Office of Councillor Janice Lukes
Waverley West Ward

July 8, 2022

Submission RE: Emergency Management Leadership Team COVID-19 Response and Recovery Plan

Historically, economic recovery has proven to be a period of readjustment and reinvention, as we've seen in many activities in City of Winnipeg:

- Council Meetings
- Public Engagement process
- Libraries
- WFPS innovation, etc

Identify the most impacted areas, supporting data – through those lenses lens focus on:

- economic recovery
- affordable housing
- community health & safety
- communications

2019, Winnipeg had the largest net loss in population from interprovincial migration out of all 35 Census Metropolitan Areas in Canada.

- Provide Council with why / demographics
- IMO – its jobs – I'd like to see Province put venture capital funding in place to assist high-potential technology companies innovate and grow, and to provide tax benefits to bring companies to Winnipeg & Winnipeg Metropolitan Region

TIMEFRAMES:

- Provide Short / Medium / Long Term approaches
- Put measurements in place to see measured results
- Quarterly updates on progress to Council

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CRITICAL we focus priorities on an ECONOMIC Recovery program

- as we can't provide many other services unless we have money.
- Many many good social programs, which Cities often don't provide, but if we are to provide, we need to have resources to deliver on programs.

Create awareness of preserving property tax base

- Ensure the public is aware that any loss in taxes in response to the COVID-19 crisis will require a reduction in services or a disproportionate increase in taxes in the future
- Ensure the public is aware tax deferrals provide short-term relief to taxpayers while ensuring sufficient funding to maintain services
- Cancellation of fees is a cost that will need to be borne by the taxpayers in another way in a later year

Province of Manitoba

- Replace current Interprovincial Liaison with someone else – ie:Chair of Task Force, CAO, etc
- Critical to work in sync with Province on their economic recovery program to elevate synergies
- Provide Council seminar on Provincial recovery approach - highlighting synergies

Economic Development Winnipeg

- Task EDW to provide tangible list / guidelines for Council with economic development reference points in decision making
- Task EDW to liaise in new ways with Council to sharpen Council's focus on economic development / strategies EDW is focusing on
- Like the 'bring it home campaign that convention center and EDW have ' create a 'What Can I Do' campaign - over 700,000 people in city – build a 'team approach' to recovery – people want to – and can add huge value

Downtown

- Every city in Canada is having downtown challenges – seek out ideas from others
- Reality or not – a tremendous perception of great instability related to personal / community safety downtown.
- Top Priority - develop a community safety communication program - much is in place – people are not aware of it
- Task downtown BIZ to create a 'Back to Work Downtown' campaign

- Task public service to look at City office spaces and fill the spaces. Public service staff working from home when they have offices larger than my kitchen - City needs to lead in having public service working back downtown
- Task Downtown BIZ to create a campaign on why downtown is important to suburbs and why suburbs are important to downtown – a love love campaign –
- We've had years of poor leadership saying urban sprawl is bad and thereby creating a divisive environment. Each need each other – and should be promoted together and explained
- Empower leaders to participate-promote a downtown / suburbs campaign – not just have text – engage leaders to participate in campaigns
- Create a 'What Can I Do' campaign to support downtown for residents
- Create a fund to enable pop ups / events / activities to bring people downtown
- Partner with Chamber / and others to develop a Campaign to promote Buy Local – engage leaders to participate (ie: vaccine program)

Transportation:

- Establish a communication plan for transit – focusing on highlighting transit safety and the many improvements we've made to the system. Set goals on getting people back on transit and develop education campaign
- Focus on expanding active transportation network - for mental and environmental health.

Communications

- Develop a communications strategy for the recovery that brands Winnipeg as - ?? Stronger, Better, Back or ?? The brand and accompanying communications materials could provide a frame for our economic recovery activities / communication.
- Highlight 'What Can I Do' - as each person can do something – create a team approach - we are all in this together -
- Winnipeg is growing through immigration – yet we are not communicating to the residents in a manner that reaches all. Ie: Vaccines highlighted ways to reach communities – in language / through leadership groups / etc
- Ensure there are people on the Corporate communication team – in leadership roles – where English is not their first language
- Revise the communication focus & task communication department to create buy in with Councillors on materials that are being produced - communication dept may be unaware – but Councillors have extensive network and can promote information that is relevant.
- The pandemic has created a 'new form of communication style' The ability for residents to participate in decision making process at City Hall through zoom – has greatly increased participation. Continue this approach, in addition to in person when health regulation allows.

- Increased resident participation is resulting in all day committee meetings – and increased day to day one on one meetings with residents. Previously, much work could be accomplished when attending large events / gatherings.
- This new form of 'remote one on one' communication is resulting in reduced work time availability for day to day Councillor work – in addition to being most under resourced offices in Canada
- Provide communication & outreach support to Councillors to accommodate the 'new form of communication style'
- Facilitate SPC or CC brainstorming sessions with Councillors and staff when draft recovery plan is prepared– there is incredible insight not being captured due to lack of current leadership not engaging all of Council

Economic Recovery

Province:

- Replace current Interprovincial Liaison with someone else – or Chair of Task Force: ie Chair of Finance / new CAO
- Critical to work in sync with Province on their economic recovery program to elevate synergies
- Provide Council seminar on Provincial approach highlighting synergies

Federal gov't:

- Ensure we have 'shovel ready' projects available to address city's priorities – other than roads.
- We have enough 'shovel ready road' plans on the shelf – focus on recreation & housing 'shovel ready' projects

Form Economic Recovery Taskforce

- comprised of key stakeholders in the community, City Staff, and Council.
- Hold roundtables / focus groups to capture residents' thoughts - not a broad survey, be more targeted – ask leaders in community to reach out to their communities – take a pyramid approach- again the Covid vaccination approach to targeted groups who work with their leaders / groups is a wonderful approach

Focus on the Planning Department

- the one other area that City can generate significant revenue
- Undertaking a line by line review of the fees and charges we apply to business / development / to see where relief may be possible, at least in the short term.
- Accelerate the asset management study of City properties - and unload city properties not being used
- Review again how to streamline operations even further – use of technology to enable online 24x7x365 – do we need funding in budget to improve
- Fund the Zoning By Laws review ASAP

- Fund the Infrastructure Plan ASAP, then secure more planners. Benchmarked against other Canadian municipalities, Winnipeg invests $8.51 vs $26.83 on planning

Focus on Public Spaces – Summer and Winter

- Accelerate the tech program/study on 'refuse can' locations to provide clean parks and open spaces
- Figure out a way to get the 'recycle everywhere' program in not just regional parks, but larger neighborhood parks
- Determine a funding model to focus on park and open space improvements.
- Look to developing private partnerships to support parks and open spaces

Affordable Housing

Primarily a Federal / Provincial area/responsibility but City has many opportunities to support

- Create a 'Developer/ Homebuilders Affordable Housing' Task Force – not surprisingly industry has incredible insight and ideas that are not being embraced I've approved over 2,800 units in 5 years – surely there is a way to work with builders to include affordability units -
- Housing and Affordability Department
    - one person in that department. IMO – there is no way one person can oversee / do what is required
- Real Estate Policy Framework – some good options in that file – look to moving on some of those recommendations

Community Health & Safety

- In speaking with many residents – there are two key areas that the City can help in:
    1. Ensuring in all communications –details that Covid protocols are in place at any event / city facility / etc. After a long period of 'isolation' – people are hesitant to gather again – there will be a need for 're-assurance' of safety protocols
    2. Anything the city can to do enable residents to engage grass roots community local programs – ie: the 'wellness' program was an excellent initiative, community gardens has been spectacularly received, small local programs.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Councillors' Office Resources

Critical Path: Governance Committee of Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
C. Gameiro	M. Lemoine	N/A	N/A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The resources that members of Council have access to for operation of their offices are governed by the Councillors' Ward Allowance Policy, with budgetary amounts approved in each year's operating budget. These budgets include monies to be spent on all items required to operate each Councillor's office, including items such as office supplies, advertising, telephones and most notably, staffing.

Councillors in comparable cities in Canada have similar duties to their Winnipeg counterparts, though the budgetary amounts available vary across jurisdictions. A cross jurisdictional scan of Canadian cities is outlined in Attachment A, and reveals that the City of Winnipeg has amongst the lowest levels of support available to Councillors of the compared municipalities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That this report be received as information.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On July 6, 2020, the Governance Committee of Council directed the Winnipeg Public Service to conduct a cross jurisdictional review of other Canadian City Councils to determine the level of support provided to Councillors, including budgets and staffing, and report back to the Governance Committee of Council within 90 days.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no implications to receiving this report as information.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

The City of Winnipeg Council consists of 15 Councillors and the Mayor. Each Councillor represents a ward consisting of roughly 47,000 constituents and is provided with an office budget of $83,924.00 (2019 funds). The spending of these funds are governed by the Councillors' Ward Allowance Policy (CWA), and includes allowance for such categories as advertising, community expenses, office equipment, supplies, community offices and staffing, amongst others. In addition to actual staff salary costs, Councillors must also pay for the employer portion of staff employment insurance and Canada pension plan, as well as the full costs for vacation pay and optional benefits. Staff are not eligible to receive a pension. The strain on Councillors budget limits their ability to pay and retain staff, which has resulted in an increasingly high turnover rate of Councillors Executive Assistants.

A cross jurisdictional review of other Canadian City Councils was conducted in July of 2020 to determine the level of support provided to Councillors to run their offices, including budgets and staffing. Results of the survey include those municipalities who responded to the survey and who have a comparable methodology. Information from the Province of Manitoba for operation of MLA offices is also included. As indicated in Attachment A, the review found that of those jurisdictions included, Winnipeg City Councillors are provided with the second lowest level of funding to operate their offices and serve their constituents, with a budget of $83,924.00 annually. Conversely, City of Toronto City Councillors are each provided with an annual budget of $532,000.

Each City of Toronto electoral ward contains approximately 109,263 people. Councillors in Toronto have separate budgets for operating their offices and hiring staff. The amount available to Councillors to operate their office is $50,000.00 annually, with their staff budget being $482,000.00. Each Councillor can hire a maximum of 5 staff, with defined job titles and roles, as well as salary ranges. These positions include Executive Assistant, Constituency Assistant, Administrative Assistant Level 2, Administrative Assistant Level 1, and Councillor's Aide (summer student). At the top of this scale is the Executive Assistant with a salary scale of $48,102.60 to $90,344.80, and the Councillor's Aide representing a part-time/casual position with an hourly rate of $15.51. Councillor staff are considered non-union employees of the City of Toronto and as such are provided with benefits in accordance with the City's benefits plan for non-union employees. Councillors are not responsible for the benefits expenditures, which come from a separate corporate budget.

Vancouver's civic government is distinct in nature to the majority of Canadian Councils in that their system allows for political parties. As well, some Councillors are elected at large. Councillors' Assistants are civic employees, paid for out of budgets that are not at the discretion of Councillors. The 10 Councillors in Vancouver are aided by 5 Assistants out of a staffing budget of $400,000.00. In addition to assistants provided by the City, each Councillor has a $6,000.00 discretionary budget allocated to political staff, and an office budget consisting of $41,951.00. Councillors' Assistants are City employees and fall under the collective agreement.

The cities of Ottawa, Calgary, and Edmonton are the most closely comparable to Winnipeg, in that Councillors in those cities have access to combined budgets that include office expenditures and staffing, similar to the budget provided by the CWA in Winnipeg.

Councillors in Ottawa have access to a budget in the amount of $266,565.00 to operate their offices. There is no set maximum or minimum number of staff that each Councillor must or may hire, but in consultation with the City of Ottawa, it was communicated that it is common for each Councillor to employ between 3 and 5 staff, comprised of both full and part time positions. The level of staffing is at the discretion of each Councillor, provided the annual budgetary amount is not exceeded. Councillors' Assistants enter into an employment contract with the City and are entitled to receive pension and benefits paid for by the City.

In Calgary, Councillors have access to a budget of $285,900.00 for office operations and to hire a maximum of three staff. One complexity unique to Calgary is that staff salaries are paid out of the Councillor's budget, while RRSP contributions, vacation pay, and other employer contributions are made from separate accounts contained in City budgets. The salary amounts of these assistants are not publicly disclosed.

Edmonton City Councillors are provided with a budget in the amount of $191,649.00 from which to operate their offices and hire staff. Similar to other cities, the number of staff members is at the discretion of each Councillor. Although not part of a union, Councillor's assistants are an employee group at the City of Edmonton and are entitled to receive benefits and pension which is paid out of a separate budget.

On a per capita basis, the City of Ottawa ranks as the highest in providing funding to assist Councillors with operation of their offices with a budget that equates to $6.36 per constituent, followed by Toronto at $4.87. The prairie cities are next with Calgary at $3.27, Edmonton at $2.56 and Winnipeg at $1.79.

Councillors in Vancouver have the lowest budget at their discretion at $0.76 per constituent, though it must be reiterated that the City of Vancouver provides 5 assistants to serve all 10 City Councillors, out of a budget of a $400,000. Taking that into consideration, it could be argued that the per capita budget for Vancouver City Councillors increases to $1.39 per constituent.

The Province of Manitoba is also included for comparison purposes. The Members' Allowances Regulation at https://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/members/regulations/membersallowancesregulation.pdf contains the rules regarding allowances for Members of the Legislative Assembly. Allowances include a constituency allowance for operation of offices. Expenses include office supplies, telephone, advertising, websites, etc. The constituency allowance varies for members in different parts of the Province. For the purposes of this report, the 2020 / 2021 Winnipeg Constituency Allowance rate of $65,185 is used. Also available is a Constituency assistant's allowance of $2,016 bi-weekly / $52,416 annually. There are also various other small allowances that MLA's can access including a constituency office rent allowance of $1,446 monthly / $17,352 annually, an annual travel allowance of $6,929 and living allowances for MLA's residing outside of Winnipeg.

As with all of the City's examined, the basis of the plans vary slightly compared to Winnipeg, so it is difficult to allow for a true "apples to apples" comparison among the various jurisdictions. However, most cities compared did have other benefits which were not included in these comparisons, such as benefits and pensions for employees paid for out of separate corporate budgets. These were not included in order not to inflate other comparable cities versus Winnipeg, which has few similar extra funding mechanisms. Regardless of how the comparisons are made, City of Winnipeg Councillors Offices do appear to be funded at a lower level than comparable municipalities, both in total amount and per capita. It is also notable that Winnipeg was the only jurisdiction that did not provide pensions to Councillors Assistants. It is

believed that they may be the only staffing group at the City of Winnipeg that does not receive a pension. Lower pay and benefits are significant as these factors impact staff that can be attracted to the position and can increase turnover / reduce experience which is critical to this unique complex position. Councillor's Offices are often the first point of contact for citizens along with the 311 service. Inability of Councillor's Assistants to handle customer service directly impacts customer service and can add to the public service burden by increasing requests.

It is worth noting that the City of Winnipeg Councillor office budget was temporarily increased by $40,000 in 2013, but it was then reduced by $37,000 in 2014. If that increase would have been maintained, Winnipeg would still be at the bottom end of the scale in terms of budget amount, but on a per capita basis would be at a level equal to Edmonton (see Attachment A).

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: September 10, 2020

Project Name:
Councillors' Office Resources

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Electronically signed by T. Yanchishyn
Tanis Yanchishyn
Manager of Finance (Campus)
Corporate Finance Department

CONSULTATION

None

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

The recommendations contained in this report align with Our Winnipeg Direction 1: Provide efficient and focused civic administration and governance.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

N/A

SUBMITTED BY

Department: City Clerk's Department
Prepared by: C. Gameiro, Deputy City Clerk
Date: September 9, 2020

ATTACHMENT A

City	Office Budget	Staff Budget	Staff Pension	Per Capita	Average Ward Size
Ottawa	$266,565		Yes	$6.36	41,922
Manitoba MLA	$89,466*	$52,416	Yes	$6.33	22,428
Toronto	$50,000	$482,000	Yes	$4.87	109,263
Calgary	$285,900		City RRSP contributions up to 7.5% of base salary	$3.27	87,314
Edmonton	$191,649		Yes	$2.56	74,954
Winnipeg	$83,924		No	$1.79	47,016
Vancouver**	$41,951	$6,000	Yes	$0.76	63,149

*Includes Winnipeg Constituency Allowance rate of $65,185, constituency office rent allowance of $17,352, and travel allowance of $6,929

**In addition to the office and staff budget above, the 10 Councillors in Vancouver share 5 Assistants who are city employees paid out of a $400,000.00 budget which equates to an additional value of $40,000 per Councillor and increases the value of each Councillor's budget to $87,951 with a per capita rating of $1.39.