

Utilities & Environmental Protection Report to
SPC on Utilities and Corporate Services
2018 October 10

ISC: UNRESTRICTED
UCS2018-1171

Integrated Watershed Management Strategic Meeting – Deferral Request

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 2018 May 28, an update on Upstream Bow River Flood Mitigation was provided to Council (UCS2018-0600). At that time, Council directed Administration to facilitate a strategic meeting of Council with respect to Integrated Watershed Management (IWM) and The City's resiliency plan no later than the fall of 2018. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council on the status of this work and request a deferral of the strategic meeting of Council on this topic to spring 2019.

The deferral is requested in light of the timing and significance of One Calgary deliberations this fall and will allow direction from Council's One Calgary service line discussions to be integrated into meeting content. This new timing also provides an opportunity to better align with Administration's annual reporting on flood mitigation and watershed management, which are typically presented in spring of each year.

The strategic meeting will provide an opportunity for Council to discuss the following items related to IWM:

- The overall purpose of Administration's ongoing IWM approach to water resource management;
- How The City's lines of service are connected to IWM and support The City's resiliency plan;
- Key watershed management issues facing The City;
- Watershed management actions undertaken by The City in 2018; and
- The impact of Provincial regulations and policy on The City and region with regards to watershed management.

In addition to the discussion, the strategic meeting will provide an opportunity for Council to hear from external subject matter experts on how IWM is applied elsewhere in the world and the benefits of such an approach to managing water resources.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

That the Standing Policy Committee on Utilities and Corporate Services recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report as an item of Urgent Business for the 2018 October 15 Meeting of Council; and
2. Defer the integrated watershed management strategic meeting and direct Administration to return to a strategic meeting of Council, no later than 2019 Q2.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

On 2018 May 28, Council received an update on Upstream Bow River Flood Mitigation (UCS2018-0600). Council directed Administration to facilitate a strategic meeting of Council with respect to IWM and The City's resiliency plan no later than the fall of 2018.

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BACKGROUND

Following Administration's update on Upstream Bow River Flood Mitigation on 2018 May 28, Council identified a need to discuss The City's IWM approach. This meeting is an opportunity for an in-depth discussion on Administration's ongoing approach to IWM as it relates to the Water Utility's three lines of service and regional development demands. This meeting will also identify strategic opportunities to address Provincial regulatory or policy issues related to The City's watershed management work.

Administration provides annual watershed updates to Council on the Water Utility's goals of protecting our water supply, using water wisely, and keeping our rivers healthy. These updates summarize actions undertaken by The City to address topics such as water demand management, water quality, drought management, riparian protection, wastewater management, and stormwater management. Data in these areas are made available in Q1 and are included in the annual updates. A separate update on The City's flood mitigation program is also provided to Council annually to address the fourth watershed management goal of building resiliency to flooding. Administration intends to incorporate watershed and flood annual updates into the strategic meeting to help highlight connections between The City's work in these areas and its IWM approach.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

Council's previous recommendation to hold a strategic meeting with respect to IWM and The City's resiliency plan no later than the fall of 2018 coincides with One Calgary deliberations occurring between 2018 September and 2018 December. Deferring the strategic meeting from fall 2018 to spring 2019 will support integrating direction from Council's One Calgary service discussions into the strategic meeting's content. Deferral will also allow updates on The City's watershed management goals and relevant data to be included in the discussion.

The main purpose of the meeting will be to clarify, increase understanding of, and undertake substantive discussion with Council on Calgary's most pressing water management issues. The meeting will also highlight the need for holistic decision making on water resources issues as they relate to the Water Utility's three lines of service. External subject matter experts will be brought forward to discuss how other jurisdictions are utilizing an IWM approach. Discussion will also cover how Provincial decisions impact The City given regional growth pressures and climate uncertainty and how we can approach these issues holistically.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

Ongoing internal and external engagement occurs on various IWM initiatives. Engagement with stakeholders on related work is not affected by this deferral.

Strategic Alignment

The City's IWM approach supports Council's One Calgary directive for A Healthy and Green City. It also incorporates considerations to support A Well-Run City. This approach is also in alignment with the Province's Water for Life Strategy, which The City is dedicated to implementing.

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Social, Environmental, Economic (External)

An IWM approach to Calgary's water resources is critical to minimize long-term environmental risks to Calgary's water supply and the health of Calgary's watersheds. No social, environmental, or economic impacts are associated with this deferral.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

Current and future operating budgets are not impacted by this deferral request.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

Current and future capital budgets are not impacted by this deferral request.

Risk Assessment

No risks are identified due to this deferral request.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Deferral of the strategic meeting from fall 2018 to spring 2019 will accommodate the time needed by Council to complete One Calgary deliberations, facilitate integration of Administrations mitigation annual updates, and allow Administration to secure relevant external subject matter experts for the strategic meeting.

ATTACHMENT(S)

No attachments