COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Wednesday, April 23, 2008

The Council met at 9:31 a.m.

The Clerk advised the Speaker that a quorum was present.

The Speaker called the meeting to order.

The opening prayer was read by Councillor Smith.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Mr. Speaker Councillor Lazarenko, His Worship Mayor Katz, Councillors Browaty, Clement, Fielding, Gerbasi, Leipsic, Nordman, O'Shaughnessy, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Swandel, Thomas, Vandal, and Wyatt.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF GUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: Pages, Simone Jaman of Miles MacDonnell Collegiate, resides in the Elmwood-East Kildonan ward, welcome. (Applause).

Next is Welcome of Guests and Announcements. I would like to announce, Councillors, in the midst of our chambers, we have our new City Chief Administrator, Mr. Laubenstein. Glen welcome. (Applause).

Mr. Laubenstein is going to be sitting in these chambers as much as possible, and I would like to say this, that we as Council members, are more than pleased to have you here sir and we will be working together very closely and if anything, any Councillor if you may have a question or something be welcome to call the Chief Administrator on that. Once again Mr. Laubenstein, thank you, thank you for being here.

And we will continue. And Mr. Mayor I understand you have an announcement.

Mayor Katz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to echo your comments and welcome Glen Laubenstein as our CAO. I think we're all looking forward to working with our CAO. And at the same time Mr. Speaker, I would very much like to thank Alex Robinson who as the acting CAO got us through some very difficult times.

At this particular point in time Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the passing of Harold Buchwald. As most of you are aware of the funeral was yesterday afternoon.

I had the privilege and honour of knowing Bucky for probably 20, 25 years. He was truly a community leader. He was a husband, a father, a grandfather. I know that Dee and Richard and Jeffrey and the rest of the family very much mourn his loss. And I think at this time I would like to ask everyone to keep in mind what truly is important in life. And also, to take a moment to recognize the contributions of one of our City's very prominent citizens, and someone who loved this City as much as anybody could.

I also have an announcement to make, Mr. Speaker regarding the Yellow Ribbon Campaign. Winnipeggers have shown immense support for Manitoba troops deployed in Afghanistan. The Yellow Ribbon Campaign in support of Manitoba troops deployed in Afghanistan was launched in February by the Royal Military Institute of Canada.

Since then they have collected more than 20,000 signatures. The Royal Military Institute would like the campaign to conclude with signatures of members of City Council before the ribbons are taken to Afghanistan to be housed in the New Canada House in Kandahar. The concluding ceremony for the final signatures of the Yellow Ribbon Campaign will take place over the noon hour at City Hall.

Mr. Speaker, through you, I wish to encourage all of my colleagues to join me today in signing the yellow ribbons to show our Manitoba men and women who are serving in Afghanistan that we think of them constantly and pray for their safe return. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Mr. Mayor.

MINUTES

Councillor Gerbasi moves the Minutes of the meetings held on March 19 and 26, 2008 be taken as read and confirmed.

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

DELEGATIONS

Mr. Speaker: Now we're into the Delegations. Gail Fones, Director on behalf of the Ugandan Operation of Buy-A-Net Malaria Prevention Group. You have 10 minutes.

Gail Fones: Thank you. Good morning Your Worship, Councillors and friends of Buy-A-Net Malaria Prevention Group. I thank you very much for the opportunity to be with you this morning, and to speak about our 21st Century's forgotten disease, malaria.

As Mayor and Council consider acknowledging World Malaria Day, I wish to educate and to inform Winnipeggers on the issue of malaria, the efforts taken by Buy-A-Net Malaria Prevention Group to ease the burden and the suffering of malaria and the importance of World Malaria Day.

Malaria is a critical child survival issue. Spread through the bite of an infected mosquito, it is a conservative estimate that over 1 million people die each year from this deadly disease. It devastates people living with HIV and Aids, pregnant women, babies and children. Somewhere in Africa a mother loses her child every 30 seconds to this disease. It kills more than HIV/Aids, which is a very little known fact.

As a grandmother and a registered nurse, I witnessed firsthand the undeniable tragedy of the loss of a child to malaria over and over again. I was shocked when I learned that even though malaria is highly preventable, 100% treatable and curable, malaria takes the life of a child every 30 seconds. Malaria is the single leading killer of children. The senseless loss of children to malaria is absolutely obscene to watch. No one needs to die from this disease.

Concerned Canadians have been spreading the word among people, our people, about our moral obligation to defeat this disease. Established in 2004, Buy-A-Net Malaria Prevention Group is a volunteer driven, registered charitable organization that seeks to prevent the deaths from malaria in Africa, one country at a time. The nation of Uganda is our first targeted country.

Our campaign provides advocacy and awareness about this disease, and raises the funds needed for the procurement of long-lasting insecticide treated bed nets and anti-malarial medication. In partnership with community-based groups the nets are distributed one village at a time, free of charge. Buy-A-Net Malaria Prevention Group calls on all Canadian citizens to reduce the suffering and the deaths caused by malaria.

The good news is that there is something very simple and very inexpensive that all of us can do to help. The World Health Organization has declared that one of the best ways to prevent malaria is the use of a long-lasting insecticide treated bed net put up at night. With the slogan "$6 bucks, buy a net save a life", any individual who can afford a latte can prevent a death. Any group that raises $350 can save a village and save many lives. The very night that that net is hung lives are saved.

Through community-based partnerships, mosquito nets are distributed to Uganda's most vulnerable. With their help the nets reach all of the young children, pregnant mothers, and people infected with HIV/Aids. These nets help mothers sleep soundly at night knowing that their babies are safe. They help people with HIV/Aids with less fear of being more compromised. And they provide the next generation to be able to go to school. They give a country who is devastated by malaria the hope and the promise of a better life and renewed hope.

The success and growth of Buy-A-Net is remarkable. Twice in our short history, Buy-A-Net has been recognized on Parliament Hill for our efforts in advocacy, awareness and malaria prevention. The

Ugandan government has also acknowledged the important work of Buy-A-Net in their country.

While many organizations have endorsed the volunteer work of Buy-A-Net, as a registered nurse I'm particularly proud of the endorsement of our Canadian Nurses Association. The Canadian Nurses Association has acknowledged the important contribution of Buy-A-Net as a direct mechanism in malaria prevention. Nets work. And through the generosity of Canadians we are making a difference and truly saving lives, one village at a time.

Through a process involving community consultation, education, distribution, monitoring and evaluation, we know that the nets reduce the incidents of malaria-related deaths by as high as 95%. That is a pretty good bang for your buck.

World Malaria Day was declared at the World Health Assembly in early 2007. It is endorsed by the World Health Organization and World Malaria Day calls upon representatives of all governments, private foundations, religious institutions, volunteer groups and individual citizens to support the end of malaria. Malaria knows no borders and it has become the most significant global health threat of our time.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities also supports the recognition of World Malaria Day through their distribution of this endorsement, urging all Canadian municipalities to recognize World Malaria Day in their jurisdictions, and urging all citizens to do what they can to net a village. Kingston, Ontario, was the first Canadian city to recognize World Malaria Day.

And I am here to ask that under the leadership of our Mayor, Mr. Katz, Winnipeg, Manitoba will be the first western Canadian citizen to recognize World Malaria Day, joining other leaders on the world stage by doing so.

In my 10 minutes of speaking with you today, 20 children have died. One every 30 seconds. I thank you so much for your time, and I don't know if I can answer questions but I am willing to.

Mr. Speaker: Yes you can. I'll, thank you for your presentation. Are there any questions? Councillor Gerbasi, your first question.

Councillor Gerbasi: Thank you Mr. Speaker. With all of the other deadly diseases, why should people in Winnipeg focus on malaria which isn't present in Canada?

Gail Fones: I get asked that question an awful lot Councillor. There is certainly no attempt by Buy-A-Net or anybody working with malaria to take away from the devastation of other diseases, but you should know that the prevention of this disease is by a single insecticide-treated bed net. It does not require huge expense.

Malaria is the most devastating of all of the catastrophic diseases that kill children, and with Buy-A-Net, and all of us who work in malaria prevention, we just feel that a child has a right to survive a mosquito bite. Certainly in Manitoba we know mosquitoes but they don't kill us.

And to know that one net worth $6 dollars, $6 dollars, can save a family of four for five years, seems like a pretty good thing. What we would like to do is to see malaria become the polio of our generation. We did it with polio, we can sure do it with malaria if everybody gets involved. That's one of the reasons.

Mr. Speaker: Do you got a second question Councillor?

Councillor Gerbasi: My last question is what is your group seeking from this Council through this request today?

Gail Fones: What we're seeking, and we're not seeking any financial support, but what we would want is for our City Council to acknowledge World Malaria Day. This will heighten the awareness and the profile of what malaria is, and your support will raise the visibility of malaria and your leadership will

encourage other cities to do this, and that is what we're asking today. So thank you.

Mr. Speaker: No further speakers. Thank you. The Council will be supporting it on the motion that will be before us later on.

Gail Fones: Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you, thanks for your presentation. Next delegation is Paul Hesse, Winnipeg Rapid Transit Coalition, in support of March 19th, 2008 Council motion regarding Federal Transit Funding. Is Mr. Hesse present? You have 10 minutes.

Paul Hesse: Okay, and because I don't like to speak too long I have another member of the Coalition here, Curt Hull and he will be speaking a little bit on active transportation as part of the rapid transit plan.

Mr. Speaker: Go ahead.

Paul Hesse: Thank you. So Councillors, thank you for your attention this morning. Speaking here as spokesperson for the Winnipeg Rapid Transit Coalition, we've had a chance to speak with some of you before at Executive Policy Committee meetings. This is the first time we've had a chance to address all of Council. So thank you for hearing us.

The Rapid Transit Coalition is a very active and growing organization. Momentum and support for rapid transit is growing. Two days ago we had a standing-room only public forum on sustainable cities and rapid transit at the Millennium Library. It may be of interest for Council to know that it was supported by Downtown BIZ, by the Sierra Club, Councillor Gerbasi spoke, I spoke, and Minister Steve Ashton, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, was among the crowd that was sort of forced to stand at the back because of all of the interest in the event.

And at a previous Executive Policy Committee meeting I had the chance to present a petition that has been gathered enormous support, 3,500 signatures in a week from Winnipeggers from every constituency, from each of your areas. And that petition was endorsed by groups as varied as Resource Conservation Manitoba, the Sierra Club, Downtown BIZ, Osborne BIZ, West End BIZ, The Social Planning Council, the University of Winnipeg, Canadian Mennonite University, the group Manitoba Recording Artists Association, and in the past few days the support continues to grow. I have word that I expect that CUPE will officially support the Coalition very shortly.

So what we have is we have a project, a City project that has the support of BIZ organizations, that has the support of labour, that has the support of environmental organizations. People are really getting behind this. And as part of our Coalition building, we're showing that while the Federal funds are being transferred to Manitoba under the idea that they could be used for either active transportation or for implementation of the Rapid Transit Task Force report it's not an either/or situation.

In fact, the Rapid Transit Task Force report talks about bike trails being built alongside rapid transit corridors. These go together and that's why I would now like to invite Curt Hull to say a few words about that.

Curt Hull. Thank you Paul. Yes, I'm standing here representing Bike to the Future. Good morning Your Worship and honourable Councillors. I'm here to represent Bike to the Future which is a group of concerned citizens with 350 paid members and with our association with Manitoba Cycling Association there's another couple of thousand associated members.

And we support rapid transit in Winnipeg because we believe that as Paul mentioned, with the Rapid Transit Task Force report's recommendation to include bike, dedicated bike ways with the development of rapid transit, it will give, it will allow us to solve a couple of really difficult problems that we face in trying to establish an integrated network of routes to destinations within Winnipeg, cycleable routes to destinations within Winnipeg

and those are choke points. The first leg of the rapid transit would include passage through the Jubilee Underpass choke point, Confusion Corner, and potentially a crossing over the Assiniboine River. So, and that integrated network of bikeable routes is what we're looking for, to give people the ability to choose to use bicycles as a mode of transportation.

And I just wanted to bring forward something that I hope you are already aware of, is that the work that's been done for trails in Winnipeg is admirable and terrific and we enjoy the trails as much as anyone but the focus of those trails is on recreation. The bikeway for the rapid transit route and these other routes that I'm talking about, their focus is on transportation, on getting to a destination and being able to do that instead of using your car.

The other group that I represent here is Climate Change Connection, which is a hub for information and functions to get groups connected together to work on this issue of climate change. And this whole issue of rapid transit, public transit is really important for Manitoba because transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gases in Manitoba, 37% of the greenhouse gases come from transportation and of those, 40%, 46% are generated within Winnipeg. And the move to rapid transit would help people make the choice to get out of their cars.

And I wanted to make a mention of the financing of the project, and it appears that if this project is required to be financed in a method that's different from other infrastructure, ordinary roadways that are used for primarily for private cars, it sends a message to citizens that there is, priority is being given to individual car travel and, excuse me. In light of current overwhelming scientific knowledge and consensus of the causes and potential devastating effects of climate change, this priority on individual car travel is wrong and out of date.

And in fact, yesterday I was at the first Manitoba Climate Conference and Earth Forum and there was a fellow speaking on peak oil, and he led us to understand about the declining supply and increasing prices that we're seeing right now is only going to get worse and therefore, the demand from the public for this kind of activity will only increase and so will the cost.

And so, in closing for my part, successful cities of the future will be easily and safely bikeable and walkable with fast, smooth running, comfortable and efficient public transit systems. It is time for this Council to embrace and support that future. Thanks Paul. Thanks for your time.

Paul Hesse: And we are asking Council to embrace this vision for Winnipeg and to commit to the funding of the first phase, commit to building the first phase of rapid transit.

And I know that funding is an issue for Council. We recognize the constraints that are on here, so that's why I was encouraged to see a Free Press article recently by Councillors Pagtakhan and Gerbasi that talked about an alternative way of doing it as opposed to sort of lump sum up front.

So, one way that we could pay for this is if we use the almost $18 million dollars that's been transferred from the Federal government as a down payment, that leaves say if we go to Jubilee at $70 million dollars that leaves about $52 million dollars. If we borrow that at 6% interest rate, pay it off, amortize it over 20 years, that's annual payments of $4.5 million dollars.

Now, can the City afford half of $4.5 million dollars for rapid transit, that's $2.25 million dollars? That's actually less than the City has already budgeted this year for the rapid transit reserve. So you could build it for less than the money you've already budgeted this year by asking the Province also to contribute $2.25 million dollars.

Does the Province have $2.25 million dollars a year to fund on this? They mention rapid transit in their budget. They just have announced a climate change plan where people are saying okay, well 37% of emissions come from the

transportation sector there should be a rapid transit component. There is this hole just waiting for an announcement and they have the money.

So what we're asking is for the City to commit to this. We, from our meetings with Minister Ashton, from having seen him two days ago at our event, from knowing what's in the budget, the words, knowing you know, this Climate Change Bill, they will be there. They are already there for 50% of operating funds. Could they be there for 50% of this $4.5 million dollars a year? Yes and if they won't, we at the Coalition won't let them sleep until they do.

So, we're asking the City Council to commit to funding the first phase of rapid transit with active transportation corridors alongside and thank you for your time this morning.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. There will be a question. Councillor Smith your first question.

Councillor Smith: Paul, obviously the Province has to come on board. What sort of, have you made a submission to the Province?

Paul Hesse: Yeah.

Councillor Smith: And what is the reaction?

Paul Hesse: To be frank, we've heard it from almost every source in the Provincial government, which is, we like rapid transit, we support it, we're there. We've been increasing transit funds, 50% of operating funds and so on, but this is a municipal issue and what we want to see is we want to see the City commit to the project and we'll support it. That's what we're hearing.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Vandal your first question.

Councillor Vandal: Given that answer, Paul, I'm not sure if you're aware of the motion. I'm sure you are. Councillor Gerbasi and Smith moved essentially endorsing phase one, and the recommendation from Executive Committee is that it be received as information.

So, I'm saying that the, what the City needs to be doing is endorsing unanimously phase one construction of rapid transit to the University of Winnipeg, to go on the record and put the onus on the Province to come to the table.

Paul Hesse: We would certainly support that. We certainly are asking for a Council resolution on this. There is more than one way to commit to rapid transit. If you want to do it today we encourage you to do so. That there is a resolution on the floor that allows you to do that. If you want a special announcement next week or two weeks from now where you do that with the Minister or the Provincial government, that's fine, too.

But we believe this is important. We believe it's doable. The citizens are behind it. Groups are behind it. It's a win/win situation and we're asking that one way or another we do it. It's going to be a great announcement. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: No further questions? Thank you. Thanks for your presentation. The next delegation is Stefano Grande, Executive Director of the Downtown Winnipeg Business Improvement Zone, also support of March 19, 2008 Council motion. You have five minutes.

Stefano Grande: Good morning Mayor Katz and Councillors. Outside of probably downtown safety and the importance of developing our districts with the use of innovative policies like tip zones, bus rapid transit seems to be dominating the discussion at my board meetings. It seems to be dominating discussions at my committee meetings. It seems to be dominating my discussions with my business community of which we represent 1,400 members in the downtown, and a large majority of the business community is in favour of the City commencing the construction of bus rapid transit in our City and connecting it to our downtown via this first phase.

In a recent survey late last year, over 90% of our members agreed that the

Downtown BIZ should more strongly advocate for infrastructure, for this infrastructure improvement to our downtown. And that survey was done by a third party with an error rate of just under 2%.

The downtown business community is keenly aware of the challenges our downtown and City will face if we do not move in this direction and soon. In general, our members feel that downtown will become less economically competitive with other downtowns across North America, as well as other business districts within our City itself.

The office vacancy rate downtown is at an all time low. Residential vacancy rates are even lower and there are millions more visitors coming downtown annually than just a short decade ago.

Increased demand for parking is real. Indoor and surface parking rates are increasing in our downtown. And with no alternative options for the public to get to the downtown quickly, the economic costs for workers will force employers to look elsewhere to establish their head offices and businesses. This will lead to continued sprawl in our City which clearly, the City government will not be able to afford to build and maintain.

The erosion of the downtown office market cannot happen as this is one of the greatest strengths of our downtown, our City and our Province. The arrival of bus rapid transit is a tool which helps balance this economic equation by providing affordable and viable alternatives to parking for downtown workers and those that visit the downtown.

The downtown business community is concerned about increased congestion as well which is vehicular trips in the downtown, if options like rapid transit are not provided for those who work, shop and come downtown. A 30 minute ride home in traffic today will no doubt significantly increase in the next decade posing competitive challenges if no other option is provided for the public like rapid transit.

Our business members are concerned that not only the downtown but our City is in danger of becoming less competitively economically as the public is forced to pay higher and higher gas prices with no viable public transit options. Combined with a lack of new dense housing developments that are oriented for transit users and more and more of the public's hard earned money will be spent on just getting around, reducing income for spending on restaurants, entertainment and nonessential shopping. We want downtowners to spend more money on shops and restaurants, on entertainment and popcorn and less on gas and parking.

The downtown business community wants to see our downtown sidewalks bustling with people. Many studies have shown that rapid transit encourages more transit use and increases pedestrians in the downtown. Studies have also shown that rapid transit increases mobility and accessibility to major downtown destinations and attractions. With major attractions like the MTS Centre, our arts and cultural destinations, our sporting destinations, the downtown is poised to capture this traffic. In other cities, BRT has had a positive impact on special destination type events by alleviating automobile trips and reducing the demand for downtown parking.

The downtown business community understands for these reasons that quality of our downtown can be enhanced and as a result public perception of downtown improved dramatically. And economically be better positioned to continue with the growth we are experiencing this decade if BRT is part of the solution.

But what our downtown members are really keen on is that BRT allows for additional land development capacity and housing developments in and around the downtown and in a manner that addresses the concerns that I have expressed.

The real power of rapid transit is its positive impact on the City and our downtown, which is land development. A coordinated land use and transportation policy will generate new commercial and

residential developments which cater almost exclusively to people living in transit pedestrian environments minutes away from the downtown which is an absolutely growing market in our City. The arrival of this new market will continue to drive downtown revitalization and increase transit users in our City to and our downtown and put our City on track to becoming more sustainable.

No doubt, some of the land available for the developments in and around our downtown will develop whether or not BRT occurs but if ever there was a moment in time in which the City can make a fundamental shift providing more options for a growing number of people demanding to live near innovative transit hubs and strive towards building a sustainable City, now would be the time.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Grande are you just about finished? Your time has expired.

Stefano Grande: I'm sorry 10 minutes goes quickly.

Mr. Speaker: No five minutes, five minutes.

Stefano Grande: Oh five minutes, okay. The term sustainable cities is becoming more and more the benchmark in which cities are becoming competitively compared to each other. The importance that the role of rapid transit can play can only be really understood within the broader context of building sustainable communities.

As a City we can decide to build housing catering to more parking lots and more vehicles leading to more and expensive road infrastructure, more congestion, more parking problems, a worsening quality of air in the downtown or we could provide other options to the other market and housing developments catering to transit users.

The development community will respond to this vision put out by our City. Tell the developers where the hubs are going, work with them to assemble the vacant land and underutilized properties on the peripheral of our downtown, and other key areas and let them build this vision for our City. Their goal is to make a return on investment and not necessarily to create a sustainable community which is indeed the role that government can play in partnership with the private sector.

Mr. Speaker: Stefano, if I may interrupt you because you're well over the five minutes.

Stefano Grande: I apologize.

Mr. Speaker: I'll give you about another minute. Just summarize now.

Stefano Grande: Well the bottom, I guess the bottom line is if you have a downtown business community that's very keenly aware of the issues of the future, and building rapid transit is not an if but a when question.

Build it today and this action could be considered very proactive and position our City ahead of the curve. I think if we build it tomorrow, not only will it be costly but some of the issues that we discussed will come to bear forcing our City to react.

And I think, I think we are in a position today for the various reasons expressed by the speakers before me to take advantage of this opportunity. The time is now to build bus rapid transit. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Any questions? None? Thank you. The addendum delegations, Leo Ledohowski, President of Canad Inns and Chair of Manitoba Hotel Association, in opposition to Item 4. Sir, you have 10 minutes.

Leo Ledohowski: Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak here. I'll start out with a positive statement where we have an agreement. This is an agreement between the City and the community and the Hotel Association, Canad Inns that the City however defined, needs incremental dollars to market this City, to market our community, to make a presence known across the country and across the world. But I think that's to a large extent where the agreement stops.

Firstly, this tax has been referred to as a hotel tax. It is not. I notice there has been a subtle change now and it's called an accommodation tax. Basically, this is a consumption tax, two-thirds of which is paid on by the citizens of Manitoba, Winnipeggers, other people from outside of Winnipeg. In our hotels, we have an awful lot of people from Winnipeg that may perhaps can't afford it or don't choose to down south or even to Grand Forks for the weekend. They stay, use the water parks, use the guest facilities, so they will be paying an extra tax. It's a discouragement for external tourists to come here. The dollar has been very damaging to our industry and now we're compounding it with a proposed tax.

From a business point of view, this tax will visit every business, whether it's Investors Syndicate or Great West Life, we'll be tax collectors and so that I think we should call it what it is, a consumption tax that is high enough to cause a major detriment to our tourism and business community.

I'm going to go through what I think are some fundamental errors and I call them fundamental. First of all, the Budget suggests 5% tax, but then suggests that $3 million is what's going to be collected. That absolutely totally incorrect. $7-1/2 million is a closer estimate of the money. If you're going to call it, you know it seems to me it's a bit of a slight of hand. And so if you're talking about $3 million dollars, 2% raises $3 million dollars.

There has been some suggestions that maybe there are some problems with estimates here. Increase it by 50%. That's 3%. And that will get you more than enough. That probably will generate you $4, $4-1/2 million dollars. 5% is unconscionable and is also inconsistent with the Budget. Your Budget says 5% but then it says $3 million. They are fundamentally wrong and if you do go with it, I think there should be, a 3%, I mean if $3 million is desired amount, you can do that with 2%. If there is any question on the amounts then you simply increase it to the 3%. You have all the data here and the thing that there shouldn't be an inconsistency would surprise me because we file, all the hotels file data with the Assessment department as to our revenues.

Secondly, a fundamental error in this whole process is the Convention Centre. There is two parts to it. You got somebody's going on the assumption or there seems to be an assumption that there will be $200 million capital expansion of the Convention Centre, which makes no economic sense. And in the competition for scarce dollars, compare that to bridges, roads, rapid transit, pools, community centres, sewers, infrastructure, you check with the public and you'll find that there is, if you pose this question, you'll find that there is almost no support to put the money into here for $200 million dollars rather than infrastructure.

In addition, the ongoing deficits of the Convention Centre, I mean that thing has been subsidized $100 million dollars since it's been open. I think that would have made a pretty good dent in so-called infrastructure deficit, and there is an answer to that. I've thrown out the possibility that we would be interested in taking it over, but it doesn't have to be Canad Inns. If you want to negotiate exclusively with us we're more than happy. If you want to put an EOI out, that's fine. Put an RFP out, that's fine. I'm sure that however that winds up, it does save the public purse over $3 million dollars a year.

Another error which I think is fundamental is there is a loop in this process that's being missed. Taxes are based upon assessments. Assessments are based upon incomes. What is the impact of this dramatic jump in the costs to the consumer going to do to the income of the hotels? And if you drop the assessments, if you drop, I don't care if you drop the assessments by $30 million dollars, there is a significant cost to the City. About 6% of our assessed value is what we pay in taxes. I recognize that some of that goes to the school division. But if this drops off, then the school divisions get robbed of some money and the City gets hurt and I'm talking about business and realty taxes. For us they work about 6%.

The other thing that I find fundamentally missing, and I guess we're passed the stage now but we were going to do a voluntary destination fee which our cost is going to be $50 to $60,000. $60 would have been the max. I would hate to think what the costs of setting up and administering this tax are going to be. I am at a loss why I served on a Red Tape Commission, many hours of time that I didn't have, to now be facing a situation where we're setting up another cost. And not only do we have very significant costs for the City but then the compliance cost to the private sector. So I see this as a very expensive proposition.

And finally, and kind of tying it all together, what I call fundamental error number 5, where is the economic impact study? Has there been one done? You're talking about introducing a major structural change to a major industry, in this Province in this City. And we can argue, debate, et cetera, but it seems to me that we need an economic impact study. Private cost, public cost, private revenues, public revenues, I don't see that. I don't see, I haven't heard it. I mean I've heard many reasons but in any event it would seem to me that it should be fundamental. There is certainly lots of very trained people in this City administration and it's fairly easy to get some professional firm to do a study on this. And that would be, in my estimation, something that would have been very, very necessary.

So in closing, I disagree with many things that have been done. I think there has been some fundamental errors. However, if we're going to go this route, I'm going to suggest two things and I hope you consider them. Number one, 3% not 5%. We all know that 3% is more than enough. Actually, 2% does it. For a margin of error which shouldn't exist because we file our data and the City Assessment department has it. I do not buy the fact that we don't know how much the City is going to raise. That is just, that's just not correct. But even in the small chance that there is an error or something so you increase the 2% to 3%. 50% more than what's required for the $3 million dollars. Okay.

And finally, that would be fairly major and if it turns out down the road that it's increased, it's easier, it's a very big gap for the industry and the public to accept. It's a very big gap. If it turns out down the road that for some reason it gets moved up then that will be from a 3% to a 4% or something, you have some time to adjust. Going from 0 to 5% is very painful. It will be painful for a lot of people. And I'm not sure it's going to result in that much more money because if your assessments go down I don't know how much the City is going to gain on it. 3% is less traumatic, 2% is better

Finally, my final point I want to make is that all this money that's raised should be incremental to selling the City of Winnipeg. And that the board administers it, buying Grey Cups, Junos, whatever, there are some things that the City is forced to do now, it's quite fine in my estimation for this money to be used for those items. There is Grey Cup costs, there is Juno costs, I'm not sure how the formulas work but I'm quite sure that you wind up picking up a lot of the tab and this is what this money should be used for.

But given that's what it's used for, I would really, to the extent that I could, I would wish, hope, I was going to say insist but I can't insist upon anything, that there is industry representation on this board. I think that's critical. If this is what this money is for, let's have the people that run the businesses be on this board and be participating in this. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. There will be some questions. Councillor Smith you have the first question.

Councillor Smith: Mr. Ledohowski you made some comments about the Convention Centre that were a little bit negative. Does not the Convention Centre help the hotels? You know, would you be for the expansion of the Convention Centre?

Leo Ledohowski: Everything has got a price and at $200 million dollars, no I would not because if you just put it on the PKF study which they depend upon,

roughly 60,000 rooms would be generated per year. That's over $3,000 dollars capital cost per room. And even at 6% of the money that's $180 per room, per year, for the capital cost and that's not counting the deficits because the deficits will jump. And so, yeah, will it mean some business? Yeah. But will it pay? No. And that is absolute.

But I think that there should be a debate on this. The assumption is that you're just going to go ahead, have an economic impact study. Have something done instead of just, well we're going to charge a tax because we're going to expand the Convention Centre.

And maybe, I mean we all need and want many things, and the City needs and wants many things. But there is a big infrastructure deficit compare, sure, if you can do the sewers, you can do the bridges, not close any community centres, do the Convention Centre, do an enclosed football stadium. These are all nice but they are all competing needs for the money.

And I will challenge anybody to check with the public on a survey and put expansion of the Convention Centre here and put rapid transit, put infrastructure, put bridges, community centres, pools there, and see where the choice would be. I'm very confident on the answer to that from both a public point of view and from an economic point of view.

And there is a second part to the convention, there is the ongoing deficits that are being paid. How many swimming pools, how many community centres can be kept open? I mean $3 million plus a year will support $40 million capital for rapid transit.

You know, it's nice to have all these things, but the Convention Centre won't disappear if it's privatized. You just won't have to carry the deficit. The building is there, and whoever will win the RFP or EOI, or if it's us or with a private negotiation, I'm sure they could run it quite well, maybe even better. But you don't have that then you've got that money year in and year out. Like I say it's been about a hundred million since this place opened in today's dollars.

Mr. Speaker: That's it Councillor Smith? No further questions? Councillor Vandal your first question.

Councillor Vandal: Mr. Ledohowski you referenced your dozens of hours, serving, volunteering on the Economic Opportunity Commission, which was looking at ways to completely eliminate the business tax. Was the introduction of a hotel tax ever discussed at that committee with Councillor Fielding and other representatives?

Leo Ledohowski: I'm not sure we're talking about the same, I sat on the Red Tape Commission. I don't ever remember that. The Red Tape Commission, okay. What I'm seeing here is the creation of a bunch more red tape to administer a tax that we're going to feel that we're going to do involuntarily.

Mr. Speaker: Any further questions? If not sir, thank you.

Leo Ledohowski: Okay thank you very much for the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. The final delegation on the same subject, Mr. Jim Baker, you have five minutes.

Jim Baker: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Yes, I was, Jerry Weir was listed as speaking and I'm his substitute. Good morning Your Worship and Councillors. I am Jim Baker, the President and CEO of the Manitoba Hotel Association and I'm here to represent the hotels of Winnipeg and the hotels of Manitoba. Hotels that employ 17,000 workers in the Province.

On Monday, I appeared before Executive Policy Committee appealing to them to amend the proposed By-law No. 70/2008. A By-law that is slated for all three readings today. And I'm going to make this short because Mr. Ledohowski has obviously covered everything. I made three recommendations at EPC, three recommendations for amendment and the first recommendation was that the rate must be 3%.

The second recommendation was that the support to Destination Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Convention Centre and special events be worded as incremental support. And in listening to Leo, it just came to mind I should point out there is a difference between support to the Winnipeg Convention Centre and an expansion of the Winnipeg Convention Centre. I believe that it's very important that the continued support for the Winnipeg Convention Centre stay, or go to an increased level and that's because of the need for dollars for that Convention Centre to compete. Not space-wise but to compete with incentive-wise in the communities that we compete with.

The third recommendation was that the process of allocating the money that will be collected, will include a significant role for the industry, and that's the broader industry, not just the hotel industry, because as I pointed out, that the hotels only get 20% of the spend out of the travelers.

Our first recommendation comes from the fact there has been a mathematical error in setting the rate to produce the Budget amount and Mr. Ledohowski went through that. Clearly there is a variance there and the variance isn't thousands of dollars or even hundreds of thousands of dollars. We are talking about millions of dollars. So not only is the rate incorrect and must be corrected but the correction will help to paint our City in a less undesirable light to the traveling public.

And subsequent to the EPC, I know that the Tourism Industry of Canada has sent a letter to the Mayor, and the Hotel Association of Canada, likewise, and the contents of the letter was that in, I'll just do the Cole's notes for those of you who are as old as me to know what Cole's notes are, that the rate puts us in a very noncompetitive position.

At EPC, the Mayor had some comments to which I replied and one of the comments was not knowing how much money that the tax could extract. And it's clear that we do know how much money will be collected. We know because we did a calculation, hotel by hotel, that calculation was supplied to the administration in the Mayor's office and to various Councillors on March the 24th. And, of course, I believe, I couldn't hear very well back there, but I believe Mr. Ledohowski went into some length about how that number can be verified. But, when we did supply that information, March 24th, no questions were asked that there, to any extent. But I have noticed that now there is a reserve that's being created and I can only guess that reserve is to capture the excess.

I spoke about where the funding has to be incremental and go to those areas and my last point being industry development or industry involvement. At the Council meeting where the Budget was passed I stressed that the work in developing a fund to accomplish most of what this tax is targeted for, came from the partnership of Destination Winnipeg, Travel Manitoba, the Winnipeg Convention Centre, and the Hotel Association. And that partnership provides the City with all the components necessary to ensure that the dollars are used timely, effectively and with a minimum of red tape.

And if you want to get into red tape, I found some crimson tape in clause 6(4) of the By-law that has to do with the medical exemption and I won't read it through here because I only have 30 seconds but if you look at that, that is going to be a real boondoggle in terms of administration and I think the industry can help you with that.

I believe that the City and the industry must develop an agreement as to the roles that the two parties play in this regard and that the roles and priorities agreed upon are clearly defined. The By-law must have wording that ensures that this extended partnership is formed and put into place as soon as possible. Time is of the essence. We in the industry wanted to get going January 1st and now it appears that no funds will be allocated in 2008. Winnipeg hotels and the MHA are committed to make our City the place to meet, to explore and to come back to. Implementing our recommendations will ensure the best use of resources and a further bonding amongst the partners.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Mr. Baker. I believe there's some questions. Mr. Mayor you have the first question.

Mayor Katz: Thank you Mr. Speaker. First of all Mr. Baker I very much appreciate your being here. I'd like to know if you could share with Council, any feedback that you've gotten from members of the Manitoba Hotel Association, on the proposal that Leo Ledohowski put forward regarding the Convention Centre. I would very much appreciate hearing some feedback on that.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Baker.

Jim Baker: Well the feedback firstly from, I guess it was the last Council meeting when he first announced it was one of very much surprise on the part of many of the hoteliers and very much from many hoteliers are saying yes, well that's something that he has been speaking about for the longest time. From others, hotels are saying well I'm glad that he did that to try to separate the Convention Centre issue from the marketing issue, the fund issue.

It's very clear that Mr. Ledohowski is speaking on his own, has some strong feelings about the Convention Centre. The Convention Centre is, I suppose it's a love-hate relationship with the hotels in that we appreciate it being there. It is responsible, a driver for some of our occupancy but at the same time, it's very much a competitor for a lot of the business that the hotels do. As a matter of interest, is that the meeting and convention business that is held in the various hotels in total greatly exceeds any of the conventions that are held in the Convention Centre.

So it's a valuable asset to the City of Winnipeg and one that I think has been excellently maintained. You just have to go and see the second floor where they were able to, they being the Convention Centre, and I happen to be on the board so I guess I'm patting myself on the back but I had nothing to do with it, was that what they were able to do with the dollars that are being supplied between the grants, between the City and the Province and their own administration, I think that Convention Centre, they should be applauded for what they have.

But on the same token, there are hotels out there that are expanding their facilities with their own money so that they can compete better with the Convention Centre in terms of the banquet business. And the banquet business is significant to the Convention Centre. But the Convention Centre has the asset being a thousand plus people can be hosted and now we have only two hotels that can do that. But they are competing. So that's the love-hate.

Mr. Speaker: Your second question Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker I was hoping to get an answer of supportive or not supportive but maybe that will be another day.

Approximately a month ago Mr. Baker you presented a package here at City Hall, basically projections of numbers, et cetera. And in that package, you said that $8 million dollars would be raised from this tax. Thirty-six hours ago on Global TV you used the number $7 million dollars. Can you tell me where you put the million dollars please?

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Baker.

Jim Baker: Yeah. It's this document here that was supplied, and I guess you didn't read it very well Mr. Mayor, because that $8 million dollars is a go-forward position into '09, giving the growth in our occupancy and our growth in our rate. So, I used the $7 million dollars because what number do I need to show how far out the budget estimate is? I mean $7 million is like falling off a log. So I thought that it would be very simple to use $3-1/2 and then double it to be $7. I have no problem with the number being greater than $7, but these are estimates.

Mr. Speaker: Your final question.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. I find it interesting that Mr. Ledohowski said this would be a major

detriment. He talked about how assessments can change and yet you just said you're projecting growth in 2009. Would you not say that basically contradicts what was said earlier?

Jim Baker: Not at all. There is a growth in cost too Mr. Mayor. It has to be a growth in rate because there is a growth in cost. There is a growth, a huge growth in property taxes. The business taxes weren't eliminated so that's back in their budgets okay, so that's not contradicting it whatsoever.

And I'll give you the answer that you were looking for. Is the feeling about the Convention Centre is mixed. The closer you are to the Convention Centre, the more benefit you get. The further away, the less you get. But does the Hotel Association support the need for a major Convention Centre in our City? Absolutely.

Mr. Speaker: No further questions? Thank you Mr. Baker. Thank you for your presentation. Councillors Executive Policy Committee, report of March 26th, 2008, Mr. Mayor.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
DATED MARCH 26, 2008**

Mayor Katz: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce the report and move adoption of Consent Agenda Item 1.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Report of April 9th of 2008.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
DATED APRIL 9, 2008**

Mayor Katz: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce the report and move adoption of the Consent Agenda, Items 1 to 5.

Councillor Gerbasi: Item 2.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Gerbasi Item 2.

Councillor Thomas: Item 5 please.

Mr. Speaker: Nos. 2 and 5. No further ones? So then from 2 and 5 and the rest are as Consent.

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Item 2.

Item 2 - Federal Transit Funding - Southwest Bus Rapid Transit Corridor, Phase One, File TT-8

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, I'd very much love to hear from the Councillor and then I'll respond at that particular point in time.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Gerbasi.

Councillor Gerbasi: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to put some comments on the record regarding this motion.

In the early 1980's, both Ottawa and Winnipeg studied transit options and both studies recommended a bus rapid transit system. Ottawa went ahead and built that system and Winnipeg City Council did not. And Ottawa now has as we know an extensive network of BRT as well as LRT and Winnipeg unfortunately remains the last city in Canada of its size that has no form of rapid transit. There have been a series of studies and task forces over the years and it seems no matter who sets up the task force or who was put on it, the studies all conclude that BRT is the best solution for Winnipeg.

Why is BRT the best solution for Winnipeg? Because it's a cost effective way to create high speed transit. The key issue is the separation of buses from traffic congestion by a separate roadway using railway property. In the future, with the land secured and being used for transit use, theoretically these busways could be converted to LRT if it made sense in the future. BRT has the advantage of requiring less transfers as the same kind of vehicle can go on and off the busway. The cost is four to six times less than LRT, at least. Yet the

same reliability and speed as LRT can be obtained with separate bus corridors.

And what would BRT mean for Winnipeg? The first phase from Jubilee and Pembina, from downtown to Jubilee and Pembina takes off 9 to 10 minutes of travel time. A fast, reliable transit service is a key part of downtown revitalization as we heard from the Executive Director of the Downtown BIZ today on behalf of his members. It makes it more attractive to work downtown, to live downtown, to open a business downtown and to visit downtown if you can get there quickly and conveniently without parking woes.

Hydro has a new office tower going up downtown right now. At that time, at the time that the City sold Winnipeg Hydro to the Province it was agreed that this tower would be built downtown. At that time BRT was seen as part of the solution to provide faster transit service for the new downtown employees. Imagine if most of those employees would take our new fast BRT to work and leave their cars in the park and ride at Taylor or leave them at home.

BRT would also mean the stimulation of infill housing development along the dedicated transit corridors and potentially new transit oriented commercial development. Transit oriented high density infill development makes both economic and environmental sense.

Fuel prices are going up as fossil fuels become more and more scarce and the cost of operating City services keep going up as the City continues to build low density, car dependent developments. It makes sense to promote compact urban development where people will have access to existing schools, recreation facilities and green space.

We must address our footprint as a City in ecological terms. Waverley West is now underway and there will eventually be 40,000 people living there. It makes absolute sense to extend BRT in the south direction to plan for the future. Rapid transit brings with it increased land values which mean increased revenue for the City, from new tax assessment without the need for expensive new provision of City services, facilities and infrastructure.

Another issue that not everyone is aware of that we heard this morning from Bike to the Future who has endorsed BRT and come out strongly in support of all their affiliated organizations, have said that they support BRT because this is how we're going to get through safe commuter cycling paths. A separate roadway for buses would include separate paved paths for bicycles. The southwest BRT corridor would address the problem spots of Confusion Corner where it is now impossible for bicycles to avoid being in close quarters with cars. Like they do in Europe, grandmothers, families, women in high heels, could ride their bike and that includes me, safely, completely removed from traffic.

More people riding transit and using active transportation serves many purposes. We must face the reality of climate change and that transportation is the major factor in causing greenhouse gas emissions. For each bus full of 60 people it means that 45 cars are taken off the road. Picture that as you are driving slowly across the Donald Street Bridge on the way home from work, because I do everyday when I'm not taking the bus, when I'm crawling along in the bus.

Imagine the reduced congestion, the shortened travel time and the convenience for everyone, not just those who use public transit. It is clear that investing in public transit benefits everyone not only transit riders but those who drive cars as well through reduced commutes, congestion, travel time and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

Research by the Canadian Urban Transit Association has shown that a majority of people believe that investment in public transit is the right thing to do even if they themselves don't use transit. Not everyone is going to start taking the bus but a lot more people will if the trip is under 30 minutes, it is convenient and fast and with gas prices continuing to rise.

And what about funding? It is reasonable at times to borrow money to build capital

investment and to pay for them over time. That is how the Province is building highways and how the City is building the major roads and bridge projects they're building now.

This Council has worked hard to reduce our debt and to avoid borrowing. With lower infrastructure rates and the infrastructure deficit Council has shifted to begin doing some borrowing once again whether through P3s or through straight borrowing. Unfortunately City Council has shown willingness to borrow money to widen and extend roadways but has shown reluctance to apply the same principles to transit investment. The idea of fixing your roof before you build an addition makes a lot of sense but this Council is building and expanding the roadway system before we fix and maintain the existing roads we have.

The right thing to do for our future is to invest a reasonable percentage of our capital dollars into public transit infrastructure and active transportation and the rest into fixing our existing streets. This is what other Canadian cities are doing en masse.

The City committed in the SIRP report a few years ago to do cost benefit analysis for all capital projects. However we haven't seen that happening when it comes to projects such as the widening of Kenaston and the Chief Peguis Trail extension. Yet a detailed cost benefit analysis was done for the proposed first phase of BRT in 2004 and the BRT project showed a higher level of benefit than the analysis shown for the Kenaston Underpass, a project which has since been constructed.

With what is known about the benefits to downtown revitalization, to the environment and to healthy neighbourhood development it is crazy to under invest in public transit and active transportation and to continue down this same road of massive car culture expansion.

Not only is the price of gas going up but so is the price of construction. In 2004 the first phase of BRT from downtown to Jubilee would have been $43 million. It is now $70 million. What will it be in five or 10 years? Now is the time to get started. Council created a Rapid Transit Reserve fund of $2.7 million in this year's Budget. What I think we should do is the City should match, we should ask the Province to match this contribution and to agree that both levels of government will continue to contribute each year.

The Federal government, and I think this is very important, should also be a partner. That was part of the Rapid Transit Task Force's recommendation. The $17.9 million in Federal funding has become available to be used as a down payment. You know borrowing is borrowing and we don't want to get too carried away.

It will take a new found political will to take this step, but the world is changing and the public pressure is growing.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Fielding moves an extension of two minutes.

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Gerbasi: Winnipeg needs to catch up with other cities and become a leader, a leader that we could be if we make this choice. Each journey begins with a single step. The motion before you asks for that step to be taken. Receiving it as information really doesn't mean anything. Whatever is decided today regarding this motion, and I'm not going to make an issue about the semantics of how this gets done because I just want to get something done for the benefit of this City. So whatever EPC has decided to receive this as information so be it. But they heard today from the Downtown BIZ. They've heard today from cyclists. They've heard today from citizens and they've heard today from members of Council.

And I urge the Mayor to continue discussions with the Province, the $18 million is secured, is open for discussion. This is all possible. And I urge the Council and the Mayor to go forth and have these discussions and take this opportunity

while this opportunity is still before us. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too hope that I live long enough to see the first bus rapid transit line in Winnipeg go from downtown to the University of Manitoba, which would benefit all the citizens of Winnipeg.

A first step as we've talked about which is $70 million will do nothing for the citizens of my ward. We have to have a commitment, all the way to the University or we'll have no effect on 90% of Winnipeg. No positive effect anyway.

The parallel was drawn with Ottawa. Ottawa has a very good transit system. I would like to know Mr. Mayor, from your vast experience and knowledge, what percentage of the rapid transit busways did the City of Ottawa pay and what percentage was paid by the National Capital Commission, the Federal government, and the government of Ontario? I am under the, maybe mistaken belief that Ottawa paid significantly less than 10% and I actually know, less than 5%. Nothing is a nice round figure.

Ottawa also has a, as does Edmonton and Calgary, has a single rail line rapid transit system, just one route, one line. I would like to know how much Ottawa, Edmonton or Calgary paid for those. And if it's that same round nothing, Winnipeggers I'm sure would support it to the same extent.

My final question on this, is do you believe Winnipeggers are willing to pay what Ottawa citizens pay for transit? $3.00 per ride on a regular bus. $4.00 on an express route. This is off their website as of this minute. I guess these facetious questions aren't going to be answered and don't need a direct answer.

The point is, we need those who can afford to pay for this to pay for this which is mostly the Federal government. Then most significantly the Provincial government, and the City of Winnipeg which gets 8% of the tax dollar should, is going to have to pay some and that's understood.

But to come out and keep expecting these things to happen without putting together a financial package for them isn't responsible. We do want these. We all, united want these things but they have got to be paid for. And instead of political sniping we've got to have an united front through the Province to go to the Federal government and get the money. And the money has to come in hundreds of millions of dollars not in $17.9. That's for studies and engineers. That won't give you one bucket full of concrete.

Let's get the job done. From the start when we had estimates of $43 million and it was over a hundred million, we've just totally ignored the realities. Let's go out, storm Ottawa and get the real money and make it happen. And if we don't, quit dreaming.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Vandal.

Councillor Vandal: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Further to what Councillor O'Shaughnessy was saying, I would suggest the first step that we need to take as a Council is to actually determine what it is we want. I've had some dealings with the Province over the last 10 years and my experience has been the same as what Mr. Hesse has said. What does the City want?

The City needs to, first of all, determine a priority. They need to bring that priority, do the due diligence, bring that priority to this floor of Council, have a vote on that priority whether it's transportation, whether it's whatever issue but let's stick to rapid transit. And then be united, approve that as a Council and then have our Mayor or our intergovernmental affairs liaison or whatever that moniker may be, go there and meet with the Premier and meet with the lead Minister in Ottawa and actually try to put the financing together. And maybe that's happening.

But my experience has always been is that Council has to be united. There has to be a Council motion that's debated and

discussed and approved on this floor of Council and that's our policy. And essentially that's not happening.

Councillor Gerbasi and Councillor Smith have put a motion together and the recommendation is that we receive it as information. And we all know what that really means, having been here long enough. It's like kissing your sister when you receive something as information.

But let me also be clear, this is something that should have occurred, this is something that should have occurred back in 1960. And I remember having this conversation with a pretty senior Federal Minister who has since retired, saying that there was a significant amount of money on the table back in 1960 or early '70s, for rapid transit. And that the Mayor at the time and the Provincial government at the time simply weren't there. And 40, 45 years later, almost 50 years later we see what's occurred.

It seems everyone, everyone is in favour of bus rapid transit but nobody actually wants to come out and say it or nobody actually wants to implement it and I've read the budget that Gary Doer has tabled last, two weeks ago and I mean there is some, there is some soft words in there.

The benefits are obvious. The benefits are obvious. Councillor Russ Wyatt chaired a Rapid Transit Task Force which I'm sure we've spent at least $200,000 dollars on, on putting that together about three years ago, maybe I'm off by, it cost a significant amount of money and what was the first recommendation?

First recommendation was the southwest transit corridor which incidentally was ready to be built in '04. The first recommendation, southwest transit corridor and where has that been since 2005, I believe? I'm not sure. We're building bike paths and you know I'm all for bike paths, whether you're going to work or whether you are taking your son out for a ride at night but let's face it, we're under snow or cold weather eight or nine months out of the year. A bike path in Winnipeg is not the answer to a viable alternative transportation solution for a City such as ours.

The benefits are obvious, the environmental benefits. Greenhouse gas reductions, getting vehicles off of our roads, getting beaters off of our roads. It's obvious. The studies have been done. Our infrastructure deficit. Well you know you take less cars off the road and it's easier on our cement.

And our downtown, Stefano Grande I think clearly explained the benefits of rapid transit on vibrant downtowns. And let's look around the country. Let's look at Ottawa. Let's look at Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Minneapolis, St. Paul. All cities I've been to in the last three years all with new rapid transit systems, one modality or the other. I mean are we so different as a City? By the way, all with more vibrant downtowns than Winnipeg.

Now, we're improving and there has been great progress done in the last 10 years but until you get those hundreds and thousands of citizens walking, pedestrians, walking on our streets at big intersections or collecting spots, or to get on rapid transit or get off, then other businesses will follow. We should have done this 40, 50 years ago but it's not done. And I don't know why we're not embracing the leadership that Councillor Gerbasi, the determination that Councillor Gerbasi has shown on this issue, and going with it. And going to Gary Doer and going to Vic Toews and trying to negotiate a cost sharing agreement, all the way to the U of M.

And the first phase is the most challenging phase because it's pioneering and when you do something that's pioneering, you're not going to get the big bang immediately. But once that spine is built, then you're going to go out to the parker lands and to all sorts of different lands all over the City. It's going to cost money. It's going to take leadership from this Council. It's going to take leadership and it's going to take political will.

I hearken back to Chief Peguis Trail. Something that was not in the first phase

of Plan Winnipeg, but we, Chief Peguis Trail went through this Council like a hot knife through butter. Started off at $32 million. It's now at $64 million. There was an overpass over Raleigh and now it's a full stop. Nevertheless it's going forward. We're going to do it because we're politically engaged and we're committed to doing it. There is leadership there on Councillor Browaty's part and on the Mayor's part. We need that same kind of leadership for rapid transit to build it all the way to the University of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: Thank you. If we want money, we've got to ask for it. And I think the motion that has come back from Executive Policy Committee is very disappointing in that regard. Receiving something as information is the same as deciding that you're going to buy a piece of furniture and you go and collect the information from a variety of stores. When you walk in the store, you get the information and you walk out. They don't know whether you're coming back. They don't know whether you're going to buy something from their store or another store or whether you're going to buy something at all.

The Federal government has money. It has announced $18 million dollars in funding for the Province that can be used for public transit. Let's get that money. The first thing we have to do is stand up as a group and say we're interested in getting that money. Yes, what has been done in Ottawa, yes what has been done in Vancouver, what has been done in Edmonton and what has been done in Calgary with the amount of Federal money that's been there, as compared to what was there for us, is not been fair.

And is $18 million dollars everything that we need for doing a rapid transit system? No. Is it anywhere near what anybody else got? No. Does that mean we should walk away and say well we're receiving that as information because we don't have what you guys got.

Well this is something we want. So if this is something we want, the first thing we have to do is say I agree, I want this. Then we can negotiate the amount that they're giving us and say look this is patently unfair. You've given so much to Ottawa. You've given so much to Vancouver. You've given with their Sky Trains, with all the things that have been given to others, but the first thing we have to do is say yes, we want this. And then we can say, you know, we really don't like what we're being offered here.

But to receive it as information is worse than nothing. Especially when we've been on record with several, I can think back as far as Chris Lorenc putting forward a proposal saying we want rapid transit in this City. And I'm sure even back before 1989 there were other proposals that have said that. We've had several documents that have come forward and say yes we should have rapid transit and yes it should start with the southwest corridor and that's all this motion is saying. It's saying there is the money there. Let's go ask.

So receiving it as information is very weak. Why don't we just say yes, we're going to do that. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Councillor Thomas. Councillor Smith.

Councillor Smith: Mr. Speaker, you know, it's, this debate reminds me of the whole Quebec question, all the years of haggling. You know, it goes on and on and on. And we go on and on and on about rapid transit.

I agree that receiving it as information does absolutely nothing. You know, we have the Big City Mayors conferences. I gather our Mayor has not attended. He sends a Councillor. You know like we have to join with the other cities.

You know, the only thing that's been said today that makes sense about this was Councillor O'Shaughnessy when he talked about going after the Federal government for a sizeable sum. That's what we should be doing.

And obviously we have to decide that we want this. You know, we have to make

that decision. And, this, this clause does not do it. Receive as information. You know I can go back and list all the things that we received as information where we did nothing after. It's like putting it in a big deep hole.

Let's not support this resolution. Let's take some leadership. Mr. Mayor, you can do it. Do it.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Wyatt you're the final speaker.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think one of the reasons we're here today debating this is because of the unexpected Federal announcement of $17 million or $17.9 million towards rapid transit which I think was unexpected and I think is very welcome, and it's brought the issue to the fore for us.

I don't for one moment believe that the Federal government will write us a massive cheque. At this point in the history of this Province they are spending hundreds of millions on the floodway. They're spending millions in transfer payments to Manitoba, actually billions.

I think the key issue here Mr. Speaker is exactly where the Federal dollars are going, flowing into the Province right now. We saw the Provincial budget recently and really, the biggest bank in this Province Mr. Speaker, is the Broadway bank. And the Provincial budget was very clear, that bank is closed in many ways to municipalities across this Province, including Winnipeg. And you know, the reality is Mr. Speaker, for us to deal with rapid transit or any other of the major issues we're facing today as a municipality, we need the Province to come to the table.

I'm strongly supporting the motion to receive it as information because I think that it's, the motion refers to the Rapid Transit Task Force report which I think is great and the Councillor was a member of that, who is moving it, Councillor Gerbasi, but if you actually read the report Mr. Speaker, the report is very clear. The report recommends in the first phase that the entire southwest corridor be built and part of the eastern corridor in the first phase.

It's, the motion is actually factually therefore incorrect before us today and that's why we're receiving it as information. It refers to phase one being the southwest corridor. Well phase one of the report refers to the entire corridor. So the motion before us is factually incorrect and that's why Council in order to support it would be not only misleading but factually wrong and therefore should be received as information.

There is no doubt that I think we're closer than ever before, thanks to the leadership of the Mayor, I think we're closer than ever before to achieving something great for this City. The fact of the matter is Mr. Speaker, the debate is over. Global warming is here. We know that. You have executives of oil companies standing up and saying you know what, we've got a problem. We don't have a solution for at least another 50 years and we're reaching the oil crunch now. The prices are starting to go up. We know there's going to a major problem. This is probably one of the greatest challenges the economies of western, of the western world have faced in the longest time Mr. Speaker, because the entire economy of the west has relied on oil and cheap oil.

And so, we have to I believe, partake and lead in a major shift. I think there's going to be a major shift occurring and I think Winnipeg is well positioned to lead that major shift, and that is to move away, as much as we can, away and give options other than the private automobile, and that means building busways. It also means Mr. Speaker, taking existing regional roads and converting them into diamond lanes or actually dedicated lanes, that takes leadership. That does take a bit of political guts in the sense of taking lanes away from cars. That's a tough call but I think we're actually going to be, we're going to have no choice Mr. Speaker in the coming years but to be facing that decision.

I think we're at the verge of doing something great, and you know, when I, whenever I go to Cuba Mr. Speaker, one

of the greatest challenges I find there is not the language. It's not the fact that you don't have all the conveniences you have here. It's the fact that you come from a society like ours which is extremely fast paced and we expect things today and we expect things now and maybe that's a good thing of our society, but when you go there, you've got to slow down and one of the things the Cubans always tell me Mr. Speaker is (speaking Spanish) patience my love, patience.

And let us go forward with that in mind, knowing that we are I think very close to achieving something great, thanks to the leadership again of the Mayor. And I think this motion is factually incorrect. It should be received as information and that's where we should be going from here. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Mayor, closing.

Mayor Katz: Thank you Mr. Speaker. First of all, I appreciate Councillor Gerbasi putting her comments on the record. I will say that I agree with a lot of the things she said. Unfortunately, I don't agree with everything but I do agree with a lot of the things she said.

What I find interesting Mr. Speaker, is when we talk about transit. Our transit grant Mr. Speaker was frozen since the early '90s. I guess that would mean at least three Mayors before me were unable to get the Province to come up with more funding for transit as the City's costs continued to rise and rise and rise.

And Mr. Speaker, with due respect to all the other Mayors, it was my style of leadership and negotiation and dialogue with the Province that brought them to the table where now they are 50/50 and they've made a long term commitment to be 50/50. I think I have a very good relationship with the Province.

And when you talk about the $18 million dollars that came forward, the announcement, and I know there were many here who wanted the Province to make the commitment that that would go to rapid transit. Well I heard Councillors Vandal and Thomas and Gerbasi and Smith, all talk about that. I didn't see a rally on Broadway picketing saying put the money in there.

I can tell you I went to the Province and said here is what we're prepared to do. Will you match it? I don't know if that was God or Councillor Clement but someone said no. Never got the answer Mr. Speaker.

So the realities are, when you are so bold and you show all that bravo here, where is that same bravo and passion when it comes to Broadway? I'd like to see the same. Throw political stripes aside. Let's just do what's right. I think we all agree with that.

Now here is the essence of it Mr. Speaker. It would have been nice, if I got a phone call, just a phone call from a Councillor Smith or Thomas or Vandal, I've got to leave Councillor Gerbasi out of it because she did make a phone call and ask me what's going on. Because you know what? I don't need this wonderful debate to influence me to do what's right or the rest of Council. We already have some very positive dialogue going on at this particular point in time.

And the realities are, which I said once before, you don't go to Broadway and tell the Premier what to do. You don't go to Ottawa and tell the Prime Minister what to do. You dialogue. You dialogue in private, and you let them know very passionately and intelligently why something is needed and why it's the right thing for everybody because they represent the citizens of Winnipeg as well. That's my style, that's the way I will continue to do it, that is why I will not support the motion.

I've had these conversations with Councillor Gerbasi on so many occasions. She knows the way I do things and I will continue to do it that way because I believe that's the way we get things done.

And I hope to be here when we see rapid transit from our downtown to the University of Manitoba. I think it would be a positive step in the right direction. And

as Councillor Vandal said, long overdue, should have, could have happened, 40 years ago. The bottom line is we're talking now, and it will be up to this Council to get things done. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Mr. Mayor. Are you ready for the question?

All in favour? Councillor Thomas and Vandal, one of you recorded in opposition. And Councillor Smith, Councillor Pagtakhan. Let's have a vote. All in favour receiving it as information, just hold it, receiving this as information. All in favour receiving this as information please stand.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Katz, Councillors Browaty, Clement, Fielding, Leipsic, Nordman, O'Shaughnessy, Steeves, Swandel, Wyatt, and Mr. Speaker Councillor Lazarenko.

Nays

Councillors Gerbasi, Pagtakhan, Smith, Thomas and Vandal.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 11, Nays 5.

Mr. Speaker: It's Carried.

Item No. 5, Madam Clerk.

Item 5 - General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres - Separation of Westridge Community Centre File PR-2

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker I'm not sure but I think it was Councillor Thomas who asked to have this set aside so I would very much like to hear comments and then I will respond.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: Yes. First I would like to congratulate the Westridge and Whyte Ridge communities for successfully negotiating their separation into two community centres with the funding that will come with that for each of those centres. This means that middle class and upper middle class areas of the City will now have two centres serving their community and this is good for them.

I would like to know how many people and how many children will be serviced by this, the attached report doesn't say. But I would like to point out that there are 12,000 people, 2,000 children, 69.4% of which are under the age of 9, that have lost not one but two community centres. These children do not have summer cottages in which to go. These children do not have nearby alternatives.

Now, as well as losing Kelvin Community Centre in which some of them had to walk upwards of 1.2 kilometres to get to Kelvin, there was an additional 1.6 kilometres to get to Bronx. They will now have to walk to a third community centre of Melrose and that will be an a additional 1.2 kilometres as well. Meaning that if they live south of Elmwood Cemetery or if they live on the west side close to the Redwood/Hespeler Bridge, they will be walking in excess…

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: of 3.2 kilometres…

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: in each direction.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Thomas, Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: Stick to the subject before us.

Councillor Thomas: Yes. In Westridge Community Centre, I believe it's much closer. I would like to point out that these children need programming and they need it nearby.

I do not begrudge the citizens of Whyte Ridge and Westridge for getting their community centres. I will be supporting that. I want all of Council to be aware that there needs to be something done for the citizens of Elmwood who were devastated by the destruction this week of their community centre.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you.

Councillor Thomas: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Steeves.

Councillor Steeves: When I saw my colleague Mr. Speaker, Councillor Thomas pull this aside I actually had a small suspicion that the discussion of Kelvin might be behind the setting aside of the report for discussions today.

Although it would appear that Councillor Thomas has not taken any issue with the report itself, and I anticipate she will be in support although I don't know that she said yea or nay directly in her comments previous.

As I understand it, and looking at the report, this report is a recommendation of the GCWCC, Mr. Speaker. This is what has been recommended by the body, that this Council has put in charge for want of a better term, of these types of issues at the community level.

And I want to stress that a little bit Mr. Speaker. This is something that they are saying is a good thing and should work in this community as opposed to the other item, the aforementioned community centres as highlighted by my colleague from Elmwood-East Kildonan that the contrary recommendation, as I recall.

This is being done in conjunction with our (inaudible) policy, again as I understand it, something that we all put in place will result, as I understand it and no increase in square footage, there will be no financial impact and the operating grant is to be divided between the two facilities. Those are some of the issues that I think may be highlighted as a little bit different.

If you happen to know the area as compared to again, the aforementioned situation that we spent a goodly amount of time talking about in this honourable chamber Mr. Speaker, you'll know that physically speaking, these two facilities are very, very far apart in non, in completely non-coinciding communities. I would respectfully submit that that is different then the other situation that my colleague from Elmwood-East Kildonan highlighted. It really is apples and oranges in every way.

These were, and the chronology is laid out in the report Mr. Speaker. March 2006, the community centres, Westridge got together and met with representatives of GCWCC to talk about the process. Meetings April 26th and October of '06, formally voted to investigate the process. June 2006, December 2007, the articles pertaining to the separation of the centre were printed in the community centre's newsletter. February 13th/07, the board unanimously passed a motion. December 20th those who sat on the City Centre District Community Centre Board voted unanimously to support separation, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. This is the type of process that we followed all the way through.

I'm hoping that if you look down the chronology of some of that type of process, you'll start to notice some of the differences in the process here, verses the process that was embarked upon pursuant to the aforementioned issue that my learned colleague from Elmwood-East Kildonan mentioned.

There, we had a situation where, really I mean and I'm not faulting or pointing a finger at anybody, but ostensibly, the community centre had ceased operating. There was I guess, the death knell, if I could use that term, came when the GCWCC or the Community Services department was contacted by the custodian, who was running the said facility and said I can't even find anybody to sign the cheques that need to be signed so we can operate this facility and he handed over the keys in essence, and this was after, I don't remember the exact number, four, five, six consecutive years

of not having quorum at the AGM, those types of things.

We're also, as everybody knows as a City, investing a sizeable sum of money for the rehabilitation of a facility that's not very far away from another facility that was aforementioned by my colleague.

I really don't think that there is any fair comparison between these two issues, if you really do stand back and honestly and objectively compare the two. What we've done, and rightly or wrongly we've done it together, we've empowered an organization, the GCWCC to go out and try to work through these community problems together, and try to come to solutions.

And in the same way that the GCWCC was very involved in the Kelvin/Bronx Park issue with the co-operation and the full knowing of my colleague's office from Elmwood-East Kildonan by virtue of the attendance of her executive assistant at the meetings themselves, this has followed a process of full public disclosure, transparency and accountability. I don't believe that anybody who has been at all fair, or at all objective about this report could look at this and say there is anything at all untoward.

And I'm trusting by making these comments that this will end for the moment, the comparisons and the discussion with respect to the other incident that we spent a fair amount of time talking about in this chamber as well. I think it would be unfair to the people of Westridge and Whyte Ridge to sort of drag this report into a debate this Council had, fair enough, but had regarding an area of the City and another issue that has nothing at all to do with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: No further speakers. Mr. Mayor, closing.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, it appears the only reason this was set aside was for some political grandstanding. I not going to be part of it. I think it's time we move on. It appears that everybody on the floor of Council is supportive so let's get the job done.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, thank you Mr. Mayor.

All in favour of Item 5? Opposed? None. It's Carried.

Addendum report of April 21 of 2008, Mr. Mayor.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
DATED APRIL 21, 2008**

Mayor Katz: Thank you Mr. Speaker, I move that the rule be suspended and the Consent Agenda Items 1 to 6 be adopted.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Browaty: No. 4, I have a motion on it.

Mr. Speaker: There is two motions. Motion No., Councillor Browaty you have a motion? I tried, I tried, I tried Bill. Councillor Browaty.

**Item 4 - Accommodation Tax
File FL**

Mr. Speaker: Item 4 has been stood down. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker I think we're all aware of what this is. I would love to hear from Councillor Browaty, I've had the opportunity, his motion and I'm sure he will explain what his game plan is, so let's just listen.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Browaty.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Mr. Chairman, Point of Order.

Mr. Speaker: Oh I should call the question on Items 1, 2, 3 and 5 as Consent Agendas.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: And 6 while you're at it.

Mr. Speaker: And 6. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Item, Councillor Browaty.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Point of Order.

Mr. Speaker: What's your Point of Order?

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Where does it say this is an amendment? How does it amend the clause? What is the new wording? It's a stand alone separate motion which couldn't be debated until Motions come up.

Mr. Speaker: To tell you the truth I didn't even see it until it was pointed out to me. Mr. Clerk I think Councillor O'Shaughnessy is right. It's not? Are you sure? No, no, it's in order. It's in order Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: So would you read out the new resolution part of the clause that would be with this amendment?

Mr. Speaker: I'll get the clerk to read that out.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: It doesn't say it.

Mr. Speaker: Richard.

City Clerk: Well this amendment was received quite late. The intent of the amendment is to look at the details of the Accommodations Tax that are therefore in front of you and to specifically put a cap of $5 million dollars in revenue.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Would this add a point 7 or a point 8? What is it?

City Clerk: Yes, it would. And if it were written out, then the amendment should properly say by adding the resolve included in the amendment and if it passed we would have to add an additional resolve in the clause of Councillor Browaty.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Mr. Chairman, while I respect to very deeply the ability and knowledge of our City Clerk, I've never seen an amendment that doesn't say amendment on it and doesn't tell you what the new clause would then read. And this is, this is why we have motions in writing is to eliminate stuff like this. Why we made all motions to be in writing but they should also have to be lucid.

Mr. Speaker: Well what's, what is the will of Council? Deal with it? Let's deal with it. Deal with it. Deal with it. Deal with it. Councillor Browaty.

Motion No. 1
Moved by Councillor Browaty
Seconded by Councillor Vandal

WHEREAS The Municipal Revenue (Grants and Taxation) Act provides that the council of a municipality may pass by-laws imposing such forms of taxes as it deems advisable within the municipality including, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, taxes on persons who purchase hotel and motel accommodation;

AND WHEREAS a tax on accommodation of short duration within the City of Winnipeg is intended to support attracting events, meetings and conferences to Winnipeg;

AND WHEREAS Destination Winnipeg is mandated to assist in these efforts, existing and incremental funding for attracting events meetings and conferences to Winnipeg should be directed to Destination Winnipeg;

AND WHEREAS the Winnipeg Convention Centre could apply, based on the merit of the individual application, for funds to attract events, meetings and conference to Winnipeg based on the criteria of the fund, but not for general operating or capital improvement expenses;

AND WHEREAS the fund would be administered by a committee whose membership would consist of a majority representing the hospitality industry;

AND WHEREAS there is great variance in the projections of the amount of funds that would be generated by the Accommodations Tax;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the initial rate of the tax be set by the best estimates of the City of Winnipeg Assessment and Taxation Department based on declared room revenues to achieve $5 million in revenue;

AND THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the level of the tax be adjusted up or down rounded up to the nearest half percentage point on June 1st of each year so that the tax generate $5 million in the subsequent year based on the previous year's revenue.

Councillor Browaty: Thank you Mr. Speaker and I apologize if the wording on this was not to the proper protocol.

I rise today to speak to my amendment to the proposed Accommodations Tax. First I want to make it clear that I'm not opposed to the City of Winnipeg levying an accommodations tax. Currently the City receives no direct incremental benefit from the many exciting events that come to town like the Tim Horton's Brier, the Grey Cup, the Juno Awards and hopefully soon, the return of the World Junior Men's Hockey. Yet we are asked to and we do provide financial assistance.

The Province and Federal governments can justify their support through direct increases in sales tax revenues. The City does not enjoy that windfall and instead fund these events on the backs of current revenue sources, mainly property taxes.

The amendments I propose cap the revenues to be raised from the Accommodations Tax at $5 million dollars. This allows a portion of the revenues from the tax to be directed to pick up part of Destination Winnipeg's current funding related to the hospitality industry as well as provide incremental funding to Destination Winnipeg to attract further new tourism, convention and event business to the City.

It also helps, allows the City to set up a reserve fund for providing sponsorships for major events like the Brier, the Junos and the Grey Cup, that we currently do not receive direct benefit from.

I like our Convention Centre. It is both a local gathering place and a venue where we welcome people from across the country and around the world. It is also a first class venue to host events like the Words and Deeds Leadership Award Dinner, the International Conference on War Affected Children and the Mayor's City Summit. It also plays host to annual events like the Home Expressions Show, the Wedding Show, the Rotary Career Symposium, the (Inaudible) Show, the Winnipeg Wine Festival, and many, many more.

But at this point there is no plan on the table that I'm aware of to expand the Convention Centre and I have doubts that there is a solid business case to be made to expand our Convention Centre. I hope I am wrong. I find it strange that we are starting a reserve for a Convention Centre expansion when I am not aware of any offers on the table from other levels of government for support.

On the operating side, taxpayers in Winnipeg support the Convention Centre to the tune of almost $3 million dollars a year today. How much more will taxpayers have to subsidize a larger convention centre? As I stated in my remarks about the Operating Budget, we need to look at all the alternatives to ensure we maintain this publicly accessible facility in the most prudent way possible. We need to have the discussion.

I think it's time we explore the possibility of third party management of the facility if it maintains public accessibility, quality of services and decreases or eliminates dependence on City subsidies. My proposal is to remove support of the Convention Centre from the Accommodations Tax because we simply don't have a plan. And we need to have this debate before we start establishing this reserve.

Recently, other cities have become quite aggressive in attracting events of a smaller scale by providing a variety of inducements. Sometimes these include discounted conference venue fees, hosted receptions or local shuttle bus transportation for events ranging from professional conferences to darts tournaments. That's why an independent board of people from the hospitality industry should be charged with determining which proposals provide the best use of this new inducement funding to bring new business to Winnipeg.

Finally, I've heard numbers discussed about how much revenue this tax will range, will bring in and they range from $3 million dollars to $8 million dollars per year. The latest numbers from the hotel industry suggest that maybe $7 million dollars while the Budget for the first full year of this tax only budgets for $3 million dollars in revenue.

I believe in fair taxation. That's why I propose we ask our Assessment department, which has information on the accommodations revenue of our hotels to set the tax at a rate to achieve a target of $5 million dollars to be raised from the tax. That amount would clearly cover all the objectives that I describe and provide support for incremental tourism funding.

The Mayor is committed to re-examine the tax if it raises more than $3 million dollars projected. By adopting my amendment we have the opportunity to ensure the tax is adjusted when the revenues don't meet or exceed the objective set out by the tax. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Councillors I would like to remind once again that I check with the clerks each and every Tuesday, the day before Council and I was with them at 4:30, there were no motions such as this, no motion at all until this morning. And I would suggest you have to be fair when you're presenting a motion such as this. Give it earlier so the clerks could have a chance to review it instead of us trying to find, Councillor O'Shaughnessy was correct, because this motion really is not worded properly the way it should be for us to consider. Thank you. Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This…

Mr. Speaker: Councillor O'Shaughnessy hold it. Hold it. What's wrong? Oh there's a second motion. And when was this motion brought forward? Just now. Okay Councillor Leipsic, Councillor O'Shaughnessy we'll get Councillor Leipsic to move her Motion No. 2.

Motion No. 2
Moved by Councillor Leipsic
Seconded by Councillor Fielding

THAT Item 4 of the Report of the Executive Policy Committee dated April 21, 2008, pertaining to the Accommodation Tax By-law be amended to delete Recommendation 2 in its entirety and substitute the following:

"2. That the Province of Manitoba be requested to amend The Retail Sales Tax Act to exempt the City of Winnipeg's Accommodation Tax from the Retail Sales Tax and to request the Government of Canada to exempt the City of Winnipeg's Accommodation Tax from the Goods and Services Tax."

Councillor Leipsic: Thank you Mr. Speaker. My Motion relates to Item 4, report of Executive Policy Committee dated April 21/08, pertaining to Accommodation Tax By-law be amended to delete Recommendation 2 in its entirety and substitute the following "that the Province of Manitoba be requested to amend the Retail Sales Tax Act to exempt the City of Winnipeg Accommodation Tax from the Retail Sales Tax and to request the Government of Canada to exempt the City of Winnipeg's Accommodation Tax from the Goods and Service Tax."

Mr. Speaker: Thank you.

Councillor Leipsic: Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: First of all, Mr. Speaker, Motion 2 I think, no matter where you stand on the item, deserves the full support of this Council and on behalf of myself and the City's Finance administration I wish to apologize for not having that be part of the original clause as it clearly should have been all along.

The main amendment, Item 1, confuses me. Never having been a tiny Tory or, I really don't understand why you would want to tell the citizens of Winnipeg that you're going to limit their revenue from a source of income derived from Calgarians, Edmontonians, Torontonians, Haligonians, residents of Quebec City, people from England, Germany, France, Australia, the Philippines, wherever but you're not going to put the same limit on their fees and charges and their taxes that you're charging on their property.

If this brings in more than $5 million dollars would that be a shame? Or would that be a source of great cheering in this City? This is money we're not going to have to tax Winnipeggers on their homes. This is a good thing Martha. Why would we want to pass such a silly, silly restriction on our ability to raise money.

I don't understand it. I don't think the good Councillor Browaty made it clear to me or, well maybe it's conceited to say, or to anyone else, but I feel that. Why would we want to restrict how much money we bring in? Are we going to limit how much money we are going to put into Destination Winnipeg in the future? Are we going to put, limit how much money we're going to for events promotion? Are we going to limit our grants to the Convention Centre or our saving for the future for a Convention Centre?

I mean, I can't think of one good reason that we should put a cap on how much money this tax brings in. If you build two new hotels in Winnipeg do we lower the rate even further? I just don't understand that and maybe in summing up, Councillor Browaty can bring me around, but that would be interesting to see.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Councillor O'Shaughnessy. Any further speakers on the two motions before us? Councillor Leipsic you will be, you're closing on yours.

Councillor Leipsic: I want to speak to Councillor Browaty's …

Mr. Speaker: Oh you want to speak. Okay go ahead. You just do it, you introduced your Motion okay now you speak, speak to the clause. Go ahead Councillor Browaty, go ahead.

Councillor Leipsic: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to comment to Councillor Browaty. I'm also, I guess I'm wearing two hats here today in that I am a representative of Council on the board of the Convention Centre, as is Councillor Nordman and at any time Councillor Browaty feel free to come and ask us.

There is an expansion report. It has been received and tomorrow actually on the agenda for the Executive Committee meeting, Item No. 3, Expansion Committee Update. This didn't just start Councillor Browaty it's been going on for quite a while. And I guess that's what I wanted to basically say to Councillor Browaty.

And I saw some question marks regarding my Motion. This is simply a housekeeping issue regarding asking the Province to ask the Federal government to exempt our tax here okay.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Tax on tax.

Councillor Leipsic: Tax on tax.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Vandal.

Councillor Vandal: Mr. Speaker thank you. I'm going to speak to the main motion. I didn't support it in the Budget. I'm certainly not going to support it this morning. I don't think we could have chosen a worse time to add 5%, an arbitrary 5% tax to hotels. We know that the American economy is heading into recession. We know there has been layoffs in Steinbach of manufacturing firms.

I think we're fooling ourselves if we think that this is not going to be a disincentive for Americans to come up to our City, to enjoy our attractions, our amenities. And it's going to be a significant disincentive I think that's going to hurt the City at a time when the Canadian dollar is as high as it has ever been in the last 25 years. I think the last thing we need is a new tax.

And I guess on the bigger picture, is I think we need some sort of policy on where we're going with taxation. We've cobbled together a Budget for this year that was approved. There is a $38 million dollar deficit next year. There is a $55 million dollar deficit the year after. The Mayor is committed to a complete elimination of $57 million dollars of business tax. We've had property tax freezes or cuts over the last 12 years. And I think we need a plan. We need a plan on how we're going to deal with this issue.

Hotel tax was talked about during the New Deal discussions but let me be clear. Whenever a hotel tax or an alternative source of revenue to diversify our City of Winnipeg revenue side was discussed, there was a corresponding decrease in the property tax. It was never discussed out there on its own, cobbled together with no consultation and implemented in about two months, and I think that that's a significant distinction.

There was a set of assumptions brought forward. There was a plan for the City to move forward on the taxation side, and that is simply missing at this point. We don't know what's going to happen next year with $38 million. We don't know what's going to happen with $55 million dollar deficits.

And actually I find the whole thing quite amusing when we, when a Council is elected once every four years, that's definitely pro-business, the Mayor is elected four years ago, definitely pro-business, on promises to cut government largesse and become more efficient and cut taxes, cut business taxes, cut property taxes and what's one of the first things that comes out is a new tax. A brand new tax on hotels that without a plan on where we're going for the next three years, for the next three years on the whole issue of taxation.

I know that there has been talk about the revenue being earmarked for Destination Winnipeg, the Convention Centre expansion, but we know where this is really going. This is going to go into the black hole of civic administration and this is simply going to buy us room. There's going to be no more incremental funding for Destination Winnipeg. Does anyone really believe that?

Expansion of the Convention Centre? Where's the plan for the expansion of the Convention Centre? Has it ever been discussed at Executive Committee? At this Council? Has it been endorsed? Well not, not to my knowledge. I don't know when the last time we talked about a Convention Centre expansion on this floor, on this Council to move forward. It's simply not there.

The administration of the tax. Our Assessment department. Our Assessment department probably the most important department in the City of Winnipeg are going to be charged with administrating and collecting the tax when there is, we're going into a reassessment year. It's the cornerstone of our Operating and our Capital Budget is our Assessment department and we're giving them another task to, by the way collect what we think is going to be $5 million, maybe $3 million. We hope it's $8 million.

Mr. Speaker, I'm supporting Mr. Browaty, Councillor Browaty's amendment and I'm certainly not going to be supporting the clause as it comes forward today. We need a plan.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Mr. Speaker, I've heard it all, I think in this very short time that I've been on Council. We were, many of us were here when we had the New Deal debate Mr. Speaker, in this very chamber, when the monies came forward and the request was $500,000 on the total of $986,000 to be spent on the New Deal meetings to be held across the City.

What was one of the main taxes in the middle of the New Deal debate that was being proposed by the former Mayor Glen Murray? Hotel taxes, hotel taxes and members of EPC…

Mr. Speaker: Leave it! Let the speaker speak!

Councillor Wyatt: Hotel tax and there were meetings across this City Mr. Speaker and I attended many of them, and hotel tax was front and centre in meeting after meeting after meeting after meeting.

I'll tell you the difference Mr. Speaker between then and now. I'll tell you the difference between then and now Mr. Speaker, the difference is number one, this Council is showing the leadership to actually do it, verses just talk about it. And number two, Mr. Speaker, it's not going into the black hole of general revenues is exactly what was going to happen when that hotel tax, if it had been implemented it would have been a tax and grab, Mr. Speaker and that's all it would have been. And that was extremely clear at the time during the debate.

Mr. Speaker, this tax is going specifically to funding the Destination Winnipeg which is crucial to marketing the City. It's going to fund the subsidy that we know we've been funding out of taxpayer's general. What is wrong Mr. Speaker with not asking the taxpayers of the City to help us subsidize the Convention Centre rather than a hotel guest coming to Winnipeg? I think that's progressive and more importantly Mr. Speaker, it's going to fund special events coming to the City. Before we had to turn to the taxpayers of Winnipeg to have to find money to attract special events that are great for this City. Great for morale. How can anybody be against that Mr. Speaker? I don't understand.

And finally Mr. Speaker, and most importantly in my opinion, it's going to fund, set aside monies for a future expansion of Winnipeg Convention Centre. The single Mr. Speaker, biggest project probably seen in the downtown in generations. It was Mayor Steve Juba, Mr. Speaker, who had the vision and you were here at the time Mr. Speaker, who had the vision. (Laughing). Sorry about that Harry. Who had the vision to build the Convention Centre. The first of its kind in Canada, in 1975. In 1975, that's 33 years ago.

We need to expand the Convention Centre now because if we don't, cities like Hamilton will be out-competing us for conventions. We're going to go from a tier 2 Convention Centre, you know, Toronto and Vancouver they're up here we know that but we'll go from a tier 2 down to a tier 3 and how far are we gonna go? Tier 4 or 5? Well if we privatize the Convention Centre Mr. Speaker and give it away you can be guaranteed we're going to be falling to a tier 5. We won't even be on the radar screen Mr. Speaker.

This is a great City. This is a great City, Mr. Speaker and has a great future. But Mr. Speaker, we have to have a vision to ensure that future is great. The Convention Centre, expanded Convention Centre. Mayor Juba built the first Convention Centre, Mayor Katz is gong to build the new Convention Centre with the support of this Council. We are setting aside the funds. That's what good for Winnipeg Mr. Speaker.

This clause should be endorsed unanimously. This motion, my friend from North Kildonan, I have to disagree with him on this one but we have to endorse this clause Mr. Speaker. This is good for the future of the City and I encourage all members of Council to support it. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. And remember I was here. So was Councillor O'Shaughnessy. The next speaker is Councillor Gerbasi.

Councillor Gerbasi: Was I even born then?

Mr. Speaker: No.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Definitely not.

Councillor Gerbasi: Anyway thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to clarify something. Talking about the New Deal that was brought up. There were those public meetings and there were those discussions. There is a word called consultation that this Council has sort of forgotten about. But what that word is, is you go out with a bunch of ideas and you air them out with the public. And I think the previous Council deserves some credit for having had some of those earlier discussions, which I recall Councillor Wyatt used to be a huge advocate of having public meetings in every ward of the City and having them talking about these things. He used to be.

But the point is that we had those discussions and it was a first step and it didn't happen then and that's because there wasn't support from many of the members of Council then who are now supporting something now. And there wasn't support from the hotel industry then either if my memory serves me right.

And I just wanted to say that I'm not opposed to the idea of a hotel tax but when you are bringing in something it's also how you bring it in, how high it is, where the money is going and various details about the issue. And that's what we're talking about. This is not just a, not everything is that simplistic and this isn't that simplistic.

I do agree that we should be supporting the Convention Centre. I agree we should be supporting an event or funds for events and supporting Destination Winnipeg. But I have been unable to get clarity in my discussions with the political staff, in discussions with anybody, and questions on the floor of Council during the Budget debate, I've been unable to get clarity about where exactly this money is going. Now EPC members seem to be confident it's all going to be just ducky, but I have to vote on the information that's been given to me and that clarity has not been given to me.

I also think we have to look at the number, you know, there has been a lot of people saying that we're going to get a lot more money, we're going to get enough money if we did 3%. I don't know where this 5% came from and I also haven't had it clarified in terms of that, how much money we're going to get. It doesn't make sense you know to bring in a tax and say oh yeah we'll just simply decrease it if we get more money. I mean that's not realistic.

And then the last point I'd like to make is that one of the points that Councillor Vandal said that makes sense is we need a plan for taxation. We need a strategy for how are we going to make the City financially viable. And we don't. We have a one year budget that doesn't tell you what we're doing next year for business tax. We have promises to cut taxes. We have budgets that don't balance in the next two years. Okay so we're bringing this in, and yeah we need more money but we also, in fairness to the business community, as well as residents, everybody, we should be having, we should have a clear, long-term plan that this fits into and that's what's missing.

So I think it might be a good idea to have those New Deal type of meetings. Maybe Councillor Wyatt can champion that as an EPC member. And we can have meetings all across the City and have everybody come in to discuss what they think is fair taxation and we could hear from the business community and we could hear from the residents and we could hear from everyone. That is what's not happening.

And also what's not happening is a clear fiscal plan. It seems to have gone out the window. So I like the idea of a hotel tax but it has to fit into a context of a clear financial plan, and this doesn't, and the questions that I asked have not been satisfactorily answered in terms of clarity.

So I wish I could support it. I'm glad there is some enthusiasm from EPC. I hope that those answers are clear to them and maybe that's why they're supporting it and good for them. But if you want full support from Council, members of Council you have to include all members of Council in the discussion, you have to include the community in the discussion, you have to work with people, like our hoteliers and

our downtown BIZ and our community that are good citizens instead of having matches with them, fighting. And you know I don't know whose fault that was because again, non-EPC members were not part of any of these discussions

So if you want unanimity we all need to start working together more and we need to do more consultation with our community and those are areas where I think we're losing ground in comparison to previous administrations. And we have the opportunity to gain that ground back under your leadership. So thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Steeves.

Councillor Steeves: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Very clever. Very clever. I'll be rising in support of the report as tabled. Not the amendment.

I'm reminded of this issue given the good work that been done by the Hotel Association, and they have every right to come here and do a good job of bringing forward their interests of course, and putting their position forward to help Council make its decision with as much information as possible.

I am reminded however, and I should say this, that having the industry come forward it does remind me of the debate that we had with respect to the smoking issue, you'll recall when we went through those discussions where we tried, we were introducing the by-law that prohibited smoking in the City of Winnipeg. Very difficult issue. Very divisive issue.

At the time we were of course offered every reassurance by members of the hotel industry that that would in fact be a really, really bad thing for that industry, potentially a fatal blow to the hotel industry here in the City of Winnipeg. I think what we saw as we stuck to our guns as it were and as we moved through the debate, that looking back it was probably the right thing to do that we did, despite the fact that our industry told us that it would be hugely detrimental to the financial health of the industry.

No one can predict the future and obviously the industry has an obligation to err on the side of maybe what they see in their best interest. But, just because a person sees something as being potentially financially detrimental doesn't necessarily make it so. And I think we have a pretty graphic example of that in the very recent history here at the City of Winnipeg.

The City of Winnipeg Council, if there is one thing that we can walk into any room, right across this country and probably right across North America, and be the leading authority in, it's fiscal responsibility. There is no city on this continent of any size, that has done what this Council has done with taxation, of the citizens that it represents. There is no city of any size, if you look back over the last decade, that has watched the bottom line in terms of taxation revenue like the group of people in this room have. It would be patently absurd for anybody to suggest that this Council, and I'm speaking of everybody around this table, for anybody to suggest that this Council is not incredibly and absolutely fiscally responsible.

If you look at Edmonton, Ottawa, Toronto, Montreal and Calgary and Vancouver, the cities that have been mentioned and we've been compared to this morning, quite rightly. They've probably increased their taxation to residents in their cities by an average of I would say 4% per year over the last five years at least, if not more. This City, and these Councillors around this table have nothing to apologize for when it comes to watching the bottom line. Nobody does it better than this Council. There are certainly things that we could maybe be better at in terms of other issues that we're often called to task on. But people around this continent look at this City and say how are they doing it.

I only mention that to remind people that this is not a tax grab Council. There is no Council more responsible when it comes to issues of fiscal responsibility.

Revenue diversification Mr. Speaker is good. Revenue diversification is

something that we should strive towards, not run away from. The New Deal discussions have been mentioned more robustly, and I would say better than I have, by my friend from Transcona. But he is exactly right. We went through this entire debate and spent a lot of that taxpayer money I just talked about, on trying to convince our citizens that this type of thing is exactly what we should be doing.

By not raising taxes an average of 3% over the last 10 years we have probably left between $150 and $200 million dollars in the economy of Winnipeg for citizens to spend as they see fit each and every year. That is an economic choice that this Council has made and the businesses in the City of Winnipeg are benefiting by being in a position to access that $200 million dollars of funding every year for their businesses because it's not coming to the City of Winnipeg.

Our history as a nation has shown us that when provinces have run into problems fiscally they put in place a PST with the exception of one that has some pretty substantial oil revenue. When the Federal government of Canada came across the same issue in the early 1990's they instituted the GST. As unpopular as those two taxes may have been, look at what they have done to the marginal tax rates in this country and in these provinces?

It would be incredible to consider the prospect that somebody might be raising marginal tax rates at the Federal/Provincial level. You will probably never see that happen again. Why? Because they have diversified their revenue streams and they have included growth-based revenue streams. This is a small potato answer to that type of issue that the other levels of government have done but we all should agree with the principle. History should have taught us that.

It would be impossible for me to finish this speech without addressing my opponents, not opponents but my Council colleagues directly on this motion. I say opponents on this report. It is incredible that the people I suspect are going to vote against this report are actually going to do that Mr. Speaker. Absolutely incredible.

My friend from St. Boniface, to suggest that because of the business climate in the United States, this is a bad road for us to go down. I take it that obviously, that he would be in full support of a business tax decrease, extending the logic, correct Mr. Speaker? I mean I'm sure that would be the next step. He would never argue against such a thing would he? That would be absurd if someone was to suggest that well jeez why can't we support that.

My friend Councillor Gerbasi, whom I love more than the sun (laughter). I have watched the debate on the pork plant, to put a plant where she did as a Councillor and then not want to have one at the new site in Transcona and then to see her privatize over half the garbage service here in Winnipeg but not want to take it any further, despite our administration's assurance that it would bring in, it would save revenue, and then of course the Police Commission, a complete (inaudible) and now this.

I've stood shoulder to shoulder with the people who are going to vote against this report and Mr. Speaker, if anyone is interested, I have heard them speak as passionately and probably even more articulately than I about the reasons we need this type of taxation and this type of revenue in this City. What I think is going to happen, is in the next 15 seconds and 2 minutes, because I'll need an extension, they are going to change their mind Mr. Speaker, and they are going to see the error of their ways and they are going to look back at their history as a Councillor, and they're going to say....

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Gerbasi moves extension of two minutes

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Steeves: And they're going to say Mr. Speaker, as they rise with me and with other folks who are supportive of this report, they are going to say, I remember when I spent that money trying to convince the citizens of the City of

Winnipeg and this is what we needed to do, I'd temporarily forgotten when I made my speech earlier in this debate but now I remember and that's why I'm standing up right now.

I won't be supporting the amendment. I don't think that it's right-headed and I think it's a little bit cumbersome and that may be being a bit diplomatic. What we're trying to do here Mr. Speaker, is create an administration, and a revenue model that is not dependent upon property taxation. Why? So our administration isn't obligated and tempted to consistently and constantly look for building around the ring of the City to increase the revenue stream that flows to this City.

This is the type of tax Mr. Speaker, that will encourage our administration to work with the business community, to bring more people in here so we can realize more revenue. This is exactly the type of direction a city should be moving in. And if there is one city that has the credibility after 11 years to do so, it's the City of Winnipeg. I look forward Mr. Speaker, to assured unanimous support for this report.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Councillor. Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: Thank you. And now for something completely different...

I will be supporting the amendment but I will not be supporting the clause and I need to explain why. Back in 1989, I brought forward a motion saying that I wanted to see two cents on the dollar room tax, but that was part of a mix. And this is five cents not two, and I believe that the amount of money that will be collected from this tax will be $9 million dollars. And there is the rub for me.

Because I don't believe this is relieving property taxes. I believe this is relieving business taxes. In the past two years there have been $9 million dollars reduction, $2 million and then $7 million in the business tax. And I think it is unconscionable that we take the money from all the businesses and then attack one particular business, a business that is under siege at this time.

It should be a part of a strategy on how we do this. And while I would have preferred $3 million rather than $5 million, I do applaud Councillor Browaty for coming up with limits. And the limits are, I think appropriate, if not a little high.

I believe that the hotel business can pay their fair share, and I believe that all businesses can pay their fair share, based on the services that they receive. And while we in the past number of years have increased our services to the business community, we've decreased the amount of money that we collect from them. And I think fairly shortly, in order to make up for that, there is going to have to be a general increase in property tax, and I'm concerned about that. I don't think we're diverting, diversifying, we're limiting and I'm concerned about doing that. So I will be supporting the motion.

This was too much and it was at the wrong time, and I would suggest that in the future, if Executive Policy wants the support of Councillors who are not on Executive Policy Committee, they would do well to have a discussion with them rather than a last minute surprise such as this was. And they could get the advice from the business community, the advice from all Councillors, seminars that we used to have on a monthly basis are gone and these discussions could have happened beforehand and we wouldn't have last minute motions on the fly, trying to fix up the damage that has been done. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Councillor. No further speakers. I'll ask now the movers of Motion No. 2 and 1, Motion No. 2, in closing Councillor Leipsic, followed by Councillor Browaty. He will be closing his and then the Mayor will close and then we will be voting. Councillor, you have the floor, closing on your Motion.

Councillor Leipsic: It's simply Mr. Speaker, a housekeeping motion as I said, regarding tax. We will be asking the Province and the Federal government to ask for the removal of our tax here. Okay.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Browaty on your Motion No. 1.

Councillor Browaty: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I feel this has been a positive debate here today. First off, I am not opposed to an Accommodations Tax. I made that abundantly clear. I am in favour of taxes, new taxes that are very relevant and take away from other revenue sources that are relevant to the services provided.

I believe the gas tax that's out there today should 100% be funded towards roads. I applaud the Mayor for moving the water utility towards having 100% of the revenue from the water utility staying in the water utility and not going to general revenue. That hasn't been the way in the past. It hasn't been the way by the New Deal Mayor in the past but this Mayor is doing it and I applaud that.

The hotel tax though, should be going towards event sponsorship, event acquisition and growing the tourism industry here as well as taking away the burden that the City currently pays that help them in terms of providing those major event funding towards the City of Winnipeg.

If the hotel industry grows and if we do get more, if we do get two or three more hotels downtown and I hope we do because it would help the Human Rights Museum, things like that, the tax could go down. If it's still, if we're still, if that's enough money to bring in to acquire these events that other cities now are using this funding towards, using inducements to bring.

So those are my comments for today. I thank you for your time in listening. Again, I'm not opposed to the Accommodations Tax. I think we do need to have a further debate on the Convention Centre. $200 million dollars is a lot of money and as Jim Baker has pointed out, hotels as you get further and further away from the downtown core, have a less and less and less benefit from it. Maybe there should be a separate tax for downtown hotels to fund an expansion on the downtown Convention Centre. We need to have that debate.

And in fact in the Motion I proposed here the Winnipeg Convention Centre has the opportunity to participate in the funding that, the destination-type funding the inducement funding would provide just like every other venue and that's where I'm coming from here today. Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: You're closing, Mr. Mayor you're closing and then we'll have the vote.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, I wish with all my heart, that Councillor Steeves was accurate when he said people would listen to the arguments and this would be unanimous. Unfortunately we know that's not the case.

And I must say to you Mr. Speaker, everybody here should know a few facts. We are the only major city in Canada that doesn't have an Accommodation tax. We are the only major city in all of North America that doesn't have an Accommodation tax. And it's interesting Mr. Speaker because when our City hosts the Grey Cup, citizens of our City put up approximately three-quarters of a million dollars to make sure that event takes place.

The Provincial government gets 7% for all the money the people are spending. The Federal government used to get 7%, now it's 5%. You know what the City got back on its investment? Bubkis, gornisht, (speaking Yiddish) not a thing Mr. Speaker, nothing! And you know what's interesting, we talked about the fact, whether it's world hockey or world curling, we get approached all the time. And I think those events are good for our City. Who benefits the most? The hospitality industry.

I couldn't help but hear Councillor Thomas talk about how could you discriminate or pick out one industry. Whatever happened to protecting the movie theatres? They have been paying this entertainment tax forever. No one

cares about that whole industry? They don't count?

Here is the situation where an industry benefits. We're spending money. We're marketing. Who do you think funds Destination Winnipeg? But you know what Mr. Speaker, it's good for every single city, major city in North America, but not Winnipeg. The only thing I question is what took so long Mr. Speaker? Maybe next time we should lead and not follow every other major city in Canada.

I can't help but take exception when I hear some Councillors talk about this Accommodation Tax. The facts are, Mr. Speaker, we've identified the three areas where it's going to. Destination Winnipeg for marketing. A special event fund where we can do something which this City hasn't done. Councillor Browaty actually made mention of it and maybe we can do a better job than Edmonton. They go out there Mr. Speaker, and actively, they buy conventions Mr. Speaker. They will subsidize the rental charge. They will pay for transportation. Does Winnipeg do that? No. Maybe that's something we should be doing and I can assure you that something will start hopefully when this is approved.

But the facts are, I now understand when I hear Councillor Vandal speak, how the City got into trouble. Get out of your caves ladies and gentlemen, okay. This is a positive thing. You talk to the Hotel Association members downtown, the Convention Centre is positive. 80% of our clientele they're outside the Province. Yes it changes from area to area but don't get sucked in by the numbers that are thrown around. This is something that is good.

And we all talked about, we're facing deficits in the future. Well you know what, maybe it's time we be financially responsible. And I don't believe there is a more transparent and a more financially prudent Council than we are today. No one before us has done what we've done. We've put it all on the table.

And we talk about the Convention Centre, I agree, that is a debate. But not for later, for very much in the very near future we have to discuss that. And all Councillors should have the opportunity to give their opinion on what they think about the Convention Centre, whether it's the subsidy, whether how it's managed, whether it should continue the way it is, whether it should be outside management, that's a discussion that should take place.

But don't confuse the issue here right now, okay. This is not, this is basically a user fee people pay. I travel all over the world, and so do you. You know it's there. You know we all pay it. You know in some cities it's double this. And you know there was a point in time where the Manitoba Hotel Association was going to charge 2% and they were saying oh my God this is going to be 7%. Well guess what Mr. Speaker, they're not charging that 2%. That's dead. We're only talking about this 5%.

And Mr. Speaker, if in the end this 5% raises $5 million, great. If it raises $8 million or $9 million, yes, I think we need to take a look at it. But unless you look at the By-law that was passed with the exemptions, if you are staying more than 30 days Mr. Speaker, you don't pay it. If you're coming here for medical attention you don't pay it. If you're basically $30 or less, you don't pay it. There is a significant amount of exemptions to this.

And you know what, I can proudly say, and I know Councillor Vandal referred to it, how much it's going to cost to basically monitor this and to collect it. Well you know what? We met with the public service, and I am damn proud of the number they came up with, what it's going to take to do this better than I believe anybody else could do and they should be commended for that.

This is good. This is positive. Anyone who doesn't vote for this, shame on you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Mr. Mayor. Now we will vote on Motion No. 2. Motion No. 2, Councillor Leipsic.

All in favour? Opposed? Councillor Thomas recorded in opposition. Carried.

Motion No. 1. Councillor Browaty. Motion No. 1.

All in favour? Recorded vote has been called for.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Browaty, Pagtakhan, Thomas, and Vandal.

Nays

His Worship Mayor Katz, Councillors Clement, Fielding, Gerbasi, Leipsic, Nordman, O'Shaughnessy, Smith, Steeves, Swandel, Wyatt, and Mr. Speaker Councillor Lazarenko.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 4, Nays 12.

Mr. Speaker: It's Lost.

On the clause a recorded vote has been called for.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Katz, Councillors Clement, Fielding, Leipsic, Nordman, O'Shaughnessy, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Swandel, Wyatt, and Mr. Speaker Councillor Lazarenko.

Nays

Councillors Browaty, Gerbasi, Thomas, and Vandal.

City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 12, Nays 4.

Mr. Speaker: It's Carried.

Okay. It's a few minutes after 12:00 p.m. Obviously we are not going to finish the agenda that's before us now. Do we adjourn to 1:30 p.m.?

Councillor Clement so moves.

All in favour? Contrary? Carried. We'll reconvene at 1:30 p.m.

Reconvened meeting of Winnipeg City Council of April 23, 2008 at 1:35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor's it's 25 to, we'll start our meeting, continuation. The Notice of Motion, Councillor Gerbasi's Motion, Councillor.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF MOTIONS

Motion
Moved by Councillor Gerbasi,
Seconded by His Worship Mayor Katz*,*

WHEREAS malaria is the leading killer of children in Africa, taking a child's life every 30 seconds;

AND WHEREAS on April 25, 2000, at the African Summit in Abuja, Nigeria, Africa Malaria Day was declared as April 25th as a commitment by all nations to halve the burden of Malaria by 2010;

AND WHEREAS April 25th is also known and recognized as World Malaria Day by the international community;

AND WHEREAS the United Nations acknowledges the importance of the need to halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria not only as a goal in itself, but as an essential path toward achieving all the Millennium Development Goals by the target year of 2015;

AND WHEREAS Canadian citizens make an immense contribution to improving quality of life in communities around the world through their efforts as volunteers and supporters of international cooperation and partnership;

AND WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg is committed to international cooperation and partnership to improve the quality of life of all people as demonstrated by its "Sister City's" projects;

AND WHEREAS the BUY-A-NET Malaria Prevention Group, a registered charitable Canadian citizen and volunteer driven initiative, based in Kingston with an active Winnipeg branch, believes that together, as united citizens against malaria, we can prevent malaria and alleviate the pain and suffering inflicted upon people [particularly children and pregnant women] in Africa through the procurement and distribution of long lasting insecticide treated bed nets and antimalarial medicines free of charge, one village at a time;

AND WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg is known as "the Gateway to the West";

AND WHEREAS it takes so little to make a difference by providing nets to protect whole villages in Africa from malaria;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Mayor Katz and City Council express support for the outstanding efforts of community groups such as BUY-A-NET for their work on Malaria Prevention.

Councillor Gerbasi: Okay, thank you Mr. Speaker. I'll just speak quite briefly to this. This was the Motion which, first of all I would like to thank the Mayor for seconding the Motion. This is regarding the malaria Buy-A-Net efforts and Council's support for them.

I know that sometimes we do things outside what Council normally focuses on, occasionally we do that. We did that with the Falun Gong human rights issue in China, and we in a sense did that at noon today by acknowledging the soldiers overseas. And so occasionally we step outside the focus on urban issues that affect our City directly, and make a stand or provide some support for an important issue. So I just wanted to mention a little bit about this.

World Malaria Day is coming up on April 25th. And perhaps because I was a nurse before, and when a group of grandmothers and nurses come to me with an issue, it's pretty hard to turn them down, especially when they're saving lives and it's something that we can do very, very simply. It's a preventable illness. And it's preventable very cheaply with support for providing these nets.

So I just wanted to take the opportunity to encourage all Winnipeggers to contribute to Buy-A-Net. You can go to their website, Buy-A-Net and you can, for $350, a community group could save an entire village and protect the children of that village from unnecessary loss of life and tragedy.

So, I just wanted to thank Council for supporting this and hopefully, our Council, and one other point that's interesting that the City of Kingston, that our former CAO came from, was a City in Canada that, the first City in Canada that endorsed this, took a stand on this issue as a municipality.

So, anyways I just want to thank you for your support and I urge everyone to speak to their constituents and encourage our community to support the efforts to prevent malaria. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Councillor. Councillor Smith.

Councillor Smith: Yes. I'm definitely going to support this and especially since the FCM has come out and recommended us to this and our President here, Gord Steeves, I know you are going to be speaking on this, aren't you Gord?

Councillor Steeves: Oh yeah.

Councillor Smith: So that's why I'm supporting it largely because they are a very reasonable group with reasonable demands.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. No further speakers?

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

No Motions. Question Period. Oh By-laws. I've got to get back on my screen here. Oh yes. Consideration of By-laws. Mr. Mayor.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to, By-law No. 65/2008 I would like to lay over to the next Council meeting. Mr. Speaker, there is a process that the department has to go through. It's not quite complete so I would like to lay that one over. Just so you are aware of it. And then, there are By-laws No. 69/2008, 87/2008, 88/2008, and 89/2008, that I would like to have read for the first time.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. And Mr. Clerk, you have that By-law No. 65/2008 recorded? It will be laid over.

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws No. 69/2008, 87/2008, 88/2008, and 89/2008.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker I move that By-laws No. 69/2008, 87/2008 to 89/2008, both inclusive, be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws No. 69/2008, 87/2008 to 89/2008, both inclusive.

Mayor Katz: I move that the rule be suspended and By-laws No. 69/2008, 87/2008 to 89/2008, both inclusive, be read a third time and that same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Addendum, EPC Consideration of By-laws, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Thank you Mr. Speaker, I move that the rule be suspended and that the following By-laws be read a first time, By-law No. 70/2008, By-law No. 91/2008.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Thomas: Record me in opposition to By-law No. 70/2008.

Mr. Speaker: Okay you're recorded.

Clerk: By-law No. 70/2008, By-law No. 91/2008.

Mayor Katz: I move that By-laws No. 70/2008 and 91/2008, be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 70/2008, By-law No. 91/2008.

Mayor Katz: And Mr. Speaker I move that the rules be suspended and By-laws Nos. 70/2008 and 91/2008, be read a third time, and that same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Clerk you've got Councillor Thomas recorded each time? Okay, thank you. And Browaty, and Councillor Browaty, the two of them? Okay, fine. Okay.

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Speaker: Question period. Councillor Gerbasi.

Councillor Gerbasi: He doesn't even look to see if my hand is up (Laughter).

Mr. Speaker: I saw your hand way ahead of time.

Councillor Gerbasi: Okay. Thank you Mr. Speaker. The newly appointed Planning Director will be responsible for many areas not only real estate, but civic buildings, zoning, long-term planning, Plan Winnipeg, housing and the Heritage branch.

These are complex areas and deal with not only private development concerns but must balance the public good and neighbourhood vitality.

Does the Mayor have any concerns at all that the newly, about the newly appointed Director of Planning's level of experience in areas of City planning and in working with the public sector?

Mr. Speaker: Councillor, Councillor I don't think that's fair to be asking the Mayor the question.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: It's totally improper.

Councillor Gerbasi: Why?

Mr. Speaker: Because this person is just going to be starting with us.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Totally improper.

Mr. Speaker: You can't talk about individual people in Council. I mean this is a person that, Councillor withdraw that because this is not appropriate.

Councillor Gerbasi: Well Mr. Speaker, it's public knowledge that the person has been appointed. It's public knowledge what their credentials are. I'm simply asking the Mayor to comment.

Mr. Speaker: Look you ask the Mayor, go to his office and ask. Publicly it's not fair. We don't do that. We don't discuss employees in Council.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Hear, hear.

Councillor Gerbasi: Okay.

Mr. Speaker: Any further questions Councillor Gerbasi?

Councillor Gerbasi: No.

Mr. Speaker: Any further questions? Councillor Thomas.

Councillor Thomas: Yes in spite of the belief of some City Councillors, there was 12 programs operating at Kelvin Community Centre and over 100 volunteers before they were summarily removed from the premises.

And the question that I have with regard to that is no one has called the head of the Chess club. No one has called the head of the Wrestling club. No one has called the head or the person who operated movie night.

And the question I have for the Mayor is when will there be a call forthcoming telling them what alternative site they can have to operate their programs?

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, I thank Councillor Thomas for that question. It is my understanding that many of these groups have been contacted by Community Services and as a result of this question I will communicate with the department to verify that they have been communicated with and spoken to. And if they haven't, to make sure that it's done posthaste.

Mr. Speaker: Your second question Councillor.

Councillor Thomas: My second question is also with regard to the program that was operated by the Greater Council of Winnipeg Community Centres for three months out of Glen Elm School and then they closed it not for lack of participation but because they said it was too expensive to operate out of that place. And my concern is where will the drop-in program happen for the kids after school?

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that question as well. I don't know whether Councillor Thomas has communicated with the GCWCC to explore alternatives.

I would also encourage Councillor Thomas, the Councillor for the ward, to explore opportunities since she should know that area better than anybody else, maybe she might have some suggestions. If she comes up with something, I would be happy to work with the Councillor.

Mr. Speaker: Any further questions? Your final question Councillor Thomas?

Councillor Thomas: That's it.

Mr. Speaker: That's it. No further questions? Councillor Vandal.

(Inaudible) Who? What? Councillor Vandal. Councillor Vandal. (Inaudible) Why is it that side to my left, to my left don't seem to communicate too well? Councillor Vandal.

Councillor Vandal: To your left Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Your first question.

Councillor Vandal: Mr. Speaker through you to the Mayor, Budget '08 is behind us. Budget '09 has a deficit of $38 million dollars, and I'm wondering if you can tell us what the plan is relative to business taxes and property taxes for Budget '09?

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, thank you very much to Councillor Vandal for the question. Mr. Speaker I can tell you we've already started to work on Budget '09.

As I said, when we approved the other Budget we would start right away to address some of our issues and as soon as I have some real specific comments to make on it, I will be happy to share that with Councillor Vandal.

Right now we do have the public service along with the guidance and leadership of the CAO working on that, along with the CFO, give them a little bit of time and I'm sure we'll have some very good solutions to some of our problems.

As Councillor Vandal knows, we always face a deficit. We've never had a surplus and we work hard to find a solution to that.

Mr. Speaker: Your second question Councillor Vandal.

Councillor Vandal: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Have there been any directives given to the civic administration on directives or targets for their departmental budgets for the year '09 as there was in '08?

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: No, there have not been any of those directives given as there was in the previous Budget.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Vandal your final, third question.

Councillor Vandal: Final question is about Plan Winnipeg which was adopted about seven years ago. I'm wondering if you can tell this Council when we will be rolling out the next Plan Winnipeg review and when there will be public consultations around Plan Winnipeg?

Mayor Katz: As has been stated earlier, the process has started. I know that Councillor Swandel has been very much involved in this. He has actually had some meetings with representation from the Province.

We are still working with the Province to make sure we have the proper funding. To make sure we have a successful review of Plan Winnipeg.

If there is any other information pertaining to that, I will be happy to share that and send that over to Councillor Vandal.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Wyatt your first question.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your Worship, the top issues that clearly are on the minds of electorate are issues of policing, safety and infrastructure.

Just recently, the Provincial budget came down and the President of the Association of Manitoba Municipalities gave the Provincial budget a C+ which I thought was very generous considering the status of funding for municipalities, not only in Winnipeg but across the Province.

You fought and won to receive the gas tax funding, that it should go into roads and bridges from the Federal government. You pushed hard and got the extra 10% on top of gas tax funding.

My question is when do you think the Premier is going to realize that there has

to be a major shift with regards to funding and the support of municipalities in this Province?

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor. (Inaudible) (Laughter).

Mayor Katz: My apologies Mr. Speaker. We have a comedian here at Council. I thank Councillor Wyatt for the question and I think we all know that the funding mechanisms that are in place right now for cities and municipalities is not working. We know we need a change.

Getting one cent out of every dollar doesn't cut it any more. The majority of the population now lives in urban centres as opposed to being rural centres. And we need change. I know I've had meetings with Mayors and Reeves as well as other people from the regions and I think everybody believes we need to find something new.

By the same token, we need to get the Province to buy into it, and as I've said to other Councillors before, this is something I hope to work at face-to-face with the Premier, and see if we can find a solution to what really ails our cities when it comes to a infrastructure that's falling apart, deficits so great that we can barely you know, think about how we're going to solve the problem, let alone actually do it. Not having enough money to maintain our infrastructure as well as to continue to grow the City and you have to do both at the same time.

Keeping in mind these problems did not arise overnight. You know, there have been decades of neglect, decades of cities and municipalities trying to do a job that was almost impossible to do with the revenue they had, considering their biggest source of revenue is property tax. We know we're far too dependent on property tax.

I believe we all know we need a fair deal, and that is something I intend to work very hard at this year, and hopefully in concurrence with the other leaders in the Province, get something new on the table.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Your second question, Councillor.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you, thanks for the response. The Mayor is a very, the gentleman is very diplomatic and I maybe don't have to be, so I'll be more direct with regards to the issue in the sense of…

Mr. Speaker, the Province is receiving billions now in unallocated funding from Ottawa, more than they ever have before in the history of this Province. They are literally rolling money over on Broadway.

When will the Premier start to correct the provincial municipal funding imbalance that exists and start to do the right thing and fund municipalities the way he should be?

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker I don't disagree with what Councillor Wyatt has talked about transfer payments. We're at an all time high. I don't think that's something to brag about in one respect, because that means we're a have-not Province. Unlike British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan. We are a have-not province and we are getting records, record amounts of millions, billions of dollars in transfer payments.

Do I believe that more of that money should be shared with the City of Winnipeg with no strings attached? Absolutely. Of course I believe that. I think I've said that on many occasions before. I've actually thrown out ideas on how we could accomplish our goal.

By the same token, I have always said that when it comes to sitting down and if you want to call it negotiating with the Province, I will do it behind closed doors. I will not do it through the media, and I will continue to do it that way. Although I do understand Councillor Wyatt is pressing for an answer, I know where he is coming from and I'm not going to disagree with what he is saying.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Wyatt, your final. That's it? Councillor Browaty your first question.

Councillor Browaty: Thank you Mr. Speaker. In the Provincial budget the Province committed one-third funding of the City's wastewater improvements. They also attached a figure to that of $256 million dollars.

As a member of the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works we are hearing that the number to improve the wastewater systems, both in terms of the plants as well as combined sewers, is probably closer to $1.8 billion dollars.

If the Province is committing one-third, I'm asking the Mayor through you Mr. Speaker, if there has been any change in the Province's requirements in terms of what type of upgrades are required? Perhaps a, looking again at the requirement to remove nitrogen using a biological process from our wastewater plants.

Mr. Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Katz: Mr. Speaker, I thank Councillor Browaty for that question and I must confess that many eyebrows were raised when we saw those numbers. We have a serious problem. We know what the Clean Environment Commission had recommended and we're prepared to fulfill those recommendations. By the same token it also said that all three levels of government should be participating equally.

At the point in time, the working number was $1.2 billion dollars, so I'll work with the old number. If you take one-third of $1.2 billion dollars, I think every Councillor here can figure out that's, that the commitment they've made of $200 million is not one-third. It should be $400 million. I don't know where that number came from. I don't know why they're saying it's one-third.

I'm glad they're saying it's one-third. It's good to have the fact that they're prepared to fund one-third on the record because when the number is ultimately $1.2 or $1.4, it's nice to say that they have said they'll fund one-third. And of course we would hold them to that commitment. But the numbers do not coincide with what's been committed and what's been said. We'll have to determine, and I'm certainly happy to take that on, to determine if that was just a down payment on the one-third commitment, and I will be happy to get back to Councillor Browaty when we get the answer to that question.

Mr. Speaker: No further questions? No further questions? Councillors we'll get into the next it's Property. The Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, report of March 25th, 2008. Councillor Swandel.

**REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT
DATED MARCH 25, 2008**

Councillor Swandel: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move the report of March 25th, 2008, and move adoption of the Consent Agenda Items 2 to 13 and 15 to 19.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Swandel: Mr. Speaker I'd like to advise that Items 1 and 14 have been filed as much as applicants have withdrawn their applications.

Mr. Speaker: Motions, none. Consideration of By-laws, first reading only, Councillor Swandel.

**STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS**

Councillor Swandel: Mr. Speaker, I will, well no those actually, those were not actually PP & D items, for first reading, 64/2008 was an EPC item and it's been laid over, as I understand it.

Mr. Speaker: 65/2008.

Councillor Swandel: Okay. I will move By-law No. 64/2008 be read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 64/2008.

Councillor Swandel: Mr. Speaker, I will move that the following By-laws be read a first time, By-law Nos. 67/2008, 68/2008, 71/2008, 72/2008, 73/2008, 74/2008, 75/2008, 76/2008, 77/2008, 78/2008, 79/2008, 80/2008, 81/2008, 82/2008, 83/2008, 84/2008, and 85/2008.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws No. 67/2008, 68/2008, 71/2008, 72/2008, 73/2008, 74/2008, 75/2008, 76/2008, 77/2008, 78/2008, 79/2008, 80/2008, 81/2008, 82/2008, 83/2008, 84/2008, 85/2008.

Councillor Swandel: Mr. Speaker I'll move that By-laws Nos. 67/2008, 68/2008, and 71/2008 to 85/2008, both inclusive, be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws No. 67/2008, 68/2008, 71/2008 to 85/2008, both inclusive.

Councillor Swandel: Mr. Speaker I'll move that the rules be suspended and By-laws Nos. 67/2008, 68/2008, 71/2008 to 85/2008, both inclusive, be read a third time and that same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Question Period. Quietly let's go on to the next one. Standing Policy Committee Protection and Community Services report of April 7th of 2008. Councillor Steeves.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DATED APRIL 7, 2008

Councillor Steeves: I'd like to introduce the report and move adoption of the Consent Items 1 and 2 please.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Motions none. By-laws, Councillor Steeves.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY SERVICES CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Councillor Steeves: I'll move that By-law No. 86/2008 be read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 86/2008.

Councillor Steeves: I'll move that By-law No. 86/2008 be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 86/2008.

Councillor Steeves: I'll move that the rules be suspended and By-law No. 86/2008 be read a third time and that same be passed and be ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Questions. None. Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works, report of April 8, 2008, Councillor Clement.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL AND PUBLIC WORKS DATED APRIL 8, 2008

Councillor Clement: Thank you Mr. Speaker, I'll move the minutes of April the 8th, and I'll move Items 1 and 2 as Consent.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: No.

Councillor Clement: Just 2.

Mr. Speaker: Yes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Clement: Okay.

Councillor O'Shaughnessy: Now move Item 1.

Mr. Speaker: You will now move Item No. 1.

Councillor Clement: Extension of time.

Mr. Speaker: Yes. 180 days be granted to...

Councillor Clement: Up to, up to 180.

Mr. Speaker: Up to 180. Okay.

All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Motions none. By-laws Councillor Clement.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL AND PUBLIC WORKS
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Councillor Clement: I move that By-law No. 66/2008 and 90/2008 be read a first time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 66/2008 and By-law No. 90/2008.

Councillor Clement: I move By-law No. 66/2008 and 90/2008, be read a second time.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws No. 66/2008 and 90/2008.

Councillor Clement: I move that the rule be suspended and By-laws No. 66/2008 and 90/2008, be read a third time and that same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL AND PUBLIC WORKS
QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Speaker: Question period. None. (Inaudible) Trying to get, trying to get away from this. Who's first? Councillor Vandal.

Councillor Vandal: Yes, I'm wondering if the chairperson could tell us why the plastic bag, plastic grocery bags was laid over for 180 days?

Councillor Clement: Because the Committee wasn't prepared to deal with it yet. There were two different motions that were made at the previous meeting and one of them had to come back and I believe that it actually had to come here because of the amount of time.

But when we laid it over the first time we laid it over because we were waiting for a document from the Provincial government. Evidently, they are working on this same issue and we were waiting to find out what they were going to implement as legislation before we did anything, and it hasn't come yet so we were out kind of waiting. That's what this is all about.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Vandal, second question? None. Councillor Pagtakhan your first question.

Councillor Pagtakhan: Thanks Mr. Speaker, through you to the chair, my question is in regards to street cleaning of the City, and I just wanted to know if the, on regional street cleaning services, if the sidewalks are cleaned in conjunction with the streets because there has been a couple of situations Mr. Speaker in which the regional streets have been cleaned but there is tons of sand on the sidewalks.

And I just want to make sure, I want to know if there is a concerted effort or coordinated effort at the City to ensure that sidewalks are cleaned in conjunction with the streets.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Clement.

Councillor Clement: I would like to say it's coordinated but I know it's not exactly. One of the problems Mr. Speaker is that the sidewalks and boulevards, even on regional streets for the most part are dealt with by our Parks department.

And while it's not the case every time, in many cases we're dealing with grass, and they can't really co-ordinate the street cleaning and the boulevard cleaning because of weather, in some cases. If you go on the grass too early, you basically just destroy it. And so it's not easy to co-ordinate in every case and we've tried.

That was actually one of the reasons why the Parks department was rolled into Public Works a few years ago was to try and co-ordinate that a little better. It really hasn't worked very well and unfortunately, sometimes although I'm sure they're trying their best, they actually wind up making more mess than when they started, depending on who gets there first.

And the other problem too, and I agree with Councillor Pagtakhan it would be nice if it could be all done at the same time, but it's difficult to do that. Part of the reason is because we're using City staff for the most part in Parks, and in many cases, the equipment that's being used on the regional streets and other streets for that matter are contract jobs and so it's somewhat difficult to combine them. So there is no good answer to it Mike, but that's the best I can give you.

Mr. Speaker: Your second question Councillor.

Councillor Pagtakhan: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the response from the chair. Would the chair entertain perhaps looking into streamlining this because I'm thinking it's a bit of a cost issue and an issue that we're not being as efficient as we could be.

Is the chair committed to looking at streamlining this process, perhaps you know having City staff take an inventory of what streets could be cleaned in conjunction with Parks staff or ensuring whatever, that the end result, ensuring that some, whatever regional streets there are, that don't have grass problems, if we can clean those along with the regional streets, is he committed to looking at that process?

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Clement.

Councillor Clement: I would be happy to discuss that with the director. Everything that we do it's always a reasonable thing to review from time to time and there may be ways that they can co-ordinate better than what they are. I'll certainly request that they have a look at it.

Mr. Speaker: Okay, thank you. No further questions? Thank you Councillor Clement.

Standing Policy Committee on Finance. No report. Efficiency at work. Finance Motions if any. None. By-laws. None. Question Period. No questions.

And we get on to Downtown Development, report "A", March 4, 2008, Councillor Wyatt.

REPORT "A" OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DATED MARCH 4, 2008

Councillor Wyatt: I'll move the adoption of Consent Item No. 1.

Mr. Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

March the 27th, 2008, no report. Motions. None. By-laws none. Question Period. None.

Council Swandel moves that we, Council do now adjourn.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Mr. Speaker Councillor Lazarenko. Councillors Browaty, Clement, Fielding, Gerbasi, Leipsic, Nordman, O'Shaughnessy, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Swandel, Thomas, Vandal, Wyatt, His Worship Mayor Katz.

Council adjourned at 2:06 p.m.