

Patience requested following financial adjustments to service levels

(Penticton, BC – June 2, 2020) – The City of Penticton is seeking the public’s understanding and patience as the impact of \$3.6 million in COVID-19 triggered budget cuts becomes more evident throughout the community.

“What a reduction of \$3.6 million actually looks like is now becoming more visible”, said Penticton’s Chief Financial Officer, Jim Bauer. “Although the City has taken steps wherever possible to mitigate revenue reductions with cost savings as we navigate through the COVID-19 crisis, many of these adjustments have had a direct impact on services that are highly visible to our residents, including maintenance for parks, roads and beaches as well as reduced recreation programs and amenity access.”

Cost saving measures introduced in April, including the layoff of 88 employees constituting nearly 20 per cent of the City’s workforce, were triggered by drops in annual revenue typically acquired through gaming, recreation, parking, building & licensing, transit, planning and other sources.

Details of the City’s current financial state, along with steps being taken to responsibly manage available funds, were presented to Council during their June 2 meeting. For a complete breakdown of all service level adjustments, refer to the [backgrounder](#) accompanying this news release. Notable adjustments include:

- Closure of arenas, Community Centre and all related programs at the Cleland Theatre, SOEC, PTCC, Library and Museum.
- Reduction of Park staff from 34 to 23.
- Reduced maintenance in Dunant, Granby, KVR, Lions McGregor, McLaren, Old RCMP, Riverside, Skate Park Warren, Windsor, Columbia, Kiwanis, Queens, Robinson and Sendero Canyon, Arasook, Ayres Cres and Baskin parks.
- Reduced maintenance along boulevards, parking lots, sports fields, roads and trails.

“Nobody likes seeing weeds and tall grass in locations that are normally maintained”, said Penticton Mayor, John Vassilaki. “Unfortunately, with the onset of COVID-19, the City’s financial position was hard hit resulting in tough decisions on what spending was a priority and what wasn’t. However, of the parks and public works maintenance that remains in place, I want to commend our committed crews for what they are able to achieve given the reduced resources they have to work with. Please be patient with them, they are doing their best.”

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