Wi-Fi IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS REPORT

Issue

At the April 23 Council meeting, Administration presented the 2019 Service Priorities and Budget Guidelines Report. Council passed a resolution to review Wi-Fi in public buildings service. An updated Wi-Fi in public buildings report is presented to Council for consideration.

Motion Proposed by Administration

Is that:

1. A Managed Wi-Fi solution is installed through the current available Capital Construction Budget for Pason.
2. The Operating Budget for Pason be increased by $9600 to accommodate the monthly fee.
3. Administration conduct further research on Pay for Service Internet Systems in all other Town facilities, with nominal fee for room rentals and an online signup for public visitors. The revenue generation may have the potential to offset installation and operation costs. This report to be presented to Council by June 30, 2019.

Report, Analysis and Financial Implications

Costs & Business Models

Shaw Cable installed the current Wi-Fi service to the Okotoks Recreation Centre and Pason Green (original PCA). At the completion of the Pason Arena Expansion program Administration requested Shaw Cable install a similar service to the newly expanded areas. Shaw Cable advised they no longer provide support to this service. Administration has also researched other service providers who responded with a similar answer.

Renters, users of rooms and Town employees are offered the ToO Wi-Fi service. Facility renters, users, and employees require a password to access the system. This is not a public service.

I.T. has conducted preliminary research for anticipated costs for a managed Wi-Fi service. Estimated service installation costs provided by Telus for the Pason Arena expansion were $795.40/month for a managed service plus $10,600.00 in one-time costs for cable runs and electrical outlet costs. However, there are multiple models for internet installation and provision.

Parks Services reports that costs for Wi-Fi in at an outdoor location would include infrastructure costs of $240/m for conduit, fiber cable, power, router, antenna, etc Monthly operational cost estimates are approximately $500-800/month. (The fiber

service area that includes Rotary Park is already approved but does have a supply box south of Riverside Drive so the future tie-in is expected to be relatively easy.)

Each municipality tends to find their own way, one that works for their community. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Municipally Owned
2. Privately Owned
3. Free
4. Pay for Service

[1] "The City of Ottawa confirmed that when they rent conference rooms, they charge an additional fee to activate Wi-Fi. The meeting room Wi-Fi service draws more meetings to their facilities and is profitable." (Municipal Public Wi-Fi – A Sound Investment? P 17)

The economic bonuses are beneficial. "The City of Belleville, Ontario hosted the U19 Women's World Floorball Championships at the Quinte Sports and Wellness Centre in May, 2016. More than 400 athletes from 16 countries attended this tournament. The economic spinoff from the event is estimated to be in excess of $1.2 million. This type of tournament requires a world-class facility, including excellent public Wi-Fi to support officials, camera crews, athletes and spectators." (Municipal Public Wi-Fi P11)

Community Service Buildings Usage

The Town of Okotoks offers two types of Wi-Fi service in some of its facilities.

1. Free Public Access Wi-Fi through SHAW Go.
2. ToO Wi-Fi Service in some town facilities is meant for users of our rooms and Town employees. It is not available to the public. Facility renters, users, and employees require a password to access the system. The Password is changed on a regular basis.

Facilities with Public Wi-Fi

As stated earlier, Shaw Cable offers free public access at the Okotoks Recreation Centre and Pason Green Arena. Because Shaw has eliminated their support of this service, system maintenance and failure costs are unknown.

The Okotoks Recreation Centre welcomes around one million visitors each year. Besides local families, the Recreation Centre Arenas hosted more than 30 special events in 2017, including the Timbit Tournament, Ball Hockey Provincials, and the Female Hockey Classic.

Okotoks Aquatics reports that each year they offer learn to swim lessons to just under 10,000 participants. Most of their parents are on the deck, on their phones and in the viewing area on their laptops.

All swim clubs in Alberta use an app-based system, which allows parents to track their swimmers times quickly. This includes both the Foothills Stingrays who host two

major events: 600 swimmers total with an average of 1000 people on any one day of a swim meet. The Okotoks Stingrays also host a single meet with over 400 swimmers. Event hosts frequently complain that the Wi-Fi system in the Recreation Centre is unreliable and does not provide sufficient reliability to use the tracking app.

Leadership classes also rely on online resources. Participants use smart phones and laptops to access materials during the courses. This can be particularly slow during lesson times, affecting trainers who are delivering the programs.

The majority of young swimmers, over eight but under 13 years old, who attend public swims typically have devices but often cannot access cellular service.

Facilities without Public Wi-Fi

Pason Gold Arena does not provide free public Wi-Fi through the Shaw service. Pason Green does offer this service. Many potential renters of the Rotary Performing Arts Centre (RPAC) desire Wi-Fi for presentations. RPAC does provide the ToO service to renters and users.

The Okotoks Art Gallery and the Museum and Archives buildings do not have Wi-Fi service.

The result is a noticeable inconsistency in service levels among similar Town facilities. Residents commonly express confusion and complain to Administration about the lack of Wi-Fi service in facilities.

<u>What Other Communities Are Doing</u>

Administration conducted a recent survey through the [Creative Cities Network](#) with 90% of respondents indicating that their Recreation Centres had public Wi-Fi (Attach.1). One hundred percent reported that the city covered the costs associated with the service, with one respondent stating that users paid for higher speed access. Administration also verbally inquired with a number of Alberta recreation centres who also indicated that they offer free Wi-Fi service to their users.

The Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN), a consortium of different orders of government and private sector partners released a study called [Municipal Public Wi-Fi: A Sound investment](#) in 2016, indicating that multiple municipalities across Canada operate Wi-Fi Zones to serve their downtown areas. The most recent example of this is Taber, AB. Wi-Fi hotspots commonly serve limited areas like libraries and the broad spectrum of recreational facilities for leisure, sport, and the arts. Specifically, places where people gather increasingly require Wi-Fi in order to function in a 21st century environment. ([Municipal Public Wi-Fi](#) P6)

The move toward municipally owned fibre networks is on the increase, as are public networks provided on a pay-for-service basis. The report suggests that "Municipal Wi-Fi system can support a variety of applications for municipal operations including fleet services, water management, smart lighting, traffic management, parking meters and

security video management that help make cities safer and greener." (Municipal Public Wi-Fi P6) This Smart City model supports and simplifies municipal operations and can be used to enhance community interaction by providing free public Wi-Fi hotspots or zones. (Municipal Public Wi-Fi P3)

Examples of successful Wi-Fi networks hosted on Municipally owned fibre networks include Fredericton, New Brunswick, Stratford, Olds and Taber. To expand, the Town of Taber recently "entered into partnership with a network provider that will see free Wi-Fi broadcast in the downtown area as a pilot program in 2018." (Wi-Fi). Taber used the services of Mage Networks from which they purchased hardware and installation. (Attach.2)

[2] Hardware costs range from $500 - $1100/unit

Many of these "communities own their fibre backhaul facilities, there is no incremental backhaul cost to their public Wi-Fi services. (Municipal Public Wi-Fi P6)

IMPACTS OF INTERNET IN PUBLIC PLACES

"Adults (over the age of 18) spend 51% of online time, on mobile devices. A Catalyst study showed that in 2015, the Canadian smartphone penetration rate grew to 68% from 55% in 2014, a year over year growth rate of 25%. The same study revealed that after short battery life and small screen size, data limits are the third greatest frustration with smartphones. This frustration with data limits motivates smartphone users to use free public Wi-Fi, where possible. (Municipal Public Wi-Fi P3-4)

Multiple reports state that municipally operated Wi-Fi functions to integrate internet use with public space. This result of public internet is enhanced interaction "the formation of social networks, opinions and democracy." (Hampton 834)

CONCLUSION

Public Wi-Fi can benefit and grow opportunities for municipalities. It connects residents to services, businesses and visitors. Public Wi-Fi is a growing trend. As our communities move into the 21st century, everything and everyone is increasingly connected. This connection provides quality infrastructure, manages community growth, fosters economic vitality, and strengthens a healthy and safe community "by providing internet connectivity for those who do not have access at home for reasons of income or lack of service availability." (Municipal Public Wi-Fi P36)

Business models support the investment. Although business-case framework provided in the EORN study (Municipal Public Wi-Fi P14), provides cost/benefit evaluation, it is clear that individual communities "must be modeled and analyzed to determine whether municipal public Wi-Fi is a sound investment".

Public Wi-Fi in our public gathering facilities – the recreation centers, libraries, theatres, museums, and galleries will provide economic and social support to Okotoks.

As stated in footnote 1, the City of Ottawa has implemented a Pay for Service system, charging an additional fee to activate Wi-Fi in conference rooms. Ottawa's Wi-Fi service has increased facilities rentals and generates a profit.

Strategic Plan Goals

☐	Manage Community Growth		☐	Provide Strong Governance
☒	Provide Quality Community Infrastructure		☐	Healthy and Safe Community
			☒	Foster Economic Vitality
☐	Maintain Organizational Excellence		☐	Promote Environmental Stewardship

Governing Policies/Bylaws/Legislation or Agreements
n/a

Public Engagement/Communication Strategy
n/a

Alternatives for Consideration
n/a

CAO Comments
As Wi-Fi has traditionally been provided in Okotoks public buildings, I support having it provided in the Pason expansion. I also support a review to ensure this 'benefit' is appropriately costed and potentially recovered in a new model.

Attachment(s)
1. Creative Cities Network Survey
2. Taber, Alberta Wi-Fi Experiment Survey

Prepared by:
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Culture & Heritage Manager
November 07, 2018

Attachment 1 -- CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK SURVEY

	Creative Cities Network Wi-Fi Survey, May 2018.			
	Conducted by Okotoks Culture & Heritage			
	Ten community respondents	Yes	No	No Answer
Q1	Does your theatre have publicly available Wi-Fi?	6	2	1
Q2	Does your gallery have publicly available Wi-Fi?	5	3	1
Q3	Does your museum have publicly available Wi-Fi?	4	4	1
Q4	Does your Rec Centre have publicly available Wi-Fi?	8		1
		City	Other	
Q5	Who covers the cost of the service?	8	*1*	

The gallery is not run by the city. The City covers the cost of wifi for the others.

City [covers cost] and through a commercial provider as part of leveraged services and benefits to community.

Municipality

City

Municipality

The City, unless the public choose to purchase higher-speed access

Strathcona County

Corporate Services - IT

Our IT department in Corpoate Services covers all costs for Public wifi in all town facilities.

		Above Average	Average	Below Average
Q6	How satisfied are you with the Wi-Fi service you provide?	3	4	2

Q7	Do you have any other comments? (Those who provided answers)	We're trying to expand from the town centre to entire City and in process of working with a commercial vendor who is looking for some benefits but needs Council approval
		No

No

We do not have civic cultural centres, but we have many community-use buildings that are used for festivals and events and they all have Wi-Fi provided by the municipality.

The City of _____ does not operate a gallery or museum; the Wi-Fi at our theatre is weak and intermittent. We need a better solution.
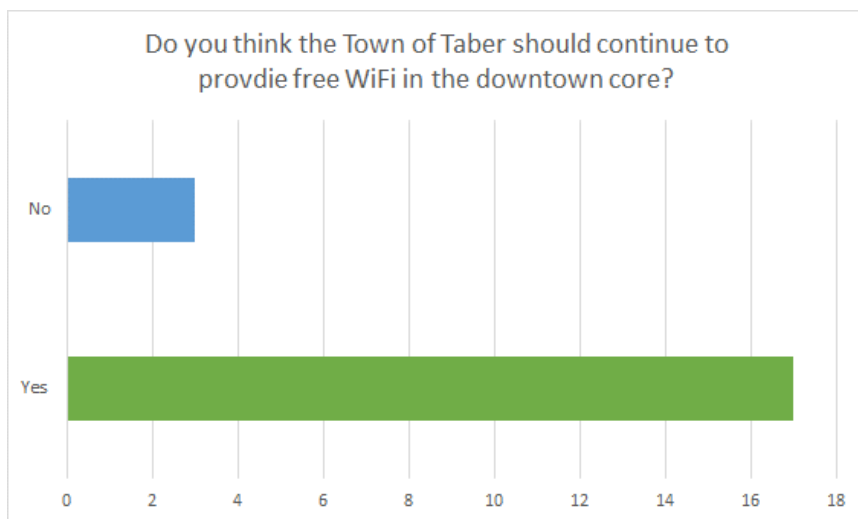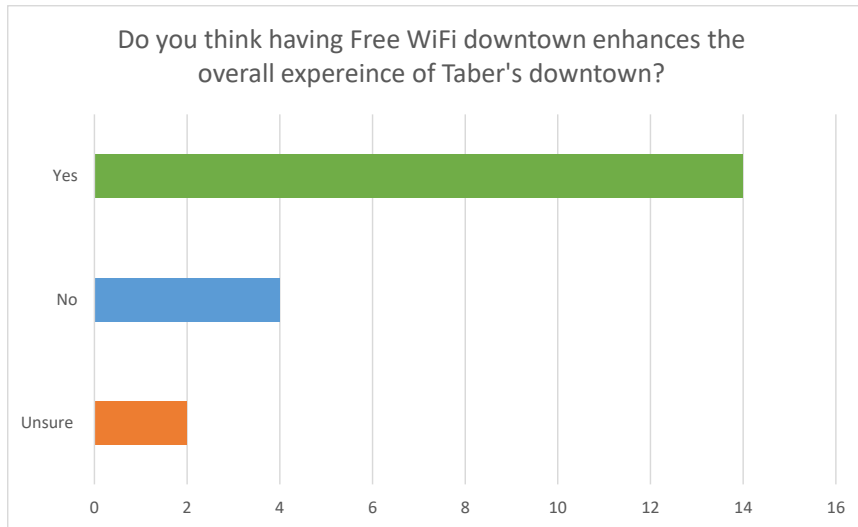
Could not answer the satisfaction question due to wide range of "owners"; also the "yes" answers should ready most as we have many facilities across the city.

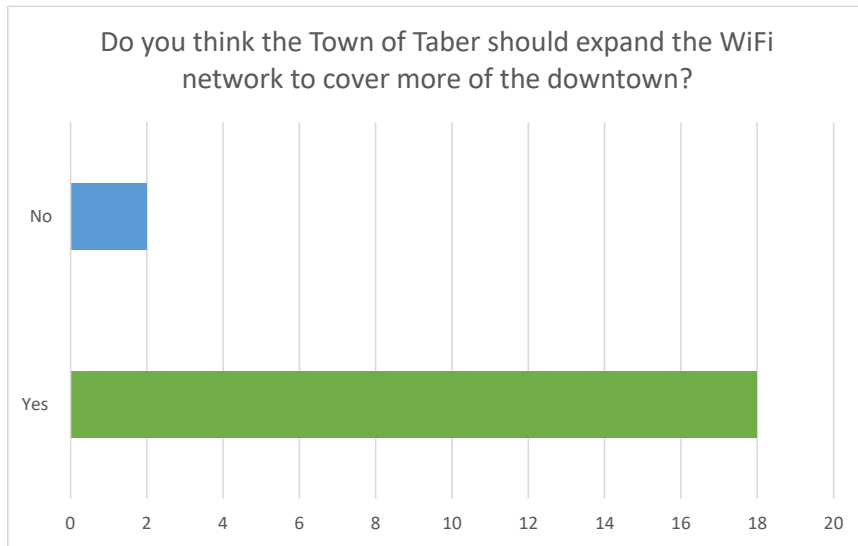| Q8	What is your location? (Those who provided answers)	
		Maple Ridge, BC
		Southwestern Ontario
		West Vancouver, BC
		District of Sechelt, BC
		Barrie, Ontario
		County of Strathcona
		Hamilton, Ontario

Attachment 2 – TABER, ALBERTA Wi-Fi EXPERIMENT SURVEY

Recently the Town of Taber issued a survey to their community to determine the impact of the service. The following graphs show the results.

Do you think having Free WiFi downtown enhances the overall expereince of Taber's downtown?

Do you think the Town of Taber should continue to provdie free WiFi in the downtown core?

Do you think the Town of Taber should expand the WiFi network to cover more of the downtown?

Wi-Fi in Public Buildings Report

SNOW AND ICE CONTROL FOR THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORTATION NETWORK POLICY PXX-XX

Issue
At the April 23 Council meeting, administration presented the 2019 Service Priorities and Budget Guidelines Report. Council passed a resolution to review Snow and Ice Control service. An updated Snow and Ice Control for the Integrated Transportation Network Policy XXXX is presented to Council for consideration.

Motion Proposed by Administration
That the revised Snow and Ice Control for the Integrated Transportation Network Policy XXXX be approved as presented.

Report, Analysis and Financial Implications
In December 2017, Council endorsed its policy titled Snow and Ice Control for the Integrated Transportation Network. This policy in addition to providing more clarity around existing snow and ice control services provided along roads, also provided a service level increase that included seven day per week snow clearing services on pathways for the 2017 / 2018 winter.

In the spring of this year, the 2018 Community Household Survey was completed. Results from the survey indicated that snow removal was high priority on most resident's minds and the satisfaction level received was low. This feedback was not a surprise to Infrastructure and Operations to the survey being conducted following one of the worst winters in several years. The survey also indicated that while the majority of residents were not satisfied with the level of service, the majority also didn't want to pay more to enhance current service level delivery. Bannister Research, the company who conducted the survey, also indicated that generally speaking when it comes to the area of snow and ice control, increasing snow removal budgets doesn't always indicate a more positive customer experience when future surveys are conducted.

During this past summer, Infrastructure and Operations teams including Parks and Transportation held collaborative sessions to solicit feedback from all staff involved in this service delivery and at the same time discuss whether any changes in service level delivery should be recommended to Council prior to the next winter season. Suggestions were brought forward for discussion but generally speaking minor in nature. Overall staff felt that guiding direction provided by the existing policy subject to some minor refinements prior to the next winter season were in order. These minor process refinements have been captured within the revised policy. To name a few changes, the revised policy includes:

- A more comprehensive list of definitions.
- Revised pathway clearing trigger point from 1.5cm to 2cm.

- Further clarity in terms of snow and ice cleaning efforts and snow clearing extent along Priority 1 and Priority 2 roads.
- Timelines related to snow clearing response for roads.

While there are minor adjustments to the service delivery area for the 2018 / 2019 winter due to growth in our community, no changes are being proposed at this time in regards to service delivery that would impact the operating budget. . During staff collaboration sessions, it was also agreed that continuous public education campaigns proved very effective last winter in terms of providing more awareness around this hotly debated topic in our community. For example, information was provided last season to residents via several communication streams including snow storage solutions, space utilization for strategic snow stockpiling, snow shovelling awareness, embracing winter, and other snow and ice control alternatives (winter sand).

Information captured within the revised policy provides a sustainable tool to staff to enable them to provide a reasonable approach to snow and ice control service delivery. This guiding policy document will also continue to serve as a valuable tool to inform residents of the level of service which can be anticipated within current operational budgets.

If approved, the Snow and Ice Control for the Integrated Transportation Network Policy PXX-XX will replace the previous policy P17-04.

Strategic Plan Goals

☐	Manage Community Growth	☐	Provide Strong Governance
☒	Provide Quality Community Infrastructure	☒	Healthy and Safe Community
☐	Maintain Organizational Excellence	☐	Foster Economic Vitality
		☐	Promote Environmental Stewardship

Governing Policies/Bylaws/Legislation or Agreements
n/a

Public Engagement/Communication Strategy
The policy will be regularly communicated via the Town's social media channels in order to adequately and accurately manage residents' expectations.

Alternatives for Consideration
n/a

CAO Comments
I support these minor changes to the policy. Clearing of residential routes although desired comes with a cost that residents did not want to pay for according to the household survey. The enhancement of the policy last year for trails and pathways was a significant service level enhancement that has been positively received by Okotokians.

Attachment(s)

1. Revised Snow and Ice Control for the Integrated Transportation Network Policy PXX-XX.
2. Snow and Ice Control for the Integrated Transportation Network Policy P17-04.

Prepared by:
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November 07, 2018