Minutes – Executive Policy Committee – July 5, 2023

Reports – Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment – June 23, 2023

Item No. 2 The Montreal Pledge – Cities United in Action for Biodiversity

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment and submitted the following to Council:

1. That the report be received as information.

2. That the City of Winnipeg become a signatory to the Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity.

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

Reports – Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment – June 23, 2023

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Mayes,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment be concurred in and forwarded to Council.

Carried

Councillor Browaty asked to be recorded as having voted against the above motion, in accordance with Rule 47(7) of The Procedure By-law No. 50/2007.

Erna Buffie, Trees Please, and David John Green submitted communications with respect to the matter.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 23, 2023, the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service, with the following amendment:

- Add the following new Recommendations:

  "2. That the City of Winnipeg become a signatory to the Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity.

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

and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

The following persons submitted communications with respect to the matter:

- Erna Buffie, Trees Please Winnipeg
- Pam Lucenkiw, Co-Chair, OURS-Winnipeg

Reports – Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment – June 23, 2023

DECISION MAKING HISTORY (continued):

COUNCIL DECISION:

On April 27, 2023, Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment and adopted the following:

1. That the Winnipeg Public Service be directed to report back in 90 days on the City of Winnipeg becoming a signatory to the Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity, (attached for reference as Appendix A).

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

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: The Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Water, Waste and Environment – Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
B. Raddatz	T. W. Shanks	N/A	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In December 2022 Montreal hosted the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. As host city, Montreal invited cities across the world to make a commitment to protect biodiversity and preserve ecosystems. *The Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity* challenges municipalities to take 15 tangible actions towards pursuing and accelerating their efforts to preserve ecosystems.

The Montreal Pledge actions are well aligned with the City of Winnipeg's established policies and operating procedures, including OurWinnipeg 2045. The Pledge further supports forthcoming City strategies on green space and climate resilience. The Public Service believes the City of Winnipeg would be an appropriate signatory of the Montreal Pledge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That this report be received as information.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On March 23, 2023, Council directed the Public Service to report back in 90 days on the City of Winnipeg becoming a signatory to the Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action on Biodiversity.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no implications to receiving this report as information.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

In December 2022, Montreal hosted the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. COP15 focused on protecting nature and halting biodiversity loss around the world, recognizing an urgent need for international partners to halt and reverse the alarming loss of biodiversity worldwide.

As host city to COP15, Montreal invited cities across the world to make a commitment to protect biodiversity and preserve ecosystems. *The Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity* challenges municipalities to take 15 tangible actions towards pursuing and accelerating their efforts to preserve ecosystems.

The 15 actions are categorized as follows:

Reduce Threats to Biodiversity

1. Integrate biodiversity into territorial and regulatory planning.
2. Restore and rehabilitate ecosystems and their connectivity.
3. Conserve existing natural environments through protected areas and other effective and equitable measures.
4. Ensure the conservation and recovery of vulnerable species, both wild and domestic, and effectively manage their interactions with humans.
5. Control or eradicate invasive alien species to eliminate or reduce their impacts.
6. Reduce pollution from all sources to levels that do not adversely affect biodiversity, ecosystem functions or human health.
7. Aim to eliminate plastic waste.
8. Aim to reduce pesticide use by at least two-thirds.
9. Contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption measures through ecosystem-based approaches.

Share the Benefits of Biodiversity

10. Aim to ensure that urban agriculture, aquaculture and forestry zones are accessible, sustainably managed and contribute to food security.
11. Prioritize nature-based solutions to protect against extreme weather events and hazards and to regulate air and water quality.
12. Increase the amount of green and blue spaces and improve equitable access to them.

Solutions, Governance, Management and Education

13. Integrate biodiversity into governance frameworks and public policies, and increase financial resources allocated to its conservation and sustainable use.
14. Through citizen education and participation, help ensure that people and businesses are encouraged to make responsible choices toward biodiversity and have the resources and knowledge to do so.
15. Ensure the equitable and effective participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities in decision-making and in the process of knowledge acquisition and transmission.

At the time of the conference, 47 cities in five continents pledged to sign on to the Montreal Pledge to protect biodiversity.

The Montreal Pledge actions are well aligned with the City of Winnipeg's established policies and operating procedures, including OurWinnipeg 2045, and further support forthcoming City policies including the Master Greenspace and Natural Corridors Plan Bylaw and Biodiversity Policy, Urban Forestry Strategy, and the Climate Resilience Strategy.

Many City of Winnipeg policies, programs, and operating procedures align with actions in multiple Pledge categories. The following are listed under the Pledge categories in which they most align.

Reduce Threats to Biodiversity

- OurWinnipeg 2045
- Complete Communities 2.0
- Ecologically Significant Natural Lands Strategy
- Combined Sewer Overflow Masterplan
- Community Energy Investment Roadmap
- Winnipeg Climate Action Plan
- Winnipeg Parks Strategy
- Comprehensive Integrated Waste Management Strategy
- Adult Mosquito Control Policy
- Lights Out Winnipeg Bird-friendly Policy
- Responsible Pet Ownership By-law
- Master Greenspace and Natural Corridors Plan Bylaw & Biodiversity Policy (forthcoming)
- Urban Forestry Strategy (forthcoming)
- Climate Resiliency Strategy (forthcoming)
- Operating procedures which follow various Provincial regulations such as those in the *Aquatic Invasive Species Act*, *Noxious Weeds Act*, and *Pesticide and Fertilizer Control Act*.

Share the Benefits of Biodiversity

- Community Garden Policy
- Urban Agriculture on City Lands Policy
- Poverty Reduction Strategy

Solutions, Governance, Management and Education

- Living Prairie Museum
- Winnipeg Food Council
- Winnipeg's Indigenous Accord
- Public Engagement Policy
- Welcoming Winnipeg Initiative
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Due to the nature and breadth of alignment and support for forthcoming City policies, the Public Service would be in support of the City of Winnipeg becoming a signatory of the Montreal Pledge.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** May 18, 2023

Project Name:

The Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity

COMMENTS:

There are no financial implications for the recommendations of this report.

Lucy Szkwarek, CPA, CGA

Lucy Szkwarek, CPA, CGA
Manager of Finance and Administration

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

N/A

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

This report is in accordance with OurWinnipeg 2045 policies through several goals and objectives, most notably:

Environmental Resilience: Objective 5: Protect and value ecosystems as essential components to life.

Protect and respect the land through the City's responsibility to ensure that life-sustaining ecosystems continue to provide clean air, clean water, biodiversity, local food systems, natural habitats, ecological restoration, carbon sequestration, cooling of urban heat island effect, opportunities for Indigenous land-based practices, and improved mental and physical health.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

This report is in alignment with the Winnipeg Climate Action Plan through the following directions and their related actions:

Strategic Opportunity #7 Community Climate Resiliency
Direction 7.1: Implement opportunities to improve Winnipeg's Resilience and adaptability to the effects of a changing climate (Primary Responsibility: Office of Sustainability)
Direction 7.2: Increase and preserve tree canopy (Primary Responsibility: Public Works Department)
Direction 7.3: Preserve and manage parks and natural areas to support climate change mitigation (Primary Responsibility: Public Works Department

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

The Montreal Pledge aligns with the Poverty Reduction Strategy in that it prioritizes equity and traditional ecological knowledge as a cross-cutting theme. The actions promote improving equitable access to green spaces, the use of the benefits of biodiversity for food security, and the equitable and effective participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities in decision-making and in the process of knowledge acquisition and transmission. This aligns most notably with the following goal and objectives in the Poverty Reduction Strategy:

Goal 1: Equity and a culture of caring are demonstrated through strategy implementation and systems change
Objective B: City decisions and actions are informed by Lived Experience perspectives, trusting relationships are established.
Objective C: Equity and a Culture of Caring are factored into all service planning and budget decisions, resulting in City-wide systems change.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Water and Waste Department
Division: Office of Sustainability
Prepared by: Jeanette Sivilay MA, Sustainability Planner
Date: May 19, 2023
File No.: O-012