Minute No. 590
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – June 29, 2023

Item No. 3 Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge Annual Report

COUNCIL DECISION:

Council concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services and adopted the following:

1. That this report be received as information.

2. That the annual reporting on the Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge be concluded.

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

Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – June 29, 2023

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Orlikow,

That the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services be adopted by consent.

Carried

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On July 5, 2023, the Executive Policy Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services and submitted the matter to Council.

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On June 29, 2023, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and submitted the matter to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

David Grant submitted a communication with respect to the matter.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge Annual Report

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks – Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
D. Domke	J. Berezowsky	N/A	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2019, then-Mayor Brian Bowman shared a vision to protect and expand our City's immense tree canopy and named it the One Million Tree Challenge (Million Tree Challenge). The Challenge aims to promote tree planting and make it so Winnipeggers collectively plant one million trees by the time our City's population reaches one million people. The One Million Tree Challenge is a call to action for all Winnipeggers to plant trees.

During its 2023 budget deliberations, Council did not endorse another $70,000 grant to Trees Winnipeg to manage the Million Tree Challenge.

In 2020, over 9,150 trees were planted toward the Million Tree Challenge. In 2021, approximately 20,324 trees were registered toward the Million Tree Challenge. In 2022, an estimated 47,152 trees are expected to be registered to the Million Tree Challenge by the time City of Winnipeg trees are included.

In 2022, Trees Winnipeg had a number of staffing and operational challenges which resulted in them not being able to keep some of their commitments. Trees Winnipeg reports the organization is much more stable in 2023, and will complete all outstanding commitments. Trees Winnipeg will also continue to lead the Million Tree Challenge in 2023. Tree Canada will also continue to maintain existing corporate donations including those from the Winnipeg Foundation, Canadian National Railway, and the Loewen family.

The Public Service will focus its existing resources on the Federal Government's 2 Billion Tree campaign moving forward approved by Council on July 21, 2022. The total estimated cost of the Home-Grown program is $17.2 million over five years, with the City contributing approximately $9.9 million within approved and forecasted budgets from 2022 to 2026. This program would allow the Public Service to increase capacity to plant approximately 70,000 additional trees on public property from 2022 to 2026. These additional plantings would include replacement trees and net-new trees along boulevards and active transportation pathways, in parks, and in native woodlands and riverbank forests. This program will also fund a community-based program to increase equitable access to trees and hands-on support as a means of enabling community groups, businesses, and nonprofit organizations to plant in their often under-treed communities. Trees planted in this program will be counted towards the Million Tree Challenge.

Since new sponsorship for the Million Tree Challenge appears to be diminishing, the Public Service recommends that annual reporting on the matter be concluded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That this report be received as information.

2. That the annual reporting on the Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge be concluded.

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

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On February 27, 2020, Council directed the Public Service to submit an annual report on the One Million Tree Challenge to Council in the second quarter of each year, beginning in 2021.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

There are no implications to the Recommendations of this report.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

In September 2019, Mayor Brian Bowman shared a vision to protect and expand our City's immense tree canopy and named it the One Million Tree Challenge (Million Tree Challenge). The Challenge aims to promote tree planting and make it so Winnipeggers collectively plant one million trees by the time our City's population reaches one million people. This will result in a net expansion and growth in our tree canopy beyond replacing existing trees lost to age or disease. The program challenges individual residents, not-for-profit agencies, as well as private businesses to help plant the new trees. The One Million Tree Challenge is a call to action for all Winnipeggers to plant trees.

On February 27, 2020, Council approved a report to grant $140,000 to Trees Winnipeg to lead and coordinate the challenge. In a subsequent recommendation, Council approved that the Public Service generate an annual report on the challenge in the second quarter of each year.

On June 24, 2021, Council considered a report to grant another $140,000 to Trees Winnipeg from the 2022 Urban Forest Enhancement Program. In addition, Council considered another $59,000 be approved from the same capital budget for a City representative to help coordinate projects on public property. Subsequently, Council approved both of these motions in its 2022 budget deliberations.

On July 21, 2022, Council considered a report to grant another $70,000 to Trees Winnipeg from the 2023 Urban Forest Enhancement Program subject to Council approval. Council did not endorse this funding in its 2023 budget deliberations.

In 2020, over 9,150 trees were planted toward the Million Tree Challenge. In 2021, approximately 20,324 trees were registered toward the Million Tree Challenge. As of mid-April 2023, the Trees

Winnipeg website was registering 31,423 trees in total. This figure does not yet include the trees planted by the City of Winnipeg. Trees Winnipeg is still adding those trees to the web-site so another 15,729 trees will be added. In total, an estimated 47,152 trees will have been planted by the Million Tree Challenge since 2020.

Trees Winnipeg

In 2022, Trees Winnipeg had a number of staffing and operational challenges. As a result, the group is still completing their 2021-2022 final report for the Million Tree Challenge and other commitments to the City of Winnipeg. Trees Winnipeg reports that the organization is much more stable in 2023, and will complete all outstanding commitments.

Tree Canada

Tree Canada continues to maintain existing corporate donations toward the Million Tree Challenge. Private donations continue to be collected on Tree Canada's website. The Winnipeg Foundation has committed $1 million over five years to support tree planting for the Million Tree Challenge and planning is underway to have trees planted in underserved areas of the community. Canadian National Railway continues to support the Million Tree Challenge and has committed $1 million to Tree Canada to support planting efforts in Winnipeg. The Loewen family continues to support the effort by donating $25,000 per year for the next two years. Tree Canada will continue to work with other sponsors as required.

Future Direction

Trees Winnipeg has agreed to manage the Million Tree Challenge in 2023 through its own resources. They will maintain the Million Tree Challenge website and continue education and awareness programs as resources permit.

The Public Service will focus its existing resources on the Federal Government's 2 Billion Tree campaign moving forward approved by Council on July 21, 2022. The total estimated cost of the Home-Grown program is $17.2 million over five years, with the City contributing approximately $9.9 million within approved and forecasted budgets from 2022 to 2026. This program would allow the Public Service to increase capacity to plant approximately 70,000 additional trees on public property from 2022 to 2026. These additional plantings would include replacement trees and net-new trees along boulevards and active transportation pathways, in parks, and in native woodlands and riverbank forests. This program will also fund a community-based program to increase equitable access to trees and hands-on support as a means of enabling community groups, businesses, and nonprofit organizations to plant in their often under-treed communities. Any sponsors identified by Tree Canada will be given the opportunity to plant trees on City property moving forward through volunteer events or through outside resources. These trees will all be counted towards the Million Tree Challenge.

Since new sponsorship for the Million Tree Challenge appears to be diminishing, the Public Service recommends that annual reporting on the matter be concluded.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: **4/28/2023**

Project Name:

Winnipeg One Million Tree Challenge Annual Report

COMMENTS:

There is no financial impact as this report is to be received as information only.

J. Ruby, 2023-05-01
J. Ruby, CPA, CA
Manager of Finance & Administration

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with: N/A

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

The report is in accordance with the OurWinnipeg Policy, 02-2 Environment:

- Recognize and preserve Winnipeg's parks, green spaces and riverbanks as green oases in our urban setting.
- Enable the protection of ecologically significant lands.
- Protect and Enhance the Urban Forest.

Direction strategies of 'A Sustainable Winnipeg':

- 09 Continue to respect and value our natural and built environment.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

The report is in accordance with Strategic Opportunity #7:

- 7.2 Increase and Preserve Tree Canopy (Primary Responsibility: Public Works Department).
- 7.3 Preserve and Manage Parks and Natural Areas to Support Climate Change Mitigation (Primary Responsibility: Public Works - Parks).

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

The information and recommendations presented in this report align with and advance the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy (2021 – 2031) as follows:

They embody the following Guiding Principles:

- We will Uphold Human Rights
- We will Honour Relationships and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples
- We will Address Systemic Oppression, Trauma and Social Inequity
- We will Promote and Maintain the Welfare of All Residents
- We will Develop Trust and Meaningful Partnerships to find solutions and drive change.

They align with the following Goals and Objectives:

- Goal 1: Equity and a Culture of Caring are Demonstrated through Strategy Implementation and Systems Change

Related 10-year Objectives:

- D. The City advocates for and pursues partnerships to implement the Strategy.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works
Division: Parks and Open Space
Prepared by: David A. Domke, Manager, Parks and Open Space
Date: May 2, 2023