

File #: 4025-01 WSW-LIC

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

TO:	Development Services Committee
FROM:	Administration
DATE:	October 17, 2016
RE:	Wheeler Street Reconstruction – Local Improvement Charge Bylaw

ISSUE

A local improvement charges process for the reconstruction of Wheeler Street

REFERENCE

Municipal Act	Bylaw 2016-39
Whitehorse Sustainability Plan	Schedule A – Local Improvement Charges
Local Improvement Charge Policy	Sketch of Project Area

HISTORY

Wheeler Street is identified as one of 15 areas in the downtown core requiring road and utility reconstruction. The Engineering Services Department has received several requests from property owners to proceed with reconstructing the street. In response, two public meetings and a survey occurred in summer 2016 to collect preliminary feedback from property owners and residents on design preferences.

Approximately 30 people attended the meetings and 20 people responded to the survey. While strong support has been expressed for the project, some opposition has also been indicated. Concerns generally relate to the proposed Local Improvement charge that would be applied to properties. Support/opposition will be confirmed through a property owner vote associated with Bylaw 2016-39.

Engineering services has developed a preliminary design for the project area based on the input received, local factors, technical considerations, and City standards. The project area extends along Wheeler Street from 4th Avenue to the base of the escarpment. The sections of 5th, 7th, and 8th Avenues between Wheeler and Black Streets are also included in the project scope. The proposed work includes:

- Replacement of water and sewer mains to meet current infrastructure standards and increasing capacity needs;
- Replacement of water services that bleed with recirculating services to meet current standards for frost protection and improve efficiency in the distribution of water;
- Enhanced street lighting and landscaping;
- Monolithic sidewalks and angled parking on both sides of Wheeler Street between 4th and 6th Avenues;
- A monolithic sidewalk on the north side of Wheeler Street between 6th Avenue and the escarpment, and on the east sides of 7th and 8th Avenues;
- New asphalt road surface and removal of frost susceptible soils below roadways; and
- Construction of concrete curbs and gutters to improve drainage.

The Engineer's estimate to complete this project is \$5,150,000. Approximately \$660,000 would be contributed through a Local Improvement Charge applied to abutting properties. Federal Build Canada Funding has been secured for the remainder of the costs. The earliest potential date for construction is spring 2017.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Bring the Local Improvement Charges Bylaw forward under the bylaw process
2. Do not bring forward the Local Improvement Charges Bylaw

ANALYSIS

Reducing water and energy consumption are goals listed in the Whitehorse Sustainability Plan. By replacing aging water and sewer infrastructure on Wheeler Street, the project will contribute towards meeting these goals by reducing the amount of water wasted by services that bleed for frost protection. Reductions will be achieved in the energy and costs associated with treating, heating, and circulating water within the distribution system. Additional benefits include upsizing the capacity of infrastructure to meet a growing population density in downtown and the increase in service needs.

Achieving universal accessibility in surface works is an important goal for the City. Wheeler Street consists of a combination of paved and gravel surfacing, on which potholes, ponding, and dusty conditions are common occurrences. The proposed work includes building concrete sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and new paving which will significantly improve accessibility and pedestrian safety.

The proposed charge to residential properties is \$633.33 per metre of frontage (the average residential property in this area has about 15.3 m of frontage). The proposed charge for commercial properties is \$1,266.67 per metre. Government owners would be charged \$1,900.00 per metre. Owners have the option to amortize these costs over a 15-year period. Bylaw 2016-39 authorizes the levy of these charges to the benefiting property owners with the balance provided from City reserves.

A tentative schedule for the next steps in the process is as follows:

- **October 24:** First Reading of the bylaw which will launch the property owner vote
- **October 25-28:** Ballots will be mailed to property owners
- **November 21:** Public Hearing
- **November 29:** Conclusion of the vote
- **December 5:** Public Hearing Input Report and results of the vote to City Council
- **December 12:** 2nd & 3rd Reading of the Bylaw (Council may proceed or defeat)

Council would consider final confirmation of the project with the approval of the project in the Capital Budget.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council direct that Bylaw 2016-39, a bylaw to provide for a Local Improvement Charge with respect to the Wheeler Street reconstruction project, be brought forward for consideration under the bylaw process.