Minute No. 482
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks – June 10, 2020

Item No. 3 Protection of City of Winnipeg Tree Canopy – Allocation of Disaster Relief Funding

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks, as amended by the Executive Policy Committee, and adopted the following:

1. That the following be referred to the 2021 Budget Review Process:

    A. That subject to the receipt of funding, the City of Winnipeg allocate up to $3 million of Disaster Financial Assistance Program funds of up to a $1 million per year to the City of Winnipeg's Forestry branch 2021, 2022 and 2023 operating budgets.

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

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Rollins,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks, as amended by the Executive Policy Committee, be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 15, 2020, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks, with the following amendment:

- Delete Recommendation 1 and replace with the following:

  "1. That the following be referred to the 2021 Budget Review Process:

     A. That subject to the receipt of funding, the City of Winnipeg allocate up to $3 million of Disaster Financial Assistance Program funds of up to a $1 million per year to the City of Winnipeg's Forestry branch 2021, 2022 and 2023 operating budgets."

and submitted the matter to Council.

On June 18, 2020, the Executive Policy Committee laid the matter over for 30 days.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 10, 2020, the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks concurred in the recommendation of the City Centre Community Committee and forwarded the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On May 8, 2020, the City Centre Community Committee passed the following motion:

WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg's tree canopy is under threat from the impacts of climate change and age;

AND WHEREAS the tree canopy provides numerous benefits for citizens across the city;

AND WHEREAS the tree canopy was severely damaged in October 2019 due to an unprecedented freezing rain weather event; for which disaster relief funding will be provided;

AND WHEREAS that a significant portion of the city's costs resulting from the disaster were forestry related expenses;

AND WHEREAS on October 28, 2019 City Council approved the submission of an application for Disaster Financial Assistance to the Province of Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS on January 23, 2020, the Province of Manitoba announced a Disaster Financial Assistance Program for the October 2019 weather event for eligible municipalities;

AND WHEREAS in accordance with public sector accounting rules, the expenses for the October 2019 weather event have been largely accounted for in 2019 and any revenue arising from the Disaster Financial Assistance Program will be accounted for in 2020;

AND WHEREAS this revenue is unencumbered in 2020 and would factor into the overall accounting largely in the General Revenue Fund for 2020, including transferring to the Financial Stabilization Reserve Fund should a year-end surplus result;

AND WHEREAS current forecasts indicate that if every cost submitted is deemed eligible by the Province of Manitoba, the City of Winnipeg's General Revenue Fund would receive approximately $4 million;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that subject to the receipt of funding, the City of Winnipeg allocate up to $3 million of Disaster Financial Assistance Program funds of up to a $1 million per year to the City of Winnipeg's Forestry branch's 2021, 2022 and 2023 operating budgets.

and forwarded to the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks.