Minutes – Council – March 21, 2024

Minute No. 230
Report – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – March 6, 2024

Item No. 4 Winnipeg National Urban Park Assessment Funding Agreement

COUNCIL DECISION:

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

1. That grant funding in the amount of up to $405,300 from Parks Canada Agency be approved for the pre-feasibility assessment and planning phases of the process for designating a national urban park in Winnipeg.

2. That the City enter into, execute and deliver a contribution agreement with Parks Canada Agency and such other agreements as determined necessary by the City Solicitor / Director of Legal Services to implement the intent of the foregoing ("Ancillary Agreements").

3. That authority be delegated to the Chief Financial Officer to negotiate and approve the terms and conditions of the contribution agreement with Parks Canada Agency and the Ancillary Agreements, in accordance with this report and such other terms and conditions deemed necessary by the City Solicitor / Director of Legal Services to protect the interests of the City.

4. 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 – March 6, 2024

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Duncan,

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

Carried

Councillor Chambers was absent from the vote on the above motion.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On March 12, 2024, 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 March 6, 2024, 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.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Winnipeg National Urban Park Assessment Funding Agreement

Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – Executive Policy Committee – Council

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
D. Domke	J. Berezowsky	C. Kloepfer	M. Jack

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Winnipeg is often described as a prairie oasis, connected by its rivers. This title is earned by the beautiful network of parks and open spaces distributed across the city. This parks system encourages and promotes healthy lifestyles, strengthens our communities, protects nature, and makes our City a more attractive place to live and work.

Parks Canada and the City of Winnipeg share a common goal of enhancing urban greenspaces to reflect both natural and cultural values. On July 20, 2021, the City of Winnipeg signed a non-binding Statement of Collaboration with Parks Canada indicating the intent to conduct dialogue around the feasibility of potentially designating a national urban park in Winnipeg. This document also referenced a commitment to enter into subsequent agreements, between the Parties, as required and agreed upon (e.g. contribution agreement for capacity support).

As such, the Public Service requests approval to enter into a contribution agreement with Parks Canada Agency in order to receive funding in the amount of up to $405,300 ($208,950 in 2024-25 and $196,350 in 2025-26) to support the pre-feasibility and planning phases of the process for designating a potential national urban park in Winnipeg. Project activities are expected to be complete in April 2026.

The City is required to cover all up-front program expenses (for reimbursement by Parks Canada) and contribute staff time of $45,617 to the project. The City intends to use existing staff to meet the requirement and, therefore, no incremental budget is required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That grant funding in the amount of up to $405,300 from Parks Canada Agency be approved for the pre-feasibility assessment and planning phases of the process for designating a national urban park in Winnipeg.

2. That the City enter into, execute and deliver a contribution agreement with Parks Canada Agency and such other agreements as determined necessary by the City

Solicitor / Director of Legal Services to implement the intent of the foregoing ("Ancillary Agreements").

3. That authority be delegated to the Chief Financial Officer to negotiate and approve the terms and conditions of the contribution agreement with Parks Canada Agency and the Ancillary Agreements, in accordance with this report and such other terms and conditions deemed necessary by the City Solicitor / Director of Legal Services to protect the interests of the City.

4. 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

In July 2021, the City of Winnipeg signed a non-binding Statement of Collaboration with Parks Canada signaling both parties' intention to work together to explore opportunities to enhance urban nature and access to urban parks in Winnipeg. The Statement of Collaboration identifies the opportunity for the City of Winnipeg and Parks Canada to enter into subsequent agreements as required and agreed upon (e.g. contribution agreement for capacity support).

Council approval is required to receive grants and enter into the contribution agreement.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The City would be required to incur project costs of up to $405,300 in advance of reimbursement by Parks Canada Agency, with Council approval being required to accept the funds from Parks Canada Agency. No budget adjustment is required as this is mill rate neutral, with additional expenditures being fully off-set by additional recoveries.

In addition to the expenditures being reimbursed by Parks Canada, the agreement requires that the City contribute staff time of $45,617 to the project. The City intends to use existing staff to meet the requirement and, therefore, no incremental budget is required.

In summary, if Council approval is given to enter into this agreement, the City expects to incur total costs of $450,917, including $45,617 of internal staff time. No budget adjustment is required as the additional expenditures are fully recoverable from Parks Canada and existing staff will be used to fulfill the City contribution.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

This Agreement is undertaken in the context of the National Urban Parks program, formally launched by Parks Canada in August 2021. Urban parks play an important role in providing access to nature for communities, protecting biodiversity, mitigating the impacts of climate change, providing multiple ecosystem services, and supporting health and well-being. Urban parks also provide opportunities for reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, by recognizing and honouring Indigenous knowledge and stewardship of the lands and waters for present and future generations. Parks Canada and the City of Winnipeg share a common goal to enhance urban greenspaces, reflecting both natural and cultural values.

In July 2021, the City of Winnipeg signed a Statement of Collaboration with Parks Canada signaling both parties' intention to work together to explore opportunities to enhance urban nature and access to urban parks in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The Statement of Collaboration identifies the opportunity for the City of Winnipeg and Parks Canada to enter into subsequent agreements as required and agreed upon (e.g. contribution agreement for capacity support).

The City of Winnipeg will work in collaboration with Parks Canada and partner agencies to undertake the pre-feasibility and planning phases of the process for potentially designating a national urban park in Winnipeg. Project management and oversight will be the responsibility of a temporary City of Winnipeg project manager (PM) within the Public Works Department for the term beginning April 1, 2024, and ending February 28, 2026. The PM will work directly with the City of Winnipeg's Office of Public Engagement and additional public engagement consultant(s) to implement the project, as required.

Expected Results:

1. Proposed location and boundary of a potential national urban park in Winnipeg.

2. Collection of feedback from stakeholders and the public on the potential national urban park in Winnipeg.

3. Recommendations from pre-feasibility and planning activities related to operations, vision, boundary, and natural and cultural elements of the potential national urban park.

Key Activities:

1. Pre-feasibility and planning work:

    - Develop a vision, in collaboration with project partners, of how a national urban park in Winnipeg could contribute to shared goals for nature and climate, connecting people with nature and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.
    - Determine potential boundaries and options for phasing and scalability for the park, in collaboration with project partners.

2. Public engagement:

    - Organize public and stakeholder engagement on the national urban park initiative in Winnipeg.

3. Research and materials:

    - Conduct research and create materials for pre-feasibility and planning discussions (e.g. maps, identification of land ownership, etc).

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement **Date:** January 29, 2024

Project Name: **First Year of Program** **2024**

Winnipeg National Urban Park Assessment Funding Agreement

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants (Enter Description Here)	-	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Enter Description Here	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ 189,748	$ 232,601	$ 28,568	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	$ 170,552	$ 209,070	$ 25,678	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ 19,196	$ 23,531	$ 2,890	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	19,196	23,531	2,890	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: Direct Costs total $450,917 and are comprised of incremental expenditures of $405,300 plus internal staff time of $45,617. Under the agreement, incremental expenditures are fully reimbursable and recoveries are expected to total $405,300. As the City's contribution of internal staff time will be fulfilled by using existing employees, $45,617 will come from existing budgets and no Net Budget Adjustment is required to the Public Works operating budget.

J. Ruby, 2024-01-30

J. Ruby, CPA, CA
Manager of Finance and Administration

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Office of Public Engagement
- Legal Services

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

Goal: Environmental Resilience
2.19 Leverage Green Infrastructure

- Value, protect and integrate green infrastructure solutions within the urban environment, to achieve highest and best use for biodiversity and ecosystem integrity, mitigate servicing capacity constraints, and accommodate only park, recreation, open space, or City operations related uses in City-owned land used as parks or under parks jurisdiction

2.21 Leverage Green Infrastructure

- Conserve, restore, and enhance the urban forest as a key contributor to air quality, erosion control, carbon sequestration, storm water management, efficient energy resource consumption, shade, improved health and wellbeing, and mitigation of and adaptation to the urban heat island effect.

Goal: Good Health and Well-Being
4.11 Equitable Service Access

- Prioritize equitable access to recreation and parks systems, services, and infrastructure, in order to: enable active living; connect people and nature; create supportive environments; build community capacity; and achieve desired health outcomes, with a focus on children and youth.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Strategic Opportunity #7: Community Climate Resiliency

- Implement opportunities to improve Winnipeg's resilience and adaptability to the effects of a changing climate.

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Goal 1: Equity and a Culture of Caring are Demonstrated through Strategy Implementation and Systems Change.
Related 10-year Objectives:

C. Equity and a Culture of Caring are factored into all service planning and budget decisions, resulting in City-wide systems change.

Goal 6: All City Services are Equitable, Inclusive and Accessible:
Related 10-year Objectives:

A. Residents have equitable access to City services, in particular demographic groups who experience marginalization.

B. Community development models and collaborative approaches are enhanced or initiated for service planning & delivery in areas of higher poverty.
C. Use of City's tools and resources are maximized to reduce systemic inequities.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works Department
Division: Parks and Open Space
Prepared by: Lori Nichols
Date: January 5, 2024