

DATE OF MEETING SEPTEMBER 25, 2023

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SUBJECT POTHOLE MAINTENANCE POLICY

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To introduce a new Pothole Maintenance Policy (one of three core policies to form part of a unified approach to asset maintenance).

Recommendation

That Council endorse the Pothole Maintenance Council Policy COU-218 as attached to the September 25, 2023 report titled Pothole Maintenance Policy.

BACKGROUND

The City develops and maintains a wide variety of policies. These serve to codify the City's actions and define the services and service levels provided to taxpayers and the public. These policies also form part of legal defence in the case of claims brought forward, either in negligence, or occupiers liability claims.

Following advice and best practices from our insurer, and reflecting legal precedents, it is important to establish Sidewalk Maintenance, Pothole Inspection and Maintenance, and Winter Maintenance as core policies. Core policies reflect a deliberative process, weighing competing interests made at the highest level of the organization. Attached is the Pothole Inspection and Maintenance Policy for Council's consideration. The Sidewalk Maintenance and Winter Maintenance policies are addressed in separate reports.

DISCUSSION

This attached policy has been drafted to reflect the current capacity and processes of the Public Works unit responsible. Over the last 3 years, the City has been subject to 2 claims for wheel/tire damage due to potholes, with an average claim cost of \$296, or \$197/yr. The policy is reactive in that the City will address matters as they are brought forward (either by complaint or other process).

Potholes are most prevalent in the winter and spring, primarily as a result of freeze/thaw cycles and entry of water to the road base through small cracks. Staff have responded to and repaired approximately 93 potholes of various sizes during the most recent winter/spring season. The

presence of increasing amounts of potholes in an area directs Staff to consider if more substantial repairs are required to ensure the maximum life of the roadway is achieved.

Repairs of potholes are part of an integrated, comprehensive operations road maintenance program; the 2023 budget includes \$2.075 million for total annual expenditures.

OPTIONS

Option 1:

That Council endorse the Pothole Maintenance Council Policy COU-218 as attached to the September 25, 2023 report titled Pothole Maintenance Policy.

- The advantages of this option are that:
 - The City will be able to rely of the strongest liability defence available.
 - It sets a consistent expectation for service standards.
- The disadvantage of this option is that:
 - Unknown defects will not be discovered and repaired.
- Financial implications:
 - No impact to operating or capital budgets.

Option 2:

Direct Staff to create a Pothole Maintenance Policy that is more pro-active.

- Additional operating costs associated with continual/periodic surveys will be incurred, including collection and analysis of data, and managing the workflow associated with this data.

SUMMARY POINTS

- A policy is required to ensure consistent standards of service delivery and to set reasonable expectations with respect to pothole maintenance.
- Council is responsible for weighing competing interests for constrained resources.
- A good policy will help mitigate liability exposure in the case of claims.
- This policy is reactive as defects are identified.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Pothole Maintenance Policy COU-218

Submitted by:

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Concurrence by:

John Elliot,
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Bill Sims,
General Manager, Eng. & Public Works