



GOVERNANCE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE REPORT

Title Update – Sweeping Service Level Review

Meeting Date May 22, 2025

Submitted By Councillor Crowson, Chair Governance Standing Policy Committee

Recommendation from Governance Standing Policy Committee:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT City Council directs Administration to proceed with Option 1 for all sweeping programs with existing funding within the 2023-2026 Operating Budget.

Vote:

In Favour: 4-0 (Unanimous)

Public Speakers at the Meeting: None

Public Submissions: None

Submitted By Darwin Juell, General Manager - Transportation

Presented By Juliane Ruck, Transportation Operations Manager
Darwin Juell, General Manager - Transportation

Summary

In December 2020, City Council implemented budget reduction initiatives, which resulted in the implementation of 18% budget reductions for the sweeping program at the start of 2021. Service level modifications were implemented while trying to meet the new budget requirements.

On [June 21, 2022](#), City Council directed administration to monitor the new service levels resulting from the 2020 budget reduction initiative and report back to the Civic Works Standing Policy Committee in the spring of 2025 about operating budget and resource impacts.

The administration's goal was to maintain similar service levels by implementing operational efficiencies and report back to Council in the spring of 2025 about service level impacts. This report highlights operational efficiencies that have been achieved and service level impacts resulting from the direction received by Council on [December 14, 2020](#).

Recommendation(s)

That the Governance Standing Policy Committee recommends that Council:

1. Direct Administration to implement Option 1, maintain the service levels approved on [December 14, 2020](#) for all sweeping programs with existing funding within the 2023-2026 Operating Budget; and
2. Direct Administration to incorporate inflationary factors within the base 2027 and 2028-2031 Operating Budget deliberations to ensure that service levels approved by Council can be maintained.

Financial

Key components of the sweeping budget include labour, equipment and sweeping debris disposal cost. Prior to 2021, the annual sweeping program costs were less than the budget (see table below). In 2021, 18% budget reductions were implemented, and the overall annual budget was adjusted to approximately \$1.3 million. The City's goal was to maintain similar service levels and implement operational efficiencies.

Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
TOTAL expenses	1,377,448	1,334,049	1,100,751	1,224,361	1,325,916	1,362,613
Total Budget	\$1,512,899	\$1,519,799	\$1,337,798	\$1,348,369	\$1,351,670	\$1,368,070



18% cuts implemented

To meet the new budget requirements, the following measures were implemented:

- Potential for not completing the spring sweeping program, or completing at a lower quality standard, depending on winter traction control material utilization and sweeper fleet reliability. In 2021, Tudor Estates, Scenic Heights, Chinook Heights and Park Royal were neighbourhoods that were not completed due to budget constraints.
- Improving the management and recycling of sweeping debris to limit disposal cost, i.e. this includes recycling approximately 75% of sweeping debris.
- Reduction of 2 rental street sweepers (7 Sweepers 2020 – 5 Sweepers 2021).
- Elimination of windshield wiper notification and door hangers for spring sweeping.
- Significant reduction in summer day sweeping services, which is a reduction in service level.
- Optimizing the number of passes per street for residential spring sweeping services and limiting return trips to blocked areas during the first sweep.

The current operating budget (2023-2026) approved [November 29, 2022](#) allocates 1.2% of system network growth per year to maintain existing service levels for Transportation.

Background and Prior Decisions

The City of Lethbridge Transportation Department provides street sweeping services for the city. The services generally run from the spring to the fall, but sweepers will be activated over the winter as weather dictates. The biggest program components are the residential and night spring sweeping, where all City roads are cleared of debris accumulating over the winter months, i.e. sanding/salting. Over the summer, night sweeping occurs on arterial streets, industrial areas, and downtown areas. In the fall, sweeping is performed in areas where there is mature tree growth and therefore a high number of leaves that can plug catch basins in winter months during spring run-off. Key cost components are labour, equipment charges and disposal of collected debris.

Value-added services as part of the sweeping program include debris pick-up from roads (animal carcasses and other objects) and guard rail debris clearing along arterial roads.

The general purpose of the sweeping program is to keep the roads safe and reduce the environmental impacts of storm runoff. Road safety is enhanced by removing sand, dirt and litter, which can be a slipping hazard for pedestrians, bicycles and motor vehicles, specifically motorcycles. There are environmental benefits from removing ice control materials left behind from the winter operation.

In 2020, the Fiscal and Operational Performance Review recommended that the City explore and evaluate alternative street sweeping options and consider whether the City should continue its current spring and fall sweeping schedule. Additionally, Council approved significant budget reductions (18%) in December 2020 to be effective January 1, 2021. The budget modifications were implemented in 2021. Following the KPMG recommendation, on [March 4 2021](#), Lethbridge City Council directed City Administration to obtain public feedback on possible service level modifications.

In 2021, Argyle Consulting was hired to collect community feedback on selected service level options. This feedback was incorporated to provide recommendations for service level modifications to the Council in [June 2022](#). The community engagement identified the following as the highest cumulative ranking of preferred sweeping service level options:

- Respondents supported maintaining current practices for residential spring and fall sweeping as well as summer night sweeping,
- Respondents supported enhanced enforcement by ticketing when cars are parked during the residential street sweeping program.

On [June 21, 2022](#), Council approved the administration's recommendation to leave the approved budget reductions in place and to maintain current service levels for all sweeping programs in combination with enhanced parking enforcement action. During the same meeting, Council directed Administration to monitor the new service levels resulting from the 2020 budget reduction initiative and to report back to Civic Works Standing Policy Committee in the spring of 2025 about operating budget and resource impacts. This report is prepared for this direction, however the appropriate committee is the Governance SPC.

In [January 2025](#), Council approved the Asset Management Policy CC-68 which states: "It is the policy of the City of Lethbridge that all responsible employees contribute to the practice of Asset Management by ensuring adequate provision is made for the long-term acquisition, operation, maintenance, replacement, and disposal of major Assets by:

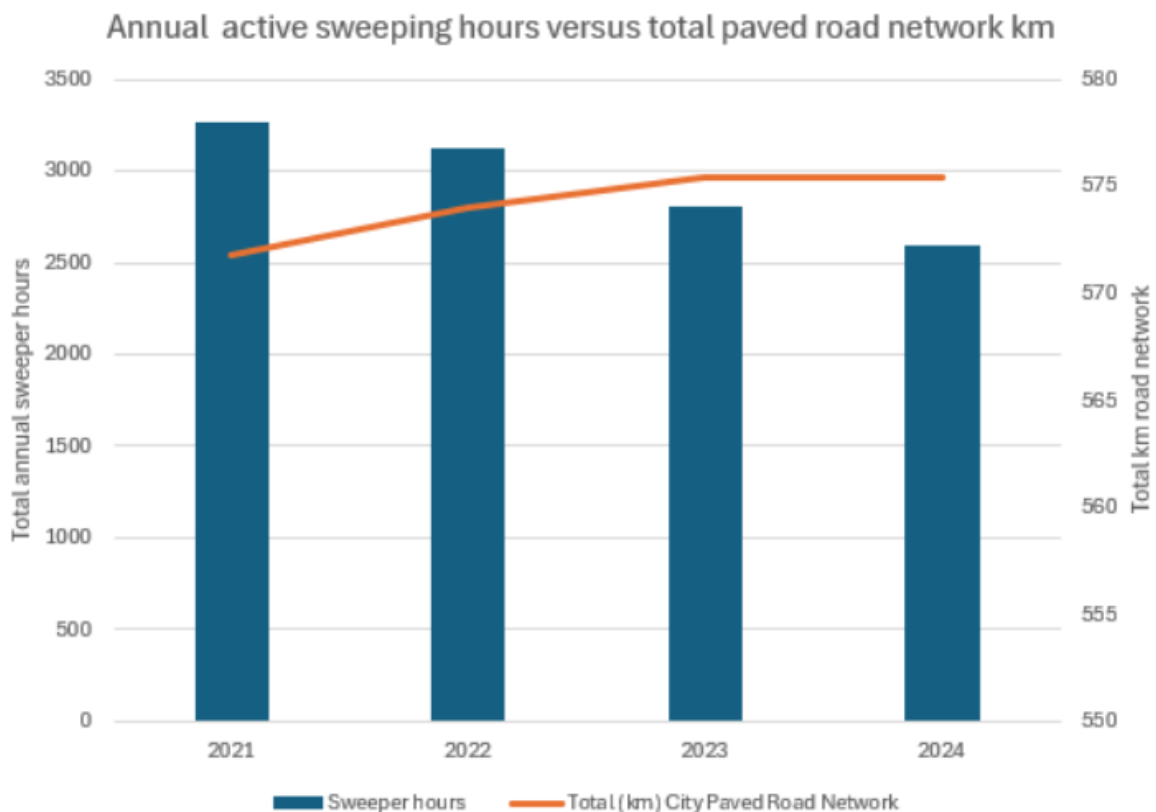
- ensuring that services and infrastructure are provided in a financially sustainable manner, with the appropriate levels of service to customers;
- implementing suitable Asset Management strategies and dedicating adequate financial resources towards City Assets; (...)"

This report is meeting the policy requirements and providing recommendations and updates on how the sweeping program is contributing to the operation and maintenance of City roads and maintaining appropriate service levels.

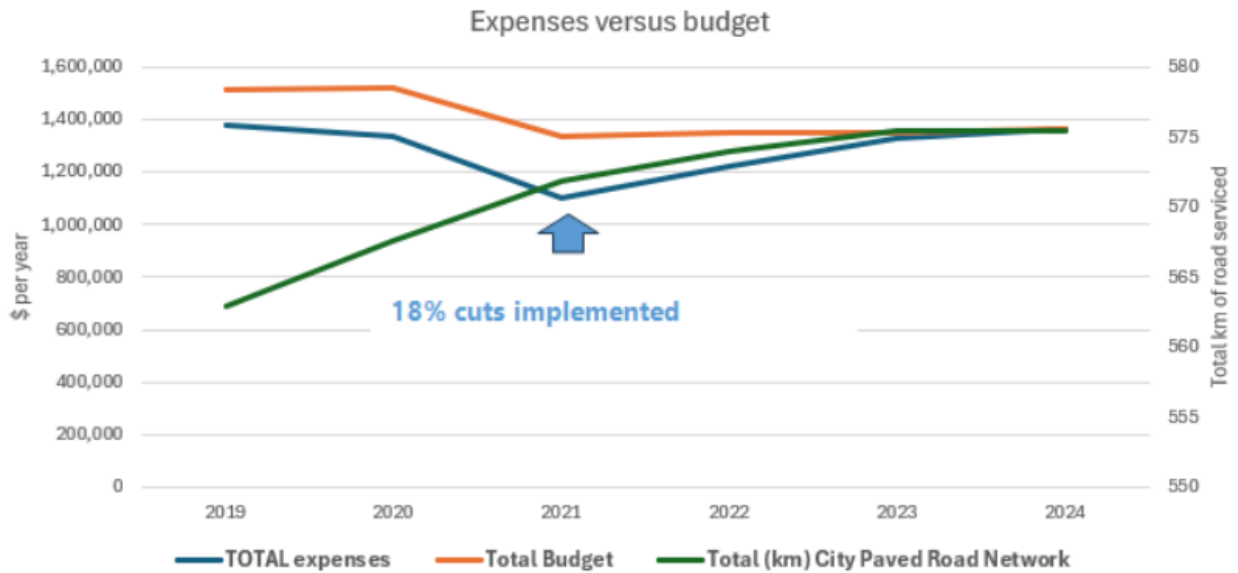
Sweeping Operation

The paved road network in Lethbridge is currently 575 km long. All the included arterials, collectors and local roads are serviced and cleaned as part of the sweeping program.

Transportation operations implemented several measures to optimize the program. The time sweepers take to sweep a segment of road has been improved since changes were implemented in 2021.



However, the network growth and inflationary cost pressures on labour, equipment and debris management have put pressures on the budget.



The following table shows the current, adjusted service level and associated cost:

Program Name	Service Level	Average cost past 4-years, incl. labour, equipment, debris management)
Residential and Night Spring Sweeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweepers clean neighborhoods in a predetermined, rotating order, as weather, staff and machinery allow. All residential roads are swept once a year All other roads are swept, incl. medians 	\$1,180,000
Summer Night Sweeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sweep non-residential areas outside peak traffic hours, including downtown, the industrial park and major roads and their medians 	\$80,000
Fall Sweeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heavily treed areas are swept in the fall 	\$110,000
Total		\$1.37 Million

Parking Enforcement:

Transportation operations place no-parking signs in a specific neighbourhood the day before to notify residents of spring street sweeping the following day. All vehicles must be moved before 7:30 a.m. on street sweeping days. Parking tickets are issued to vehicles that have not been moved from

the street, as per [traffic bylaw](#). Residents can sign up for the Lethbridge Loop app to receive sweeping notifications and follow the sweeping progress on the live [AVL sweeper viewer](#). Sweepers work around vehicles parked on the street but they do not return to an area. When the area is complete, signs are to be removed and parking can resume.

Residential spring sweeping parking enforcement data is available for 2017 - 2019 prior to the pandemic. During the pandemic there was not enforcement. Enforcement was reinstated as of spring 2023. A dedicated resource for street sweeping enforcement in 2023 and 2024 resulted in over 1,000 tickets issued per year.



The enforcement data shows that number of violations decreased from 2017-2019. In 2023, the number of violations was like pre pandemic levels but has declined slightly in 2024. This indicates acceptance by the public for a new program. Over several years, the number of tickets issued will continue to decline and stabilize. Administration will continue parking enforcement with a dedicated resource during spring sweeping operation.

Engagement

According to City Council Public Participation Policy CC60, residents of Lethbridge were engaged in the Street Sweeping program's service level review. The City retained Argyle Communication in June 2021 to provide a public engagement program during COVID with a number of virtual open houses, stakeholder meetings and public opinion polls. The primary public engagement method was provided through the City's website (Get Involved webpage). The City of Lethbridge used the feedback from this engagement to determine recommendations to Council.

Street sweeping service levels have remained at status quo and existing communications tactics have been applied. The 2022 Community Satisfaction survey indicated that satisfaction with "Maintenance, cleaning and upgrading of streets and sidewalks" has decreased from 83% (2020) to 75% (2022) satisfied while the importance of those services has increased from 97% (2020) to 99% (2022). Therefore, maintenance, cleaning and upgrading of streets and sidewalks is identified as a possible primary area for improvement.

Recommendation and Option(s) Analysis

Option 1

Maintain the adjusted service levels approved on December 14, 2020 for the 2021 budget period for all sweeping programs with existing funding within the 2023-2026 Operating Budget and incorporate inflationary factors within the base 2027 and 2028-2031 Operating Budget deliberations to ensure that service levels approved by Council could be maintained.

Option 2

Direct administration to add the 18% (up to \$250,000 due to additional road growth and inflation that have occurred since 2021) reduced during the [December 14, 2020](#) for the 2021 budget period into the sweeping budget and service levels can be brought back to similar standards as prior to 2021. Incorporate inflationary factors within the base 2027 and 2028-2031 Operating Budget deliberations to ensure that service levels approved by Council could be maintained.

Administration's recommendation is that the Governance SPC recommend Option 1 to Council on this report.

Attachment(s)

Attachment 1 – Council Update May 25, 2025 Presentation

Link(s)

1. Traffic Bylaw: <https://www.lethbridge.ca/media/w0skxk5j/5834-lethbridge-traffic-bylaw.pdf>
2. AVL Sweeper Viewer: <https://lethbridgesweeperpv.azurewebsites.net/>
3. June 21, 2022 City Council meeting ([City Council Meeting - 6/21/2022 1:30:00 PM - OnBase Agenda Online](#))
4. March 4, 2021 Civics Works Standing Policy Committee ([MINUTES - MARCH 4, 2021.pdf](#))
5. December 14, 2020 City Council Approval Reduction Initiative A122 – Street Sweeping Option 2 ([SUBDIVISION AND](#))
6. November 23-28, 2020 Finance Committee Review of Reduction Initiatives ([Finance Committee - Meeting Packet - 11 27 2020 \(11 27 2020 8 28 57 AM\).pdf](#))
7. January 21, 2025 [City Council Approved Recommendation from Governance Standing Policy Committee on Asset Management Policy CC-68](#)

Approvals

Department Director: Joel Sanchez

City Manager: Lloyd Brierley