PRESENTATION TO EPC COMMITTEE, JULY 5, 2023

WWE Report Item 2 - The Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity

Dave Green - Co-chair, OURS-Winnipeg

My submission today on behalf of OURS-Winnipeg is in support of the recommendations from the Standing Committee on Water, Waste and Environment meeting on June 23, 2023 that recommends:

- that the Winnipeg Public Service Report[1] be accepted as information;
- that the City of Winnipeg become a signatory to the Montreal Pledge: Cities United in Action for Biodiversity[2]; and
- that the Proper Officers of the City be authorized to do all things necessary to implement the intent of the forgoing.

It is important to note that as of June 22, 2023 a total of 61 cities worldwide have signed the pledge; up from the original 47 cities that signed during the Biodiversity Conference in December 2022.[3]

The Public Service Report's executive summary states that "the Public Service believes the City of Winnipeg would be an appropriate signatory of the Montreal Pledge."

And in the discussion section of the report it says - "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."

The pledge must be approved in its entirety to achieve its full potential.

The report identifies the positive alignment of pledge actions with multiple existing city policies. The pledge will be especially complimentary as the city works toward completion of the Master Greenspace and Natural Corridors plans and Biodiversity Policy.

The scientific evidence of biodiversity loss is alarming and taking action is imperative. Cities are at the forefront of observing biodiversity loss and have a large impact both locally and around the world.

The Pledge's 15 easily relatable, clearly stated, practical actions for cities to take are based on the detailed COP15 Global Biodiversity Framework Goals and Targets. A quote from the Biodiversity Framework is as follows - "It is for all - for the whole of government and the whole of society. Its success requires political will and recognition at the highest level of government and relies on action and cooperation by all levels of government and by all actors of society." [4]

Voting today to make Winnipeg a signatory of the Montreal Pledge is something to personally feel very good about. We all need to work towards a common goal of keeping our environment healthy and sustainable for future generations.

It is commendable that the City and its Councillors are formalizing steps toward preserving biodiversity. Thanks to Councillor Gilroy for making the motion to sign the pledge, the WWE committee (Councillors Mayes, Santos, Eadie and Gilroy) who all voted to support the pledge and to move it forward to EPC. Much appreciation is extended to Councillor Rollins for the motions to create the Master Greenspace Plan and Biodiversity Policy and to Councillor Mayes who seconded both motions and provides important environmental contributions as chair of this committee and to many environmental concerns over the years. Thank you for your time.

1. EPC July 5, 2023 meeting WWE report from June 23, 2023, Item # 2 - City Clerk's Decision Making Information System (winnipeg.ca)
2. vdm_montreal-pledge_2022.pdf
3. Montréal Pledge: Call for COP15 launched to world's cities | Ville de Montréal (montreal.ca)
4. United Nations Environment Program Decision Adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological, December 19, 2022, page 5 https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-15/cop-15-dec-04-en.pdf