EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE

QUESTION PERIOD

Minute No. 162
In reference to infrastructure challenges, Councillor Vandal questioned why the Mayor would champion the Chief Peguis Trail new ring road construction project, whose budget has gone from 34 million dollars to 60 million dollars, when the City cannot take care of the existing infrastructure.

His Worship Mayor Katz replied that all members of Council were cognizant of the City's infrastructure problems and the significant deficit, just like every other city in Canada. His Worship suggested that the problem came about by neglect, by not maintaining properly, from not having the money and by the fact that cities and municipalities do not get their fair share in order to solve the problems; which was an initiative being fought by big city Mayors across Canada. His Worship noted that the City was growing and it was Council's job to meet the needs of the city by repairing existing infrastructure. His Worship indicated that the Chief Peguis Trail project was supported by the department, who were the experts.

In noting that the Chief Peguis Trail was not supported by Plan Winnipeg and was 30 million dollars over budget, Councillor Vandal inquired why the Mayor voted against the proposal to have an audit conducted.

His Worship acknowledged that costs have escalated above the number that the administration provided in the past. He also stated that the Chief Peguis Trail was not over budget because construction had not started and until construction was started based on detailed drawings and detailed costing, you cannot be over budget.

Councillor Vandal inquired if the 34 million dollars allocated in the 2007 Capital budget was not a real number and asked if an increase from 34 million dollars to 64 million dollars was not inflation.

His Worship replied that the capital budget number was never changed and does not take into consideration inflation, stating that the same number provided three or four years ago would continue to appear in a five-year capital budget, which was a flaw in the process that would be rectified.

Councillor Gerbasi questioned if the Mayor or his representatives have had discussions to take the initiative and encourage action with the Federal government on the Canada Post office building property.

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His Worship noted that he was provided the courtesy of having two conversations with the Postal Service representative and was informed that it was their intention to sell the facility, hopefully see it developed, and move and invest a significant amount of money into a new location. He concluded that it would be his pleasure to talk to them in order to try to motivate them to work with others to see something special and wonderful happen there.