

SERVICE LEVELS

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Mandated by: City Council

Current Revision: February 9, 2021

Cross Reference:

- Asset Management Policy GEN-013-C
- Operating & Capital Budgets Policy FIN-024-C
- Public Engagement Policy GOV-006-C & Public Engagement Framework

Next Review: January 1, 2026

Responsibility: City Manager

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To put in place a consistent and transparent approach for establishing, documenting and reviewing Service Levels for potential adjustment of relevant service areas offered by the City.

2. POLICY

- 2.1 The City establishes Service Levels to effectively plan for and prioritize resource needs, help manage costs, and improve communication to assist with aligning expectations between the municipality and the community on level of service and cost of service.
- 2.2 Service Level identification and review informs corporate and departmental planning and budgeting, fosters continuous improvement of service processes and delivery methods and enhances decision making.
- 2.3 Service Level documentation and review supports sustainable service delivery and resource management ensuring that municipal services are delivered in a socially, economically and environmentally responsible way, meet regulatory requirements and that decisions today do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own service needs.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 *Asset Management* – means the process of making decisions about the use and care of assets to deliver municipal services at approved Service Levels in a way that considers current and future needs, manages risks and opportunities, and makes the best use of resources.
- 3.2 *City* – means the municipal corporation of the City of Fort Saskatchewan.

- 3.3 *City Employee* – means an individual employed to do work on a permanent, temporary or casual basis either as part-time or full-time for the City and is included in the City's bi-weekly payroll.
- 3.4 *City Manager* – means the Chief Administrative Officer of the City or their designate.
- 3.5 *Comparator* – means a municipality with one or more characteristics in common with the City such as size, population, demographics, economy, etc., that is used for drawing comparisons.
- 3.6 *Council* – means the Mayor and Councillors of the City, both together and individually.
- 3.7 *Customer Service Level* – means the measure of how the customer receives the service and value to the customer that is provided; is typically determined and referenced by Council from the view of the person or group receiving the service.
- 3.8 *Service Level* – means the specific measure of the quality and quantity of services provided and describes the details of what providing the service means from view of person or group receiving the service or the City providing the service. This can take the form of selection of services that are provided/operated (e.g., indoor ice arena), the standard of infrastructure in place (e.g., asphalt trail verses gravel trail) or the standard to which an asset is maintained (e.g., frequency of street sweeping).
- 3.9 *Technical Service Level* – means the operational or technical measures of performance required to support the Customer Service Levels; relate to the allocation of resources to service activities to best achieve the desired customer outcomes and effective performance, and is typically set by administration or legislation.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Council shall:

- a. make decisions on new services and at what level, and make changes to existing services;
- b. make decisions that reflect community priorities;
- c. balance Service Levels with managing risks and costs for today and the future;
- d. allocate resources through the adoption of budgets that are necessary for the City to provide the Service Level; and
- e. provide information to the public on the risks and trade-offs of providing the desired service level.

4.2 City Employees shall:

- a. based on appropriate consultation with Council, identify how to deliver a Service Level;
- b. provide information to Council on the risks and trade-offs of providing desired Service Levels; and
- c. provide information to the public on the risks and trade-offs of providing the desired service level.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 5.1 Service needs change over time and Service Levels should be set and adjusted based on evidence and data while understanding trade-offs or impacts in other City program areas.
- 5.2 Service Levels will be reviewed and updated based on changes made reflecting community input and Council direction. In order to manage sustainable taxation impacts, the City will need to carefully consider the timing and extent of Service Level changes.
- 5.3 Service Level assessment for City programs shall utilize Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) tools, program reports and revenue/costing data to help support Service Level understanding, Service Level decisions and to help inform the community on the costs of service delivery.
- 5.4 Public engagement is an important component in the decision making process and communication of Service Levels; City residents and businesses are the primary recipients of City services and have an important role in what services shall be delivered and to what level and at what cost.
- 5.5 Service Level reviews shall include accessibility analysis and diversity and inclusion assessment, including how diverse groups experience City programs.
- 5.6 Service Level decisions shall be made with consideration of options to access service from an external provider or through a partnership.
- 5.7 Council Service Level Policies for key program areas shall be in place, including the Fire Department Service Level Policy, and other program areas directed by Council.
- 5.8 Assets are managed in order to deliver services and Service Levels are a key component within the Asset Management program.

6. KEY FACTORS

- 6.1 Service Levels will be reviewed and potentially adjusted as part of the City's annual budget process and/or periodically as required. The following key factors should be considered when establishing new Service Levels and for reviewing existing Service Levels:
 - a. Council and/or administrative policies;
 - b. mandate or legislation/regulations from other levels of government or agencies;
 - c. PBB Quartile and alignment detail to City results and program attributes;
 - d. established Service Levels in place and history of why the City is providing the service;
 - e. Comparators and best practices;
 - f. trends and future service needs;
 - g. community input, community expectations, and service requests;
 - h. liabilities/safety;

- i. current statistics and future projections; community growth;
- j. effects (positive and negative) of adjusting Service Levels or not providing service;
- k. costs of service delivery and cost recovery through non-tax levy support;
- l. potential for cost savings and/or reallocations;
- m. users of service and percentage of population served; considering use of City resources by user and non-user of service;
- n. accessibility and diversity and inclusion assessment;
- o. demand/service usage based on data points - increasing, flat, decreasing or unknown;
- p. reliance or dependence on the City to provide and ability to access service from an external provider or through a partnership; and
- q. asset performance assessment.

7. SERVICE LEVEL DOCUMENTATION

7.1 Service Level documentation for programs shall contain the following, as applicable:

- a. program area description/overview;
- b. reason for offering;
- c. PBB Quartile and alignment detail to City results and program attributes;
- d. inventory/volume/demand;
- e. standard operating procedures/specifications;
- f. hours of operation;
- g. frequency or response timing;
- h. resources including revenue/fees and expenses (personnel and non-personnel);
- i. cost recovery;
- j. Service Levels (Customer Service Levels and/or Technical Service Levels);
- k. policy alignment;
- l. legislation, regulations or standards;
- m. profile of users; and
- n. other data as required necessary to undertake reviews of Service Levels.

- 7.2 Service Level impacts for proposed new operating and capital budget requests shall be included in budget request documentation, including Service Level Comparators and other City departments impacted by the initiative.
- 7.3 Service Level documentation specific to Asset Management condition and capacity will be contained within the City's Asset Management program.

8. AUTHORITY / RESPONSIBILITY TO IMPLEMENT

- 8.1 The City Manager is authorized to establish procedures for the implementation of this Policy which are consistent with governing principles.