techniques.

> Incentives to promote the building of Energy Star compliant new homes.

> Sustainable landscaping in linear park development.

> The program of distributing free rain barrels, composters, and Saskatoon berry bushes to lot purchasers in the neighbourhood to encourage new residents to conserve water and reduce waste generation.

> Development of an RFP process to encourage builders to bring forward sustainable building designs on a 9.84 acre townhouse parcel south of the Evergreen Square.

Earthkeepers Design Signage for Green Energy Park

Saskatoon Light & Power unveiled four new informational signs at the Green Energy Park at the Saskatoon Landfill. What makes these signs unique is that they were designed by members of the Aden Bowman Collegiate Earthkeepers. The project was the culmination of an Education for Sustainable Development Project involving the Earthkeepers, U of S School of Environment & Sustainability students, and Saskatoon Light & Power, which provided resources and direction. The Earthkeepers worked with a graphic designer to create the signage and several brochures. To view the brochures online, go to the City of Saskatoon website at www.saskatoon.ca, and click "L" for Landfill Gas, "T" for Turboexpander, or "W" for Wind Turbine.

"It was so great to know that our work was going beyond the teacher's desk, that it was actually going out into the real world and making a difference." - Mickey K., Earthkeepers

"Who would have thought that a bunch of Grade 10 students could do something that is now being recognized in the city and across the province?" - Charlie F., Earthkeepers

Infrastructure Services Timesheets Go Green

The Administration Branch initiated electronic entry of hourly employees' timesheets for payroll purposes. The program is very user friendly, but behind the scenes it is programmed to take into account a variety of payroll rules and controls to reflect collective agreements and ensure correct payment. The move to electronic timesheets eliminates approximately two boxes of paper per week. Annual GHG savings associated with this initiative are estimated at 6.173 tonnes CO_2e.

Looking After Saskatoon's Urban Forest

The City of Saskatoon's Urban Forestry Program plants, protects, preserves, and maintains an inventory of approximately 110,000 City-owned trees on boulevards, centre medians, and in parks. Of these trees, approximately 33,000 are high value amenity American Elm that are monitored and maintained to prevent the introduction of Dutch Elm Disease to Saskatoon. Urban Forestry works closely with the Pest Management Program to ensure that all trees are monitored for all potential invasive species (animal or pathogen) that may have a negative and/or long lasting impact on the urban forest. Annual GHG savings associated with this initiative are estimated at 17,066.34 tonnes CO_2e.

City Recipient of SPLIT Grant

The City of Saskatoon was one of 23 municipalities (out of 103 applications) to receive a grant from the TD Green Streets program for the 2011 Schools Plant Legacy in Trees (SPLIT) program. The grant allowed students and volunteers to plant trees and shrubs at Holliston School to enhance the greening of school grounds.

Supporting Local Community Clean-Up Days

The City and Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services continued to support Community Associations in Caswell Hill, Pleasant Hill, Riversdale, and King George during their annual Community Clean-Up Days. Fire & Protective Services funded the commercial dumpsters and assigned a Fire Inspector to each drop-off site. The City also assigned an environmental officer to help monitor waste materials going into the dumpsters and divert recyclable products.

Quantifying the Benefits of LEED Buildings

The City of Saskatoon reported preliminary findings of the benefits of facilities designed to meet LEED Certification. LEED is the acronym for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction, and operation of high performance green buildings. The City reported on two facilities recently constructed to LEED Certification: Access Transit Storage Facility and Fire Hall #8.

> Access Transit Storage Facility features a rainwater capture and storage system that screens and captures rainwater runoff for re-use in the bus wash, toilets and irrigation systems. When combined with high-efficiency fixtures, the system is estimated to reduce water consumption by 72% a year. The facility was also designed to realize energy savings of 25%. Annual GHG savings associated with the facility's water conservation features are estimated at 75.667 tonnes CO_2e.

> Fire Hall #8 integrates systems to reduce both energy and water consumption. Preliminary results show that, compared to Fire Halls #2 - #7, Fire Hall #8 uses 20% less natural gas, 11% less water, and 56% more electricity. The higher electrical consumption is not an indication of less efficiency, but of larger equipment and/or unique services, such as the large air compressor which fills compressed air tanks for all east side fire halls. Analysis of the more efficient energy systems over the next year will help optimize the hall, and ensure annual GHG savings are achieved.

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