



REPORT TO COUNCIL MEETING OF DECEMBER 8, 2014

FROM: Public Works

DATE: December 9, 2014

Subject: Parkland Airshed Management Zone: Anti-Idling Pilot Program

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information regarding the Parkland Airshed Management Zone Anti-Idling Pilot Program and to request Council direction.

Background

In late October 2014, Administration received a request from the Executive Director of the Parkland Airshed Management Zone (PAMZ) seeking an urban community in central Alberta to participate in a pilot project campaign to reduce idling of vehicles in the community.

PAMZ has received a grant to implement and evaluate a pilot project in 2015 and has already begun implementation of a pilot project in partnership with Lacombe County. The purpose of this pilot project is to address air quality issues in the PAMZ area by tackling the major problem of vehicle idling. The pilot is to lay the foundation for an expanded, longer-term initiative that will actively support municipalities within the PAMZ zone in planning/delivering locally customized idle-free education and awareness campaigns.

To accomplish this, PAMZ will:

- 1) Provide a toolkit of resources to help municipalities implement their own idle-free campaigns;
- 2) Assist volunteers in choosing or designing realistic strategies for their community in planning their campaign;
- 3) Provide ongoing consultation and resource assistance to the community volunteers when delivering the idle reduction campaign; and
- 4) Assist in the full evaluation of the campaign effectiveness.

The PAMZ Idle Free project will be piloted in Lacombe County and a central Alberta urban community in the first year. A comprehensive pre- and post- research/survey initiative will be performed by PAMZ:

- 1) To identify idling “hot spots” in each of the communities and/or to identify key opportunities to target sectors of the population with idle free awareness campaigns, and/or to identify critical knowledge gaps among citizens related to idling behaviour; and
- 2) To compare idling behaviours pre- and post- campaigns in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot idle free campaigns.

Discussion

Vehicle idling is an ongoing concern for central Alberta due to the potentially serious human health and environmental impacts of excessive automobile emissions. Airborne particulate matter levels for the Red Deer area have recently exceeded trigger levels under the Clean Air Strategic Alliance (CASA) Particulate Matter and Ozone Management Framework. With

Alberta's rapidly growing population and increasing industrial activity, air pollution in the form of particulate matter is likely to increase and spread throughout the province without targeted strategies to address root causes. Simultaneous with the development of Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development's (ESRD) mandatory Particulate Matter (PM) Plan, PAMZ is proposing to develop and deliver an education and behaviour change strategy, in partnership with key stakeholders, to reduce the frequency of vehicle idling in the Parkland airshed. This strategy will address the goals outlined in Alberta's Clean Air Strategy (2012), and will work alongside the PM plan to reduce vehicle idling emissions as one significant source of Particulate Matter within the PAMZ area.

The main goal of PAMZ's idle free initiative is to reduce the frequency and duration of vehicle idling activity throughout the PAMZ area, and beyond. Desired outcomes include:

- Drivers of all types of vehicles (personal, government, industrial) turn off their engines and refrain from idling for time periods greater than one minute, unless absolutely necessary;
- Drivers understand the many negative impacts of vehicle idling;
- Drivers have the skills, tools, and motivation required to adopt "idle free" behavior; and
- Common myths and misconceptions surrounding vehicle idling are dispelled.

Many resources, tools, and materials have been developed by leading experts in CBSM and air pollution reduction (see Attachment #1 and Attachment #2). The PAMZ Idle Free initiative will customize these pre-existing tools and resources and help build capacity within central Alberta municipalities to lead by example in creating positive and lasting change.

Options

- 1) Council may accept this report as information.
- 2) Council may indicate an interest to enroll in the pilot program as a participating municipality.
- 3) Council may choose not to enroll in the pilot program as a participating municipality.

Resource Impacts

The PAMZ pilot program has received grant funding for the development of program materials and the performance of pre- and post-initiative surveys. It would be the responsibility of the Town to provide resources for marketing and communications of the idle-free initiative. Such resources could include, but may not be limited to:

- Print materials and/or media advertising;
- Idle-free signage;
- Beach ambassador time; and
- Staff time.

It is anticipated that outside of costs for advertising and signage, all costs could be absorbed in the 2015 operating budget. Staff and volunteer intervention has been noted as a key factor in successful idle-free campaigns and Beach Ambassadors have been identified as a front-line resource that would be able and well-equipped to provide educational messaging. Red Deer uses commissionaires at the Collicutt Centre who act as interveners in their idle-free campaign with high levels of success.

Costs for advertising and signage would be determined as part of the communication campaign development but are estimated to range from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

Communication Strategy

If Council chooses to express interest in the pilot program, Administration will contact the PAMZ program coordinators to notify them. The Town will issue notice that we are participating in the program with a message for interested stakeholders to watch for further communication in 2015.

The campaign strategy and communication strategy for the pilot program will be developed in conjunction with PAMZ in 2015 and will involve a combination of print material, media advertising, social intervention and signage.

Communication regarding the program can also be included in other environmental correspondence issued by the Town, such as mail-outs and the Eco-Loco event.

Recommendation

Administration respectfully recommends that Council indicates interest to the Parkland Airshed Management Zone in enrolling in their 2015 anti-idling initiative as a participating urban municipality.

Proposed Resolution

Administration respectfully proposes the following motion:

THAT Council indicates interest to the Parkland Airshed Management Zone in enrolling in their 2015 anti-idling initiative as a participating urban municipality.

Attachments

1. "Turn It Off" Study Synopsis – Doug McKenzie Mohr (2 pages)
2. Guide to an Effective Idle-Free Campaign (19 pages)



Report Prepared by:
Director of Public Works

Report Approved for Council by
Chief Administrative Officer