



Special Council Meeting

Jubilee Centre Council Chamber
9909 Franklin Avenue, Fort McMurray

Tuesday, December 16, 2014
4:00 p.m.

Agenda

Persons in attendance wishing to speak to an Item on the Agenda will be given that opportunity when the Item comes up during the meeting, with the exception of a bylaw scheduled only for first reading. For those items for which a Public Hearing is required or has been held, the opportunity will arise only during the associated Public Hearing. All speakers are allowed a maximum of five minutes, not including any time Council wishes to use for asking questions.

Call To Order

1. Extension of Lower Townsite Redevelopment Incentive Program
- delegations
2. Urban Snow and Ice Control
- delegations
3. 2015 Operating Budget, 2016-2017 Financial Plan
- delegations

Adjournment

Please note: A dinner break will occur from 5:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Subject: Extension of Lower Townsite Redevelopment Incentive Program

Audit and Budget Committee Recommendation:

That the Lower Townsite Redevelopment Incentive Program be extended to December 31, 2016.

Background:

The Lower Townsite Redevelopment Incentive Program has been a success during the four years since it was first adopted. Several significant new developments in the lower townsite of Fort McMurray have taken place -- for example River Station and Waters' Edge, Fatburger, Starbucks and Home Hardware -- due in part to this Program which allows some of the offsite costs of development to be shifted to the General Municipal Levy, thereby improving the economics of establishing a new business.

Since the Program has produced the desired results, the Audit and Budget Committee recommends to Council that it be extended for two more years, to December 31, 2016.

Subject: Urban Snow and Ice Control**APPROVALS:**

Robert Kirby, Director
Kevin Scoble, Executive Director
Marcel Ulliac, Interim Chief Administrative Officer

Administrative Recommendations:

THAT Administration implement parking restrictions effective as of April 1, 2015 that would restrict parking on urban municipal roadways one day a week in designated areas from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in order to enhance snow operations in the winter and road maintenance in the spring; and

THAT \$2.7 million be allocated from the Emerging Issues Reserve for hiring 21 new positions to implement enhanced snow operations and road maintenance in the Urban Service Area which takes effect April 1, 2015. In the event of a 2015 Operating Surplus, funds will be allocated from the Public Works Operating Budget or Corporate Surplus, in that order.

Summary:

Residents want more effective snow and ice control on the streets in Fort McMurray. Based on sessions, Administration proposes a new snow and ice clearing program involving weekly service starting in the 2015/2016 winter season. To facilitate this, each street will be assigned one day a week during which parking will be disallowed from the hours of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Enforcement of the new parking restrictions will begin with resident education during the spring, summer and fall of 2015. Strict enforcement will be starting in the winter. The improved service requires additional funding in the 2015 budget. Meanwhile, the current Snow and Ice Control Policy will be updated.

Background:

On May 20, 2014, Administration briefed Council on current urban snow operations and presented potential options to upgrade winter maintenance standards and services. After further analysis and consultation, Administration reported back to Council in a briefing on September 16, 2014, seeking to conduct a comprehensive urban snow and ice control policy review involving further research and community engagement.

Public feedback was solicited via Facebook, Twitter, a media luncheon with a snowplow ride-along and radio advertising. An online survey ran from October 9, 2014 to November 7, 2014. It included a comment section where respondents wrote extensively about their opinions and suggestions, addressing such topics as complaints, enforcement, road conditions, safety concerns, street parking congestion, parking tickets, impounding vehicles, tax increases, and sidewalk clearing. There were also three open houses, where surveys were likewise submitted. Each session ran from 1 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.: November 3, 2014 Frank Lacroix Arena, 40 participants; November 4, 2014 MacDonald Island Park, 55 participants; November 5, 2014

Syncrude Athletic Park, 24 participants. A total of 856 surveys were completed, 792 online and 73 at the open houses; 182 participants said they live on a primary or secondary snow removal route.

The survey focused on: Satisfaction with current urban snow and ice clearing practices, plowing as a primary method for snow and ice control, and parking restrictions to allow proper maintenance of roads.

Based on the information collected, it is clear that citizens want improved snow and ice control that allows for safer and more drivable roads. Sixty-five per cent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that they are satisfied with current levels of service, although those living on primary and secondary routes were more satisfied (primary and secondary roads are considered a priority).

Public Works proposes to plow snow on all streets. As a result, snow will be placed at the base of private driveways and on lawns. This is a common practice in other municipalities. Moreover, with a weekly schedule, snow accumulation should be relatively modest and manageable for property owners. For now, snow removal on weekly basis is not possible because of the prohibitive cost – approximately \$4 million per removal.

Currently, the Municipality does not use sodium chloride (rock salt), the most common de-icer, in residential areas because it is not effective beyond -14 degrees Celsius. To further enhance service, Public Works will now use a sand mixture that has been pre-treated with liquid calcium chloride, which will adhere to road surfaces from -15 to about -30.

To raise urban service levels, residents also strongly support parking restrictions and greater enforcement of these restrictions with fines, towing costs borne by the owner of the vehicle, as well as towing and impounding vehicles in violation. It is proposed that parking be restricted, on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on designated days. During the spring and summer, this would similarly improve street sweeping and road maintenance.

The restrictions would be introduced in the spring of 2015 when signs will be installed. Vehicles parked in violation of the ban will be provided with a warning and towing will begin at the onset of winter, giving drivers a grace period to learn about and adjust to the changes. Enforcement is critical so further support from RCMP and Bylaw Services would be necessary. Currently, temporary signs are posted in neighborhoods' when snow operations are planned. The signs indicate that parking is not permitted to allow for street maintenance. This ad hoc method of communication is neither effective nor favoured by residents because of the unpredictable nature of the signs, non-compliance, and coordination with when actual work occurs.

Public Works will consult with Environmental Services to coordinate operations and ensure that there are no scheduling conflicts with solid waste collection. The parking restrictions will be evaluated in the spring of 2016, which will include a public satisfaction survey.

Administration will revise the current Urban Snow Clearance Policy, which was approved by Council in June 2010. The updated version will be presented for approval before the 2015-2016 winter season begins. It will incorporate public feedback from the community engagement

process as well as research on snow policies and practices in other municipalities. More regular sidewalk clearing will also be addressed.

Alternative:

Maintain current urban snow plowing and clearing standards.

Budget/Financial Implications:

The total annual cost of the enhanced snow and ice control program is approximately \$7.6 million from capital and operating costs. All with the exception of \$2.7 million required for staffing has received a recommendation from the Audit and Budget Committee to be included in the 2015 operating and capital budgets. The \$2.7 million is based on having the staff hired by March 1st, 2015 and the remainder of the calendar year.

<i>Annual Operational Budget Implications (2015)</i>	
Staff (21 positions)	\$3,200,000 (12 months)
Training	\$50,000
Fuel	\$130,000
De-Icing Material	\$500,000
Towing	\$400,000
TOTAL	\$4,280,000

<i>Capital Budget</i>	
Equipment	\$3,300,000
TOTAL	\$3,300,000

Procurement and staffing processes will need to begin in January 2015 to be ready for summer street sweeping and maintenance.

Rationale for Recommendations:

With two-thirds of survey respondents indicating that they are dissatisfied with the current service, public feedback suggests that residents want higher standards for urban snow plowing and clearing and strongly support parking restrictions and regular enforcement to get safer and improved winter road conditions.

As the urban area grows, parking on public roadways continues to increase, often making it difficult to plow, clear and remove snow to the standards expected by residents and the Municipality. Currently, signs are posted when Public Works intends to work in a particular area,

indicating when and for how long vehicles must park elsewhere. However, these notices are sometimes ignored; some vehicle owners claim not to have been properly informed, or some residents are away and not aware of pending snow operations. As well, for various reasons, snow operations are not always conducted within the timeframe specified by the Municipality (e.g. changing weather conditions may require crews to go back to primary and secondary routes). An established parking ban schedule and enforced penalties would encourage compliance.

Urban Snow and Ice Control

Robert Kirby

Director, Public Operations



BACKGROUND

- **May 20:** Briefing on current urban snow and ice control (SNIC) and potential improvements.
- **May-September:** Further research, including best practices and standards in similar municipalities.
- **Sept. 16:** SNIC policy review approved.
- **Oct. 9-Nov. 7:** Online survey.
- **Nov. 3-5:** Open houses.

BACKGROUND (cont.)

Terms and Definitions

- **Plowing:** Snow pushed to sides or centre of a roadway to maintain at least one traffic lane in each direction.
- **Blading:** Compacting accumulated snow to 5cm to make roadways passable or to level ruts.



BACKGROUND (cont.)

Terms and Definitions

Hauling/Removal: Snow is blown into trucks and taken to a storage site.

Anti-icing – Treatment with ice-melting chemicals before or shortly after a storm starts – to prevent or delay ice forming, or snow and ice adhering to the surface.



BACKGROUND (cont.)

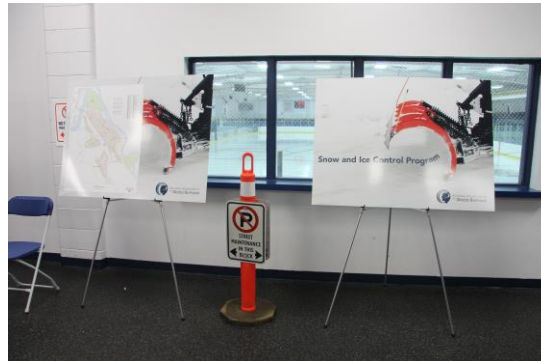
Terms and Definitions



- **De-icing** – Removal of snow, ice or frost using mechanical means or applying salt or other ice-melting chemicals.
- **Sanding** – Controlled application of sand and liquids (e.g. salt brine or magnesium chloride) to improve traction.

ENGAGEMENT

- Facebook, Twitter, radio advertising and a media luncheon with a snowplow ride-along.
- 856 surveys completed (mostly online).
- 3 open houses with 119 participants.
- Cross-section of residents.



ENGAGEMENT (cont.)

RESPONDENTS	ONLINE		OPEN HOUSES		TOTAL		% POP.
AREA	#	%	#	%	#	%	%
Abasand	47	6	4	5	51	6	7
Beacon Hill	32	4	5	7	37	4	3
Gregoire Mackenzie	13	2	1	1	14	2	5
Lower Townsite	54	7	17	23	71	8	15
Parsons Creek North	21	3	0	0	21	2	*
Prairie Creek	18	2	1	1	19	2	1
Thickwood	198	25	13	18	211	24	23
Timberlea	396	50	31	42	427	49	45
Waterways	13	2	1	1	14	2	1

ENGAGEMENT (cont.)

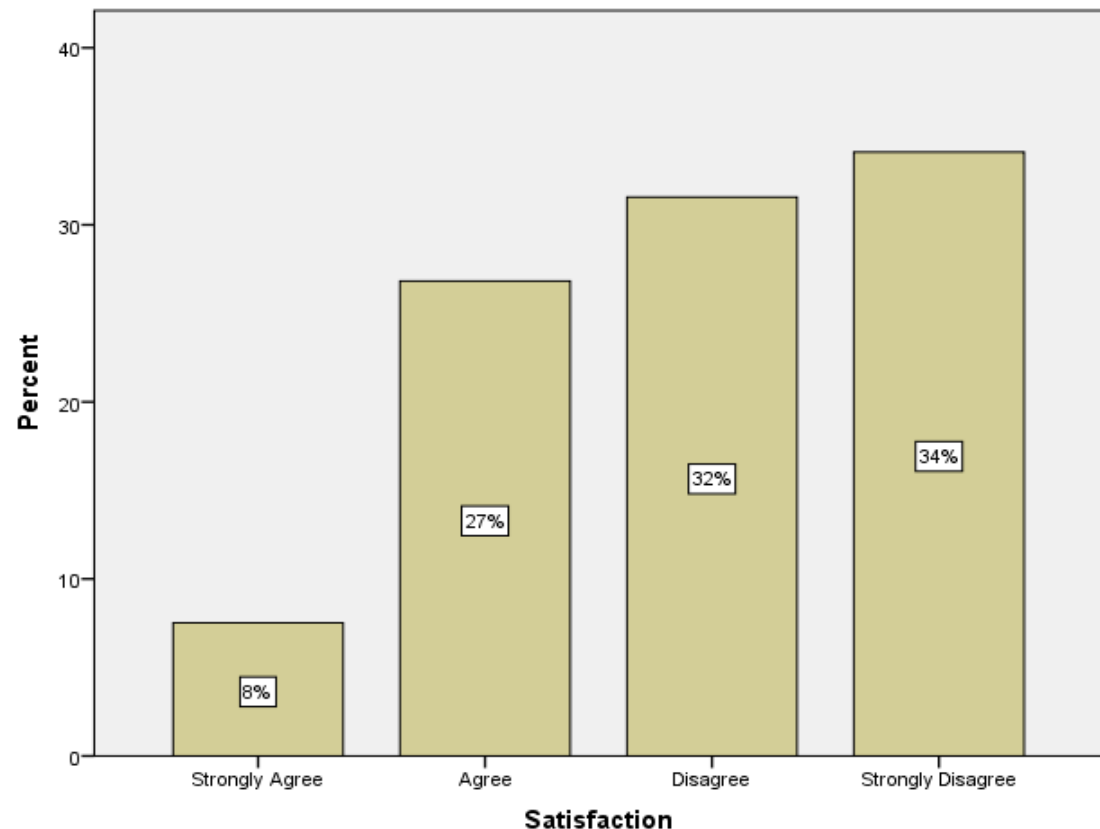
Focus:

- Satisfaction with current practices.
- Plowing – primary method for SNIC?
- Parking restrictions.



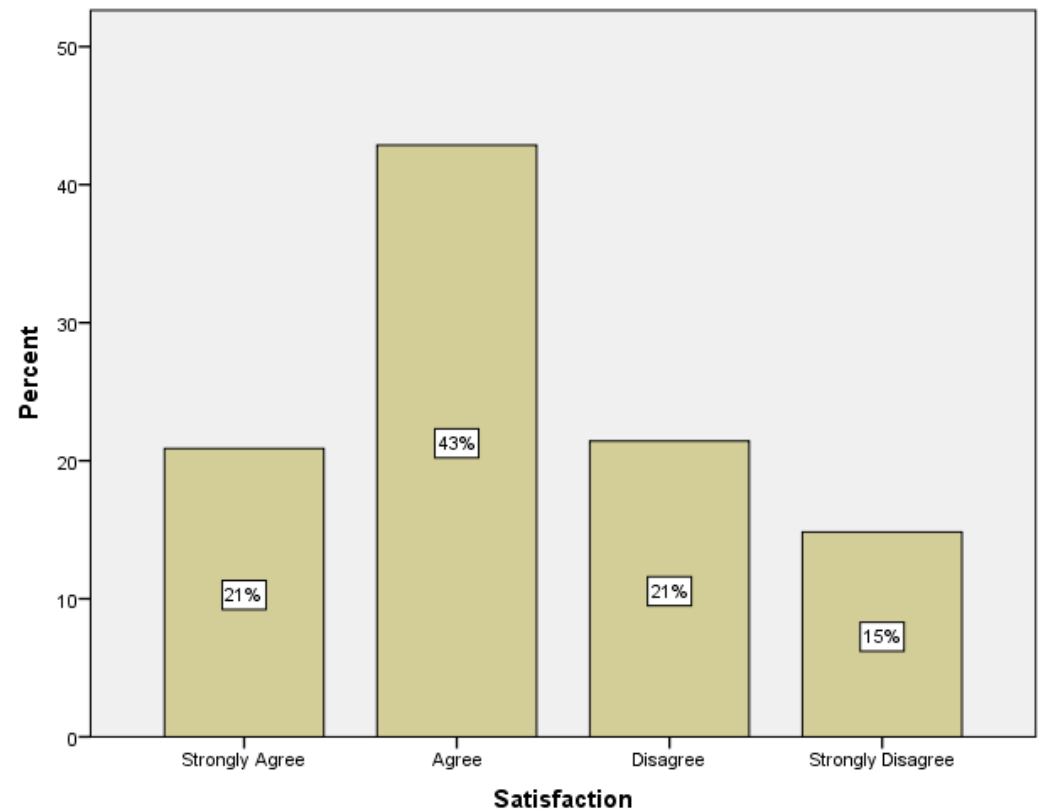
FEEDBACK

- 65% of all respondents are dissatisfied with current service.



FEEDBACK (cont.)

- Respondents living on primary and secondary routes (priority) were more satisfied.



FEEDBACK (cont.)

- Primary Routes (109.1 lane km): Plowed continuously during a snow event.
- Secondary Routes (222.6 lane km) – Plowed after primary routes.
- Residential (254 lane km): Plowed as warranted by conditions.



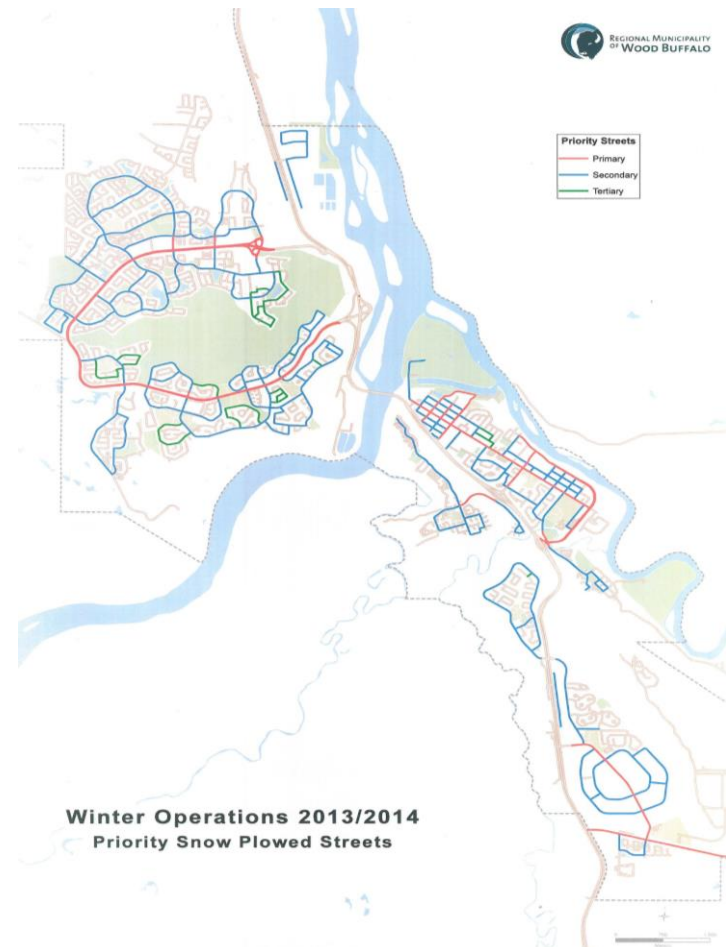
FEEDBACK (cont.)

Urban Service Area

Red = Primary

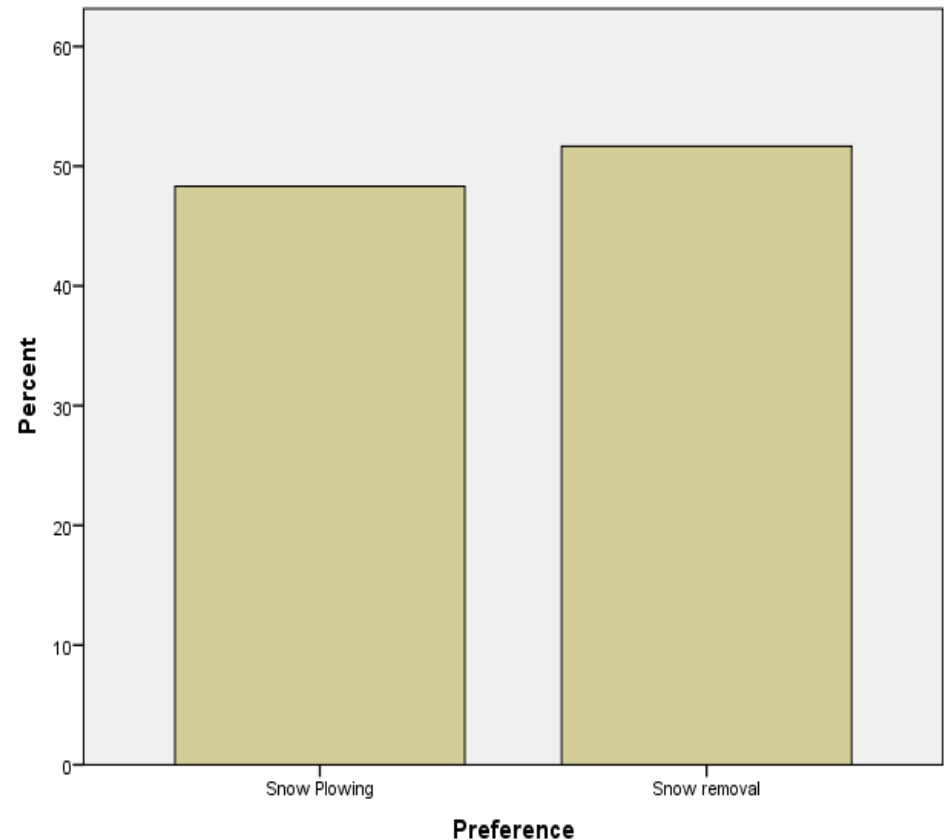
Blue = Secondary

Green = Tertiary



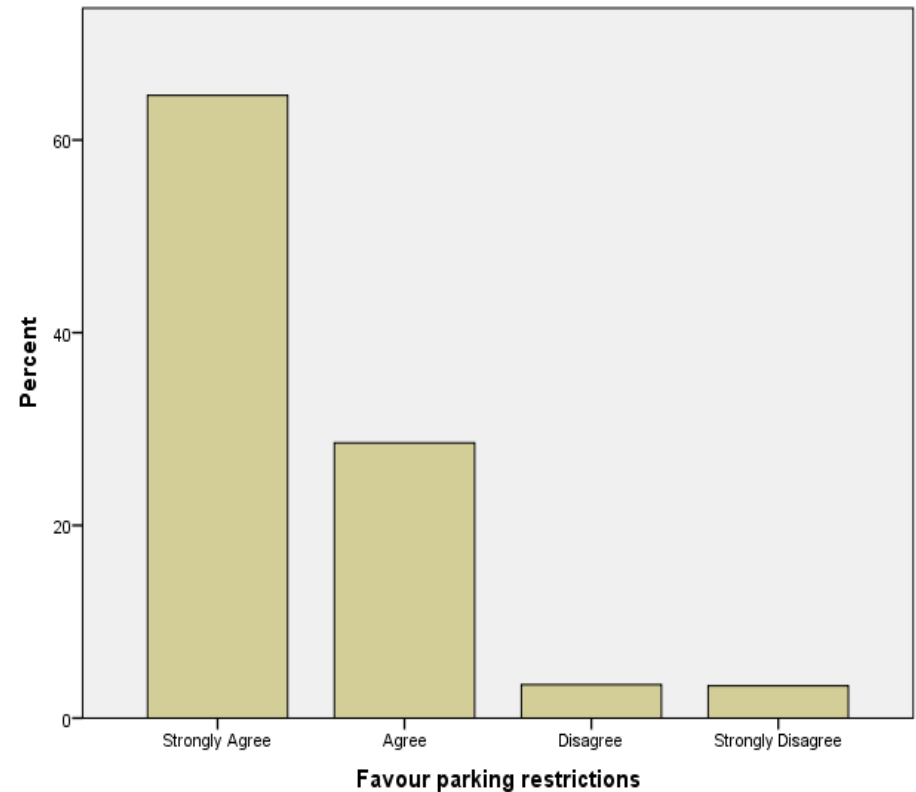
FEEDBACK (cont.)

- By a small margin, more residents put an emphasis on removal vs. plowing.

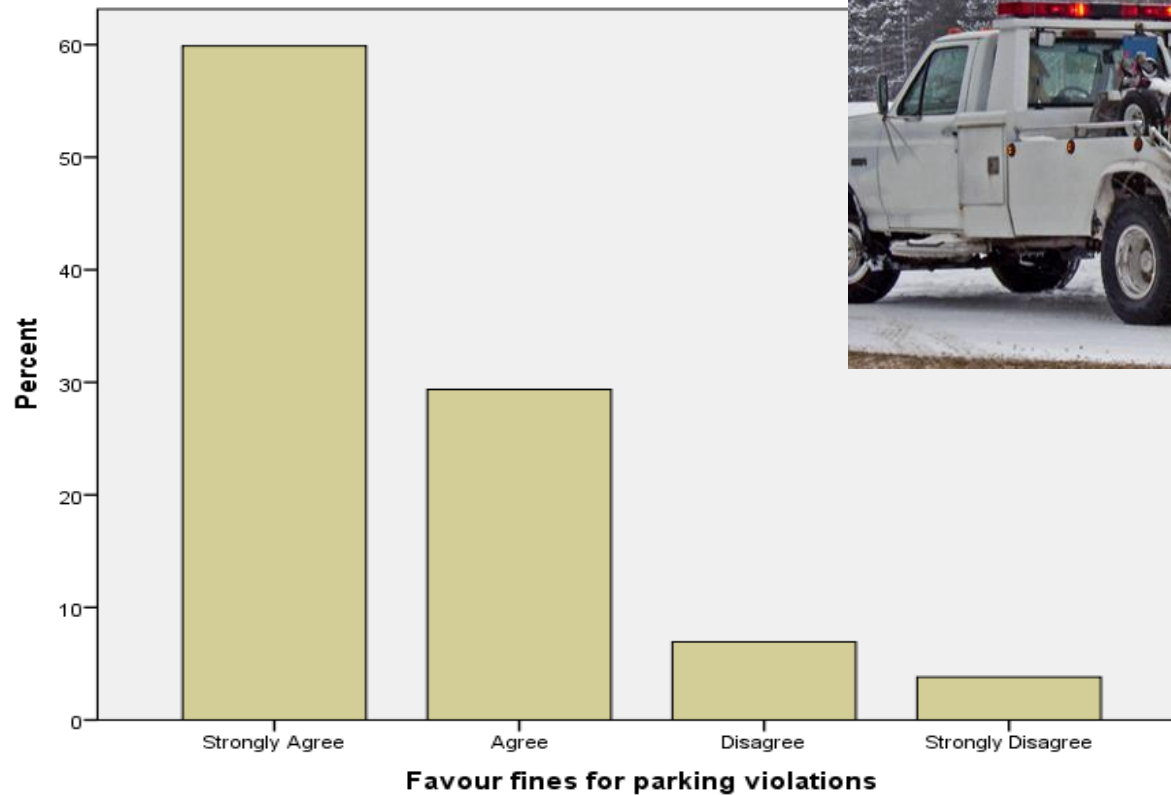


FEEDBACK (cont.)

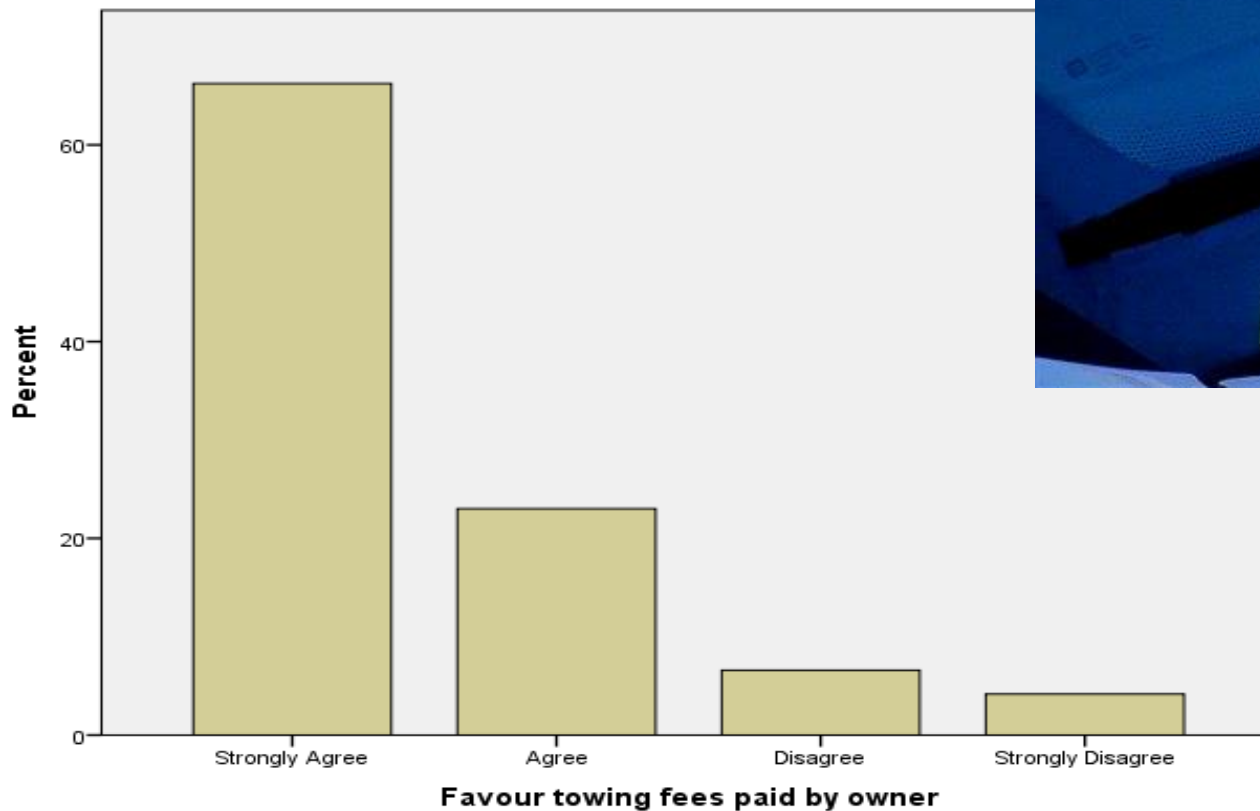
- Residents strongly support parking restrictions.
- They want bans enforced with penalties and towing.



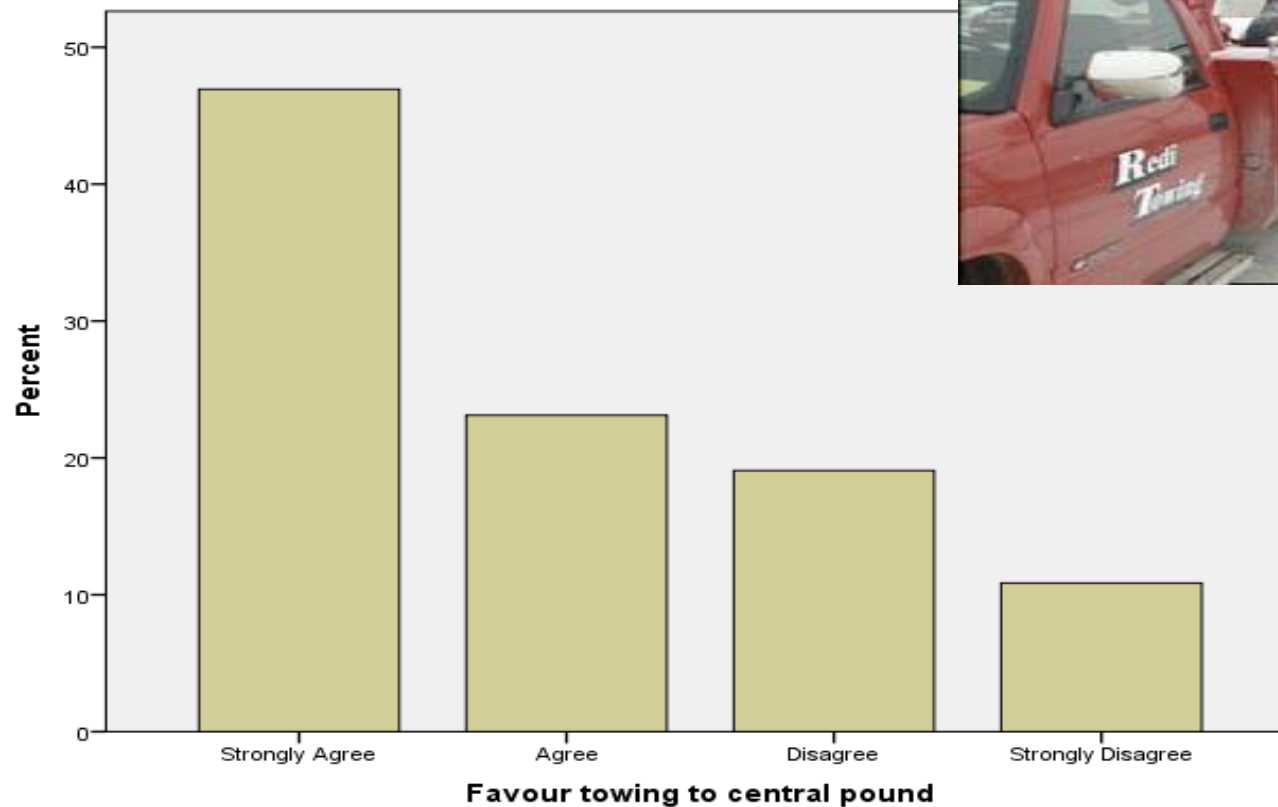
FEEDBACK (cont.)



FEEDBACK (cont.)



FEEDBACK (cont.)



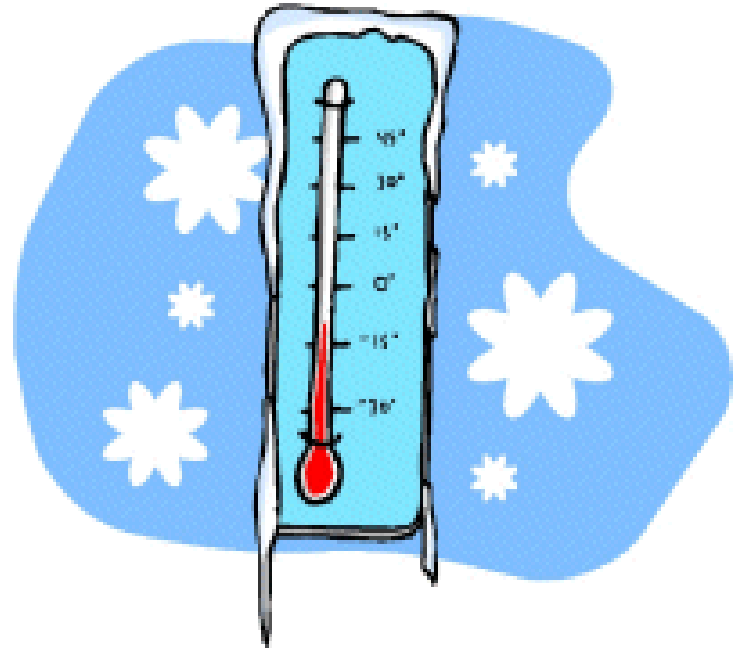
CONSIDERATIONS

- Plowing would be to the right.
- Snow placed at the base of private driveways and on lawns.
- With weekly service, property owners should find it easier to manage accumulated snow.



CONSIDERATIONS (cont.)

- Sodium chloride (salt) not used in residential areas – ineffective beyond -15.
- Replace with a sand mixture pre-treated with liquid calcium chloride. It adheres better in lower temperatures – to about -30.



CONSIDERATIONS (cont.)

- Introduce parking restrictions and install signs in Spring 2015.
- Grace period - no towing until Winter 2015.
- Enforcement is critical – further support from RCMP and Bylaw.
- Would coordinate schedules with refuse collection.
- Relatively easy and cost-effective to implement.

CONSIDERATIONS (cont.)

- Restrictions evaluated in Spring 2016, including a public satisfaction survey.
- Revised Urban Snow Clearance Policy before the 2015- 2016 winter season.

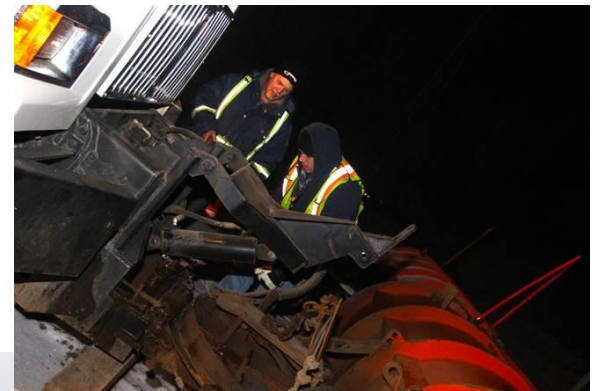


CONSIDERATIONS

Current Resources

Equipment:

- 3 graders
- 2 plow trucks
- 3 one-ton with plows
- 7 loaders/2 plows
- 16 plows with spreaders.



CONSIDERATIONS (cont.)

Current Resources

Staff

- Operating shifts: 24 hours, 7/7
- Day shift : 2 team leads; 8-12 operators
- Night shift: 1 acting/operating team lead, and 2-5 operators



CONSIDERATIONS (cont.)

Required Resources

- Staff (21 positions): **\$3.2 million** (12 Months)
- Equipment: **\$3.3 million**
- Training: **\$50,000**
- Fuel: **\$130,000**
- De-icing Material: **\$500,000**
- Towing: **\$400,000**

Total: \$7.6 million



RECOMMENDATIONS



Approve weekly snow plowing and clearing in urban residential areas.



Implement parking restrictions.



Add \$2.7 million to the 2015 budget from the emerging issues reserve to hire 21 new positions.

QUESTIONS



Subject: 2015 Operating Budget, 2016 – 2017 Financial Plan**Audit and Budget Committee Recommendations:**

THAT the 2015 Operating Budget, in the amount of \$785,905,100 be approved, representing \$500,406,080 for Municipal operations and \$285,499,020 as a funding transfer for capital purposes.

THAT the 2016 – 2017 Financial Plan in the amount of \$807,090,720 and \$829,230,142 with funding transfers for capital purposes of \$293,313,142 and \$302,362,464 respectively, be used as the basis for the development of the respective subsequent budgets.

Summary:

The 2015 Proposed Operating Budget, 2016 – 2017 Financial Plan was presented to the Audit and Budget Committee on November 4, 2014. The Committee held three subsequent meetings on November 6, 13 and 20, 2014 to review, discuss and prioritize the Municipality's requirements, which included Municipal operating budget.

The three Audit and Budget Committee Meetings resulted in resolutions amending the proposed budget and those amendments are now reflected in the Audit and Budget Committee Recommendation.

Background:

The three subsequent Audit and Budget Committee meetings were open to the public and available via live web streaming on the municipal website.

The 2014 – 2016 Fiscal Management Strategy and other key planning documents provided data that drove budget development. The information contained within the 2016 – 2017 Financial Plan will form the basis for development of future budgets and will continue to be updated as conditions change.

Budget/Financial Implications:

The financial parameters placed on the 2015 budget and financial plan are based on the principles contained in the 2014 – 2016 Fiscal Management Strategy (FMS) approved by Council on June 10, 2014.

The Strategy established the following:

- Assume property tax 'revenue neutral' plus new construction growth philosophy for all property classes in preparing 2014 – 2016 budgets.

- Establish a maximum balance of 15% of prior years' audited net property taxes, subject to a minimum uncommitted balance of \$50M in the Emerging Issues Reserve.

In addition to funding operating expenditures, contributions to the Capital Infrastructure Reserve for capital purposes are also budgeted in the 2015 Operating Budget as follows:

Revenue	\$ 785,905,100
Less: Operating Expenses	<u>500,406,080</u>
Funding available for transfer for capital purposes	285,499,020
Less: Transfer for capital purposes	<u>285,499,020</u>
Balanced Budget	<u>\$ —</u>

Contributions to the Capital Infrastructure Reserve are committed to specific projects in the 2015 Capital Budget. Funds not committed to projects are required for allocation in the 2016 – 2020 Financial Plan in order to offset the requirement for debt financing and maintain a debt limit within the Debt Management Policy.

Rationale for Recommendations:

The 2015 Recommended Operating Budget, 2016 – 2017 Financial Plan is a culmination of a series of review and prioritization meetings of the Audit and Budget Committee concluding on November 20, 2014. The Recommended Operating Budget, 2016 – 2017 Financial Plan provides for the continuation of operations and staffing requirements for the Municipality for 2015.

Attachment:

1. 2015 Recommended Operating Budget, 2016 – 2017 Financial Plan.

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF WOOD BUFFALO
2015 Recommended Operating Budget, 2016 and 2017 Financial Plan

	2015 Recommended Budget	2016 Plan	2017 Plan	2015 to 2016 Variance	Variance %	2016 to 2017 Variance	Variance %
REVENUE							
Taxes	659,039,000	675,279,100	691,519,300	16,240,100	2	16,240,200	2
Grants In Lieu-Taxes	1,739,200	1,739,200	1,739,200	-	0	-	0
Sales to Other Governments	3,573,100	3,668,100	3,710,300	95,000	3	42,200	1
Sales of Goods & Services	62,727,100	66,476,550	70,438,385	3,749,450	6	3,961,835	6
Other Revenue from Own Services	42,825,200	44,671,770	46,562,257	1,846,570	4	1,890,487	4
Conditional Grants	15,134,500	15,212,900	15,216,400	78,400	1	3,500	0
Other Transfers	867,000	43,100	44,300	(823,900)	(95)	1,200	3
Total Revenues	785,905,100	807,090,720	829,230,142	21,185,620	3	22,139,422	3
EXPENSES							
Salaries Wages & Benefits	221,983,500	233,181,500	238,122,712	(11,198,000)	(5)	(4,941,212)	(2)
Contracted & General Services	150,310,230	151,386,220	156,670,926	(1,075,990)	(1)	(5,284,706)	(3)
Purchases from Government	24,867,100	26,030,300	27,317,400	(1,163,200)	(5)	(1,287,100)	(5)
Materials Goods Supplies & Utilities	32,021,150	32,853,208	33,730,840	(832,058)	(3)	(877,632)	(3)
Small Equipment & Furnishings	6,004,600	6,110,950	6,263,800	(106,350)	(2)	(152,850)	(3)
Transfers & Grants	33,204,900	32,882,500	33,770,200	322,400	1	(887,700)	(3)
Financial Service Charges	31,200,900	30,507,300	30,153,600	693,600	2	353,700	1
Other Expenses	813,700	825,600	838,200	(11,900)	(1)	(12,600)	(2)
Total Expenses	500,406,080	513,777,578	526,867,678	(13,371,498)	(3)	(13,090,100)	(3)
Excess Revenue over Expenses	285,499,020	293,313,142	302,362,464	34,557,118	0	35,229,522	0
Transfer for Capital Purposes	285,499,020	293,313,142	302,362,464	34,557,118	0	35,229,522	0
Net Change - Surplus/(Deficit)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

