

## **Purpose**

The City of Greater Sudbury (City) received numerous concerns about the condition of town centre holiday decorations last season. This report provides information on location, condition and maintenance costs of town centre holiday decorations managed by the City's Parks Services section.

## **Executive Summary**

The City of Greater Sudbury's Parks Services section manages the installation of town centre holiday decorations in the communities of Azilda, Blezard Valley, Chelmsford, Hanmer, Levack and Val Caron. Many fixtures were purchased prior to amalgamation and have been subsequently replaced or expanded upon through Healthy Community Initiative (HCI) applications. There is no established service level for these community enhancements.

The City has an established budget of \$15,600 for the holiday decoration program which covers costs associated with installation of fixtures and minor repairs. The replacement of decorations or expansion of locations is not budgeted for.

## **Background**

Prior to amalgamation, several communities had established town centre holiday decoration programs which saw holiday themed fixtures hung on light posts in prominent areas to celebrate the season. The City of Greater Sudbury's Infrastructure Services Department (then Operations Division) managed the program in the communities of Azilda, Blezard Valley, Chelmsford, Hanmer and Val Caron following amalgamation. In 2007 management and responsibility of the town centre holiday decoration program was transferred to the City's Parks Services section.

More recently, the following enhancements were made to the town centre holiday decoration program:

- In 2014 incandescent lights were replaced with LED lights on 88 fixtures through the Citizen & Leisure Services capital envelope.
- In 2015 nine fixtures (non-lit wreaths) were purchased for Front Street in Levack through HCI funding.
- In 2017, 12 new decorations were purchased to replace older fixtures in Chelmsford through HCI funding.

There is an annual budget of \$15,600 to manage the town centre holiday decoration program. The budget is for costs relating to the installation and removal of fixtures by qualified contractors as well as minor repairs. Installation and removal must be performed by contractors with training and equipment to work at heights. Repairs would include upgrading of electrical connections to ensure fixtures meet Electrical Safety Authority standards. This budget is not sufficient for the replacement of fixtures nor is it sufficient to cover costs associated with expansion of holiday decoration program to additional locations.

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# Other Holiday Decoration Programs

The following holiday decoration programs exist, but are not managed by the City of Greater Sudbury:

## Capreol

Local volunteers working with Greater Sudbury Hydro are responsible for the seasonal holiday decorations in Capreol.

## Downtown Sudbury

Seasonal light displays are managed and funded by the downtown Business Improvement Area (BIA).

## Festival of Lights

The Festival of Lights located at Science North is a program of the Sudbury Charities Foundation. The City does provide storage space to the charity for the storage of displays and materials.

# Analysis

The following chart summarizes the current town centre holiday decoration program locations managed by Parks Services including a condition assessment performed by staff.

Location	No. of Fixtures	Condition
Azilda	8	Fair Condition
Chelmsford	15	Good Condition
Levack	9	Good Condition
Valley East (Blezard Valley, Hanmer, Val Caron)	61	50% Poor Condition 50% Fair Condition

Poor condition suggests replacement is required in one to two years. Fair condition suggests replacement is required within five years. Good condition represents a newer fixture which may require replacement in 10 or more years.

Typical lifespan of a holiday fixture is 20 years. Replacement costs for fixtures range between \$800 and \$1,300 depending on size and style of fixture. Refurbishment of LED lights and garland on each fixture is recommended every five years and this cost is approximately \$100 per decoration.

The Healthy Community Initiative (HCI) fund is recommended as a potential source of municipal funding for the replacement of aged fixtures and any potential expansion of holiday decoration programs. HCI processes would also trigger additional operating dollars to support expanded programs upon approval. Community support should also be encouraged.

As not all holiday decoration programs are managed by the City, and acknowledging the other infrastructure challenges related to City assets, regular capital funding is not recommended for the replacement/enhancement of holiday decoration programs.

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## **Conclusion**

Staff will continue to manage and maintain existing town centre holiday decorations within operational budgets. Staff will also work with any community members/groups interested in fund-raising for the replacement or enhancement of existing holiday decoration programs and will recommend HCI funding as an option.

Based on direction from Council, staff could undertake additional analysis or policy development.