From: Janet Thomas
Sent: Wednesday, December 9, 2020 1:19 PM
To: CLK-CityClerks <CityClerks@winnipeg.ca>
Subject: Letter for submission to Special EPC December 11, 2020

Good afternoon.

Please find attached a letter to be included on the public record for the Special EPC meeting scheduled on Friday, December 11, 2020.

Kind regards,

Janet Thomas, Executive Director
Manitoba Association of Landscape Architects Inc. (MALA)
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MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

December 9, 2020

Dear Mayor Bowman and Chairperson of the Committee on Finance,

RE: 2021 AND FUTURE ANNUAL CAPITAL BUDGETS

On behalf of the Manitoba Association of Landscape Architects (MALA), I am writing you today urging you to prioritize the preservation, enhancement, and promotion of our parks and recreation spaces and the creation of new green spaces, and ensure that the long-term planning and funding be firmly in place in the 2021 capital budget and annual capital budgets going forward.

The Manitoba Association of Landscape Architects (MALA) is the professional organization representing Landscape Architects in Manitoba. Its 200+ members are dedicated to a discipline that connects and sustains Manitoba's natural systems, human settlements, multicultural identity and built environments.

It is the primary purpose of the MALA to advance, promote and advocate the profession of landscape architecture in the Province of Manitoba, and regulate standards of professional practice and conduct consistent with the need to serve and to protect the public interest.

The MALA recognizes landscapes as vital by ensuring that all landscapes are understood and respected for their geographic, cultural, heritage, social, aesthetic, economic and environmental values.

As you are aware, green spaces have always played an essential role in our communities by providing both physical and mental health benefits, and a range of positive social, environmental and equity outcomes. Quite simply, parks and recreational spaces are good for everyone and thus providing ample green space is of paramount importance.

As identified by OURS-winnipeg, "Winnipeg's population is forecast to grow by 120,000 over the next 20 years. Hotter summer days, storms and flooding events are forecast to increase. The climate change impact must be mitigated by larger green spaces, natural areas and a wide-spread tree canopy."

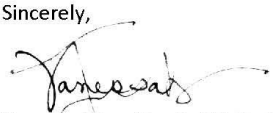
The 2018 City of Winnipeg State of the Infrastructure Report indicated that the 10-year infrastructure deficit was over $1 billion for the community service and parks and open space assets. This averages out to approximately $100 million of capital funding per year for renewal and upgrade of existing community recreation and leisure assets such as community centres, aquatic facilities including wading pools and spray pads, parks, and green spaces as well as investment in new assets to meet population growth and demand.

For Winnipeg's parks and open space system, the 10-year infrastructure deficit is identified as $199 million. The report states that 52% of the inventory was rated at Fair/Poor/Very Poor with a total replacement value for assets of these low ratings totalling $230 million. The 2021 capital budget and five year forecast shows an average of approximately $8.4 million per year for parks and open space.

Mr. Mayor and Chair, the MALA urges you to seriously consider increased funding in the 2021, and future capital budgets for recreation and green spaces. As Winnipeg's population is on track to continue to grow steadily and strong over the coming decades, we can all attest that never before has there been a need to foster deeper connections with the land then right now, in the face of climate change, a growing population, and a pandemic! Communities are flocking to parks and recreation assets as well as creating impromptu recreational activities in the wake of social gathering restrictions and physical distancing. The impacts from the decline of such amenities and the struggle to keep up with deferred maintenance is, and will continue to be, felt.

As you prepare to finalize your budgeting decisions that will stimulate our economy, create jobs, and provide our communities with the support they need, we greatly appreciate your inclusion of increased funding for community and recreation facilities, including parks and green spaces.

Sincerely,



Vanessa Jukes Strutt, MALA, CSLA, PMP
President

cc: Councillors M. Allard; J. Browaty; M. Chambers; R. Eadie; C. Gilroy; K. Klein; J. Lukes; B. Mayes; S. Nason; J. Orlikow; S. Rollins; V. Santos; D. Sharma; J. Schreyer

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