Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – February 18, 2020

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks – February 5, 2020

Item No. 1 Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks and submitted the following to Council:

1. That a grant of $140,000.00 to fund Trees Winnipeg to lead and coordinate the One Million Tree Challenge be referred to the 2020 Budget process for consideration.

2. That subject to the approval of Recommendation 1, the Public Service submit an annual report on the One Million Tree Challenge to Council in the second quarter of each year, beginning in 2021.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks – February 5, 2020

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Rollins,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On February 5, 2020, the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

Emma Durand-Wood submitted a communicated dated February 4, 2020, with respect to the matter.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks – Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
D. Domke	J. Berezowsky	P. Olafson, Interim CFO	M. Ruta, Interim CAO

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its October 15, 2019 meeting, the Executive Policy Committee approved a motion by Mayor Bowman to develop a plan for planting one million trees by the time the City's population reaches one million residents. Both Canadian National ($1 million) and Telpay ($250,000) have committed funding to Tree Canada to support Winnipeg's One Million Tree Challenge. Other corporate sponsors are interested, and tree planting volunteers are contacting the Public Service for more information.

The overall estimated cost to plant one million trees over the next 20 years is $43 million (2019 dollars). In order to complete this project by 2040, fundraising needs will be in excess of $2 million per year and approximately 50,000 trees will need to be planted per year.

The city does not currently have capacity or resources to plant 50,000 trees per year; building this capacity will take up to five years and will involve establishing agreements with stakeholders, arranging for nurseries to establish their supply, and determining how best to educate and involve the public.

Donations towards the One Million Tree Challenge began coming forward immediately upon the program's announcement; these funds are currently being held and disbursed by Tree Canada (at the discretion of Tree Canada and their donor agreement, in consultation with the City of Winnipeg).

Trees Winnipeg, a local not-for-profit organization, is willing to lead and coordinate the One Million Trees Campaign at a cost of $140,000.00 in 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That a grant of $140,000.00 to fund Trees Winnipeg to lead and coordinate the One Million Tree Challenge be referred to the 2020 Budget process for consideration.

2. That, subject to the approval of Recommendation 1, the Public Service submit an annual report on the One Million Tree Challenge to Council in the second quarter of each year, beginning in 2021.

3. That the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the foregoing.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On October 15, 2019, the Executive Policy Committee approved the following motion:

"*That the Winnipeg Public Service develop a plan to implement and promote a program with the goal of planting one million trees in Winnipeg, including a tracking mechanism, before the City's population reaches one million and report back to the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks in 120 days*."

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The One Million Tree Challenge does not currently have a lead organization or coordinator to champion marketing of the initiative, host the tracking mechanism, develop a web site or ensure that the nursery and landscaping industry are engaged. Approval of funding for this initiative would allow Trees Winnipeg to establish and lead the program.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

In September 2019, Mayor Bowman shared a vision to protect and expand our city's immense tree canopy. The purpose of the One Million Tree Challenge is to plant one million trees in Winnipeg as our city's population grows toward one million people. This will result in a net expansion and growth in our tree canopy beyond replacing existing trees lost to age or disease. The program will challenge individual residents, not-for-profit agencies, as well as private businesses to help plant the new trees.

Planting one million trees over the next 20 years translates to planting 50,000 trees per year at an estimated cost of $43 million (2019 dollars). Although 50,000 trees per year is the ultimate goal, it is anticipated that it will take up to five years to reach these optimal planting levels.

There are three reasons for this:

1. First, agreements between the stakeholders to plant these trees still require development.
2. A meeting with the Manitoba Nursery and Landscape Association confirmed nursery growers will need four to five years to grow the trees needed for this program.
3. Public education and outreach will be a key component of the program and will be required for its success; this requires an in-depth education and engagement strategy that would ultimately be developed by the program coordinators, in consultation with the City of Winnipeg

The Public Service has met numerous times with Trees Winnipeg, a local not-for-profit with some experience in this market. Trees Winnipeg is willing to become the lead organization for the One Million Tree Challenge. They estimate this initiative requires a grant of $140,000.00 to hire consultant(s) and one staff person for the first year of this program.

Vision & guiding principles

The vision of the One Million Tree Challenge is to have a dedicated web site with an interactive map and “tree counter” where the City, individuals, and institutions can register a new tree planted on their property and locate it on a map. Each tree planted will result in the “tree counter” increasing by one.

The following guiding principles were identified in meetings between the Public Service, Tree Canada, Trees Winnipeg, and the Manitoba Nursery Landscape Association:

- A survival rate of 75% at year three of planting should be targeted.
- The size of trees planted must be appropriate to the situation. In most cases seedlings are not appropriate and would not survive in the urban environment.
- Maintenance (watering, mulching, pruning, etc.) until trees are established is essential.
- Educating homeowners and volunteers about how to plant and maintain their trees must be a component of the program.
- Only appropriate tree species must be selected for Winnipeg’s climate and to minimize mortality due to disease and insects.
- Natural regeneration by allowing for existing trees to seed and sucker along the edges of existing forests should be a component of this program.
- Existing trees must be protected and preserved wherever possible.

Following these principles will ensure a successful One Million Tree Challenge.

Public support
Tremendous support for this program has already been identified:

- Corporate Support:
    - In September, Canadian National (CN) recognized the vision of the One Million Tree Challenge and committed $1 million to Tree Canada to support tree planting efforts in Winnipeg.
    - More recently, Telpay has also committed $250,000.00 to Tree Canada to support these tree planting efforts.
    - Other companies have also shown interest in this program, and are awaiting further details.
- Volunteer Support:
    - A number of organized volunteer groups have contacted the City asking if they can become involved in planting these trees. It appears that hundreds of volunteers are willing to help plant.
- Individual Support:
    - As mentioned previously, individuals will be able to register their own tree planting on their own property on an interactive web site.
    - Individuals can also donate funds to Tree Canada to support efforts to plant new trees in Winnipeg. On treecanada.ca, people can select the “Donate” button on the upper right-hand corner and under “Designation” select “Winnipeg Million Tree Challenge” to direct funds to this program. Tree Canada has confirmed that funding has already been collected for this program.

Implementation and planting
It is important to note that, as part of this challenge, trees can be planted on both private and public property. Private properties include those owned by residential, commercial, industrial, or

institutional property owners. Trees planted on public property primarily include those in parks, natural areas, and right-of-ways. This initiative involves all Winnipeggers on all types of property, and its success depends on all Winnipeggers becoming invested and getting involved.

Tree Canada, along with their corporate donors and in consultation with the City, will ultimately determine where and how the trees will be planted in Winnipeg.

Although no formal agreement is in place between the City and Tree Canada, discussions have centered on the Naturalist Services Branch coordinating the planting of trees on public property (i.e.: parks, natural areas, and right-of-ways) much as it has done for Tree Canada in the past.

On the other hand, a private tree planting program (residential, commercial, industrial, or institutional) for the Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge has yet to be articulated by Tree Canada and its partners. Planting on private lands is somewhat more complex, and may need more coordination and involvement by stakeholders and not-for-profits. Development of this program is continuing and is expected to be coordinated by the third-party program managers.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: January 20, 2020

Project Name:
Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge

First Year of Program **2020**

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Enter Description Here	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ 140,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ 140,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ 140,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: Direct costs represent the proposed grant to Trees Winnipeg for leading and coordinating the One Million Tree Challenge in 2020. The payment of this grant is subject to the approval of the grant, and associated budget through the 2020 budget process. There is currently no funding identified in the proposed 2020 Public Works Department Operating Budget for the grant.

"Original signed by A. Fischer, CPA, CA"

for Jocelyn Peters, CPA, CGA
Acting Manager of Finance & Administration

CONSULTATION

This report has been prepared in consultation with: N/A.

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

The report is in accordance with the OurWinnipeg Policy, 02-2 Environment:

- Recognize and preserve Winnipeg's parks, green spaces and riverbanks as green oases in our urban setting.
- Enable the protection of ecologically significant lands.
- Protect and Enhance the Urban Forest, and

Direction strategies of 'A Sustainable Winnipeg':

- 09 Continue to respect and value our natural and built environment.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

The report is in accordance with Strategic Opportunity #7:

- 7.2 Increase and Preserve Tree Canopy (Primary Responsibility: Public Works Department)
- 7.3 Preserve and Manage Parks and Natural Areas to Support Climate Change Mitigation (Primary Responsibility: Public Works - Parks)

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works
Division: Parks and Open Space
Prepared by: David A. Domke, Manager, Parks and Open Space
Rod Penner, City Naturalist
Date: January 20, 2020