COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Thursday, March 21, 2024

The Council met at 9:44 a.m.

The Clerk advised the Speaker that a quorum was present.

The Speaker called the meeting to order.

In accordance with Rule 11.1 of the City of Winnipeg Procedure By-law No. 50/2007, the Speaker acknowledged that we are in Treaty One Territory, the home and traditional lands of the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe), Ininew (Cree), and Dakota peoples, and in the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. Our drinking water comes from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation, in Treaty Three Territory.

MOTIONS

Madam Speaker: We have one motion to allow a member of Council to participate remotely, which requires approval of Council. Madam Clerk, will you please read the motion into the record for Councillor Chambers?

Moved by Councillor Sharma,
Seconded by Councillor Eadie,

THAT in accordance with Section 9.1(9) of the Procedure By-law 50/2007 Councillor Chambers be allowed to participate remotely in today's meeting of Council.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Please rise for a moment of silence if you are able. We'll hear from Councillor Shawn Dobson.

The opening prayer was read by Councillor Dobson.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Roll call, Madam Clerk.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma, His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Eadie, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Rollins, Santos, Schreyer, Wyatt and Councillor Chambers.

MOTIONS

Madam Speaker: Thank you. We have a leave of absence motion for Councillor Orlikow who is away due to a personal family matter. Madam Clerk.

Moved by Councillor Eadie,
Seconded by Councillor Sharma,

THAT Councillor Orlikow be granted a leave of absence from today's meeting due to a personal family matter.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? That's carried.

INTRODUCTION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Madam Speaker: We have two pages with us today. Please welcome Lloyd Bernabe from St. Boniface Diocesan High School, who resides in the Mynarski ward and Ayanna Gualdrapa from Collège Garden City, who resides in the Old Kildonan ward. Thank you for serving Council today. (applause). We'll now move into morning announcements. Mr. Mayor, you have the floor.

Mayor Gillingham: Good morning Madam Speaker, and thank you so much for…to each of us, to each of colleague who's gathered here today to do the business and work of city of Winnipeg. A couple of announcements this morning. First of all, I would like to congratulate the Sakgeeng Oldtimers hockey team, who inducted into the North American Indigenous Athletics Hall of Fame at a banquet in Green Bay, Wisconsin last weekend. The Sakgeeng Oldtimers hockey club had its origins in Sakgeeng First Nation, a community about 100 kilometres northeast of Winnipeg, with players ranging in age from 35 to 50 years of age. The players are Ojibwe and Cree ancestry who came from community in south Manitoba. And I was told this morning that when they got…they were there at the Green Bay, Wisconsin event, they were still energetic and actually racing one another up to the stage. So, they still got that competitive spirit within them. Specifically, I would like to recognize another inductee, Mr. Kenneth Strath Moore. Kenneth was the first First Nation athlete to win an Olympic gold medal for hockey in 1932 in the Olympics in Lake Placid, New York. He scored a goal in the game against Poland where they won the gold medal and made history. And today, joining us in the gallery, is Kenneth's granddaughter, Jennifer Rattray and her husband Stacy Dainard, Kenneth in fact, was an employee of the City of Winnipeg and worked for 999, which was of course the forerunner to 911, and I think he retired I think in 1970, or something in that like and Jennifer actually brought her grandfather's gold medal with her today, so, a special acknowledgment to the two of them. Thank you so much, Jennifer and Stacy for being here. Congratulations to your grandfather. (applause). Last week I was really pleased to be at the launch of Winnipeg's 150 merchandise. So, they know that there's been a strong demand for the items to celebrate this special year featuring the graphic design by local artist, Jordan Stranger of Peguis First Nation. The Winnipeg 150 collection is available at the Forks Trading Company online or in store. So, look for more items. (Inaudible) they've got a whole bunch of items already but there's more items to come in the future. And please purchase them and wear them proud throughout the year as we celebrate Winnipeg's 150th anniversary. In recognition of Francophonie Month in March, the City of Winnipeg will raise its flag at the Société de la francophonie manitobaine tomorrow, Friday, March 22. Everybody is invited. I invite my council colleagues to join me at 8:30 in the morning for this flag raising. This month serves a wonderful opportunity to celebrate francophone community and the men's value they add to our City's cultural diversity. In fact, the key role that the francophone community has played the founding of Winnipeg 150 years ago. And, finally, next week is spring break for many people throughout the city. And I just want to take this opportunity to wish all my council colleagues and City staff and Clerk's staff a wonderful break if you are taking time away from the office or if you are just going back to your office to catch up on all the things that have been kind of piling up because you've been doing other work, but to all of you, I wish you a wonderful break as well. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Next is Councillor Duncan.

Councillor Duncan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, I just want to rise today to acknowledge sports twist on things as we wrap up the hockey season. I want to congratulate all of the city champions across all of the age levels in Winnipeg, including your very proud mama bear here on Council. And Specific to my ward, I would like to give a very sincere congratulations to my (inaudible), the provincial high school hockey champion, Oak Park Raiders and to the Shaftesbury Titans, women's high school hockey team, who became over all odds captured the city championship. Congratulations to all the teams out there this year. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Duncan. Next, Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: Thank you, Madam speaker. And thank you, Councillor Duncan. Hockey is like politics. It's about teamwork, strategy, adaptation and leadership. Players and politicians are like work together strategically to achieve their goals and succeed in their respective fields. I rise to acknowledge the hockey team healing from sinking, particularly honoring Phil Fontaine, who succeeds in politics and dedicated approximately 15 years to the team. He, Madam Speaker, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to represent Sakgeeng First Nation positively. While Phil Fontaine is widely recognized as a political figure, having served as national chief of the AFN and being an activist and advisor on Indigenous relations, his tenure as a player on the hockey team, with legendary showcasing a different aspect of his life, one that I know as someone who married into the town of Lac du Bonnet was indeed legendary, was indeed a big aspect of his life. As the matter of fact, the team, which is comprised of survivors of residential schools, has been recognized by the Hockey Hall of Fame and the Fontaine has, in particular, always recalled that the competitive spirit of the games against teams from around the world, Finland, Sweden and Norway, highlighting the diverse experiences they had in hockey on these matches. I also rise on another matter pertaining to sports which is uncharacteristic, for me, Madam Speaker, concerning Vincent Massey High School. The volleyball, basketball teams, the varsity boys for AAAAA, all these A's in sports, Madam Speaker, is that not for me to say, but congratulations to the Vincent Massey teams, the volleyball and basketball. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Rollins. Councillor Mayes, on with sports.

Councillor Mayes: On with Sports, indeed, had I known Oak Park was Duncan's, oh, my matter, I would have cheered even harder for the Dakota boys against them when...but they lost, but then in the final Vincent Massey match. I wanted

to congratulate, and Councillor Chambers probably would as well Dakota Collegiate Varsity Girls for brick champions three straight years in basketball. Really a very difficult to do. So, congratulations to coach Eric Sung, the…whose sister is where there for Darya Rom, Abbie Sweeney and they were wonderfully named hope and faith for a rock, another set of sisters played on these teams. So, it's been a bit of a (inaudible) there, still some returning players, but hard to win three straight championships in any sport. Unfortunately, they had to beat the same team twice in the final Garden City, which I see more of a track school. Now, given that the work on the track there, so unfortunately, they had to be the same team twice in the final, but two terrific seasons, by Garden City as well, but the moment may not come again, so I did want to highlight really an amazing achievement by Eric Sung…and the players at Dakota. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Mayes. Our final speaker, Deputy Mayor Janice Lukes.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you very much. I rise to speak today. Between March 10th and Tuesday, April 9th is Ramadan. Hundreds of millions of people around the world are participating in Ramadan. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, and it has a special significance in Islam. It's during this time that Muslims believe that the first verses of the Quran, Islam's holy book were revealed to the Prophet Muḥammad. During this period, Muslims are required to fast and to give charity, to show kindness and patience and strength, and their relationship with God. Fasting during Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam, which laid basis to how Muslims are required to live their lives. For many of those observing Ramadan, it's a time to become closer to God and it's also a time of joy for spending time with one's family, for giving to charity and those in need. So, there are many incredible iftars, dinners that break the fast after sunset that are now being held in our city in a multitude of restaurants. You can go, and you can buy a buffet and experience the incredible foods from many different countries after sunset. Also, there is some spectacular bazaars that are coming up, where you can go to these bazaars and feel like you're just in another part of the world, but you're actually in the heart of Fort Richmond on Silverstone. These are being held coming up prior to the celebration of Eid. So I want to wish all our friends, family, our friends and neighbors and their families, Ramadan Mubarak to everyone. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Madam Deputy Mayor.

MINUTES

Councillor Browaty moves that the Minutes of the meeting held on February 22, 2024 be taken as read and confirmed.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Our first delegation is Mr. Gord Delbridge, president of CUPE Local 500, in support of Item 5, of the report of the Executive Policy Committee dated March 12, 2024, regarding living wage. Welcome, Mr. Delbridge.

DELEGATIONS

Gord Delbridge: Thank you, good morning. Thank you, Your Worship, members of Council for this opportunity to speak. I'll keep it very brief today. I know that you've had a long few days and I have respect for that, I will keep it short. I think you have heard enough from me on this topic. So, the reason I'm here today is in the event that the recommendation from the Executive Policy Committee on living wage has passed today. I would encourage all of you to, you know, to support the costing of this, but I would also like to ask that the CUPE be included in the costing process. It's my understanding that the mayor supports this, and I thank you for that. In the eye of transparency, I wouldn't be able to come back before all of you and say that we don't dispute, you know, the process that was carried out. It was done accurately, and that is the position we are hopeful to take. This is, you know, yesterday I had a manager actually from the City, I'm not going to say who, shared a text with me that the…of the top 35 employers in Manitoba and one of them (inaudible) and hopefully one day the City of Winnipeg can be included in that. We are hopeful of that, too. And we think that you know in the event the living wage is adopted by the City of Winnipeg that one day that we can be included on that and you know we can have some pride and some honor. We think this will be a step in the right direction so, I'll leave it at that, as I promised that I was going to keep it short, but if anyone does have questions for me, (inaudible).

Madam Speaker: Thank you. First question, Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Recently it was documented in the Globe and Mail how the Meridian Credit Union, one of the largest credit unions in Ontario made the deceit to grant living wage to all of their employees. And the CEO, they documented in the article about how important it was in terms of moral, in terms of building the team spirit that they're all one group, right. In terms of your point of view from representing the City employees CUPE 500, what do you think that will do in terms of,

you know, similar, I guess, in terms of workers, worker moral and spirit. If Meridian can do it, a private sector credit union, credit union nonetheless, why can't the City of Winnipeg do it?

Gord Delbridge: Interesting that you raised that, because of that list of those 35 employers, the Assiniboine Credit Union making living wage and they're on that list here in Manitoba. So, with that, I think, now more than ever, City employees…they need that morale lifted. And as I said, it's in our best interest being the union that represents your largest component of City employees that we want to see the City of Winnipeg successful as an organization. I want to be able to, when I am having meeting before our members, I want to say that you're lucky, you've got great jobs, this is a good employer. I want to be able to tell them. And you know we think this would be a step in the right direction of lifting up that morale.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Second question, Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Yeah, and somebody who know we are here all hours and sometimes talk to the cleaning staff. The cleaning staff work here as a second job to make ends meet. And, you know, that's common. But in terms of our City staff right now, the argument being given to us is that we can't do it because it's not going to be affordable to the city and our budget, that there is going to be a cost here that will be brought to bear that will be impossible to accommodate in the budget. What are your thoughts on that?

Gord Delbridge: Once again, as I've mentioned before I think the cost is going to be very minimal. I do appreciate the fact that we're going to be included…we're going to be at that table so that we can hopefully come back and say that the costing was done accurately and present back to you that it's a very minimal cost. In return for the morale that you are going to get on your workforce, our members. I think that is very important, and like I say, hopefully one day, we will be added to the list of top 35 employers in Manitoba. And this would be a step in the right direction to get us there.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Second question by Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Schreyer: Yeah, thank you, Madam Speaker. Perhaps Mr. Delbridge can give us some advice on this in terms of research. Is it not the case that in the past even within our lifetimes, but really maybe decades ago, maybe not so long ago that the minimum wage and the lowest wages here at city hall were more livable than they are today?

Gord Delbridge: Yes, there is no question a number of years ago. I mean it was…you know, if you got a job with the City of Winnipeg, it was a…you were with a lot of pride. It was an opportunity. People stayed. They, you know, worked their entire careers here. My mother worked for the City for 30 years. My brothers worked for the City, and you know, you go back a number of years ago, that used to be the case. It was…we never, this is probably the amount of turnover and issues we're having with recruitment and retention is actually the worst I have ever seen it. And so we've got to start taking some initiatives if we want to become a competitive employer and compete with this current labour market right now. And, I think we can do that. We can get back to that. And, maybe we'll get on that list of one of the top employers. It would be a good goal to try to achieve. And I think this would be a step in the right direction.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Delbridge. Seeing no further questions?

Gord Delbridge: Thank you.

Madam Speaker: We appreciate your presentation today. Our next delegation is Kenneth Ingram in support of Item 6 of the report of the Executive Policy Committee dated March 12, 2024. It's regarding Welcoming Winnipeg, the remaining of Edison Park. Welcome.

Kenneth Ingram: Thank you very much. Thank you, Madam Speaker, Mr. Mayor, Council, for the opportunity to appear here today to speak on a subject that's really important to me. My name is Kenneth Ingram. I've lived in the area of northwest Winnipeg my whole life, and I became deeply interested in local history over the last few years during my degree at the U of M, and especially after moving to that historic neighborhood of Seven Oaks in the summer of 2022. So much so that I began a history blog, Stories of Scotia and I began to re-establish historical society for the area of northwest Winnipeg, the Seven Oaks Historical Society, with support from people like Len Kaminski, the past Society President, Ted Barnett from the Bleak House, who's graciously allowed us to use their facility once a month. And, of course, Councillor Eadie who has been extremely supportive of our endeavours. So, history is extremely important to me. And I recognize that history from many years was not an accurate reflection who lived in Manitoba and the events that occurred. I was fortunate enough to take classes at the U of M from Indigenous scholars like Dr. Kiera Ladner, who I believe to be one of the best scholars on Canadian and Indigenous politics at the entire university. And I'm making sure that the society for northwest Winnipeg places an emphasis on Indigenous history because of its importance. So when I see the goals of Welcoming Winnipeg Committee, I see admirable folks. However, when the goals are put into practice, I found the

committee to be particularly problematic. In the Welcoming Winnipeg report in front of you, which was written by U of W history professor Erin Millions, on behalf of the committee, and endorsed by everyone on it. There are some obvious issues including some out right misinformation and factual errors. The Background is that these Matheson Mill's, some of the few remaining artifacts of water milling on the Red River from the time of period that was most prominent which was around the late 1820s to around 1870. During that time, only nine water mills, not four like the report says, but there was actually nine existed in the greater Red River area. But from what I can tell, there are only four millstones in terms of artifacts that we have remaining, three of them, which are here in the city. There is Cuthbert Grant's Mill on Sturgeon Creek, Louis Riel's father's Mill on the Seine River and the Matheson Mill on McLeod Creek. Millions conclusion based on that information is, the Matheson Mill itself is not particularly important to the history of milling at Red River. And I am going to repeat that in case you like I did, thought your ears were deceiving you when you heard it for the first time. Again, this is Erin Millions who has a PhD in history from the U of M, who is giving a lecture at University of Winnipeg in a class as I speak, this is her conclusion: The Matheson Mill itself is not particularly important to the history of milling at Red River. This is not only a demonstrably false claim, but it's an extremely irresponsible one, when it's made by an academic who should be credible in the field of history.

Councillor Rollins: Madam Chari, I think we are engaging a bit of decorum when we're concluding that an academic…we're skating into territory we are considering an academic's reputation.

Councillor Wyatt: Madam Speaker, it may be an argument, and questioning an academic's finding is perfectly legitimate. We are not questioning the academic's credibility, but we're questioning not even the academic. I've never heard of anything that's more ridiculous in my life on the floor of Council.

Madam Speaker: Thank you for your remarks, Councillors. Thank you. Mr. Ingram, please continue with your presentation. We'd like to continue with the presentation.

Councillor Allard: I believe I heard a classic ad hominem attack, an attack against a person that is permanent. Perhaps the speaker wants to clarify, but I head a permanent negative quality assigned to a person. That's an ad hominem attack so if the speaker wants to clarify, but I don't think that's allowed around here.

Kenneth Ingram: Okay, I'm going to continue.

Madam Speaker: I will have the Clerk clarify.

Kenneth Ingram: This...

Madam Speaker: Mr. Ingram, if you could continue, please.

Kenneth Ingram: Yes, of course. Again, this is an academic who is…has a Ph.D. in the field of history making this argument that the Matheson Mill is not particularly important in the history of milling at the Red River. Again, it's not only a demonstrable false claim, but it's extremely irresponsible. The Matheson Mill was in operation between 1829, 1832 and now operates as a museum. The Riel Mill only operated between 1850 and sometime later in that decade. And the millstones are now predominantly displayed outside the St. Boniface Museum. The Matheson Mill was operational from at least 1860 to 1870 in operation longer than the two upper mentioned mills. And so, it's objectively more prolific than the other two mills. So, if we were to apply our line of thinking objectively the next logical conclusion is that millions is making the case that the Grant's and Riel mills, built by prominent Metis man (inaudible) had are not particularly important to the history of milling at Red River. But of course, no one would make such an obviously false claim based on nothing but a misunderstanding of history and baked in historical revisions. And so, I asked millions in welcoming Winnipeg to think and I ask Council and everyone else watching it at home to think, to yourself, why was it made in relation to the Matheson Mill. Millions goes on to argue what is significant about the Matheson Millstone is that they represent Indigenous led food production and Metis people in the milling trade. And if we are talking about the Grant and Riel mills, that will be a historically accurate assessment and a fair point. But when we are talking about the Matheson Mill, it's simply…is not factually accurate to say that we have evidence to suggest that Indigenous people milled on McLeod Creek between the late 1820s and the 1870s. Historians like Jim Smith, who specialize in the history of northeast Winnipeg have long searched for it. Tens of thousands of hours, and have found little and no evidence to support that conclusion. But the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee had upwards of three years, which is when they started assessing names, about half a year after this particular name was proposed to demonstrate some type of connection they claim exists between the Matheson millstones and Indigenous food production. And because they were unable to find one, their argument against the name with 83% support from the public, is simply one based on symbolism. And I think it is an exceptionally weak one, but this isn't the first time that the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee has sent an erroneous recommendation that was later disregarded by EPC and then Council. In the fall of proposal to rename the park Appletree-Bridgeland Drive North Park in Bridgewater.

Councillor Rollins: It was confused about, as a member of EPC, what my intent was by voting, which is, you know, impugning.

Madam Speaker: I think I heard him speak to the facts of the report. Continue with your presentation, please.

Kenneth Ingram: Anyway, it was later disregarded by EPC and then Council. In the fall of proposal to rename the park Appletree-Bridgeland Drive North Park in Bridgewater to Emeka Nnadi Park was proposed honoring a Nigerian-Canadian Emeka Nnadi. He received his bachelor's degree at the U of M in landscape architecture, and through his group played an instrumental role in the designing of the entire gate Bridgewater. Anyone who has seen that his TEDx Talk know he was born coming off the heels of Nigerian Civil War, contracted pneumonia as an infant, had a less than 1% chance of surviving, and yet pulled through to become the inspiration that he is today. His story is one of the most inspiring you will ever hear. Over 90% of the people surveyed supported that name change, yet the Welcoming Winnipeg similarly recommended to EPC that the park not be remained to honor a person of color and clear inspiration not just to people of color, but to everyone in Winnipeg. By making these types of glaringly historically inaccurate arguments and similarly erroneous recommendations, the committee only undercuts its own credibility.

Councillor Mayes: This troubles me there. Unsuccessful would be, it is an advisory committee. We don't have to follow it. That's why it's called an advisory committee.

Madam Speaker: Kenneth, please make your point about the report in front of you.

Kenneth Ingram: Correct.

Madam Speaker: And If you could do so in a respectful manner, please.

Kenneth Ingram: Looking into my area of northwest Winnipeg I think that all the important people who have been deservingly recognized through parks and plazas. I think Physicist Louis Slotin, World War II pilots, Louis Greenberg and Andrew Mynarski, journalist for the Winnipeg Tribune and historian Vince Leah, mayor of the North End, Slaw Rebchuk, and long-time politician of the working class and local communist during the height of the Cold War and Red Scare Joseph. And I don't know if anyone could say with complete certainty that the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee would get behind even a single one of their names if they were proposed today. So, while these heroes may not have received recognition they deserve, all because nowadays, names put forward are relying on the impulse of a committee that has proven themselves unreliable to possess proper understanding of the history of our city and clearly cannot determine what names are appropriate.

Madam Speaker: Mr. Ingram. I have just cautioned you to make your presentation in a respectful manner. Shall we go to questions? I think you've made your point today. If you could please wrap up.

Kenneth Ingram: Okay. It's demonstrated through its own reports like the one you have in front of you now, that in order to further its own agenda, it has no issue with devaluing the importance of other cultures.

Madam Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Kenneth Ingram: And improve.

Mayor Gillingham: And I'll…we will move to questions in a moment. The Agenda of Welcoming Winnipeg Committee has been set by Council.

Madam Speaker: That's right.

Mayor Gillingham: Right? And so, we have created the Welcome Winnipeg. I'll explain this more in just a moment. For the purpose is to try to begin to acknowledge the errors and grievous omissions that have been made in history. And so, Welcoming Winnipeg plays a key role in our collective journey and reconciliation. And, I don't dispute the fact, you know, the speaker can question the findings, but I'll be just straight up. The tone is too much.

Madam Speaker: As I've cautioned you previously, Kenneth Ingram. I think we should go to questions now. Twenty seconds.

Kenneth Ingram: I am here because I think your decision has the power to set future precedent. And, in a way, just demonstrate the type of delay that this type of proposal has received isn't acceptable. So, regardless of whether it does

that or not, it really just comes down to whether or not it makes sense to rename a park currently after renamed after an American inventor and contains two Matheson Millstones that has for 60 years, Matheson Millstones Park.

Madam Speaker: We'll take questions now. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you. I guess the question ultimately will be an are you aware question that Welcoming Winnipeg was established in the last term of Council by the previous council and mayor with the vision to begin to address some of what had been complete omission in acknowledging when naming places First Nations, Indigenous peoples who've been on the lands at the time of (inaudible) were often overlooked, often not recognized and understood. It is an advisory committee. I think what has…that is volunteer based, and I think what has happened, I don't know if you are aware of this, but it's happened in following the process that we've established the Welcoming Winnipeg process. The sheer volume of work that has come back committee's way I think is something beyond what anybody expected. And therefore, that's one of the reasons for the delay or the timeline that it takes to get reports back. I don't know if you are aware of that. But are you…here is my question. Are you aware that I have committed to Mr. Cecil Swenson, the head of Indigenous Relations and the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee and our own Executive Policy Committee here today to tell all Council committed to working with, as a council, working with Welcoming Winnipeg to make sure we collectively improve the process, the work that all of us have to do, because we have to be on the path of reconciliation. We must. And so, to question, I guess, the motives or the work of welcome Winnipeg, I don't think is appropriate at this time. I think they are doing the best that they can in these days. But I think that there is work that we collectively as a committee need to do to improve the process and improve the outcomes for everybody's benefit. Are you aware of that, sir?

Kenneth Ingram: I was not aware of who had introduced the motion to improve and expedited the process. And I'm really, really glad to hear that.

Madam Speaker: We do have another speaker on this item. If I can just hold the questions and hear from the next speaker first. We'll take that momentarily. I'd like to call up. Thank you, Mr. Ingram. Oh, it's not on this topic? Okay, sorry. Mr. Ingram, if you could come back. It's…they're in opposition. That's right. Councillor Wyatt, your question.

Councillor Wyatt: Yeah. And I hear what the mayor is saying, and I agree with what he indicated. I guess, you know, when we want to build a bridge we hire an engineer, right? When we want to build a building, we hire an architect, but we hire them. And we relied on volunteers. It is maybe one of the things we might want to consider to hear thoughts on it is, you know, naming has become very controversial for various reasons, right? And you see this now, with even this report. And you know I have an opinion on it because I believe that it should be based on best historical information we had at hand in the case, I agree with (inaudible), Mr. Smith and yourself. But having said that, if somebody can demonstrate to me differently, I like to hear that. But I prefer to hear it from experts who actually have skin in the game may be getting paid. So, maybe what are your thoughts in terms of potentially right now we have volunteer committee overwhelmed. We should be looking at potentially bringing in a permanent body, which will look at permanent body but an ad-hoc committee that would be (inaudible) bases to give us expert advice, historians in their field, no different than you would hire an architect for a building, you hire an engineer for a bridge, that we should be bringing in people who would bring that balance, that volunteers, for all good intention they may have, may not necessarily have the expertise at the table to be able to do this. And for the intent of Welcoming Winnipeg started out at this, maybe at least it will evolve it…evolve into something else in light of the importance of naming. What are your thoughts?

Kenneth Ingram: I think it might be a great option to look at because when I think of some of the best in the field, it could be academics, it could also be people as part of Manitoba Historical Society. Gordon Gord Burrows I think it could be people from the various museums around the city, like Eric from the Seven Oaks House Museum. There is a whole bunch of people who I think that offered great insight into some of these names because they have the knowledge and the expertise. And I think if it came down to paying them to do it, I think, in order to expedite the process, I think that would be worth looking into.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Next question, Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: The worst thing, in my mind, what are your thoughts on that, to correct the errors of history, wouldn't it be a tragedy to make errors again going forward in a rush to correct the errors of the past, which we risk doing with the present process we have presently in place, from what I can see?

Kenneth Ingram: I think we are in the danger of potentially doing that and it just causes a whole host of other issues as soon as we have to get into re-renaming and this whole process repeats itself. But I just want to expand upon this because. I was in Victoria exactly this time last year. And they're actually about 10 years ahead of us in terms of renaming stuff. And I was particularly taking it back when a friend of mine told me to visit a street, because his brother lived there, called Trutch Street, and I couldn't find Trutch Street. And I looked into it, and they had changed the name to Su'it Street, Su'it

which is Lekwungen for truth. And I was nearly moved to tears because of how well that they had implemented a name. I was just going to mention Joseph Trutch was the first lieutenant-governor and was looked upon very poorly because of his views on Indigenous people and how he lowered the size of lands that they had. And their implementation of these names is exactly something that I think we need to be looking into for our council.

Madam Speaker: Next question by Council. Final question, Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: And I am not a fan of the council culture. But sometimes names, as you mentioned, on this last example, need to be…they need to be reflected in a different way as part of history, but not necessarily on a street which is very high profile. Right? So, in other words, we're not throwing any…putting in the context where they lived, what they were part of, or maybe it's part of their name is in a museum to document it fully, but this is why they decided to do these things. They weren't necessarily evil, but they are living in the time they were living in.

Kenneth Ingram: Exactly. And we…by naming something after someone you are, in effect, celebrating someone, which is why some of these streets like Brandon should be renamed. But at the same time, we need to do be doing it effectively and through historically accurate sources.

Madam Speaker: Next question by Councillor Chambers.

Councillor Chambers: Thank you, Madam Speaker to you, and to the delegation. Are you aware that many, many years ago, Winnipeg was not…well, Winnipeg was a very homogenous society, and did not address the Indigenous people that lived here or as we, you know, 50s, 60s, 70s, saw the influx of immigration diversity that we celebrate today, that we need to be reflective of those who made significant contributions as our city continued to grow and as we expanded in terms of diversity.

Kenneth Ingram: I am aware of that. And I'm fully supportive of the goals of the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee wholeheartedly.

Councillor Chambers: So, in terms of looking at our history and trying to be a welcoming society and a welcoming city that reflects the population or the diversity we now have, we have instituted a welcoming Winnipeg and policy that addresses how we can grow as a city and how we can welcome individuals that make them feel at home here, because there are individuals who have contributed and made our city even that much greater?

Kenneth Ingram: I am aware of that, yes. And like I say, there are countless examples of great recommendations by the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee. One is Tommy Prince Park and the stuff was named after Raymond Sinclair.

Councillor Chambers: Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Rollins, and then Councillor Chambers.

Councillor Rollins: I am aware that Dr. Anne Lindsey and Mary Jane McCallum have undertaken significant efforts to highlight and bring to light the bridge of extensive histories of the First Nations and Metis communities in the area, and that their work including public presentations, research and advocacy has shed light on the historical narratives and experiences of Indigenous groups in the area, particularly during the time, the period when the mill was in operation. Are you?

Kenneth Ingram: So, I saw when that was mentioned in the report. I was not at that particular presentation in Glenelm, but from what I read, they were talking about both the parishes of St. John's which is across the river, as well as the area of the north…well, it's like the area east of the river, which is where I believe the Metis connection to be, although (inaudible).

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Second question, Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: So again, relying on their scholarship, they have understood the long-standing presence, contributions and resilience of the First Nations and Metis people in the region. Dr. Lindsey in particular, and Dr. McCallum's efforts serve as a powerful antidote I think to historical (inaudible). Do you?

Kenneth Ingram: Yes, I do.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Lukes moves extension of two minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Third question, Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: Again, their work, not only honors the past, but also contributes to ongoing efforts of reconciliation, education and awareness building regarding Indigenous histories, cultures and contemporary issues. I think this is important. Do you?

Kenneth Ingram: Yes, I do strongly believe in the importance of all of these histories and highlighting it. And I am proud to say that I visit the Seven Oaks House Museum every single year, where I think that the curator does an outstanding job doing just that.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Thank you for your presentation. I think we're still believing in local democracy here. It's an advisory panel. It was set up that way. If… we're just to rubber stamp things, I don't know why we would… why we would set up such a mechanism. I do also think we need to have a debate here about what constitutes decorum when you have the Mayor and Councillor Chambers criticized very harshly, well quite strongly criticized because they took exception to a delegate saying that the police do get 312 million dollars a year and the police kill with impunity. The assertion… I mean, Councillor Chambers tries to enforce decorum when someone says that, and as much criticized for it. I don't think these remarks approach that. So, I think we probably need to have a council discussion about decorum. Any, I mean the… what improvement would you like to see made in the process? My frustration with the process right now is… I mean, it's advisory, but we're… it taking years, and also, we have people saying, "Well, you shouldn't name things for individuals." Well, then all the stuff that's in the pipeline now should be grandfathered. I mean, I spent quite a bit of efforts trying… I've named a lot of things for women because that's a historical wrong. Here we don't have lot of stuff named for women as to men. That's why I'm trying to rename William Johnstone Park for Louise Johnstone. It was a very successful school trustee. There's also William Johnstone Street, so we can probably do it at the park William Johnstone. I don't think there's anything particularly wrong with that. So, I guess my question is what improvements would you like to see in the process?

Kenneth Ingram: I think the process needs to be expedited. That's pretty clear when this one has been in the process for three and a half years. And at the end of it, the committee just comes back with rejection and says come bring us another one. And in addition, I think that it mostly comes down to that timeframe. Just we need quicker reactions to these types of things when they are proposed. And I think that, maybe I was wrong, but I was watching a recording of one of these things brought forward, and even the City Clerks themselves had said that this was not exactly how the committee was supposed to be working at the time it was introduced. And that's part of why it's so backed up.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Kenneth Ingram for your presentation today. Our next delegation is Reanna Merasty, Chair, and Angelina Pelletier, who are appearing on behalf of the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee of Community Members and in opposition to Item 6 of the report of the Executive Policy Committee dated March 12, and it's regarding the renaming of Edison Park. Welcome.

Reanna Merasty: Thank you, Madam Speaker, His Worship and the rest of Council. My name is Reanna Merasty. I am Chair of the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee and Community Members, and I am here to speak on behalf of the rest of the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee, and I'm joined by Angelina Pelletier, one of our new members. And the statement that I'm going to read to you today comes from the rest of our members within our committee, which include Raymond Sokalski, Erin Millions, Dr. Mary LeMaître, Honoure Black and also Albert McLeod, which are all very highly members of our community. The Welcoming Winnipeg Committee and Community Members, from here on will be referred to as CCM is guided by values and principles established by Winnipeg citizens through public consultation process in 2019, and refined by the committee in 2020. These include honoring the original peoples of the land, their descendants upholding the treaty relationship, respecting Indigenous rights and recognizing and affirming in traditional Indigenous laws ceremonies and ways of being. And I really appreciate the statement that Mayor Scott Gillingham has made in terms of his commitment to making this a better process for all. In respect to Item 6, renaming Edison Park, we stand by our recommendation that the park not be renamed Matheson Millstones Park, and direct the Indigenous Relations to engage in further consultation to rename Edison Park and provide interpretation that reflects a much more inclusive history. The mandate of the Welcoming Winnipeg initiative is to recentre Indigenous histories, and perspectives, and how we understand and reflect Winnipeg's past. The Matheson family's connection to the millstone is already commemorated at the park in an existing historical plaque. Based on these requests, the CCM developed guidelines by renaming city assets after individuals and groups of people. This guideline practically utilizes lands and inclusion balance and Indigenous perspectives. And the guideline we did is by one important criteria, a person or group's contribution to promotions and reclamation of First Nations, Metis, Ininew language, rights, culture, spirituality and/or traditions. Based on this guideline, the CCM concluded that the name Matheson Millstones Park is not ideal for the park, and we will outline why in a little bit. However, the millstones provided an opportunity to highlight the long histories of agriculture and food production that predate Winnipeg's incorporation as a city in 1873.

Angelina Pelletier: Hello, good morning, bonjour, tansi. Angelina Pelletier (inaudible), and as Reanna mentioned, my name is Angelina Pelletier. I'm here on behalf of the CCM, and I'm speaking on behalf of my colleague and peer, Dr. Erin Millions, who was referenced by our previous speaker. Dr. Erin Millions, a faculty member in the Department of History at the University of Winnipeg, and the historian of the Red River settlement, submitted to CCM for reasoning for our recommendation in writing to the EPC's March 12 meeting, but her submission was not addressed. Only Jim Smith's in person comments were responded to. In this portion of recap, some of the letter that was submitted on behalf of the entire CCM. Further information on this research, as well as Dr. Millions' response to Mr. Smith's presentation was submitted in writing by Dr. Millions for today's Council meeting. I do have a copy if you don't have that on hand. The millstones at Edison Park are from the Matheson Grist Mill built before 1861, by Angus Matheson. Matheson was a Selkirk settler who arrived at Red River in 1823 with his parents and several siblings to join his brother, John Matheson. Contrary to claims made in the application, the Matheson Mill is not particularly important to the history of milling at Red River. It was one of four water-powered mills in the settlement in this period. The proponent argues in the application that the new name and new sign would help tell the historical story of northeast Winnipeg that has largely been forgotten, for present and future generations. Concerning the Matheson family specifically, their contributions to Winnipeg history, as Selkirk settlers and founding members of the Lord Selkirk Settlers Society have been well-documented in historical literature and commemorations throughout the City of Winnipeg, including an existing historical plaque as Reanna had mentioned, in Edison Park and Winnipeg's Matheson Avenue, which is named for Angus's nephew Alexander Matheson. What is historically significant about the millstones, is that they represent long histories of Indigenous-led food production and agricultural developments at Red River, including in the Metis-dominated milling trade. The proponent is correct that the longer agricultural histories of Winnipeg, including North Kildonan, need to be better reflected in Winnipeg. However, it is the CCM's position that naming the park after one non-Indigenous family limits the opportunities to interpret critical aspects of Red River history at the park and, and it could be argued, misrepresents the Metis-led history of milling at Red River. Thank you.

Reanna Merasty: And now I would like to respond to some statements that were made towards Welcoming Winnipeg. One of those is, which was mentioned previously is that there was no Metis settlements within the area. This is wrong, as it outlines in reports commission by the City in the past two years, written by noted historian of Winnipeg and Manitoba histories. There absolutely were first nations and Metis occupancy within the area in the time period that crossed with the mill. And it's the refusal to acknowledge as history demonstrates why Welcoming Winnipeg job is not just to respond to the public, but to draw on the community's expertise and center the Welcoming Winnipeg mandate. Another statement that was made is that we are unknowledgeable. And I believe it is disrespectful to say that we are unknowledgeable and shameful to use that reasoning to justify this renaming. This comment is an extension of said colonial weaponizing and devaluate our knowledge and education. To let you know, we are highly educated individuals appointed to this position based on our expertise in heritage history and Indigenous engagement. Welcoming Winnipeg membership is comprised of professionals, including four university instructors representing both University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg, a retired history teacher; a current museum interpreter, two specialists in art and museum curation and conservation, an elder at community economic practitioner and myself, an intern architect who's working on the Hudson Bay redevelopment here in downtown Winnipeg, and also working on projects within Naawi-Oodina, the former Kapyong Barracks site. I have spoken internationally on Indigenous (inaudible) reclamation and inclusion at 28 years old. And I have dedicated my life and my work to this project. And other statements were made is that, they are also volunteers. The committee comprised of volunteers dedicate their time to a Public Service initiative. All of the appointed members advocate for the betterment of the Indigenous community. Another statement was made is that of the date that this application was created, and that was in 2020. I just wanted to highlight that we have developed this from scratch. There is no precedent for this within all of Canada. We have had to develop the application process, the terms of reference, the assessment tools and we take the time and resulted in a delay of possessing applications in a timely manner. And also, what was mentioned is that there is a large percentage of persons who completed the survey who are in support. And I just want to advance those percentages. We are very seriously consider public feedback of Welcoming Winnipeg applications, however we are not here to respond only to public feedback. Following the lead of the majority which is the majority of non-Indigenous people is of that percentage, which is why the Welcoming Winnipeg policy came to be because for 150 years, Indigenous histories of Winnipeg have been erased in our public memory and public spaces, and I just want to address some of those public feedbacks. In regards to renaming Edison Park, which was very below compared to other Welcoming Winnipeg applications, there was only 26 responses and one of those was indigenous. And they stated this: Disrespect is an example of how this Welcoming Winnipeg initiative can be used completely undermine its own objectives. Sure, we named the park, but to name of settlers who laid claimed to already occupied lands to signatories of treaties that have not yet been upheld by settlers, that should be shameful to approve this request. I also want to address the renaming the Appletree-Bridgeland North Park and our reason behind that as a reference. There was only 4% where Indigenous within that public feedback of almost 400 respondents. And one person stated that this request in no way honors the Indigenous history of the land and that renaming will do nothing to teach about the first inhabitants of the land on which the park is situated nor about the treaty obligations that those who use it. The request continues the colonial history of naming which Welcoming Winnipeg was developed to address. And in closing, we just want to talk about our experience as a committee. We are exhausted and as though, our (inaudible) are unheard. The committee's work feels often times

reformative and often as referred here, as tokens for the city to say that they have consulted Indigenous groups within the process. Although we are advisors, we should be seen as valuable advisers. And we are volunteers for the past few months have been repeatedly taking extra time above and beyond our usual time commitment to the CCM, need to discuss letters, write letters and attend council or committee meetings in person to defend our recommendations. All of communities wanted to be heard, but otherwise, I have full time jobs and I am taking unpaid time away from my job to be here, as a volunteer. A series of decision by the City regarding our work has overtime diminished our trust and the City did not allocate additional funds for Indigenous Relations Division to support Welcoming Winnipeg. Would you like to talk about…

Angelina Pelletier: Yeah, I can speak. Again, this regarding Item 6, renaming Edison Park, we stand by our recommendation that the park not be renamed Matheson Millstones Park.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Schreyer moves extension, two minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Angelina Pelletier: Thank you**.** We stand by our recommendation that the park not be renamed Matheson Millstones Park, and direct the Indigenous Relations Division to engage in further consultation to rename Edison Park and provide an interpretation that reflects a much more inclusive history at the park. Welcoming Winnipeg, the Council, and the Mayor must align in centering Indigenous perspectives and histories in municipal spaces. We call on the Mayor and Council to demonstrate their commitment today to the principles you voted to implement through the Welcoming Winnipeg initiative. That you commit it to through Winnipeg Indigenous support and the principles of reconciliation in general. Our job here is not to reflect the community majority in Winnipeg. That is how we got here in the first place. For 150 years, Winnipeg's history has been told by the majority, non-Indigenous. Indigenous voices have been pushed aside. Some final questions for Council. Will you continue to uphold this history of erasure in Winnipeg? Is your commitment continue pleasing the majority a.k.a. the non-Indigenous community members? And if you are unwilling to implement or commit to Welcoming Winnipeg and indigenization policy, is there a point in us being here today? Merci. Miigwetch.

Madam Speaker: Thank you for your presentation. We'll now take questions. Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: First of all. Thank you for coming here today. And the Q&A often is not the best forum for getting to know each other. And in no way shape or form, do I want you to walk away thinking that anyone in this council chamber does not appreciate the work you have done including myself. Okay? The volunteerism that you put in and the passion that you have and sincerity that you obviously have as well. So, do you think, and I just want you to know that, just to recognize that and to the you know, to allude to the fact that we're talking about bringing experts does no way in shape or form, in any way, take away the work you have done or what you've brought to the table. And Welcoming Winnipeg, by the way, was created before I arrived on Council. So, I had no idea that your volunteerism and all the time you put in. We are not informed of this, right? This is all news to many of us. So, I just want to make sure, first of all, just to let you, more like…I have to ask you a question. So, it's like are you aware question. So yeah.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Wyatt. Your response.

Reanna Merasty: Sorry. I was not aware. But that really…that, thank you for that.

Councillor Wyatt: Secondly, I really believe that there is room to reflect both histories. The one that's been forgotten especially and I agree, but also to recognize that there are those settlers. I mean the sad story of course of the Scottish settlers how, you know, Chief Peguis did so much, right? For the settlers and then often later on they forgot it. But you believe there is room for both that we can't just wipe out one history, put it to another. But there has to be a rebalancing, to safely call it that, but necessarily not by diminishing one at the expense of the other, but that there is room for both?

Reanna Merasty: Yeah, this is something that we often discussed in previous applications. So, sometimes we combine the two. But what we're really trying to do is that further investigation. And, I do believe that there is space for both, but I think there's ways to do so in terms of sharing a name is another big thing that we discussed.

Councillor Wyatt: Right, that's a good idea. It's a very good idea.

Madam Speaker: Final question.

Councillor Wyatt: And, my final question is, I have an executive assistant that has a PhD, is a lot smarter than me, and I have asked them to look at the BC model, you know, there is balance and what they're doing out there in Vancouver. I understand that BC Government led a lot of initiative there versus municipalities actually. And would you welcome us looking at retooling or re-giving more in light of the fact that you're doing so much with so little…kind of re-purposing, retooling, giving support that maybe that's not there today to look at the processes that we have right now to make it a

better process? Especially since we're always here in Winnipeg, we forget. We don't have to reinvent the wheels, especially if somebody there speaks this way ahead of us, in terms of this, than what we're doing.

Reanna Merasty: Yeah, absolutely I…we welcome those conversations and I believe Mayor Scott Gillingham is going to have those conversations with us, as well as the Indigenous Relations Division. So, whatever tools and resources that you have, we welcome that.

Angelina Pelletier: Can I add something? Just to note, I work across the national perspective with communities, Indigenous and northern communities across the country of Canada. And I do work with the community in British Columbia. And I will note that British Columbia is not an unseated land. This is Treaty One. This was the first treaty that was agreed upon and signed. British Columbia is miles ahead of all other communities in the country. So, it's important to note that that land is unseated, and the sovereignty that exist for Indigenous community is much more greater and unfortunately deeper than it is here in Treaty One, the first treaty that was signed in the history. So, I just wanted to add that. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mayor Gillingham.

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. First of all, thank Ms. Merasty and Ms. Pelletier for your presentation and for your work as well on the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee that… and Community Members. I guess my question is, you know, it's an invitation on behalf of all of council. And I'm going to, you know, take a step and commit all of council to the conversations with Welcoming Winnipeg so that we can collectively improve the process. You know, I think what's been reflected here on this one item and quite frankly regardless how this item turns out. I think we've kind of brought to bear on this council floor is the bigger discussion that needs to happen. And, I'm looking at this from kind of more of a journey of reconciliation process. And I think on journeys that, you know, on any journey, there's moments where everyone's making good progress and you're clipping along, and there's moments where things happen and you hit a pothole as can happen here in our city. If I can use that expression, but there's times to say let's stop for a minute, gather ourselves again and improve the progress that we need to make collectively. And I think we are at that point frankly, Welcoming Winnipeg. I you know had discussions with others. I don't…I think Welcoming Winnipeg plays a critical role for our committee and will continue to play a critical role. But I think, we as a council, need to understand more and learn more. I think on the flip side, I think that we need to be engaged with Welcoming Winnipeg so that there is clear understanding all around. How do we do this together? How do we journey our future together so that when we are naming and renaming places that the…we can do so in a manner that is... that gets us collectively to where we want the future to be while it also acknowledging the importance of what has been missed or overlooked or intentionally ignored in the past? So, the question is then, you've already answered it. But will you and Welcoming Winnipeg work with Council, to work together to improve things for the future.

Reanna Merasty: Yeah. I do welcome that collaboration. I think this could be the start of a really good relationship with each of you and I really welcome that. So, also, our purpose and also our direction doesn't get lost in translation within the process. So, I welcome that dialogue.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Gillingham: I guess my follow up with you, we please express, on behalf of all of Council, appreciation to all of the members that are doing the work and I can appreciate because I've heard directly that individuals can feel pretty deflated. You talked about your own experience and just, you know, feeling kind of worn out, my words not yours. But please…if you can express on behalf of all of us our appreciation.

Reanna Merasty: Yes, absolutely. Thank you, Mayor.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: Madam Speaker, I just want to also thank you. I have to do this in, as you, are you aware. I really appreciated your presentation. This is the first time that I have actually heard from the Welcoming Committee. So, you know I really appreciate hearing from you. And, you know, you are trailblazers and you are making history. I wanted to really thank you for your work. I will be not supporting the EPC recommendation. I think that there is a new motion. I think somebody is circulating a new motion. But you spoke very, very articulately on this subject. I do believe in what you are saying and we are here to change history, and you are our guiders in that. And I really respect and honor your decision making process here today. I think it was really important that you did come and speak today because, you know, I…you know, we just had budget yesterday. And I wasn't aware of this issue. So, now…so now I am. So, I appreciate you taking the time and all the work that you're doing. I do know volunteer work is very, very hard and takes a lot of work. So, Kudos for you and just let you know I want you to know that you are making history. So, thank you for that.

Reanna Merasty: Thank you, Councillor Gilroy.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Next is Councillor Allard followed by Councillor Santos. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Councillor Wyatt is correct. This is not a great way to have an exchange like this one. I want to thank you for coming. I was there. I first met the Welcoming Committee when we were talking about the renaming of the Bishop Grandin Boulevard. I heard some stories there that brought me to tears. Apparently, I am not new to tears. I was just in tears in this council Chambers just a couple weeks ago, a couple of weeks or last week. Feels like a couple weeks ago. But I want to thank you for your work and I know that you're working that many hours. I do believe at some point compensation is in order especially for the type of work that you're doing. I also want to agree with you that this is not…this is not a process that we do by referendum. I have learned so much reading 21 things you didn't know about the Indian Act. I've read that in (inaudible) book. And I heard anger today, I head anger from a young man. I think I heard anger from a young man who…I don't…I just…

Madam Speaker: Question, Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Well, it's not really…it's probably a rhetorical question, but it feels to me like this delegation is the one that should be angry and they are the ones that are coming in peace.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Your response…

Councillor Allard: You don't think…

Reanna Merasty: Thank you, Councillor Allard.

Madam Speaker: Okay, that concludes our questions for your delegation. I also want to thank you for your tireless work as was remarked by the Mayor and others in the Council Chamber today. Thank you so much.

Councillor Chambers: Point of order, Madam Clerk. Could I move an extension? Move a motion for extension?

Madam Speaker: Councillor Chambers, you have that delayed response, I believe. We just wrapped up the delegation. Okay, Councillor Gilroy moves extension of two minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. The next speaker is Councillor Santos, Okay, Councillor Lukes. And then, Councillor Chambers.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you. This is more of a did you know. I will start off by thanking you very much for coming down and speaking to us. I know all of us really appreciate it. Did you know that we are working on governance review for city council and how we do things. And one of the aspects, Councillor Sharma is the speaker for the Governance Committee, and one of the aspects that we were working on is to actually have more interactions with Indigenous Relations and having a better…no, I'm not saying a better because it isn't bad, it's just non-existent relationship. You know, it is existent, but I think we can do better and in our governance review we are working on that. So, I…it was more of a did you know and I want to thank you for your presentation.

Reanna Merasty: I did not know, but thank you. Thank you for that, Councillor Lukes. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Chambers, your question please.

Councillor Chambers: Yes. Thank you. Thank you for your presentation this morning. It was very well worded. Did you know that after being elected in 2018, the first Black History Month I participated was in February 2019. And I created a t-shirt with some great work that was done in the community called Know their names. And on the back of the t-shirt was a inventor that was black that contributed to, you know, different inventions that allowed the world to go forward. And we are not recognized as the inventor of that specific project or item that the world now uses and accepts as part of the Industrial Revolution. And so, I see your process as something that allows us to get familiarized with historical figures, historical facts and allows us to move forward in spirit of reconciliation. So, thank you very much for the work that you do. And you know, I appreciate the fact that we can now work together in spirit of collaboration and work, not just from the sense of erasure, but did you know. So, thank you very much.

Reanna Merasty: I did not know, but thank you so much for that. I will look more into the did you know and do my own research on that. Thank you.

Councillor Chambers: Thank you.

Madam Speaker: That concludes our question period. Once again, thank you for your valued contributions and for being here today.

Reanna Merasty: Thank you, Council.

Madam Speaker: Our next speaker is Jim Smith, President and Historian/Archivist, North East Winnipeg Historical Society. I want to clarify that you are in support, sir.

Jim Smith: I'm in support of the EPC recommendation.

Madam Speaker: You were listed in opposition. We corrected that to support of Item 6, the report of the Executive Policy Committee dated March 12, 2024.

Councillor Allard: (Inaudible) support and not support at Council? Are we waiting that right now?

Madam Speaker: No, there was an error and the individual was marked in opposition and we're clarifying that. It is in support.

Jim Smith: I clearly make it.

Madam Speaker: And if I could just ask you to stand back…stand down momentarily. I'm going to have council take their seats and we will start momentarily. Okay. It is the item March 12, as we all know, 2024 regarding Welcoming Winnipeg - Renaming Edison Park to Matheson Millstones Park. Okay. I'll ask Council to take your seats, please. Councillor Wyatt, Mr. Mayor, and we'll have the delegation. Okay, I'm going to call for a short recess. Five minutes. Thank you.

Reconvened meeting of
Winnipeg City Council of
March 21, 2024 at 11:17 a.m.

Madam Speaker: I'd like to reconvene our Council meeting of March 21, 2024. We are on delegations. Next, we have Mr. Jim Smith, President and Historian/Archivist, North East Winnipeg Historical Society in support of Item 6 of the report of Executive Policy Committee dated March 12, 2024. It's regarding Welcoming Winnipeg - Renaming Edison Park.

Jim Smith: Thank you very much, and I will be respectful. When I first suggested this back in 2000 first to the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee, I didn't think there was controversy. I am not looking for controversy, I am not looking to try to upset people. That's the whole point. When I refer to the area in my talk. I am referring to just Elmwood East Kildonan and North Kildonan, I am not referring to other parts. Okay? So, everything refers to that. So, and I'm well aware that the Metis in 1870 made up about 80% of the population in Manitoba. So it's not that I'm not aware. I have spent about 15,000 hours researching history of Northeast Winnipeg. Again, Elmwood East Kildonan, North Kildonan. Okay? So, that's what I'm preferring to. We've put out three books. Now, in our volume II book, we talk about the history. Now, the millstones, the history of our…of Northeast Winnipeg specifically is not very well-known, and it really doesn't get much recognition, and this is the point that I'm stressing. So, I thought because there was millstones close by to where the park is. Edison park, everybody agrees it has no relevance as a name. And it didn't have a name until 2015 or somewhere around there. It was an unnamed park. So I suggested it first to my colleagues in the Northeast Winnipeg historical society, and then we brought it up to, first to the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee. Now, one of the…I know you received the…a package, a two-page thing from Dr. Erin Millions. I am not here to criticize her. One thing I'm going to say that those pictures that were sent are actually not the way it looks now. First of all, the plaque to the Mathesons there was removed approximately three years ago by the Public Works Department. And the millstones have actually got mosaics on it. That was a public works that I'm not…would be aware of. I just saw after the facts so I don't know anything about that. When we are talking about the history as I said, of Elmwood East Kildonan, North Kildonan. Now, because I've studied the map, I've been to the Manitoba Archives. Now, if you go to the Manitoba Archives and look at who was living in the Red River census in 1830s, and up to the 1871 before Manitoba became a province, you will see that all the people that did settle then were actually all Europeans. There were no Métis. Unlike most parts of the city, this is just the facts. And you can see that if you go to the records and if somebody doesn't believe me, go to the Manitoba Archives and look at this material. We have done that. Our historical society, we want to be factual, you don't want to be…miss information. There is enough of that out there anyway. So this is what we are trying to do, and this is why I think that this is an important thing. The Matheson family is basically, I guess, before maybe we started this, was probably not very well-known at all to probably, most of you never heard of it. People that are listening probably never heard of them. And it's because our history of this Elmwood East and North Kildonan basically, we don't see in the books. Really, they are not in the history.

So, anyways, this is what I am trying to…this is what I'm trying to stress. Information we have okay, that there were no Métis now. Now I know that there has been for the Glenelm Society, there was speaking about Métis history. And I am not, in anyway criticize the… those things, but I'm…what, but I'm…but in our area and I'll say what the Glenelm area for example, which is the west of the area, west of Henderson Highway in the Elmwood area. And the reason why that was… that was actually not the last area, not the last area to be settled because it was actually a very swampy area. So, when people were starting setting up the farms and that, they didn't want…obviously, do you want to put your house or anything in the middle of sort of a marshy area? There's reports even from the newspapers in the 1880s, people used to go there to hunt. In the fall for ducks and that. So, and I'm sorry…they're just, you know, in our area, again, in Elmwood, East Kildonan, North Kildonan, there was no settlement of Métis people. Now, I'm not in any way trying to bad mouth Métis or Indigenous people or anything like that. I am just trying to be straight forward. And that is the reason why I think it should be to honor this family.

Madam Speaker: Do you require more time or does that wrap up your presentation?

Jim Smith: No, that is basically it. So, I…you know what, that's all I…you know, just bring up that all I want to deal with is the facts. That's…whatever the facts are. That's all I'm interested.

Madam Speaker: Okay, thank you. We'll take some questions. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Yes, Madam Speaker. Thank you very much. Thank you for the presentation. Thank you for the tone of the presentation. I am hearing just the facts. And I don't think facts are…I think we have a shared vocabulary anymore when it comes to facts. Like we've got some facts so we've got some work to do as a society and what a fact is and isn't. You have to start with certain assumptions on. I don't think those are shared. I guess my question is I understand your…I understand the argument that this is strictly a very small part of…I understand that. But it's also part of Treaty One and it's also part of a much larger discussion with the speaker, Madam Speaker, not acknowledge that.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Smith.

Jim Smith: Yes, it is. But again, I guess the reason I want to stress this point and trying to, because our area doesn't get any recognition. Like historically people think that there was nothing here. Like I hear this all of the time people told me. I mean, I just want the information. You know, the information so we get some recognition. I'm not related in any way to the Mathesons by the way. So, I have no…my ancestors first came here in 1880s, so it was after this period, so I have nothing. You know, any kind of a thing that for my family or anything like that, but we've lived in the area. Our family goes back in the area to the 1880s. And I'm referring to Elmwood, East Kildonan, North Kildonan area, just, you know. So, I'm just trying to, you know, I don't want to bad mouth anybody else or trying, you know, but I'm just saying in our…to recognize…just because we don't really have anything in our area, okay? We need historical plaques or…really, or anybody, there's very little unlike other parts of the city. We're just sort of ignored. And that's…that was the full emphasis why I wanted to start the North East Winnipeg Historical Society. And, you know, I have been president for now, I guess for about 10 years now, historian and archivist. I even have City…members of the City administration refer things to me because they don't know the answer, and they refer other people to me. And I try to present what I know. If I don't know the answer, I'm not going to make up stories about something that's not true. So, that's all I'm…all I'm interested is just trying to…our story, and I said we have three volumes. We are working on the fourth one because there is no history of our area.

Madam Speaker: Okay, thank you, Mr. Smith. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The only way, I…we have to ask this as a are you aware. I just want to thank you for your presentation. Are you aware, just to assure you, that I don't think anyone here certainly is questioning your sincerity nor your motivation behind your work. And so, just thank you for the work you do. Thank you.

Jim Smith: Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Councillor Dobson.

Councillor Allard: (Inaudible)

Madam Speaker: I didn't see your hand. I will come back to you in a moment. Councillor Dobson.

Councillor Dobson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a simple question. The millstones on the property. They belong to the Matheson mill from back then?

Jim Smith: Yes, from period 1860 to1870.

Councillor Dobson: And they're on the property, right now?

Jim Smith: They're on the property. They've been there since 1966. But the Matheson family never got any…in fact, they were a whole bunch of (inaudible) in the area, very close by and never got recognition. All I'm trying to…I just wanted to…you know, get the family recognition. That's all my motives were.

Councillor Dobson: I just wanted to confirm that those millstones are from the Matheson's mill, and they are on the property.

Jim Smith: Yes, yes. And there was actually nine, there was nine mills and…if not four. And that's…that's…and that can be shown, too, but anyways.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Allard. Second question.

Councillor Allard: Yes, I believe the previous speaker said that there was almost no evidence of Métis in this area. I'm hearing now no evidence. So, which is it almost no evidence which would mean evidence or no evidence which would mean no evidence?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Smith.

Jim Smith: What I'm referring to, if you look at, in the census of before 1870, including 1870, okay? You don't find…and they described them, Europe, well, White, Métis, if there are Indigenous listed. There is none listed. I know that's not true in other areas. Like in your…for example, in your area that's certainly not the case. But that's the…so, in a sense it's different, I guess, in other areas. And that's all I want to, you know, I'm not trying to….

Madam Speaker: Councillor Schreyer moves extension for five minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Mr. Smith, Madam Speaker, Mr. Smith, it's very thorough when he undertakes the work of his passion and the…for northeast Winnipeg. And, so I just want to maybe to demonstrate maybe why, you know, this family, the Mathesons should be noted over on the other side, on the east side. Is there any connection with this Matheson family and the Matheson family that the avenue, Matheson Avenue is named after on the west side of the river? And if you could also cover off there were wood lots under the first treaty between Europeans and the Anishinaabe. They designated under treaty with lots on one side and farming land on the other side. So, is there connections with that as well? If you could just help me out, just to give me a little history lesson.

Jim Smith: Okay. In regards to the Matheson, I've talked to a lady who is a direct decent of the Matheson's. And I asked her that question. Are you related to the Matheson's on the west side of the river? And she said certainly not a direct line. Perhaps, second cousins like the original that they weren't split. I mean they're not. It's not a direct thing. And I know well aware there is a Matheson Avenue for example on the other side of the river. I mean it's been…I don't know how long. But anyways, now in terms of the river, yes, there was wood lots but it didn't take very long because partly…part of the eight…early 1820s, there was people, Selkirk settlers that had settled, that had moved to the east side of the river and they set up. I mean a few to start with, and then over time, I guess, like everything else, it enlarged. But yeah, so that's the history, like John Pritchard that you may have heard of. There is a school named after him in the area. Well, where John Pritchard School is that property was actually…he started sort of farming that actually before probably in the late 1818, 1919 before there was ever any, I guess, official thing from the Lord Selkirk for the record or the Hudson's Bay company…he sort of…and then of course it was late 80s, there is a long time history. The Henderson family, of course, they go back a long time. That is another family that goes back. Henderson Highway is named after them and a number of things. So there is a lot…basically, at this stage, we go over 200 years of history have settled, and I'm just referring to settled line. I am not going to, you know, get into the Indigenous because I am not qualified to talk about that, and I'm not going to be…would be irresponsible for me to speak on that subject.

Madam Speaker: Anything further, Councillor Eadie? No? Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: Just are you aware that I'm not going to be supporting EPC's motion here today. I think we're trying to...and I do want to thank you for your presentation and all your work because history is important. The stories that we learn is critical. And obviously, the young man that spoke before, you've made an impression on him. So, you are also, you know, encouraging other young people to follow suit in your…in what you pursue. I just want to thank you for that and thank you for coming because this is not an easy topic.

Jim Smith: No, I know. A lot of people don't want to speak here.

Councillor Gilroy: No, they don't. And this is…this is the…this is history and it's changing itself. But the reason why I'm just…I am going to support the committee's…we hired them to do the difficult work and trying to find a balance between equity in our city, and we have tons of people that were named and because of the settlement. And the word settlement is even very hard because they were no…a lot of people were nomadic, right? So, to say that they didn't step foot, right? And those are conversations that are difficult to have. But history also isn't about maybe the first person that laid the ground.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Gilroy, the question.

Councillor Gilroy: Okay. Did you know the history is not about the limestone that was first laid? It could be about 15 years ago, somebody who did a very impressionable thing in that community that may have also been Indigenous. So, are you aware that, you know, our history will tell us stories, but our job right now is to look for those Indigenous histories that really share that voice?

Jim Smith: Yes, I'm very aware of that history. I have studied lots…

Madam Speaker: Councillor Schreyer moves extension for five minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Jim Smith: This is my…history has been my passion since young age.

Councillor Gilroy: And just my second follow up question is are you aware that I am pleased that you came today. And I think you do have a voice and I'm glad you are writing books and you're sharing that because I also think that that's important for us to learn from. So thank you for all of your work. Are you aware of that?

Jim Smith: Yes.

Councillor Gilroy: Okay. Thank you very much.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Schreyer, then Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Schreyer: Thank you Madam Speaker and thank you to Jim Smith for his years, decades of dedication to what I call the Henderson Strip, Elmwood, East Kildonan and North Kildonan. He's done more work on the history of the area. I think history will show, if you want to, Madam, I'll vote it, that he is an individuals that have done more work on that, and the information he has brought forth today is sincere, and we have to deal with that. My question is that since because of Mr. Smith here today, it has spurned on some considerations, some thoughts and very real thought that is going to come to action in terms of naming a place within Winnipeg or probably renaming of a park or something to do with Indigenous food production because of Mr. Smith being here today which is an excellent thing because isn't that the point of moving forward and having progress? So, I don't think I'm misinterpreting. We'll see what happens. Because of Mr. Smith being here today and because of the Welcoming Committee, the question is because of Mr. Smith's expertise and his dedication over years and decades on his own, spending his own money. And I…Councillor Browaty and I have helped to some extent. Would he give his advice and his expertise to help, given that we have heard today from the CCM, that this place in particular wasn't necessarily important for milling in the Red River area per se. It is for North Kildonan and East Kildonan, yeah, absolutely. And that's why we are here, but it was…wouldn't…would Jim Smith help find a place that is more appropriate for a naming of a place in Winnipeg that makes more sense regarding Indigenous food production?

Jim Smith: Yes, I would suggest…isn't there an area at The Forks? There's specifically a…that, and that is you know obviously a lot more people go there. And I think that that would be…I think that would be the place to indicate that because that was the meeting ground for people, Indigenous people going back, you know, thousands of years. That's my personal if you're asking my opinion. That's where it should be. And I have no…I would never speak up against anything like that. Never.

Madam Speaker: Second question.

Councillor Schreyer: I just want to get this straight. In North Kildonan and East Kildonan, that Millstone is important to East Kildonan history, North Kildonan history, which we can't ignore as a community among the many things that the researches that Mr. Smith has done. However, in dealing, it needs to be consistent with what the Welcoming Committee has said in terms of relevance of food production. You are saying The Forks would be the most relevant place.

Jim Smith: I think…

Councillor Schreyer: They said this is not…important, relevant Red River of…

Jim Smith: Well, that's…if you are asking for recommendation and there is an area. Isn't there an area specifically at The Forks? I am trying to think. Yes, and that's what…you know, I think that that would be a more representative…

Madam Speaker: Final question, Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Schreyer: You are here because you are here now, we're talking about this now. It's a pretty heavy conversation. Could you even recommend off the top or maybe later, even a second place in the city that's more appropriate to do with given what we've heard today relevant to the Red River and food production as pertains to Indigenous food production rather than local importance of this millstone to North Kildonan?

Jim Smith: Well, I guess there is certainly other places in history if you think…I…I can't say I know what's at the junction of the Seine River and the Red River where the Riel met, now I plead ignorance on that. Is there anything like that? Like I think that might be a good location.

Councillor Wyatt: Point of order, Madam Speaker. (Inaudible)

Madam Speaker: Yes, Councillor Wyatt. Next question.

Councillor Wyatt: Yeah, Madam Speaker, are you aware…Jim, are you aware and, no doubt you are not, that in the last year this council actually voted to put an abeyance. So, here we are talking about importance of naming things, Indigenous history, Mother Earth Nature Park, 25 acres, that we are going to have all the kids involved of the community to come out and plant trees and everything else in honour of that heritage. The EPC voted. This shows me how much of a priority it is to them. To put this plan on hold with no budget allocation, but made it a subject to a budget which they did not allocate in terms of the planning. So, how important is this really today to members of EPC and now making this an issue? In light of the fact that we had a report to do something about with regards to what (inaudible) naming location…

Madam Speaker: That concludes our question period under this delegation. Thank you, Mr. Smith.

Councillor Mayes: Madam Speaker, in order to move a layover of an item that is further on the agenda, given we have no further delegations on this item.

Madam Speaker: Not at this time. We'll deal with it…

Councillor Mayes: When would…would I be in order?

Madam Speaker: You want to move layover of an item that's on today's agenda? Let's do it at that time. Okay, we have Patrick Stewart. We have a next delegation, and I'd like to get on with the meeting. Patrick Stewart, Consultant.

Councillor Allard: Am I not in order to ask for suspension of the rules? Is that not in order, Madam Speaker?

Patrick Stewart: Hi, can…can you hear me? Hello, can you hear me?

Madam Speaker: Just a moment, Patrick. We'll be right with you. Okay? Can…we'll deal with this momentarily after this delegation. Thank you. Patrick Stewart, Consultant, Independent Living Resource Centre, in support of Item 2 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development dated March 7, 2024. It's regarding the Portage and Main Intersection – Implementation of a Phased-Approach to Below and At-Grade Improvements.

Patrick Stewart: Hi, can you hear me?

Madam Speaker: Yes, we can.

Patrick Stewart: You can hear me?

Madam Speaker: Can you put your…can you hear me, Patrick?

Patrick Stewart: Yeah, I can hear you. As long as we have audio, that's okay.

Madam Speaker: Do you have video?

Patrick Stewart: I apologize. I would've liked to be…no. I would've liked to be in person, but I've suffered an injury recently and doing this call from the place that I can do it at the moment. As long as you can hear my audio though, we should be okay. You can still hear me?

Madam Speaker: Yes, we can hear you, Patrick.

Patrick Stewart: Okay. Thank you very much. Apologies for the confusion there. Good morning, everyone. Thanks for the opportunity to speak today and for your Public Service. My name is Patrick Stewart, and I'm a consultant, Independent Living Resource Centre for Winnipeg based non-profit, promoting the full independence of people with disabilities in all aspects of life, and in all places within our community. We have been around since 1984, and always on Portage Avenue, first in the Somerset Building, then Portage Place for over 20 years. And in late 2021, we moved to the Grain Exchange of Portage and Main, bringing the intersection's long-standing accessibility issues right to our front door. By the summer of 2022, we had already begun investigating and filing our report which we have submitted to this meeting. I hope people had a chance to see it. And we publicly available a few weeks ago that illustrates serious physical navigational policy barriers that often prevent citizens with disabilities from accessing the underground concourse simply to cross the street. In 2022, we were also contacted by the Arccadd Consulting and HFTC, the authors of the Portage and Main Revitalization Study regarding our perspective, which we are more than happy to share, which is basically, we like everyone else, hope to see dynamic and engaging space to celebrate significance and the history of Portage and Main. But from our perspective, all redesigns are going to fall short if all members of our community are not able to even get there. And I am happy to say that they listened. We were overjoyed to see the community's concerns addressed in the final report and vision, which we had anticipated showing up to this meeting, and encouraging Council to adopt. But to our surprise, the conversation pivoted significantly a couple weeks ago, when Mayor Gillingham announced his intention, the intension to last open the intersection to upgrade street level pedestrian crossing and to close the underground concourse and circus. ILRC is here today to unequivocally support the opening of Portage and Main and to attempt to illustrate for you, the profounding series of barriers a person requiring accessible travel experiences under the status quo, which I have no doubt you will agree, has established a discriminatory two-tier system that can no longer be accepted by our community. Now, the challenge to describe the very idiosyncratic network of lifts, private entrances, public entrances, elevators, different hours of access and various signage experienced by anyone requiring accessible route to travel is kind of the point. And what our four corners project attempts to do. It can be tremendously confusing for anyone, with disability or not, that is familiar with space, let alone someone who's visiting for the first time, but I am going to try to paint you a picture. If you were on the east side of Main Street heading south and wanted to cross the intersection, you would arrive at one of the four public entrance ways to the underground, which are all stairs only. There are no public elevators. You would also find a way finding sign that indicates your position, but provides zero information regarding an accessible entrance or route. The options would be either to proceed all the way down Portage Avenue East to cross at the Ballpark or if you are able to ask someone for the directions, they may let you know that there is an elevator to the underground available in the lobby of Richardson Building. Now, the first thing you need to know about these private elevators, located at all four corners in the different buildings, is that they not only, do not operate according to the same hours as the public stairwells, they close at 6:00 while stairwells in concourse is open to past 10:00 p.m., but they're not even open on the same days of the week, meaning that if you use a wheelchair and you wish to cross on the weekend, you are simply locked out. And, if that isn't discrimination, I don't know what is. For the sake of argument, let's say that it is a Tuesday afternoon, and the elevator at Richardson Building is open and you are able to make it below ground. To access the circus, required for crossing the intersection, you'd have to use one of the City's four wheelchair lifts that are frankly quite old and very often out of service. In which case, you'd have to turn around, go back above ground and try to find a different way, which is very difficult. It's the various pieces of way finding signage do not include any accessible information. If the lift below the Richardson Building was operational, and you made it to the concourse, you would then head south underground to the only lift with the City seal on it at the Bank of Montreal. It would be reasonable to assume that by taking this lift upwards, you would then be on your way to street level, but you would once again be greeted by a stairs only public exit instead of one way locked doors preventing you from accessing the private elevator, in which case, you would have to turn around and start figuring it out all over again. These barriers take on great significance as they're the only option for many individuals, but keeping the intersection closed to at grade pedestrian crossing, you're forced to encounter that (inaudible) or you are simply locked out. Accessibility is not always a straight line. But in this instance, it kind of is. By opening the intersection, these unnecessary barriers can be avoided and Portage and Main can finally be a place for all Winnipeggers. And we urge you to take this historic opportunities to do so. Finally, the intention to close the concourse was also a surprise announcement for us with unknown implications. We urge caution on this front in taking the time to understand the economic mobility impact of such a decision. The underground concourse connects thousands of workers and the intersection sky rises, the skywalk system, a vital and accessible artery for navigating downtown Winnipeg, especially in the winter time. Thank you all very much for the opportunity to address Council today on this important matter and I welcome any questions that you might have.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Questions for the delegation. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Patrick, I hope you are on the mend. We missed you at, it's Brian Mayes, missed you at the town hall meeting the other night, that I know you wanted to attend. So I just want to be clear, yes, you would've enjoyed it. We would've enjoyed having you. So, for clarity, your ILRC is saying, yes to the surface re-opening, but also keep the concourse open, take your time thinking about the concourse or I mean I don't want to put words in your mouth. Can you just clarify? You're registered in support, but I think somewhat conditionally you do want to see the concourse. Well, what would you like to see with the concourse? Can you clarify that?

Patrick Stewart: Sure, thanks very much, Yeah, when I registered as a delegate, there was sort of two boxes to select. You know, one for support or one against the motion. There wasn't a, you know, select a nuance position. That wasn't (inaudible) one of the options. So, yes, number one, absolutely. We are 100% in favour of opening intersection. As I mentioned, it is a very confusing route, with a lot of barriers, a lot of opportunities for things to go wrong. And when people are sort of forced into that system, into that route, then they have no other choice, but to deal with these barriers. And sometimes it can be re-routed. We ran probably…we took various tours of the underground with all sorts of different individuals with disabilities, without disabilities. We timed how long it would take from different angles. In some instances, it is 45 minutes to just to navigate at the intersection. So, opening to pedestrians at grade is the simplest, clearest route. We're not thinking about universal designs is all about. It's not about creating special systems for different people so creating kind of a one solution that needs to meet for everybody, and certainly opening at grade a crossing would do so. When it comes to the concourse though is that I mentioned that was a bit of a surprise to us. And we are not here to sort of say, you know, yes keeping the concourse open, investing in it is the right thing to do or saying, no, you know, close the concourse, it's impossible. What we are saying is that, the intersection closed in 1979. And we spent over 40 years as a community kind of wringing our hands to figure out whether or not to open it again. You know, what is the right thing to do. Considering that, making a decision to close the concourse in a couple of weeks, that seemed very quick. What we are encouraging is that, the process plays itself out, that we understand you know what the true cost is, understand you know how that costs, you know, it might be impacted by the property owners contributing to the revitalization. And, understanding the economic impact, the mobility impact that it might have. There is a lot of engagement that has to happen before we decide whether or not to close the concourse. But whether the concourse stays open, whether it stays closed, here is the status quo, can't remain. Whether the concourse is open or closed, opening the intersection to pedestrians is absolutely the right thing to do.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Second question, Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: How could I follow that up? That was…that was so eloquent. I will leave that standing. Yeah, no further questions.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Stewart for…thank Mr. Stewart for coming and well, presenting in his injured state.

Patrick Stewart: Thank you.

Councillor Eadie: Lots of injuries happen when you have with disabilities and you're moving around, right? So, and Madam Speaker, just…I used to be the financial manager for the Independent Living Resource Centre in the early 90s. And it's across disability, independent living as it states. And systems and everything need to change. But…and it's interesting that…I'm glad you moved out of Portage Place because the director at the time, that's after I was there, moved in to Portage Place when it wasn't accessible. So, my first question is when the ILRC looked at the Grain Exchange Building, did you consider the accessibility of the whole area?

Patrick Stewart: Yeah, absolutely. That is a very good question. We are connected. The Grain Exchange is connected to the underground concourse and then, you know, on to the skywalk system as well. So, visitors in our membership are able to access it to our centre through the front doors. We're on the first floor and have an accessible building spot there, but are also able to access it through the underground as well.

Councillor Eadie: Yeah, so…so, there's probably a number of persons with disabilities. There's different levels. That's why universal design is supposed to be considered not…you know, this isn't being done just for wheelchair users, right?

Patrick Stewart: Yes, of course.

Councillor Eadie: Although this…as a teenager with lots of ability, I used to cross that intersection and cringed. So, I'm just going to…anyway…I'm just pointing out, you know, you can say it was…it wasn't a decision to ban persons with disabilities when they closed the pedestrians from crossing at Portage. It was to smooth traffic out and to protect people

because that was the worst intersection for accidents back in the 1970s. It was always number one list. Now, Madam Speaker, I just want to ask, like I don't know why you have to look further in depth and study the use of the underground. There are seniors who have limitations, there are many people who use that underground in the winter, and these are people with disabilities. I don't know why you are not coming out to say, don't close the indoor concourse. I know it's not…it's not…it's…anyway, I don't go down there myself, by myself. I go with others, but would you not agree that the disability community, the independent living people who are trusting themselves and living independently, don't you think that they're going to be quite upset that the concourse got closed? And I don't know why you're not taking a position stating right now, not to close the underground concourse.

Patrick Stewart: Well, you are right. There are absolutely some very tangible benefits to having the concourse open. Benefits that extend well beyond the disability community to anybody that is navigating that space. That being said, the barriers that we have identified in our four corners project. And one said mobile known in our communities are often the barriers that are simply not known by the general public. We are all aware of the plebiscites in 2018, but my recollection, that conversation, did not include, you know, information for the public, regarding the different hours of operation and that's just the most basic…most basic level by locking people out on the weekends by closing you know access of people with mobility limitations after 6:00 p.m., when the general public is able to access it much beyond that. Yeah, I don't doubt that the public would be very sensitive and appreciative to…and not accepting these types of, kind of policy, not just physical but the policy-based barriers. When it comes to the concourse being closed, you know frankly, you know, I mean there is something I use every day, I'm through the concourse every single day. And I certainly benefit from that type of access. But what I do see also are lifts that are just as often out of order, as they are in service, way finding signage that does not identify any accessible route of travel.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Patrick.

Patrick Stewart: You know, it kind of adds to the confusion. Sorry, yeah, I'm just trying to answer the question, but so, closing concourse is kind of a new item on the menu. And it has been sort of framed in relation to 75 million dollar price tag. And whether or not that is sort of worth the investment, well, that is up to everyone in this meeting that can vote. Myself excluded. That is the decision that you have to make. What we are urging is that this is a very, very important option for people with disabilities to move around underground especially in the wintertime and that due diligence needs to be taken to sort of understand that impact.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Patrick. Next question, Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Yeah. Would you agree that merely closing…to close it is to discriminate against people who have not the worst…not the most difficult types of disabilities. Would that not be discrimination just closing it for those people who use it in the winter?

Madam Speaker: Councillor Wyatt moves extension of two minutes. All in favour? There is just one speaker. Five Minutes, All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Patrick Stewart: I always see is what we stand for is choices. We believe that we all have an inherit right to make choices for ourselves. For some people, crossing at grade would be the accessible route for them. For others, traveling underneath through the concourse. So, yes, it absolutely serves a very valuable purpose, and we do hope and urge Council to find a way to keep it open. But as mentioned, you know, this is a…we're just beginning that process of understanding the cost benefit. What the ratio is there and yeah…and we're just….at this juncture, just really urging Council to engage stakeholders, to engage our community, to engage at large and to certainly engage the property owners who should be responsible as well for maintaining this piece of public infrastructure that benefits them as well.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Thank you, Patrick. And that concludes our questions for this delegation. Councillor…I didn't see your hand. Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Patrick.

Madam Speaker: Before you do that if you could move a motion that we work through noon seeing the hour.

Councillor Wyatt: I am not moving that, but I'm going to ask a question.

Madam Speaker: We do have two more delegations. So, I think it's important to hear them. Okay. Councillor Lukes moves that we move through lunch, and we will take a break shortly. But I do want to get through the delegations. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. And Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Patrick, are you there?

Patrick Stewart: Yeah, I am here. Yeah.

Councillor Wyatt: Okay, good. My question is are you aware question. Are you aware that at one time the City had a vision that we wanted to create greater connectivity throughout the downtown connecting people both at grade and below grade and above grade that we wanted walkways, we wanted connectivity, we wanted action across the city, but to enhance the value of not only the downtown making it safer, but to enhance the value of properties and to encourage and in spurt of development in the downtown and the concourse is directly related to that. Are you aware of that?

Patrick Stewart: Am I aware of that? Yes, of course.

Councillor Wyatt: And are you aware as well that with the closure of the concourse, there will we be a direct write down of the assessed values mainly Winnipeg Square, the shops of the Winnipeg Square, all four towers would be directed affected through the reassessment negatively hitting the City permanently on its property tax revenues coming back to the City, and that there has been no analysis pertaining to that? Are you aware no analysis has been given to Council pertaining to the write down that we are going to no doubt see thanks to the closure of the concourse?

Patrick Stewart: Yes, I am aware of that. And I've read the Public Service's report many times and when it comes to closing the concourse, it does spur many questions in terms of the costs, in terms of the impacts, not just economically, but in terms of mobility, and that livable downtown that we are all undoubtedly trying to achieve, we know we may have different ideas. But…and that is…those are very important studies that needs to happen and engagement that needs to take place. But what we really want to get across today because this has become, you know, just when you think the Portage and Main conversation can become more interesting, it has, is that the motion that's before you today what we desperately, desperately want to see happen is that the intersection is finally opened to at grade pedestrian crossing, because that is the quickest and surest way to ensure that everybody, citizens with disabilities and to the public at-large are able to cross the street, able to keep moving through downtown. And that being said, of course we acknowledge, I think if you would want to be the head of…the front of the line to acknowledge the skywalk system that the concourse and these routes that we have during the winter time are absolutely vital and things we need to maintain and find opportunities I would hope in the future to expand.

Councillor Wyatt: And are you aware finally Patrick by setting this precedent that anytime we now have a problem, any kind of concourse, below grade or above grade, especially above grade throughout the city. The City is responsible now be…we're going to shut down the concourses. Would there be over Portage, over Broadway, oh sorry, over Donald, over Smith, our policy now will be to shut concourses down. Are you aware of that that's going to be our immediate response?

Patrick Stewart: Well, I am not really sure how to answer that question. It is a bit rhetorical. What we are here to do is we're often (inaudible) stands for accessibility obviously. We want people to have choices to live their own lives with access to all public spaces.

Madam Speaker: Okay, thank you, Patrick. Patrick, thank you for your presentation.

Patrick Stewart: Okay.

Madam Speaker: The clock has timed out.

Patrick Stewart: Sure.

Madam Speaker: Have a great day. Thank you.

Patrick Stewart: Thanks.

Madam Speaker: Okay. We're going to move on to the next delegation, but Councillor Allard, I want to address you first. You had wanted to deal with an item at this time that's on the regular agenda, and that's…

Councillor Allard: Yes, am I allowed to speak to it?

Madam Speaker: That is unadvisable. It really disrupts the order of business before us.

Councillor Allard: So, it's not practice, but it's also not against the rules?

Madam Speaker: We also have delegations that are waiting. So, we would like to get through them.

Councillor Allard: Ok. I believe…

Madam Speaker: Are you asking for suspension of the rules?

Councillor Allard: I would like…

Madam Speaker: And I am not calling for that because it is unadvisable. I'd like to continue with the delegations.

Councillor Allard: Okay. I would like to call suspension of the rules to the…we may deal with the item that we have been discussing and the motion that has been circulated.

Madam Speaker: Okay. I am not calling suspension. We do have an amending motion as well, that needs to be recirculated, and there was numbering issues. So again, we are going to continue with delegations. Thank you.

Councillor Allard: (Inaudible) vote on suspension?

Madam Speaker: You can challenge the Chair if you like, but I'm not calling for suspension.

Councillor Allard: Well, I will challenge the Chair then. I think we can call for a vote. Why not call for a vote?

Madam Speaker: As I said, its unadvisable, it disrupts the order of business.

Councillor Allard: I have challenged the Chair.

Madam Speaker: We have never done this. Okay. There is a…I will put a vote to challenge the Chair. So, all in favour of allowing a vote for suspension of rules? It's to challenge…all in favour of challenging the Chair, please rise. Madam Clerk.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillor Allard

Nays

His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Eadie, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Rollins, Santos, Schreyer, Wyatt, Chambers and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma.

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 1, Nays 14.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. We'll continue with the order of business as presented today on the agenda. Our next delegation is Judy Waytiuk who is appearing in opposition to Item 2 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development dated March 7, 2024. It's regarding the Portage and Main Intersection. Welcome Judy.

Judy Waytiuk: Thank you. I have two pieces of good news. Number one, I am quite sure I just contributed a parking ticket to the City's coffers. Number two, as an old television journalist, I edit right up until airtime, so the verbal presentation will be much shorter than the written one. The 73 million dollar number for the concourse involves a full rebuild of the intersection with something I've heard nobody even mention. 13 million dollars in major sewer and water main replacements and upgrades, the City Water and Waste Department says it needs to do. If the concourse is closed, do we still go ahead with the 38 million in total it would cost to do those? Because that also means ripping up, then rebuilding the intersection and the five years of rush-hour traffic jams that are so worrisome. Given the recent huge sewage spill in south Winnipeg and a closed community center daycare, thanks to another sewer line break, both in the last six weeks, I'm thinking if Water and Waste says they need to do something, we should listen. Direct project costs for concourse repairs alone add up to just 35 of the 73 million. Without the 13 million for the sewer and waterline work, it would be 60 million for the concourse. The City's Public Service estimates that it would cost up to 50 million, maybe more, maybe less to shutter the concourse, another 10 million for surface crosswalks. That's also 60 million. But what if it only costs 20 million to close the concourse plus 10 million for crosswalks. That's 30 million. Well, what if the concourse was repaired through 50/50 cost sharing with the corner property owners? That could cost the City as little as 30 million. But the Public Service was not permitted to pursue that option, although that was what they recommended. This motion gives the Public

Service permission to talk with property owners, but only about decommissioning costs, and only after you vote to close it. Fait accompli. No going back. And nobody even knows if those numbers are accurate because until March 1, it occurred to absolutely no one to even think about closing the concourse. And you all have to wait until after you vote to close it to find out what it would actually cost. How would it work? What would the economic impacts be? We don't know. We know nothing that we need to know about the ramifications of closing it. Now we all do know, it's the primary job of the city to maintain its civic infrastructure. This is part of that infrastructure. If it matters, you maintain it with taxpayer dollars for the benefit of the taxpayer. We rebuild our roads constantly spending wads of money and creating great big traffic jams. The Public Service budget for this year is 1.7 billion dollars. A lot of it is rebuilding and repairing civic infrastructure over and over and over again. What's different about this? Not a single stakeholder at Portage and Main was consulted regarding the Mayor's decision to close it. No one. Not property owners or businesses, not the arts community, not the public was asked if they agree. The property owners through the building owners and managers of Manitoba do not agree. The Mayor has his numbers all wrong, they say. The Downtown BIZ does not agree. Businesses they encourage and nurture would be hurt or killed off outright, they say. They could both be right. And what about your constituents? A radio station straw poll two weeks ago found 70% of people who voted want the concourse to stay open, and you could only vote once. I tried. The Free Press poll published just today shows 60% support now for opening the surface of Portage and Main, but it doesn't address closing the concourse. That, says the Free, wasn't considered by most of the pro-survey respondents. That's it for public input. This motion says you will get public input after you agree to close the concourse. Isn't that kind of putting the cart before the horse? I have vested interest. My husband's massive sculpture concrete wall. The Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, the most prestigious national arts organization in Canada agrees that work must be saved. But that important western Canadian contemporary artwork will almost certainly be buried if the Mayor has his way. Once he realized it was there, he did ask for a study into what would cost to move it elsewhere. That study hasn't even begun. Well, I watched how that wall went in. It's an integral part of a key load bearing wall. Good luck figuring it out. The price tag is unimaginable and I am sure we'll approve completely indigestible. And the additional time, the Public Service was granted a week ago to refine its wild-eyed estimate of 20 to 50 million to close the concourse? That is not done yet. And yes, the concourse may have to be done all over again in 40 years. Again, that's what you do with public infrastructure that matters. It costs taxpayers' money. And then, when necessary, you do it all over again. The City's Public Service told the Mayor they want to proceed on the project and they expected property owners to cost share. That was not the decision made. And your Executive Policy Committee for reasons I can't even begin to fathom, then passed the motion that sits before you. The Public Service doesn't yet have even remotely accurate closing cost estimate. They request to undertake cost sharing discussions to keep the concourse open was denied. Instead, we have this vote before you, 14 business days after announcing the closure of the concourse. Fourteen days? So, spend maybe 60 million to shutter the concourse and open crosswalks, maybe less, maybe more, and get literally nothing but the joy of frostbite in January for that money. No traffic jams for the five years the project would take. There will be those little niggling pauses in traffic that would be created forever by pedestrians trying to cross 8 lanes of traffic in minus 30, with 40km/mile winds. Oh, and those sewer and water mains on the potential verge of falling apart. Might that not be the biggest sinkhole you ever saw right in the middle of Portage and Main? Or maybe, spend the same amount of money for something Winnipeg can continue to be proud of. And again, properly upgraded sewer and waterlines mean tearing up the intersection anyway and we need those. What sense does any of this make? Do you not think it makes sense to get the real numbers? To talk with the stakeholders around the intersection. To find out what the public actually wants here. To consider that you would almost certainly be destroying the biggest cultural legacy Bruce Head could give to the province and to the country? Think about all those things. Stop, think, and then make an informed decision. Is that too much to ask? Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Thank you, Judy. We have another delegation on the same topic. And I'll ask you to wait on the bench and we'll take questions shortly. I'd like to call forward Aaron Dolyniuk, Executive Director, Manitoba Trucking Association. He's speaking on the same topic also in opposition. Welcome.

Aaron Dolyniuk: Good afternoon. As stated, my name is Aaron Dolyniuk. I'm the Executive Director of the Manitoba Trucking Association. I'm also the Chair of the City of Winnipeg's Goods Movement Advisory Committee. It is important for Council to recognize the fundamental role commercial goods play in Winnipeg's economy which is based on trade. Goods movement is what puts groceries on store shelfs, meals in restaurants, parts and materials in factories and takes Winnipeg's products to the outside world. Goods movement maintains our economy and enables it to grow, serving the places where Winnipeggers work and where Winnipeggers are served as customers. Let me be clear. I'm here on behalf of the Manitoba Trucking Association, not to object to the reopening of Portage and Main for pedestrian traffic. The MTA is concerned that the recommendations made by the Public Service and its report to Council do not include the need to accommodate truck traffic especially on Portage Avenue East. The Public Service has recommended that Appendix 7 be approved by Council as a guiding vision for renewal of the infrastructure in the public realm at the intersection. The at grade vision for Portage and Main that is articulated in Appendix 7 of the report to Council does not envision traffic lanes for trucks or any other motor vehicles except buses on Portage Avenue East. This is not a vision that the trucking industry can support. The MTA supports a vision that maintains a current capacity for truck movements in all four directions at Portage and Main. The traffic lanes that are wide enough to safely accommodate commercial vehicles as well as all other road users. For this reason, the MTA is requesting as part of your decision today on this matter, that members of Council

move to pass a motion requiring that any final design for Portage and Main must include traffic lanes that safely accommodate all road users including commercial trucks on Portage Avenue East, Portage Avenue West and Main Street. In 1974, after many years of public debate, the City of Winnipeg chose not to build freeways in Winnipeg. Fifty years later, Portage and Main remains as it has always been, the hub of our transportation system connecting all four directions of the compass. Then as now, we continue to use Portage and Main, just as Winnipeggers have always used it for goods movement. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. We'll now take questions. Councillor Wyatt followed by Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Wyatt: Sorry, I don't recall the name of the…Aaron?

Madam Speaker: Judy, if you could please come forward as well. Judy Waytiuk and Aaron Dolyniuk.

Councillor Wyatt: Judy, you made some very good points in terms of your presentation. I guess the one struck me the most was how quickly this is all happening. And you were able to obtain a lot of information from people that you know in Winnipeg, and you're talking talk to. You know, the rush to make this happen. It's not like the concourse started to crumble all of a sudden and that we all of a sudden have to make a rushed decision here. You know, I'm all in favour of making quick decisions, but at the same time we got the Arlington Bridge sitting over there in the air. No, we're not rushing on that one to knock it down or rebuild it, but here we are rushing on this one. What do you think is driving that? Why do you think this is happening now?

Judy Waytiuk: I don't know. I have no…I just…it doesn't make any sense to me. I just don't get it. The concourse has been leaking for…well, really since the Dhillon government report back in 2018. There have been leaks happening. The consultant's report came out at the end of September 2023, and that was five months ago. And now all of a sudden, we've got to know now. I don't understand that. I…it just…to me…I mean, I'm an old journalist. You do your research, you do your homework, you find out everything you can find out before you make a decision. You don't go, we're going to do this. We'll figure out why, how much it costs, oh, we will do all that later. You just…I'm…I'm sorry I can't give you an answer because I don't have one.

Madam Speaker: Second question, Councillor Wyatt. Questions and answers through the Chair, please.

Councillor Wyatt: Since I'm an old…thank you, Madam Speaker, I'm an old elected official, you're an old journalist so if I could ask you…

Judy Waytiuk: I probably covered you, sir.

Councillor Wyatt: I am sure you did. You know, maybe I will throw a hypothesis out at you, maybe it has to do with the election cycles. And the fact that, you know, you get it done now, two years before an election. People start forgetting about it. If that will happen next year, right? The election cycle is 2026…re-election campaign for mayor and companies. So maybe that will be it. What are your thoughts?

Judy Waytiuk: Well, if you do the math on that, and you say the choice was made to repair the concourse, the election cycle would be happening about halfway through that five-year traffic jam. So, there is that. I don't know. I mean I have no idea. I would hope that civic politics is above that kind of thing.

Madam Speaker: Final question, Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: When you answer the last part of the question, you implied something, you hope it's above it, you hope it's a long-term planning and vision, is that what you are getting? What do you mean by that?

Judy Waytiuk: That is what I would hope. There is a time-honoured tradition that, you know, mayors and councils change. And when the old one comes out, the new one comes in, and it's all new and exciting. And then it's just a question of hanging in there until the next election. And trying to make sure that you stay where you want to be, in power. I would wish, I would hope that our city which has a potential for such a vision at Portage and Main, that could include a vibrant concourse if we cared enough to make it one. I would hope that our city would include that vision and think ahead far enough to be able to make that vision possible. We could go above ground, we could go below ground, we could do both. We could make that corner into something that could be the envy of the entire country or we could not.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Schreyer followed by Councillor Lukes.

Councillor Schreyer: Sure. I think I have a question for Mr. Dolyniuk. Thank you for both for your presentations. In this case, maybe I didn't get it straight. You are concerned of making sure that we have proper routes for trucking at Portage and Main including Portage East. Do we at this time have a proper routing?

Aaron Dolyniuk: Yes.

Councillor Schreyer: Okay. And is there any…could you give us an example so we can deal with this in terms of your concerns…an example of where, in your opinion, and your advice, we have inadequate trucking routes at intersection so we have some sort of comparison?

Aaron Dolyniuk: A current challenge?

Councillor Schreyer: Yeah, is there any place in the city where you think we aren't doing a proper job of truck routing, truck lanes, et cetera?

Aaron Dolyniuk: One that has actually recently come up is, if you are headed westbound, I believe it's on River coming from Main Street and you want to turn on to, I guess that would be Smith going northbound, is that correct?

Councillor Schreyer: He is talking what are the adequate routes. I just wanted a brief concept of reference. It's been a long day. This one minute, oh we are…on our own time. I would like that advice. I think Councillor is going to benefit from it. We've been here three hours, we ask questions like this. Is this irrelevant? This is about Portage and Main, what…give respect to this fellow for being here today what…

Madam Speaker: Councillor Schreyer, continue with your question, please.

Councillor Schreyer: Yeah, I'd like to know since he is here, he's talked about benefit of truck routes briefly, yet one minute, an example of what's a bad truck route, so we have an idea of some context when it comes to Portage and Main. I think it is a really valid point he is making.

Aaron Dolyniuk: So, right bound off of River on to I'm guessing it's Smith going northbound. They are removing the yield there and making it no right turn for trucks. So, if you are a food service hauler, and you're, let's say supporting restaurants along Marion-Goulet, and you want to go onto the downtown. Before the best route would have been turn right onto Smith, but now you are in a situation where there is no right turn. You have to go way around, right? So, it all boils down to having accessible points to serve the needs of other industries and that's our job safely.

Councillor Schreyer: Thank you for the practical advice as we move forward on this.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Schreyer. Councillor Lukes.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you, Mr. Dolyniuk for your presentation. So, Portage and Main has been the hub of our economy for, you know, decades, centuries. And trucking, goods movement is the backbone of our economy. So, I guess this question is a did you know. Did you know that I am working with Public Works and Transit, we are going to organize a meeting, we are going to sit down and talk about this. It's a very preliminary meeting because I know Transit's not done any detail design. It's a lot of conceptual as have Public Works not done a lot of detailed design. So, did you know that we are organizing a meeting, sit down and discuss this because we need goods movement in our city, and we can't completely shut down trucking at that intersection?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Dolyniuk.

Aaron Dolyniuk: I didn't know until today. That's great news. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Any further questions? Councillor Eadie followed by Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Eadie: First, I just want to, I can't remember the woman's name, but very good presentation. And I…

Madam Speaker: Judy, if you could come forward, please.

Councillor Eadie: No, no, I am not going to ask her a question because I agree with everything she had to say. Anyway, my question just for the Trucking Association is…I'm confused about…you know, concerned of movement of trucking. And yes, our trade highways in Winnipeg right from the beginnings, was Main Street and Portage Avenue. So, but I'm having a hard time conceptualizing recommendations from the trucking industry, which includes people who drive five-ton

trucks, I believe, not just big semi tractors, and so on and so forth. Why in the circumstance of Portage and Main, you're concerned about opening it up and slowing down traffic, but at the same time, when it comes to the Arlington Bridge, the Trucking Association says they don't need it. Can you help me understand what is the difference between them when you are driving your five-ton food truck and trying to deliver in a timely fashion?

Aaron Dolyniuk: I would say in the case of Portage and Main, the concern here is not necessarily delays. It's having access to intersection from all sides like we currently have now. That is what I articulated here. When it comes to the Arlington Bridge, it hasn't been a truck route. It's not an accessible point for our industry for a five-ton truck, for a one-ton truck or for a semi-truck. So, our industry has worked around that infrastructure for decades.

Councillor Eadie: Yeah.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Second question.

Councillor Eadie: Madam Speaker, did you know that my son drove a five-ton truck delivered, and would've preferred to use the Arlington Bridge to make some deliveries from the Polo Park area, and…because McPhillips is unattainable?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Dolyniuk. Councillor Mayes moves extension. Two minutes. All in favour? Contrary. Carried. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Thanks. Question for Mr. Dolyniuk. One of the things that came out of the town hall meeting I had last night and thanks to Ms. Waytiuk for coming to the first one, which was two nights before. But, one of the things that came out of the discussion last night was this, which is talking about Portage East, if we are going to put a full-on transit hub, stop, centre, whatever soaking up a lane that has some traffic implications. We've heard also well, we might have vehicular traffic just one way or maybe not at all. Maybe just…maybe just transit. So, obviously this just means more people turning right at some point. Mathematically if you're coming east and you can't get through, you've got to go somewhere, maybe not the buses, but everybody else, but…I think Councillor Lukes provided some of the answer, which is she is going to engage with people. The Fairmont though comes out. Fairmont's renovating as you understand. Do you have any contact with the Fairmont? I would be surprised if they would favour a complete ban on car and truck traffic in front of their hotel, but I don't know, since they don't seem to be part of this. So, if your group had any contact with Fairmont on this Portage East issue?

Aaron Dolyniuk: We have not.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Any further questions? Seeing none Thank you for your presentations today, both of you. Okay, that concludes delegations. Council will now recess and reconvene at 1:45 p.m. Thank you.

Reconvened meeting of
Winnipeg City Council of
March 21, 2024 at 1:53 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Good afternoon. I would like to reconvene our Council meeting of March 21, 2024. We are on the report of the Executive Policy Committee dated March 12. Mr. Mayor.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
DATED MARCH 12, 2024

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise and would like to move reports No. 1, 3 to 12 and No. 6.

Madam Speaker: So, you are standing down 2?

Mayor Gillingham: Standing down 2, and…

Madam Speaker: 6 has amending motion.

Mayor Gillingham: Ok. So, stand down 2, 6 has an amending motion. Stand down 13 as well and move the rest of them.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: 3, please

Madam Speaker: 3 - Engage Winnipeg Policy. Councillor Mayes. Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6.

Madam Speaker: Okay.

Councillor Wyatt: Hold on. 12, 13.

Madam Speaker: I will call the question on Item 4, 7 through 11 and 14. All in favour? Contrary? That's carried. Madam Clerk.

Item 1 - Approval of Business Improvement Zone Levies – 2024

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Mayor to introduce the item.

Mayor Gillingham: Wait to hear from my colleagues. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. This was stood down by Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Yes, Madam speaker, through you, Madam Speaker to the Chair. I rise today to speak to this just simply because we often don't speak to this. It's the annual BIZ Levy report that we have come before us. And I just want to take a moment to thank my business improvement zone for the hard work that they do, both staff and the board members, the volunteer board members, as well as BIZ members who participate in the zone. I'm proud to be able to stand here and say that we're now the fourth largest zone, the Transcona BIZ in the entire city. When I first arrived, our budget was quite minor, and we've been able to look at expanding the territory of the zone. We did an expansion in terms of the land in question. We successfully petitioned and expanded the zone. We now have a growing zone in terms of amount of businesses. At one time the zone was somewhat instable in terms of the assessment base because of the up and down nature of business at that time. I'm glad to say and report that is somewhat stabilized, that we have through the Transcona planned development overlay for downtown Transcona stabilized downtown, and hard now to get off the space for successful retail operation there through the Transcona yards area structure plan which involve all the industrial yards, and major stakeholders, CN Rail, Palliser Furniture, New Flyer Industries, to name a few, participated. We have now in many ways stabilized that economic development zone and strengthened it by other activity that now takes place there, one of the largest grow-ops in Manitoba. They don't like that advertised, but I'm not going to tell you where specifically it is, but it's created a lot of employment and employment activity while at the same time working hard to reduce the amount of conflict that does occur between employment lands and residentially zoned lands. Furthermore, I just want to give a shout out to the Transcona BIZ for the work that they do annually. They…the program they do is remarkable. Ever since we created the Transcona Centennial Square as part of the community, which is a quarter acre public park. We have yoga at the park. We have farmers market in the park. We have Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra come and play on the pavilion, Archibald Pavilion. We've had numerous events that take place and it's become…we have movies in the park on a Friday night where a big screen is rolled out, and residents come with their lawn chair and enjoy a movie on a Friday or Saturday night with their neighbours. Popcorn is given out I think for 25 cents a bag. It's remarkable. And it really has brought the community together in an amazing way. You know, I have been reading about and I think we all saw this latest UN study on happiness. Happiness, a lot of communities, it's not necessarily a matter of wealth, but a matter of connectivity and people identifying with their place that they live with, live in and live with, and those they live with. And we work…we strive hard to make folks welcome no matter what their background, no matter how new they may be to the community, where they are from, their arrival or if they have been there for generations. And so those are…BIZ also does that. Coming up very soon and May, we're going to do a large community cleanup involving all the schools in the area, all the students of the school get involved. We do the…the Transcona BIZ spearheads the annual firework display at Buhler Recreation Park which is probably one of the largest fireworks in the entire city in honor of our country's birthday, and the list goes on in terms of the activity that they do, but the staff do it with relatively few resources. They do an amazing job as well as running the day-to-day operation of the board directors and applying for grants, securing grants for summer students, the flower program that they have, plantings that they do, which are extensive now, the banner contest that we have with all the schools, getting the students involved in painting, and the contest in terms of all the banner posts. They always have a theme every year. It's just really brought the community together. I don't know what we would do without the Transcona BIZ. I want to put a…recognize Leila Dance, Executive Director, Rob Geswin, the President of the BIZ right now. And we are actually in the process of moving to a new location which will be larger that we can store the gator in and actually have a facility that will hopefully assist us because of all the programming that the BIZ is doing to give that that the extra space

we need both for storage and programming space and office space. So, they've done a remarkable job over the years. It's really revolved into something amazing. I want to thank the volunteer members, and board of directors, and the staff for their ongoing hard work. We often…they often don't get recognized, and so I'd like to take this moment. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Wyatt. Mr. Mayor to close.

Mayor Gillingham: Yes, I just want to thank our BIZ zones for all the work that they do. I want to echo Councillor's comments. They do great work in our communities, and with that, I invite you to call the question, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. All in favour? Contrary? That's carried. Madam Clerk, Item 2.

Item 2 - Initiatives Funded from the First Installment of the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF)

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This is a report that we've been looking forward to of the 122 million dollars that was committed by the federal government to the City of Winnipeg. This really represents the allocation, decision on how to allocate the first up to 30 million dollars which is the first installment of the first drawn to that money that has come to the City from the federal government. The focus of this report calls on us to move forward with primarily funding one of the eight initiatives that we committed to pursue in our application. Specifically, the incentive program for multi-family dwellings in downtown corridors. The report does lay out the fact that the focus of this allocation will be to encourage and to incentivize development of residential units in our downtown. And there is funding that is granted or may be granted to eligible recipients, successful applicants I should say. Downtown market projects are up to 25,000 dollars a unit. It's non-profit affordable housing of 35,000 dollars a unit. And affordable projects located in the downtown are eligible for both grants listed above to a maximum 60,000 dollars a unit if they meet criteria. This is good news. We have talked consistently in this council, for the last several months, about the need for more housing in our city, and specifically more affordable housing, and more housing in our downtown. We are unapologetically focusing in our downtown as a council. We have put great emphasis and effort on encouraging more people to live in the downtown and encouraging developers to build more multi-family units in the centre of our city, in our downtown communities. And so, I'm glad to support this project and look forward to the applicants coming forward. Once we adopt this and just to see what gets built in our downtown so that more people can live in our community, and more people can have access hopefully to affordable housing as well. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Thank you. As you all know, Madam Speaker, I was one of three Councillors to vote against the HAF proposal when they came through, and I was on the losing end of that. But unapologetically, I am going to continue to point out some of the discrepancies that appear in these documents, and some of the questions that I continue to have. We have said we need to keep up with other cities. Remind you yesterday people voted for a budget, which included the chart that showed we had one of the lowest tax rates for municipal property taxes in the country. And if you look further down, page 73, Winnipeg's housing market remains one of the most affordable in the country. So, we'll come back to this as I suspect as we get more into the details for the HAF project, but if the idea that like other cities, we have the same problems, I don't think we do. I think the budget we voted on yesterday reflects some of that. And if we're keeping up with other cities then Councillor Wyatt and I will be very keen to get on that LRT committee and we get going on some light rail or subway. But we aren't keeping up with other cities in that regard. There's some things to praise in the housing in the HAF document, there are some things to question. What is to be praised? The staff made it clear that moving forward as Council directed in November of 2023. They're moving forward with a series of changes. The incorporation of the infill guidelines will be the next change. They seem to forget that there was some height limit requirements in those documents, but I'm assured that will be part of the next approval, which is coming shortly to incorporate the infill guidelines into By-law form. What will be coming next year, as we directed what will be coming next year, as we directed or at the very least toward the end of this year, so all community committees can consult are the provisions around the federal requirements. Malls and corridors, the four-plexes, the four story limits, there's a number of wording details that I won't get into about… Also perhaps then, perhaps then, we can get the map that's referred to and referenced in the frequently asked questions document. We don't have the map, but the FAQ says well, if you look at the map. So, some discrepancies there. I continue to await the map which is referenced in the City zone FAQ page. So, the good news. As we indicated in November 2023, there tends to, needs to be a long process, there needs to be a lot of work done before we consider those steps on malls and corridors, the four-plexes, the four stories. The SPAP does not say, go ahead and do this. There's some references claiming that. Look at 2.8 of the SPAP. Strategic Plan had said to encourage along malls and corridors. It doesn't say as of right. It doesn't say as of right because I got those words pulled out. They were later added back in some very straightforward drafting by Mr. Kelsey in the November document, but this SPAP does not say that we're going to get as

of right development rights. It just doesn't. We read it does. It doesn't. I have to point this out, whether for good or ill. What do we mean by as of right. Here we turned to the FAQ. Elimination of public hearing is inherent to the meaning of as of right. It's inherent to the meaning as of right. We will be eliminating public hearings. Perhaps we'll come back to the centre Item 3 on our agenda and how we're engaging in consulting with everyone. We are eliminating public hearings through the as of right. There are some Councillors putting out documents saying there will still be public hearings. There will be a public hearing in front of this body. And then if passed, we will have no further public hearings where there's as of right. If you live near the St. Vital Centre and several hundred units are planned to go up. You just have to welcome that with open arms or deal with that. There will not be a public hearing. There still will be a few perhaps they want to hand start and they are upset about the 150-foot lot next door being split through a variance. Well yes, there still be a public hearing. But there aren't going to be public hearings. No dancing around that it's inherent and the meaning of as of right. What does the staff say? The Public Service will undertake fulsome due diligence. I'm not sure what the difference between fulsome due diligence and due diligence is. But then Public Service wants to undertake fulsome due diligence to ensure design standards meet the as of right requirements, but also preserve community needs. A little troubled when I'm told it's the Public Service will be determining what the community needs, not the elected official, but I lost that vote. So, we will have…it will take some time to get that fulsome due diligence to make sure we have the appropriate standards. We still have no clarity on what development agreements can be demanded from on malls, on corridors. We have at least three positions out of the Mayor's office of Public Service. Hopefully, that will be rectified when we get there late this year when we start having the community committee consultations on the malls and the corridors, the fourplexes et cetera. So, no public hearings on as of right developments. That's understood. That's straightforward. But to the staff to their credit, following what we said in November. That's not coming right away. That's coming in the fall so we can have the community committees. And then this body hears the…does the by-law review. And we'll have…the devil will be in the details as I think one of our media outlets said what do we mean by lot size restrictions? What do we mean by environmental standards? There were a couple of things that troubled me though in the document, the assertion we unfortunately dug up again items we took out of Complete Communities page 15. If you remember a debate here about three years ago in which we were told how the settlement area of the city had grown by 92% or almost doubled, which…if 92% is almost doubling, I'll be using that on the fair wage calculations believe you me to my own advantage. But leaving that aside, 92% growth in settlement area has now morphed into 92% growth in the built-up area or the built area. I've asked Mr. Jack to clarify how that could've happened. What do we mean by that? The answer we got last year was, well, in 1971, we didn't have Assiniboine Forest, for example. So, we've grown as a city. So that's the built area, Assiniboine Forest or Bois-des-Esprits. That troubles me. We have a lot of people saying please don't build on Assiniboine Forest, but as I've said before we need the Public Service to speak with one voice. If the Planning Department is saying, well, we need to have more people in the built area. Then in theory, we should be tearing down the Assiniboine Forest then, shouldn't we? Or this ends the debate about Lemay right there. But we are not to be saying that with some other wing of the civil service. Here we're saying, let's have discussions of a national park or saving the forest. I tend to go with that, but I'm not going to go back to Glenwood or people of my ward to say, well we have to densify to a great extent here even if you don't like it because the built area of the city is grown up. Oh, by the way, we're making some of it a national forest. It doesn't really hang together for those people. Secondly, we have the remarkable assertion that the water and sewer pipes, each person in the city is now responsible for 70% more water and sewer pipes than several decades ago. Why would that be? Well, it's probably because, a, we didn't hear it on sewer pipes. Last year or two years ago when we had this debate, it was merely water and we established the number, it wasn't accurate. But now we're ignoring sewer pipes in there, trying to convince Councillors that we've had this great growth. Why would that be? Well, probably because we have separated sewer pipes in the newer parts of the city so that we don't have raw sewage going into the river. If our view is that was a mistake, then we probably should stop that billion-dollar combined sewer work that we are undertaking because the expenses, we're adding more sewer pipe in the older parts of the city, and the people paying for it are throughout the city. So, I'm not going to go to people in Sage Creek. I'll need a brief extension, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Rollins moves extension of two minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Mayes: We need accurate information. We need accurate data from our staff. We can't have people saying…the evidence that we need to consolidate, the evidence that we need that the suburbs are at fault here some are all sprawl. Here is our evidence. Everyone is responsible for more water and sewer pipe, then simultaneously keep putting more sewer pipe in to the older areas funded in part by everyone across the city. What am to do? Go to people at Sage Creek and say it's your fault. It's all your fault that there is not combined sewer downtown. I don't think that hangs together too well. So, to illiterate some good work by the staff saying yes, this is going to come in waves. The first bit is the infill guidelines. Some of that will get over run, but at least we'll have it for a while. The second tranche to come in the fall, the stuff about malls and corridors, stuff about fourplexes, the stuff about four-stories, and then we're to review that, as a body, with all of those preconditions from what we said in 2023. Lot size, height, environmental standards. We need that package to review. But in the interim, can we…Mr. Jack, please ensure that we aren't repeating some of the myths that we dealt with back there a few years ago and took out…Mr. Kiernan took out of the Complete Communities document because if we are saying that Assiniboine Forest is built area, I really don't know what, where we are going. I mean I could… brought along my Arthur Koestler book here to talk about some of the... you can't just keep saying that… you can't just say the

ends justify the means. It's all in service of the larger goods so if we're shading the truth, that's all fine. Surely, we haven't come to that point yet. So, I will be asking water and sewer, somebody come on down to my committee from Water Utility and explain to me how we're now saying this is terrible, all these newer sewer pipes, because we're putting 1 billion dollars into building new sewer pipes. So, we've got to get one Public Service talking with one voice here.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Mayes. Next Speaker. Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise… the report before us regarding the first initiatives that we're planning to fund out of the HAF is concerning. I read in the report how at first glance approximately 10% of the funds are going to be used for administration. You read further on in the report though that actually it's more than that. That is actually over 20%, 20.31% of the total amount, 5.6 million is going to be used for administration. Since when did we use this…we, when we had the seminars on this originally, we stressed the employments are keeping down administrative costs. Our administration told that they're going to keep those down in around the 10% range. Now, I'm reading that those beyond that, specifically I refer to the next steps on page 10, where it appears to me, that now we're using the HAF funds to do what we should've been doing in the first place in the city, in terms of the Planning Department. Establishing a land enhancement office, an infrastructure program to support new housing, and amendments to local area plans and digitization of the development and approval… permanent approval process. These are things that we should have been doing anyway as part of our day-to-day requirements as a city with regards to the Planning Department, but 3.1 million has been set aside for this. Plus, communication which again is administrative in nature, website, portal, not to mention the amount of funds, Madam Speaker, that we're now going to be using on the first tranche again, to justify the administration of the program, that it appears that we're going to be using this to build in the systems that we didn't have in the first place throughout the entire initiative. In fact, we're going to be using it to come back with these actings that Councillor Mayes was talking about, which is the re-zoning process. Frankly, Madam Speaker, in any other city, there would be already capacity to do that. But we're actually having a higher and use this money to make up for the money that we did not spend or have not been budgeting properly for, in terms of our Planning Department and the resources that they need of city of our size. This really concerns me because this basically means that every dollar…this basically means that every dollar that we're spending on administration, is one less dollar going into programming. But putting that aside for a minute, even more concerning is where the money is actually going to be going. The downtown is great. I think the fact that downtown is being focused on first and foremost, fantastic. But from what I can see here, it's the concern that I expressed before when we had the seminars and the concern that I'm going to say right now that there's a very fine line, Madam Speaker, between the…this program being seen as one that's driving up housing and needs addressing housing needs in the city and one becoming a slush fund for developers. And it appears to me that we're on the slow slope of becoming a slush fund for developers. The first program, the downtown market project of up to 2,500 a unit, 25,000 a unit, I stand corrected. The project must include 10% of unit to be affordable glove market units, and 10% affordable is being deemed based on CMHC, 30% of median rental income at 1,100 dollars a month. CMHC, Madam…it's not mid-market rents. You're got a problem with your microphone, Madam? Okay.

Madam Speaker: Echo issue. Thank you.

Councillor Wyatt: It is an issue, Madam Speaker, that we need to address. This is not what we wrote the program for. Mid-market rents in my mind based in Manitoba or based on Manitoba market values, not CMHC. CMHC takes, for those that you don't know, CMHC levels taken Toronto and Vancouver, and all of the other higher…can I just wait a minute while the speaker figures out what she is doing? Okay, thank you. I just didn't know if I had the speaker's attention. Okay, thank you. And so, Madam Speaker, I'm concerned that we're…we have a program that we are rolling out that seems to be of the benefit of industry over those who are supposed to be actually doing the program for and that is people living in the housing. Furthermore, in terms of this downtown market projects, 10 years, 10 years is what we're giving the affordable rent for. So, in other words, typically, when you go to market, when you're building a…your own multiple family housing building you're going to go and borrow money, 25, 30-year money. You're now basically have locked in only for 10 years in terms of 10% of the units in the building. That's not affordable housing, Madam Speaker. This is another way to say here is some free money, build some more units. Yes, we do need more people downtown, yes, we do need more people living making the downtown more vibrant. Absolutely. Then why don't we just say that, then pretending that it's an affordable housing program because it is not. And there's three tranches. Non-profit affordable housing 35,000 a unit, 35,000 a door. And then there's the affordable housing top up for projects located outside of the downtown, but nowhere in here, Madam Speaker, does it say how much of the 25 million, sorry 25 million minus 3.1 because that's less. How much of that is actually going to be going to every one of these projects? We're leading that up to the administration. We're letting them decide how much I, roman numeral I, II or III, they get to decide which groups, or maybe some others get to decide which groups are going to get the funding. The lion' share, well, I can tell you where the lion's share is going to be taken up. It's going to be on roman numeral I because those are the projects that are going to make the most sense. They're going to make…they're going to be the quickest to apply. They're going to be the quickest to be taken up because the requirements are the least. And anybody who has any ability to, in terms of development, will want to tie up as least amount of the funds, and maximize as much public money as possible with as little rules and requirements on them to

fulfill in the long run because the other programs have longer periods of time of tying up their money and longer obligations especially the top up outside of the downtown that has a minimum of 20 years. So right away, you know what is going to happen. They are gearing the program one way, and one way only to drive up the numbers in downtown, not about affordable housing. This is not about affordable housing. This is driving up housing numbers in the downtown. Now if you are…Councillor Mayes is 100% correct. The issue inside of City of Winnipeg, housing is not necessarily the issue. The issue is affordability, but affordability on the far end of the spectrum and that is a challenge in terms of those who are most marginalized, but the program that should be driving that is the third program which I think is actually going to get probably the least amount of support based on way this is written. I don't know what our staff were thinking or if they were given direction in terms of this. It is disappointing that this is the first tranche of money we're getting out that we could've have been doing much better that we could've been basing it on medium market rents, number one, Manitoba level, not CMHC in terms of rent geared income that we should've been basing it on affordability, number one, first and foremost not units that have 10%. 10%, come on, of units affordable, and the rest 90% market. We might as well just…

Madam Speaker: Councillor Schreyer moves extension of two minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Wyatt: What's the point of the program and to sprinkle it all over as many developers as possible so they can all get as much as they can of the public purse. Maybe that's what the Liberals really wanted eh, federally, but just because they wanted that, doesn't mean we have to do it. We can do the right thing, and ensure that this money goes to those who can't afford to get a half decent place to live. And that's what it should be about, and also not about creating jobs for the Public Service. Jobs that should have been already created, based on what I can see that they're going to be doing. Work that we should have been doing already, in terms of our Planning Department that is not happening, that we are playing catch up on and we're using the federal program to do so. I feel less angry about that, than I do about what… with the funds, the majority of the funds that are probably going to be spent on, that irritates the heck out of me. And then combine that with the fact that what Councillor Mayes speaks about that we're going to have to go through all sorts of contortions in terms of our zoning mapping of the city to do this? Are you kidding me? Are you kidding me? That we're going to go and remap a whole city without Winnipeggers actually getting the trade-off that was promised. There's something very wrong with this picture. It makes it really hard to support the remapping coming forward when we know that the funding that some of us wanted to see for affordable housing, why we supported this back in December is not happening. I can make the case to my constituents that we need to do this because there's people out in our community who can't get a place to live, a decent place to live, who can't afford the rent, and we're doing this now for them. But I can't justify it now on this and look them straight in the face, look them straight in the eye honestly and say this is not what we are doing because this is not what we're doing. Those are my words, Madam speaker. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Schreyer. Next, Councillor…pardon me, thank you Councillor Wyatt. Next, Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Schreyer: Look, if you are not naïve, you knew that this was a possibility today, that the conversation was going to happen as such. This might be the way it was going. Nonetheless, we put our best foot forward because we really wanted that federal funding. So, we went through some contortions and then a last minute new condition put on the federal funding to deregulate our development codes at…in Winnipeg at city hall. So that's what happened. And we went for it because we're told if we didn't deregulate our zoning codes beyond what we'd already been doing during my time in office you know as I faithfully went through the mantra of density and did so in my ward. I'm not the only one, but yet, that wasn't good enough, the mantra of density as we pushed forward in my first two terms was really strong, and I did my part. But that's not good enough so we had to deregulate further in order to get that federal funding. So, we did this, and were told it was all going to be great. Well, I knew it wasn't all going to be great because sometimes when you do these things, it can affect inflation. When you say, well, you've got a cost problem. Well, give it some money. Well, guess what happens. The costs go up again. I'll give you a good example that people can relate with. So, you know, electric cars. A few years ago, a number of years ago, I can't remember when, the federal government said well, we'll give you, because electric cars are expensive, we'll give you a subsidy of 1,000 dollars or so toward your electric car. And guess what? The cost of electric cars went up 1,000 dollars. Okay, so you know, that's economics. That's the interplate, you know, in our society economically. And so, bear in mind that takes place, too. So, I am weary when we abet inflation by giving it more money because it just abets inflation. However, we've got a crisis here when it comes to affordable housing. Not only because, not just in Winnipeg, but in Winnipeg in the lower income communities, we've had the largest increase in mortgage costs, in rent. And as Ross Eadie pointed out my first six months, I didn't quite understand it all my first six months on council or he was explaining this to me before I ran. I didn't quite understand it all, and I don't know why. It's not that complicated. But I did finally get it because I did a system in his presentation when Ross Eadie explained it, all the research he did on his own, which the City could have done, and the City can, which he compiled on his own. It was really rather impressive, but explaining how during the time where we said we didn't have any net increases in taxes in the city. Well, the… we didn't have an increase in net tax income in the city, but that didn't mean people's property taxes didn't go up. In the lowest income areas is where property taxes went up the most, mortgages went up the most, rent cost obviously therefore went up the most. And in fact, in some of the more affluent neighborhoods, in fact, a few specific houses which Councillor Eadie

mentioned which is not necessarily mentioned today, but it's all on record, is that in some of the affluent areas, the property taxes, the mortgages or the rentals, or rental's another thing, but the property taxes and the mortgages actually went down. The cost of mortgages actually went down because of lowered value, lowered assessment value. So, you see we're caught up that even in our poorest neighborhoods, we've already had for years, if not decades, the highest increase in costs. One of the reasons being is people are competing in a market for cheaper housings. So, there's more demand in those neighborhoods and, therefore, it goes up more and that perpetuates competition in those neighbourhoods for buying houses, which puts the values at more. So it's self-perpetuating. So we do have an affordable housing issue, which you know, is getting worse and we can see because the pattern starts years earlier. So that the pattern was there at the rate we're going. This is where we're going to get a…get to, and it's worth it. Plus of course, our influxes of immigrants and refugees including from Ukraine. And so we have to deal, we understand that the influx is going to continue. And so, we are trying to do the best. I voted for this trying to do the best with what we have here including willing to deregulate even further our development codes here at city hall. And so I voted for it. But I was told there is going to be and this is dicey because we know it is not going to be as perfect as that even though that's not perfect, even though it's kind of quasi ridiculous, but nonetheless, the day comes here today given what I'm very grateful, I'm extremely grateful for the exact…doing the exact work, saying the exact things, talk about the exact things, we have to talk about to make these decisions, specifically by Councillor Brian Mayes and Councillor Russ Wyatt. This is how we have to think. This is what we have to talk about. What if we don't? So, they're doing their jobs. They did a better job on this than I have. I'm very grateful for further input. But of course, I am here to learn from my fellow Councillors. I'm here to learn from this. That's part of my job, but I'm very grateful because I need to know. Because I was told we're going to do this, oh yes, we're going to have our public consultations. And I really admire the way Councillor Wyatt explained these things because these are my fears but I go ahead with this, and he is saying sure enough, this is what's happening. I need this. I need their arguments specifically shown not to be the case. As an example, before the vote, I need to be told that we will have those public consultations because that's what I was told. So, I need to hear that. Otherwise, I'll be voting for…with Councillor Mayes on this one. Why should I hear that? Because I deserve to hear that. That's what I was told. Brian Mayes is putting this into question. So, I need to hear that before the end of this discussion before I'll vote, and I want to hear Councillor Russ Wyatt's arguments refuted before we have this vote. If not, you know how I'm voting. I voted for this in good faith, even kind of queasy about it, because I kind of knew how things were going to go and sure enough. So, we need some answers today before the vote.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Next Speaker, Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I wasn't going to speak to it, but I find I need to rise to speak to some things I heard. We did debate a lot of this stuff, but first thing, I just like to clarify, Madam Speaker, a little humor for the day is I think I'm going to ask for Councillor Schreyer's resignation because my study was on property taxes. Mortgages still stay the same because the million-dollar house goes up, but it doesn't go up as fast as the 100…200,000-dollar house, Madam Speaker. And so, what happens is the share of the pie for this…the ones that increase more than average pay more property taxes for the most part. A mortgage is…it's mortgage is a mortgage, right? You bought the house. There's no up and down related to that, and if your interest rates went up in your…on your million…mortgage on your million-dollar house. Then that was an increase, but the property taxes do go down, and I'm not really calling for Councillor Schreyer's resignation. Sorry, Councillor Schreyer. You know, this whole median market thing. What we are really doing here is you know, if 25 million is going towards real affordable rent geared to income, that would be something which I totally…that's affordable. The median market rent and all this stuff, whatever it is…1,100 dollars? What we're doing there, Madam speaker, and you know, it's okay. We know that the middle class is struggling to a large degree, especially the lower middle class is struggling, Madam Speaker. And this…you know, the 1,100 dollars rent, well, that helps…helps them, Madam Speaker. But you know, we have this whole dialogue about real serious problem with affordable housing. Well, the real affordable housing that people are needing who are down there on the lower chain who aren't making a living wage, Madam speaker. That's not going to…that's not helping them. But I mean it does inspire some building. I think that's important for downtown that more housing gets built so we have more people living downtown. I think all of council would agree with that. I mean that's been…what the City's been pushing for decades now. And so, if that housing is available, people will rent it. But at that, I'm just going to…I'll be voting for this. And I, too, await the details of later on, but we already passed that motion that other details that Councillor Mayes has pointed out, Madam Speaker. I mean the vote went through. We have to deal with them, and it will be very interesting to see what appears after we are allocating the first year, mostly first year's funding. I'll leave it at that. I'll be voting for it.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Any further speakers? Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: Madam Speaker, it's hard to not stand and rise to the challenge of my colleague who clearly wants to vote in favour, but wants to hear some concrete responses, and as the Chair of Housing, I feel equal to that task, but I'll let you be the judge, and certainly I understood the challenge in so far as it weighs on Councillor Schreyer. So, I'm going to make my best pitch right now. Madam Speaker, to those who express skepticism about the efficacy of our proposed initiatives under Housing Accelerator Fund, I say this. I believe we're not merely proposing superficial solutions

or engaging in wishful thinking that I believe these strategies include and will include the analysis, data driven decision making and deep understanding of the complex factors contributing to the housing crisis in Winnipeg, and yes, a public hearing on any and all of this, and continued work at the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development, which is why we voted unanimously to move this forward. Our proposed initiatives with the Housing Accelerator Fund are not the panacea for housing, Madam Speaker. Nor do they claim to solve all housing challenges overnight or even through the course of this program, but they do represent a strategic road map. They do represent evidence based by research expertise and a steadfast commitment to addressing housing I believe as a human right, Madam Speaker. And I'll just go over the key pieces here that we'll be moving today. Capital grants. That impact, Madam Speaker, we know from last term of the RHI. It housed people that are living there now. Well, some may question their immediate impact of providing capital grants to developers in the private and public sector. I think it's crucial to recognize that these incentives can act as a catalyst for the construction of much needed affordable housing, Madam Speaker. What about the staff recruitment and project launch? Well, I congratulate manager, (inaudible), our new manager, Moira Geer and the team, and the vision for CentreVenture that some of us passed in budget yesterday, Madam Speaker. Doubts may arise about the ability of additional staff and consultants to drive significant change. But we, too, around this chamber play a role in navigating complex initiatives, Madam Speaker, fostering community engagement and ensuring the successful launch of projects aimed at systemic reforms in housing. What about the by-law amendments and local area plans funded by this? Some again may question the efficacy of rapid amendments to zoning by-laws and local area plans. And Madam Speaker, you know, I stand as a Councillor who voted against the infill guidelines because of that skepticism, because I thought it would mess with my multi-family-large, Madam Speaker, as I said last term. But the analysis that we're…that is revealing I think of a strategic approach is why Councillors who feel skeptical should, you know, move this on. And finally, the digital transformation and infrastructure supports. I know some may doubt the impact of the permit process, digitizing it, infrastructure support programs. I understand that too. I believe this analysis underscores the transformative potential, not just for the length of the program, but beyond. The housing needs assessment. Madam Speaker, I waited for that last term, waited very impatiently and no one understands that more than my Councillor colleague, Councilor Gilroy. It was among the first fights we had, Madam Speaker, on two Councillors that are otherwise united on the housing plant, but the value of conducting a housing needs assessment, I don't question any longer. Analysis really reveals that profound insights we gained that I continue to use this term of council. And that will be proceeding in that way is what I hope gives my colleagues comfort that this is not just a proposal, but it can be seen as a bold declaration of some unwavering commitment to equitable housing solutions, economic revitalization and some community prosperity. We move it along maybe for pragmatic reasons, maybe having to take a bit of leap of faith what to come, but I hope the words on the record provide some comfort to my commitment to seeing it all public and transparent and at a standing policy committee and at hearings. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Any further speakers? Seeing none…oh, Councillor Chambers, yes.

Councillor Chambers: Thank you, Madam Speaker. The mere word, accelerator, means hastily. We find ourselves in a housing crisis, and citizens living in our streets, living at our bus shelters, living on our riverbanks and our parks, speaks to the acceleration that we need. There are certain barriers that are in place for developers that, you know, will take time in terms of addressing this housing crisis, and that's why we voted to accept the funding or the Housing Accelerator Fund. We have to move quickly. We have to have the guidelines in place, and we've talked about that. The development of this density along transit corridors, 880 meters I believe, is what we're speaking to. But again, it's all about hasting or accelerating. (Inaudible) The guidelines have to be looked at in terms of how we can remove some of those barriers to unlock the investment to making sure that we have the density that's required downtown to address at the critical housing shortage. As Councillor…sorry, Councillor Rollins alluded to…it's not a situation like, you know, where…it's going to be the…a panacea to address the critical housing shortage. We also have to have investments in mental health and addictions to ensure those individuals that are, you know, chronically unhoused because of their mental health status have the support they need to sustain housing. That is, you know, making them or getting them well on their journey to wellness from mental health perspective that they can sustain housing. So again, it's not the panacea, but this is a way of removing some of those barriers that have been in place by developers…or developers in terms of building the density that is required in our downtown area. So, I support this motion that's going forward. I have seen the plight of many Canadians who are suffering, those that are chronically unhoused, those that are suffering from mental health and addictions, and we as Canadians have the opportunity to assist those individuals. And here in Winnipeg, we have the will of so many strong developers that out there that have come and said this property, that property, we are willing to work with the city council to ensure that we can create that density that's needed to adjust the critical housing shortage. So again, I've heard the comments from other Councillors that have concerns with respect to the by-laws, to the changes that are required, but we are either visionary or exclusionary. I would rather be part of the visionary. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: So, Madam Speaker, I have said that (inaudible), the resident of St. Vital, one of my favourite authors. I'm going to read from his book because part of the housing crisis, Councillor Schreyer, you should be listening or you

might have to resign. It is about why…just kidding, why houses are going up in price so much. And I think the zoning by-law is in part because…and our planning processes are in part driving this. So, and I quote, if it's allowed. Is that allowed, Madam Speaker, to quote? Yes. Okay. But not news, right, something like that? And yet, another encounter involving the shrinking size of American families, a, so our families are getting smaller, has been the increasing size of American houses. So please allow the thought experiment since we are talking about Canada, not the U.S., but we did import zoning regulations sort of almost in a whole or in part from the U.S., I think not really knowing what we were getting into where the U.S. is about I think it was about the politics of race there, and here I don't think we have the same, the politics here are different. Anyway, so houses in Levittown, the first post second world war, large killed residential suburban development in New York were just short of 70 square meters, apologies for the metric, but that's what the world uses. We and Americans don't at times, or Americans never, us at times. The national mean reached 100 in 1950, top 200 in 1998, and by 2015, it was a bit above 250 square meters, slightly more than twice the size of Japan's average single-family house. American house size has gown 2.5 times in a single lifetime. Average house mass with air conditioning, more bathrooms, heavy finish materials has roughly tripled, and the average per capita habitable area has almost quadrupled, and there are the U.S. custom-built houses average area now has reached almost 500 square meters. As expected, larger houses have larger refrigerators, larger TV screens and then gets into other things that have gotten large that are not houses. So, I want to read from that. I made a twitter thread the other day about the size of vehicles, which any gains in energy efficiency and vehicles, we're losing because the vehicles themselves are getting bigger. And so, if we're paying as much as we are today for the houses that we want to live in. It's in part because the markets that we live in are…is producing these types of houses that are very expensive and for many of reach to people who want to buy a home. And those numbers are compelling to me how the houses are getting that much bigger, and we have to find our way into a place where people can afford to live without spending more than I think the number, the CMHC uses, 23%? Councillor Eadie, you would know. But we are spending a lot more on housing than we ever have, and it's having a huge impact on people's ability to pay for the basic things in life. And this goes in the right direction. So, I'll be supporting this report. I think we need to do…we need to…we need to do what we can the supply side, and do we can the man side. We just have to do all of the things at the same time, everything we can to try to tackle this wicked problem that we have, wicked problems and public administration being those that are really tough to solve. You hit it with one thing and something else happens, but yeah, I'll be supporting this report and thank you for those who have brought this forth.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate the comments of others. I think to close, Madam Speaker, I'm going to address several though I'm going to do it through you to specifically one in all of council, the one Councillor indicated that my words needed more information to understand the decision they are about to make. First of all, I'll say that there have been three, less than three seminars put on by the Public Service on the Housing Accelerator Fund, two in 2023 in June and November, and then one just a while ago, a few days ago on March 19 of this year. So, we've had plenty of opportunities to hear from the Public Service. I don't know if…and all Councillors are not able to be at the meetings, but our Public Service has provided a lot of information on the Housing Accelerator Fund. In addition, of course, they are available by phone or by e-mail. I give three primary reasons why we should all unanimously be voting for this report. The first is that an allocation or use of some of this funding to go towards staffing is a very timely and appropriate use of the money unlike one of the arguments that has been made so far. Traditionally, housing has been the responsibility of the federal and provincial governments. City really has had no housing program in any big way. Increasingly, federal/provincial governments have taken over that file until this federal government some time ago brought out certain envelopes of funding including, among others, the housing initiative fund which means that Council have voted on funding and allocated those…some of those funds to programs, to developments within the city of Winnipeg, and now the Housing Accelerator Fund. What the federal government did and virtually in essence bypass provinces and send off money directly to the cities and charge cities with the administering the funds. We really didn't have a housing department of any means to successfully and faithfully administer the funds that have been giving to the City to be sent into the community to get housing built at a time when our nation, specifically our city needs housing, require that the City of Winnipeg hire staff with some these funds so that we can administer the funds and make sure they get to where they need to get to to build housing. Second of all, that leads me to the housing. We need housing and we need housing now. The vacancy rate in our city has dropped by 70% in the last year. In 2022, the vacancy rate was at 2.7%, January of this year and it is down to 1.8%. We need housing and we need housing built now. The average two-bedroom rental unit went up 4.4% just in the last year alone. The average single-family house went up about 8% in 2023 in its sales price. Why? Because there's not enough product on the market. There's not enough units. The demand is strong. The supply is low. Adding to that, I'm now told that we are around if not already crested, 800,000 people in the city of Winnipeg. The rate of growth of our population is something like we haven't seen in many, many decades or more people coming to Winnipeg, more people living in Winnipeg, which puts more and more pressure on our housing. We need housing now. Why vote for this? We need housing now. That's the second reason. The third reason is if you take a look specifically at page 8. If there's a concern, we do want to focus on the downtown. There's no doubt we want to get more people living in the downtown so incentivizing development of multi-family units and housing units in the downtown is key to making that happen. When you look at the second point on page 8, the non-profit affordable housing of up to 35,000 dollars a unit. The project must

include 30% of the total units rented at either of the following affordability criteria. Less than 80% of the median market rent for the area in line with CMCH's affordable housing fund criteria for 20 years. We're at…Province of Manitoba affordable rents, see Appendix 2, and that's included in this report on the last page of this report. But I want to also note Item No. 3, affordable housing top-up for projects located outside of the downtown of up to 15,000 dollars a unit. If you take a look at the bullet points, you'll see that at least 50% of the units are rent geared to income, which is greater usually than 80% of the median market rent, so more deeply affordable. It gives you demonstrate confirmed operated funding for minimum of 20 years, and notice this one. Include on site supports and target priority populations including people experiencing homelessness if you as a Councillor or me as a Mayor want to invest in units that get built quickly that have a better chance of helping people get off the street with wrap around supports, this is the motion to vote for.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. With that, I will call the question on Item 2. All in favour? Call for recorded vote. All in favour, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Eadie, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Rollins, Santos, Schreyer, Chambers and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma

Nays

Councillor Wyatt

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 14, Nays 1

Madam Speaker: Motion 2 carries. Item 2 carries. Madam Clerk, Item 3.

Item 3 - Engage Winnipeg Policy (2019-2024)

Madam Speaker: Mr. Mayor, your opportunity to introduce the item.

Mayor Gillingham: I'll wait to hear from my colleagues. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Item 3, Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move to lay this over on my… the Mayor is supportive of this layover. I, just with the budget and everything, I haven't had time to really read this in depth and would like that opportunity for 30…just one-month layover.

Madam Speaker: Thank you.

Councillor Gilroy: Thanks.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Are we able to speak to the item or start vote on that forth with…?

Madam Speaker: Well, Councillor Gilroy, you moved layover to the next meeting of Council. So, I shall call the vote on that. There's an opportunity for the Mayor to rebut, Mr. Clerk, speak to it?

Mayor Gillingham: You can call the question. I'm support of it, Madam Speaker.

Mayor Gillingham: Okay. So, call the question on layover. There's no opportunity to speak to it now. All in favour? That's carried. That didn't go over well earlier. Item 5, Madam Clerk.

Item 5 - Living wage

Madam Speaker: Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Gillingham: I'll wait to hear from my colleagues. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. This was stood down by… Item 5 – Living Wage. Councillor Wyatt. Councillor Gilroy. Councillor Eadie. Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: I believe it was stood down by Councillor Wyatt actually. But Madam Speaker, I'm just going to rise to speak just quickly to this. It is my understanding, you know, that there's some people being put together to look at what the cost implications are related to actually the City paying people a living wage. And I just hope that CUPE 500 is invited to be part of this people who are doing the cost analysis of what a living wage might mean to the City of Winnipeg internally. The original call was for us to ask contractors to pay living wages as well. But anyway, I will leave it at that. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: I voted against the sending it out for costing at EPC. I don't think much rise on it frankly. In some ways, it's probably good and that when Councillor Nason and I got through a motion to bring some of Transit Plus in house. We were using it based on a year-old costing, the honest costing that the Mayor Bowman then asked for was wildly greater, which I'm not sure why we are employing people then not giving us honest costings in the first go around, but that was another lost fight. So, we'll see where this one ends up. I do have to say at EPC that talk as well. Yeah, it's in OurWinnipeg that will do this, but we sort of take some of OurWinnipeg. For example, all the stuff about densification in your ward. We will do that, but others are at sort of shopping cart or words to that effect. I suppose it was the weakness in the last term we passed all sorts grandiosity and didn't fund any of it. I think that's a fair comment if I am paraphrasing Councillor Lukes I think hopefully accurately. That the trouble is though at some point, what is it you believe and what is it you don't and to sit here and be told OurWinnipeg binds you except for this is a little unfair to the working people. I got into this line of work partly to try to help out the working poor. Here we have a chance to actually do something about it. So, let's get this costing done. My concern is not so much with the bargaining unit staff. The Mayor is actually…got a very good point which is you can bargain if you want to have more at the lower end, go bargain it, but this is much broader. In keeping with what was in OurWinnipeg, which the staff put in which is…it should affect everybody, everybody who's got anything to do with the City, we have to pay a living wage. So that's what we voted on OurWinnipeg. We'll get a costing to the best of the ability that we can. Obviously though and 8% increase is completely fine in a material sense. We just heard a little while ago that there's the staff said 92% is almost doubling, what's 8% increase between friends, I suppose. I look forward to at least having some proposal to give an increase to the people who aren't on our immediate staff. I think that's a fair point from the Mayor. That's a collective agreement issue and we'll come to that. But it's clearly…we've got a whole lot of people who are doing contracted out work. We, in some cases, have no idea what they're being paid was the evidence that we got on Transit Plus. In fact, we were then told at committee, part of this increase in budget's going to help pay, for the increased pay. We were then told later, actually we don't know what they were paying. We don't know the old rete. We don't know the new rate. Very troubling. So perhaps then, we'll get some idea of what it is we pay people who do our services and then we can address what it would cost to see if we give them a living wage.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Next speaker. Seeing none. Mr. Mayor to close.

Mayor Gillingham: You can call the question, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? That's carried. Item 6, Madam Clerk.

Item 6 - Welcoming Winnipeg – Renaming Edison Park

Motion No. 2
Moved by Councillor Santos,
Seconded by Councillor Gilroy,

BE IT RESOLVED that Item 6 of the Report of the Executive Policy Committee dated March 12, 2024, be amended as follows:

- *Delete Recommendations 1-2 and replace with the following:*

"1. That the Indigenous Relations Division be directed to undertake a renaming process that is Indigenous-led, with the intention that the new name honours Indigenous Food Sovereignty, as a response to the presence of the millstones.

2. That, when an appropriate name is identified, the Public Service report back to Council seeking approval of the proposed name.

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

Madam Speaker: Thank you. I will note we have an amending motion with this item. Mr. Mayor, your opportunity to introduce the item.

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Am I introducing it and then speaking to the amending motion?

Madam Speaker: You certainly can, yes.

Mayor Gillingham: Okay, thank you. Thank you, Madam Speaker. I won't be supporting the amending motion today. I think the discussion that happened through our delegations, our various delegations, I think exposed not in a surprised way, but exposed in a laid bear finely way on the floor of this council. I think some of it, the challenge is that we, and I said the collective we have been having related to Welcoming Winnipeg. And I'm not saying that Welcome Winnipeg is the challenge. I'm saying that all of us, Welcoming Winnipeg, our administration, the community and Council including myself. There are some challenges around Welcoming Winnipeg. I was looking up the fact that it's been five years, January 29, 2019 that the… then Mayor Bowman announced Welcoming Winnipeg, and those of us who were here I think most of us, many of us if not all of us here were supportive, I don't know how the vote went that day, but the initiative and I commended for because I think I commend all of this that the spirit behind it was to be serious about finding ways to express reconciliation, to do better in the future than we as a city have done in the past. And so, establishing the Welcoming Winnipeg Community Members Committee and establishing some initial policies around the initiative was really to ensure that First Nation, Métis and Ininew names are reflected truthfully Winnipeg stories, historical markers and place names. I think that Welcoming Winnipeg Committee has done what they have been asked to do. And I believe that when they bring forward their recommendations, they're doing so as they were set out and established to do as a volunteer group. Councillor Mayes points out consistently and he is right as others do as well. Their recommendations that are brought forward and ultimately Council makes a decision as to whether or not to agree or concur with those recommendations. But I think obviously when we don't… when ultimately the decisions come down by this council that don't align with or don't agree with the recommendations Welcoming Winnipeg makes, that's… that has I think become unfortunately increasingly a point of separation, not intentionally I don't believe, but inevitably. And so, I think more work needs to be done. We know more work needs to be done, all of us together working to improve the process so that we can continue to meet I think the ultimate goals of reconciliation that is behind the establishment of Welcoming Winnipeg, to find a way to ensure that our community through its place names, markers, naming of areas reflects Indigenous communities past, community members past as well, but also finds a way to acknowledge those in our community who perhaps are not Indigenous, but have had significant impact on our city. So, I don't think it could be an either or. I think we will end up, you know, on two different roads if we do in either or. I don't hear anybody here saying, we want either or, we want to completely set aside Welcoming Winnipeg and do away with it and disband the group. I don't here that at all, but we have to find a way that… the work that we ask Welcoming Winnipeg to do when it comes back and we come together. Ultimately, it does reflect the reconciliation that all of us are sincerely seeking to pursue and accomplish. So, there's work to do. And I'm certainly committed and I, you know, when one of the delegates this year said, you know, on behalf of all of Council so, sorry colleagues, whether you appreciated that or not, but I think on behalf of all of us, I would ask that we be committed to working together to find a better path and a better outcome. So that's going to take meeting together, understanding one another and finding a way to improve this process and the work that Welcoming Winnipeg is doing. I want to sincerely recognize them once again, every member. Ms… her name escaped me right now, Reanna and her entire team. And I also want to recognize on this matter, the other delegates we have, Jim and his work as a historian. And I think what is clear for me is that both of those individuals are very sincere and committed to trying to best… bring forward the best information, right? The information that will help us make a decision that can truly mark the area that we are talking about. There is work for us to do. And rather than a shy away from the work or abandon the work. I think all of us are up to the task of rolling up our sleeves and coming forward with a commitment… with open hearts and a commitment to make sure that we're working in such a way that we shape the future so that it's better than the past, and I know that we can do that if we work together. On this specific item, I… as I said to the delegation, you know, no matter how this item goes today, my commitment is that we work together with Welcoming Winnipeg to improve the process and improve things. I'll wait to hear from my colleagues on this matter, but thank you for the opportunity to introduce it today.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Councillor Santos, your opportunity to speak to the main item and your amending motion.

Councillor Santos: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through you Madam Speaker to the Mayor, I do appreciate his comments, and I don't agree…disagree with him at all. I think there's definitely a lot more work that can be done on the welcoming processes. So, I rise here today not to create division, but rather to re-enforce the bonds of reconciliation that are essential for the well-being of our community. As a representative of Fort Douglas Park located along Waterfront Drive, a place steeped in the rich history of the Selkirk settlement treaty, I feel a profound duty to honour the spirit and intent of this treaty. Overall, the Selkirk Treaty is an important historical document that sheds light on the early interactions between European settlers and Indigenous peoples in Canada, specially here in Winnipeg, and the challenges they face in establishing peaceful relations and resolving disputes over land and resources. Now, in the context of the Matheson Mill, we heard from delegations that the establishment of the mill did not involve the Métis people in its original construction. But we know that the Métis people play a crucial role in the history of the Red River settlement, now known as Manitoba, particularly during the Red River Resistance of 1869 to 1870. This resistance led by figures such as Louis Riel was a response to concerns about land rights and in encroachment of settlers on Métis land. While the Matheson Mill is a part of the broader history of the region, it is correct to state the establishment is not directly linked to Métis people. However, upholding historical treaties between the Indigenous peoples and settlers as recognizing its significance and rights that grants to Indigenous peoples. That's why I bring it up today to bring a little bit more awareness and understanding of the Selkirk Treaty amongst the general public and this government. Given that the Matheson Mill was established on Indigenous land, it's important to acknowledge the Indigenous people including the Métis who have lived in and interacted with the land for generations. Renaming the park after Matheson Millstone without recognizing the Selkirk Treaty or the contributions of Indigenous peoples could continue the historical native that narrative that Indigenous voices and experiences are being ignored. Instead, a more inclusive approach would involve consulting with the Indigenous communities including Métis people and considering their perspectives and input in the renaming process. It is within this context I bring forth an amendment to this motion. This amendment is not an active opposition, but rather a proposal that we take a momentary pause in the process of the renaming, a pause that is not a rejection of the progress, but rather a moment of reflection and consideration. We must ensure that our actions are not merely symbolic gestures, but meaningful steps towards true reconciliation by allowing IRD to undertake the renaming process with the intention that the name honours Indigenous food sovereignty as a response to the presence of the millstones as a whole. As stewards of the land, it's incumbent upon us to uphold these promises and to ensure that the principles of equity, respect and partnership are upheld in our actions and decisions. In moving this amendment, I have a responsibility to the communities that I represent to the principles of keeping an open mind. I hope each of you will consider the importance of this amendment, let us not see this as a wedge, but as an opportunity to strengthen the foundations of reconciliation and to build the future that honours dignity and rights of all people. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Rollins, followed by Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Rollins: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So, there is a message on the website if you go to Welcoming Winnipeg website regarding delays and response time due to high volume of requests submitted to Welcoming Winnipeg. And I want to speak of this, Madam Speaker, as indicative of a systemic issue that should be addressed and that routinely is not. Criticism can be directed I think towards the lack of adequate funding and resources allocated to Indigenous Relations Division and Welcoming Winnipeg. They handle the influx of requests. And it…there are significant delays, there are backlog and we have seen this in report after report coming to Executive Policy Committee, coming to Council on both Welcoming Winnipeg and Indigenous Relations Division and we can see, Madam Speaker, I think some of that evidence within the Indigenous Accord and the City's response to the Indigenous Accord which is not as wholesome as other organizations within the City comparatively. Like I say, reports come forward, meeting requests, and they go unanswered. This is really frustrating, and I think this is a frustration that was born again in full view of Council today by Reanna Merasty, the Chair of Welcoming Winnipeg. The situation I think highlights a few things. I think it highlights the importance of prioritizing funding and resources for programs like Welcoming Winnipeg programs that have been seen and heard around the world and showcased as something special that Winnipeg is doing on our path to reconciliation which holds for me some ironies when we have a chair that has been celebrated in international discussions on Welcoming Winnipeg, its structure, its convention overseas, and then held, you know, I'm not think…in my opinion without the regard that perhaps we should. It does play a crucial role in engaging with residents and addressing needs that were expressed through engaging process that this council read, understood and then motioned. That insufficient funding that can be expressed not only within Welcoming Winnipeg, but what the whole of the city was invested in really recently the naming of Abinojii Mikanah, which we again have not funded properly, which again IRD is struggling to fund themselves, Madam Speaker. And we will all likely be invited hopefully to go and attend unveilings, unveilings that we have not funded. And I feel a little bit an irony here, Madam speaker. There was also very uncomfortable race and gender base analysis that was at play while the speakers were here. We have quite a few women academics that provide their volunteer time. And when they are routinely characterized or dismissed as volunteers and we should get the support of research or observations from other academics, that is something that I think we are going to have to…it's going to give us pause this meeting in terms

of visibility and recognition, implicit bias, stereotypes, systemic barriers just for women academics, their representation, their leadership roles, and you know indeed, I think it extends to women academics and their research and their funding opportunities. But dare I say it all amounts to a feeling to me, Madam Speaker, as very disrespectful to the female academics and professionals that we have working as volunteers and those that are transgendered on the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee. Welcoming Winnipeg does attempt to address disparities, and it requires proactive measures such as promoting diversity inclusion, implementing equitable funding and promotion, challenging implicit biases, so recognizing and amplifying the contributions of those that are not seen. I oppose the renaming of Edison Park to Matheson Millstone Park Madam Speaker, because it goes against the principles of Welcoming Winnipeg that I voted on that aims to prioritize Indigenous histories and perspectives and our understanding of Winnipeg's past. We have heard the Matheson's family connection to the millstone is already acknowledging the park's historical plaque. We have heard the recent decision by the Executive Policy Committee to reject Welcoming Winnipeg recommendations as concerning to the Welcoming Winnipeg initiative and that's enough for me, Madam speaker. But I'm really concerned about undermining other things like the Métis led history of the Red River milling trade. The academics and historians like Dr. Anne Lindsey and Dr. Jane McCallum and more. I remind Council, Dr. Anne Lindsey last weighed in on our golf re-purposing study to import. And it wasn't just as speakers have said here around, let's stick it at The Forks. Nope. If you recall Madam Speaker, I pledged to together perhaps, in another Councillor Browaty, Councillor Rollin's motion to do something at Kildonan Park. Why? Because that was the import that this council heard in that report from Dr. Anne Lindsey with respect to the Indigenous and what an Indigenous marker, you know, maybe implied in terms of her work. So, I do think Council is at risk of compromising the commitment of Welcoming Winnipeg. I appreciate the efforts that the Mayor is looking at on a go forward basis to look at that. I would like to be involved in that work. I have my hand up to be involved in that work. But I will be…if I'm involved in that work, I will want to continue the strength led by Mayor Bowman last term on Welcoming Winnipeg. I will want to strengthen and honour in doing that, the work of the committee that I think are on tender hooks Madan Speaker, which is why they came here today, and I'm on red alert about that, Madam Speaker, today. Their work honours the past, but also contributes to ongoing efforts of reconciliation education and awareness building regarding Indigenous histories, cultures and contemporary issues. They do it in the face of I think, Madam Speaker, microaggressions. And yeah, I do think it sets a precedence for acknowledging and valuing Indigenous perspectives in this chamber and discussions about our history and identity in this chamber. And I would like us to do better, Madam Speaker, by resourcing it properly and being a lot more respectful of people's time. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Browaty is next. I had Councillor Browaty in the queue and I missed his name. I've got you, Councillor Gilroy. Thank you.

Councillor Browaty: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise in opposition to the amending motion and support of the original East Kildonan-Transcona motion back from 2020 prior to even the establishment of the Welcoming Winnipeg process. We do need to recognize our history and particularly, the lack of history that we have done in terms of recognizing our First Nations and Métis, Ininew in naming of significant items. I do support that thoroughly and I support the Welcoming Winnipeg process. In this case, we also need to I think at times recognize other history. In this case, recognizing that fact there is a historic mill piece at this park is a good way to recognize it. I bet if you asked the majority people in northeast Winnipeg and North Kildonan, people living within three blocks, they're not even aware that there the millstone is there. Unlike other parts of Winnipeg, North Kildonan, East Kildonan does not have a museum. Many other parts of pre-Unicity Winnipeg, we are still supporting the funding and operations of historic museums. Northeast Winnipeg, we have the…we have Jim Smith and the North East Historical Society. They've really done a lot of good work for Winnipeg over the years. And some of that history is recognized, you know, our Indigenous history as well. When we were doing historic panels along Northeast Pioneers Greenway, we consulted with the North East Winnipeg Historical Society to give us some context and some historical information for those. They led the process in fact on historical panels that we've put up on the construction of Chief Peguis Trail. Very… you know, yet no direct operating support. We give occasional grants for some of the projects like books, but we haven't given them, you know, an operating grant as we have for all of our city museums, for example. Speaking of Chief Peguis, sure, it's on the west side of the river in West Kildonan, Old Kildonan. It's important to note that again, we haven't done enough for acknowledge for recognizing our Indigenous leaders and Indigenous past. Kildonan Park though is home to the statute for Chief Peguis, and I guess that's when that stature went up. 1923, over a hundred years ago. It's not good enough, but it is something and we can build from it. We do need to continue our relations. So, oh and by the way, the historical plaque that was in that e-mail or the submission here to Council. That was removed a couple years ago. A couple years ago, we did a fairly substantial renovation at that park. It was quite tired and it was quite…public corner with a lot of bus traffic and a lot of people transferring buses and right beside a nice seniors' home. So, we did a pretty nice job of renovating that park. At that time, somehow, I missed the fact, but those plaques that recognized Matheson's were removed at that time. And in fact, there was some embellishments of sorts added to the millstone. Some people like them, some people don't, but there was some work done, some art done at that time. So regardless, I do appreciate and respect the work of the Welcoming Winnipeg process. I think we do need to, you know, look at our processes a little more in depth so that you know there are still opportunities to recognize our histories in other ways both Indigenous and non, and that's why I'm voting today. Thank you for your time.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Eadie, followed by Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Eadie: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I'll be…I won't be supporting the amendment. I am going to vote for EPC's recommendation on the matter, Madam Speaker. It is kind of unfortunate that Mr. Ingram…well, let me put it to you this way. We're all…lots of us were products of our descendants, right? And part of the reason we have the Welcoming Committee is because of, you know, are four parents and grandparents and great-grandparents, and great, great, great. I just want you to know that Mr. Ingram was reflecting the tenacity that his grandfather demonstrated many a time at the West Kildonan curling rink about whether or not there was a foul or whatever. Anyway, regardless, the…you know, studying the history can be very…different people sometimes come up with different interpretations, Madam Speaker. Now, I want to use an example and that I trust Mr. Smith's extensive research on it. But both of those gentlemen who I really appreciate, I appreciate all the work they do. Both of them were quite upset when I convinced Council to rename the Redwood Bridge, the Harry Lazarenko Bridge. And then the arguments came up about all the historical thing and you're taking away historical recognition of…and here's where the problem existed. First of all, why didn't they call it the Hespeler Bridge? The farmer on the other side, the Hespeler family owned that lot land in there at one point. But it…Redwood stuck with the family that owned the old Molson property, that whole property from the Red River immediately to the south of St. John's Park, which that land was owned Madam Speaker by St. John's Cathedral. Thus, the name of St. John's Park, but…and here's where history can be really weird. So, one historical research that was done quite long ago said that the Redwood Bridge and Redwood Avenue was named such because of the red colored wood shingles on a basically kind of a trading store that was built near the river. There was another house that was closer to Main Street on kind of where the Ukraine Orthodox Church is today. So, they said, well Redwood comes because of that trading post that was part owned by Inkster and some other gentlemen, a family. And the other historical fact is, is that the people who own the land. I believe it was the Boyd family. You've got a street called Alfred and a street called Boyd, Alfred Boyd, but apparently the family that owned the land there, the first sarsaparilla plant I think or whoever owned it, they used to vacation in the Redwoods in California. And that's the other historical research that was done as to how maybe that street and bridge got its name. So quite clearly, you know, either way you can say, but the bridge itself just assumed the name of the street. That is what happened. And anyway, so we can argue and discuss historical facts or historical research and…but we shouldn't get too tenacious about what you think is right or wrong because this is where we have the problem. I mean I signed on to the Indigenous Accord. Reconciliation is really important, very important. And the same people that were angry with Mr. Ingram, they are very angry at me some months ago, but when I signed on to the Indigenous Accord, we got to watch out. We had like…this amendment…this is a knee-jerk reaction. And I heard somebody talk about the Selkirk Treaty. The Selkirk Treaty was like 1817. And the territory that we are talking about that was under the treaty for the Selkirk settlers was drawn out on a map by Mr. Peter Fidler, a very historical figure which my sons are actually descendants and, therefore, they are Métis. However, we have to study…we have to like…I don't…the difficulty as the Mayor has pointed out, we don't want to argue, we want to do what we think is best. The case for Matheson Millstone Park I think is a fair one. I don't think it's trying to stamp out reconciliation. But what's definitely happened because of the heated discussion and so on, you know, and some people want to be really radical, but we did something radical to the Indigenous people. Let's not get radical on our reconciliation, please. Let's try to have dialogue where we respect…we can disagree with each other, but we have to be more respectful of each other as well. And so, I am just going to leave it at that. I think that the research that Mr. Smith has done and he's done a very detailed research on this I think is the one that we should be following. So, I'll just leave it at that. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Eadie. Councillor Wyatt, followed by Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you, Madam speaker. You know, there has to be an element of commonsense here. My name is Russ Wyatt, city Councillor. My spirit name is (inaudible). I'm a standing black bear of courage and the buffalo clan. I take the issue very seriously. I take the delegations words here this morning both sides very seriously. But I can tell you right now, Madam speaker, if we were debating this at Grant Park…out at Grant's Old Mill, you know, Métis settlement, a Métis…very clearly understood in history. Should we name it Grant's Old Mill based on the fact that it's one of the millstones? Overwhelmingly, we say yes. The same goes with Louis Riel's millstone. Overwhelmingly, we would say yes. Just so happens that this is a millstone that is not necessarily a Métis heritage. How many people who are speaking against this movie have actually been to this park? I'd like to know. Now, not to say that you have to be at the park to qualify to speak on it, but Madam Speaker, there has be an element of commonsense. Now, one of the things that I do want to point out that though we want to through our, you know, and stand up and you know on political correctness on this issue and everybody wants to do what's right. If we really truly want to do what we want to do what's right. Why was Welcoming Winnipeg…I wasn't here on Council when it was created, but why was it limited to only look at parks? Why not streets as well? Now if everybody really wants to get up on the high horse so to speak, let's start putting streets on the list of things that Welcoming Winnipeg should consider. Right? If we are truly principled by our principles that we're going to do what is right when it comes to this issue. But no, we limit it to parks which is such a small narrow aspect. Oh yes, we did make an exception for the former Bishop Grandin, but beyond that…

Councillor Mayes: Point of order. That's just fact incorrect. It's everything but streets. It's bridges, it's everything…the exception is not…

Madam Speaker: Buildings, it's buildings. Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Streets are…we've got tons of streets and council loves naming streets. So Madam Speaker, I don't…it's not…I'm very much accurate on the statement, and I think streets should be added. Bridges, fine. How many bridges? We've got one sitting there up empty, not being used. So frankly Madam Speaker, I think the request though I believe Welcoming Winnipeg's approach is sincere, maybe misdirected. And the reason I say that is because there was another request that came for EPC to name a park called Mother Nature…Mother Earth Nature Park and it was thrown aside even though it was an attempt to build contact with the Indigenous community, even though the signage on the site would be in English and appropriate Indigenous languages even though it was going to involve school children and the planting of trees and you should all these for the environment even though it was 25 acres, even though it was in northeast Winnipeg. And yet, this was not…a year ago, this was tossed aside, and EPC said, oh no, we'll rename it once, you know, you should…you've got to have a plan in place to do all this, but what was interesting is…but there's no…there's currently no budget allocated to this problem…projects. So, EPC put in the requirements to do all that, but then didn't put it in the budget to actually require it to be funded. Yet, we say that we want to build bonds with the Indigenous community, we want to do things for the environment. And here we had a project, 25 acres in northeast Winnipeg thrown aside in the last year. So, everybody can stand up and say what they want. I know how people voted in the past. Now part of me says, well this is only being stood up. I wonder if this was actually in somebody's ward. It was not on EPC whether not we be voted… the Mayor would be standing up and defending Councillor Browaty initiative or if there was another Councillor in another area whether or not we would be taking the side of Welcoming Winnipeg, that would be interesting. But I'm going to look at the facts of the issue. And I think…and I think there is no doubt in my mind based on what I have seen in terms of the resources these folks have at Welcoming Winnipeg, the resources they don't have at Welcoming Winnipeg, and what other levels of government have done and another jurisdiction to try to address these wrongs, then frankly, we should be doing a heck of a lot more if we are really serious about righting the wrongs of the past in terms of recognizing what the Indigenous community has done and has contributed along with all the other community groups that I have spoken about in the past including Councillor Chambers' points, but the Indigenous community which has been ignored including streets. You know, and those resources that should go with it. Then we can say that we can say with a clear conscience that we are doing everything we can which we are not, and let's not just throw this one project under the bus when most people on this council have not even been to this park. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I really did appreciate hearing from the committee. That was my first time I've ever hearing from the committee. And I want us to remember I am glad I think we are all in agreeance that we want to look at this further and see how we can improve the process. It really is in its infancy. This is really brand new. So, there is work for us to do and I think we should give that some grace. But I do want to talk about the importance of making sure that we hear the words that were spoken to us today. And for me, I'm coming at this as a point where you know we're at a point in our history where these are hard conversations to have because it's actually making us think about our own personal biases, and those aren't easy. And the fact that…that's great that we talked about…yeah, you know one is more research, but that's because that history was only written. Right? Was one point of history written. So that's why they can find it and find those documents and have that historical knowledge. So, I think it's really important that as leaders, that we understand that because I think it's harder for the community that hasn't been necessarily part of that…this process to really understand that. So as leaders, we have to step back and say, okay, we have gotten here, we're trying to change things in a positive way, we have our own personal biases, only one history was ever taught to us. And how are we going to change that and who should we go to for that guidance? Well, we decided who to go to for the guidance, Madam Speaker. We decided that, and the fact that, you know, we're going to have to let some of our community members down because of course they're still a minority in this…in the city that want to see other people being named. And that's not going to go away. And so, it's going to be up to us to have that uncomfortable conversations and make that hard choices to say that we're going to try to bring up the people in our history from the Indigenous community and really showcase them. And that might not have been from 1880. That could be from, you know, a year ago, somebody that might be a benefit to be named at that park. I don't know that. But what I am saying is that the onus is on us to really dig deep and understand that we have a lot of our city named from one point of history, and we've got to change that. So, I'm supporting the recommendation that the committee has put forward. I think that that's the right thing to do. I think we're having a really great conversation and I also think that there is work to be done, but I also want to give us some grace, understanding that this is just beginning, just starting and really at its infancy and we've got lots of work to do. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes, followed by Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Mayes: I still have to say something positive about the Mayor and there he goes. You know, one tries to bring forward these concepts to…the intent was not to divide. I think I know the former mayor well enough to know that, but here we are and it's become very divisive. And the current mayor is quite good at dealing with different groups, trying to bring people together. Don't always agree with him on everything so that earlier today, but I think he's strong at doing that. So I'm glad to hear he wants to spearhead some initiatives to try to reform this process along with our CAO. It started off differently I think. We had then Councillor Gillingham bring forward the motion to name the skate park for the tragic story of a young man who died, Matt Johnson. This was approved by Welcoming Winnipeg so we did not start with a hard rule, the name has to be Indigenous or related to the Indigenous community. Where are we now? I don't know. I know I have three of these that are to come. So maybe I should vote for Jeff's thing because then maybe he'll vote for my thing in case they get rejected. That doesn't seem particularly productive way to go. For today, I'll support Councillor Santos' motion, partly just…I…we have spent a great deal of time on this and I appreciate there are issues of reconciliation but it is, at the of the day, one park. It has taken how many years, four years to get this…to this stage. I think what has been said earlier does matter. We have a number of groups whose histories are underrepresented in the city. Women, I mean somebody on this council, it was you, Madam Speaker, had to name the Susan Thompson Building for Susan Thompson. I don't think we should unname that. Somebody on this council, me, named Sentier Gabriel Dufault for Gabriel Dufault, was a hero of the Métis and they…the francophone community and I think Councillor Allard was there when we opened with Canada…MP Vandal back in 2016 before the Welcoming Winnipeg process. I think some review of this has to happen because it's become very divisive. We can't change rules in midstream. You can't go to the people who you talked to in 2022 and say, oh well, now we don't name stuff for individuals. I know we got your hopes up. I know we talked like…we've done this whole process. If in 2022, somebody said we don't name stuff for individuals anymore. Well, I wouldn't have embarked on a certain course of action to name three separate parks for women of some achievement in the city, but I don't apologize for doing that. I think I've got a pretty good record on naming parks or streets for women. Obviously, I think it is something about balancing act. We voted very deliberately to keep street naming as something that the elected officials could still do, honoury street naming, street naming. I think that was very conscious. Councillor Wyatt wasn't here at the time. I do think elected officials should retain some power, some ability to do some of what they want. So, I'm hopeful the Mayor and the CAO can sit down and trying to work out a process that's not just quicker, but clearer in terms of what…what it is that we want to accomplish. I can't fault Councillor Lukes. Moving forward the Nigerian that the park name for the individual from…thank you, the individual from the Nigerian community, but you know, to have these sort of allegations flying around of bias and prejudice. Well, there are many different groups we are trying to recognize in the city, some of whom we haven't recognized before. And I've got an honoury street naming around the Kosovar community, a very good contribution to the city. That's coming the 25th anniversary of a lot of those people coming over as refugees. So complicated histories, complicated narratives to work through here. I do…pleased to see the Mayor undertaking to try and clarify what…we can't change the rules in the middle of the process. We need to be clear on…we need to have some…better timeframe. We need frankly to just be clear. I don't…you know, Mayor Bowman didn't bring this in to be divisive. I know that at the start and unfortunately, it has become divisive. And I will say the having this…I was a son of a PhD, I'm married to a woman with a PhD. Though the last thing I want to do is listening to people with battling PhDs come out here and argue about who has a better understanding at something. I get enough of that at home. I never had that so, a process that is clearer and quicker, and I…if we are not to name things for individuals then let us not start down a path and name change, that I find very problematic. So, I'm trying…I know Ray Sokalski is on all reach for the top friend of mine. He is on this committee, so perhaps Rollins and I can call him up and meet at Kelvin sometime and talk to him and trying to get some better sense from that the committee members about how they feel, and I can appreciate that. You do a lot of volunteer work and then have your recommendation ignored. That would upset me frankly. So, it's a balancing act. We have to rebalance. So, I'm pleased to see the Mayor wants to take it on. I think he is the right person to do it. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Schreyer: Thank you. Thank you, Madam Speaker. We have seen today an expression of a disconnect between the Welcoming Winnipeg Committee and City Council. As being pointed out today, we haven't had an official interaction with them as council. And not only have we had that disconnect that they don't deserve, we don't deserve that disconnect, also unloadable amount…they are overwhelmed. When you look at their website, it's even says, first thing it says due to a high volume of requests submitted to Welcoming Winnipeg, our response times are currently delayed as we work through significant backlog of requests. They've got a lot of work to do. And it's our job to help them and respect why they were created, the committee was created. This policy was developed to guide the City in making decisions regarding requests to create new, add to or remove, rename historical markers and place names and resolve the absence of Indigenous perspectives, experiences, contributions and the stories remembered and commemorated. And in all honesty, first of all, I mean I don't know where to stay. I have been told here today, we've only been told one concept of history. I was not raised that way. I was raised with all sorts of biases like every other individual I've met in this world and in this province. But I've not been raised by one point of view. I can tell you that. But I do come from a background where we were willing to lose elections for issues such as Indigenous issues, such as issues from empowerment. That's where I come from, but I'm not the only one at all, not the only one in this chamber, either. If I want to respect the intent of what

we…what I just read here, I know for a fact that to work effectively with Welcoming Winnipeg. We'd find a much better place. I don't think this place would be in the top 1,000 venues. I don't think it's…we would never have thought of it. The only reason this place is considered for Indigenous historical naming is because it was brought forth the city hall in the first place. That's the only reason. This place would never have been chosen. It would never have been chosen as a place that's appropriate and true and truly respecting the intent of what Welcoming Winnipeg is about, but we have such a disconnect with Welcoming Winnipeg. They're so overwhelmed. We end up here by fluke having this conversation, which would never have happened because this is not a true reflection of all the places we could choose in the city. This would never have happened otherwise by complete coincidence. If you ask anybody where is a good place to talk about food sovereignty of Indigenous people or Métis, nobody would've ever chosen this place because it didn't happen that way. So, I'm not contradicting the Welcoming Committee role. I want to help them. And this is not helpful. It's by fluke of lack of interaction, of having that disconnect and they're being overwhelmed that we have to be here by coincidence, and by coincidence because, I promise you, if you gave people a thousand other venues, they would be more appropriate to people and to the Welcoming Winnipeg. But by limitations of…by complete coincidence, this is an unusual circumstance that happens all the time. It's one of those unusual circumstances by human dynamic, political dynamic that we're having this conversation and it shouldn't have happened. And I'm not blaming Welcoming Winnipeg. This is by virtue of their place within city hall and this is what happened. We can…I swear that we can find much more appropriate places that are true. This place does not celebrate that. This is a millstone with very specific historical attributes that are being very well explained. And in so, I know I could find more every…every one of them if we worked with Welcoming Winnipeg can find many more venues that are much more indicative. We can do better. I think this is part of the growing pains of working with Welcoming Winnipeg and its intent, and you know part of what we have to go through. Also, I want to say it's really important to me, and not just me. We heard today that the reason we started Welcoming Winnipeg was it's one way of saying it, but it worries me to begin to acknowledge the errors of our society. Madam Speaker, reconciliation started a long time ago. It's going to happen for a long time. We're in an era where we use the word and, therefore, we think we're in some special era of reconciliation. We are in a specific phase of reconciliation, but it sure didn't start recently. And I don't think we're in our best phase of reconciliation, either. I think we're going through perhaps, for some reason, an unnecessary phase. But I don't' think it's…I think we've done better and we should, and there's things to do. But Madam Speaker, if we're talking about…because it's been said this morning, there's word to begin to acknowledge the errors. Madam Speaker, there are people around and if you ask the elders of the Indigenous community, especially those that are passed away through our own record. They know a lot has been done over the generations of which they are part. And why would we not want to recognize the work of those elders that have come before us, that have been part of the reconciliation process when it was harder? When you didn't have as much acceptance for it, all the reconciliation took place then. Just think about that. We are not in special time of reconciliation. We didn't begin it. We are in a specific time, perhaps, we can make it special. But Madam Speaker, we will be judged for where we are in the era of reconciliation. We'll be judged then, the generation where we are. And it's not just about looking good. It's not about the photo ops. It's about what happens in the generation and the effect you have over time. So anyway, Madam Speaker, I would talk more about that, but that gets pretty deep because it is. Reconciliation is pretty deep, and to really deal with, it's going to hurt. It's not going to be fun. Then renaming, we think this is hard stuff at city council or in politics, no, this is the easy stuff, but we still have a conflict here that we have to deal with. Madam Speaker, we can do much better than renaming this to an Indigenous place. We can do much, much better than that. We can do much better job working with Welcoming Winnipeg and I believe we can start now because apparently, we haven't started. This is the beginning right now. So, we can do a better job. And I appreciate the work done by Jim Smith and other members of the community in terms of giving accurate explanation of the historical significance of these millstones, these specific millstones, and specific property over a time which is very specifically allowed, very specifically researched and verified. In terms of giving credit to and recognizing the role of food and food culture in traditional Indigenous society, we can do a much better job, much, much better job than here with many places. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Schreyer. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Yes, thank you. I'm going through all of the layers I guess that have gotten us to this point. Some of this is new to me, but the chain is…the chain is complete, so I apologize for those who already know this, but about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, this is from the federal government website: The Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement, the largest class action settlement in Canadian history began to be implemented in 2007. One of the elements, the agreement was establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation of Canada to facilitate reconciliation among former students of families and communities and all Canadians. The official mandate, PDF, the TRC is found in Schedule N of the settlement agreement which includes the principals to guide commission and its important work. So, in terms of the calls to action, I was reviewing them in terms of how they affect us. And we've all voted on the Indigenous Accord we all signed it, we've…I think many of us participated in it. And so, calls to action. We called upon federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous people's lands such as the doctrine of discovery and terra nullius and to reform those laws, government policies and litigations strategies that continue to rely on such concepts. Terra nullius was literally the argument of the second presenter. He said that given that there was no identifiable claim to the Métis to that land… that for that reason that land

should not have relevance to this process because there was no reference to the Métis. That's in…that's number…that's right in the ruling. The federal government, the federal court ruling has that and that is one of the calls to action. So, terra nullius is a term that refers to territory without a master is the term used in public international law to describe the space that can be inhabited, but does not belong to state and the land is not owned by anyone. That's from the legal information. In terms of Winnipeg, right on the City website, we see all requests to create new or make changes to historical markers and place names that now go through the Welcoming Winnipeg process excluding street naming. More information about that process can be found here. This is crystal clear to me in terms of where the policy is, in terms of where the government, the Supreme Court judge ruled in favour of the claimants and it was related to the what happened with Canadian residential schools. I think I've read a chain right from the Supreme Court to the Government of Canada to the City of Winnipeg to the Indigenous Accord, which we all signed and had I had more time to prepare the speech, I could've gone into the principles of the frameworks of the United Nations, which I'm sure has more applications that we could make to this particular instance, but I heard the term, expert. Councillor Rollins mentioned the term, expert. Who here is an expert on Truth and Reconciliation? I am looking around the room like would anybody put their hand up to that? I wouldn't. In terms of how we're going to name anything in the city. Have we thought about talking to the Welcoming Committee themselves? Hey, I've got this great idea, this great person. Truth and Reconciliation is supposed to be about a discussion, about recognizing the wrongs of the past and about righting them. So, my assistant, Ben, if you're listening Ben, he knew right away, terra nullius, he knew that. He knew it in his bones. He is younger than I am, and he follows…he follows Twitter so he…anyway, he knew right away what the issue was. The issue was, the argument was there's no claim to this land. Therefore, there should be no claim to naming this land. That is counter to the settlement. The Supreme Court of Canada and the subsequent Truth and Reconciliation and the subsequent calls to action, calls to action which I believe we've all accepted here at this table. And so, I don't see how I can overrule not only the process, but the people on the Welcoming Committee that went through the work to do this, the Indigenous people of the Welcoming community…Welcoming Committee of Winnipeg. We asked them to do this work. They were here. I considered asking them, would you want us to change the Executive Policy recommendation, but then I realized that that was absurd. Why would I put them in the situation to ask them? They have been clear about their recommendation. So, the federal law is clear. And unless the Manitoba Government is using the notwithstanding clause and say in Manitoba, we don't recognize the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which is the court asking for changes to the law calls to action. We've accepted them, and here we are. So no, it shouldn't be divisive because we already have a process. We already have the law. We already have the legal concepts which are being erroneously applied and part of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action is education. And I…every time, I read a new book, my latest was Jean Teillet on how the Métis people were treated in this province. Every time I read a new book, the first one was 20…and this all flew for me from the signing of the Indigenous Accord where you commit to first of all the journey of Truth and Reconciliation. I learn things form that book that are frankly terrible. Councillor Browaty and I, we would not be allowed to be seen together. That was one of the Canadian laws at the time. That's just one example. Jean Teillet, we're talking about land, talking about terra nullius. How do we even know that the Métis people would or would not have been on the land since many of them had a life style that involved moving around? And often times you would see, just one minute. I'm almost done. I know my time is up.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Gilroy moves one-minute extension. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Allard: So, my point is, I guess, we have the federal judgment, we have the Canadian Government calls to action which leads to changes in law. Appendix D, I think, of the court ruling outlines the calls to action. We've accepted that through the Indigenous Accord. We all voted on it. We all signed it, maybe with the exception of Councillor Wyatt. I don't know if he was there or not at the time. He was there? So, let's do what we said that we would do unless somebody here is an expert. And I've heard the word expert thrown around today. I don't think anybody can be as much an expert as the people that are members of the committee, and I was at that renaming ceremony at Bishop Grandin. And I learned a lot there, too and when I heard the elders speak about what life was, which was taken away from her parents and she never saw them again. When she saw her father that her…his heart was broken and he shortly died after that time. So, I don't think we're experts. Let's listen to the experts. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Seeing no further speakers, Madam Deputy Mayor, if you could close. The Mayor had to step away for...Councillor Santos, yes, you can close first of all on your amending motion.

Councillor Santos: Oh boy, well, I'll be quick. I'll be brief. I just want to extend my gratitude to my council colleagues for engaging in a thoughtful and thought-provoking conversation on this matter. It is a very hot topic amongst us in Manitoba and across Canada, but I'm glad we're having this discussion. It's…it reflects our collective commitment in addressing an important issue and working towards meaningful solutions. I want to emphasize one of the comments through you, Madam Chair, one of the comments that was made by council colleague that it was a knee-jerk reaction. It's not a knee-jerk reaction because, if you read the report, it's considered…the Public Service is recommending it, so it's written right here in the report, and I'm just bringing it forward again. So, what I'm trying to say here with this amendment is we want our supporting the Public Service recommendation and demonstrating that our trust in the expertise of our public servants and reaffirm our commitment to working collaboratively with them towards honouring all the voices and perspectives. So, I'm

confident that, with their work, with the Indigenous Relations Division, they can find a name that strikes the balance between acknowledging the legacy of the Matheson Mill and honouring the rich history of Indigenous people. So, hopefully we all keep an open mind with our compassionate hearts and willingness to listen and learn from one another. So, I hope you can support the amendment today. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Madam Deputy Mayor, your opportunity to close on the item.

Deputy Mayor Lukes: This is on the motion, correct? Closing on the motion?

Madam Speaker: It's on the item. On the item. The Mayor had to step away. It was a prescheduled meeting at 4:00 o'clock.

Deputy Mayor Lukes: So, am I doing my thing, or the Mayor's thing? Okay.

Madam Speaker: Yours.

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Closing on the…well, I'm not going to speak on behalf of the Mayor, so I'm really not going to make any comments on it. I would speak on behalf of myself, but I didn't put my hand up so.

Madam Speaker: Okay. I can call the vote. Okay. All in favour of the amending motion. Motion 2 put forward by Councillor Santos and Councillor Gilroy. All in favour, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Allard, Gilroy, Mayes, Rollins, Santos, and Madam Speaker Councilor Sharma

Nays

Councillors Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Eadie, Lukes, Schreyer, and Wyatt

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 6, Nays 7.

Madam Speaker: Amending Motion 2 is lost. Now onto the main item. All in favour? All in favour, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Eadie, Lukes, Mayes, Schreyer, Wyatt, and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma

Nays

Councillors Allard, Gilroy, Rollins, and Santos

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 9, Nays 4.

Madam Speaker: The item passes. Thank you. Madam Clerk, next item.

Item 12 - Waiver of Tipping Fees - Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO)

Madam Speaker: Madam Deputy Mayor, if you wish to introduce the item.

Deputy Mayor Lukes: I'll let the council colleague who pulled this speak to it.

Madam Speaker: This was stood down by?

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Councillor Wyatt.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Is that a hint? Madam…this report is directing the Public Service to waive a tipping fees, from what I can see here, for a project…but there's no report, and maybe the administration or in the case of…we have Michael Jack here. Maybe…I'm kind of confused over this because I don't see any report attached to this. It just seems to be a motion and normally we have reports attached to these sorts of things, so I'd like to request that Mr. Jack to come forward to explain, like how did this work, where did this come from, what's the history of this and there's not much here in terms of information. If that could be done, Madam speaker.

Madam Speaker: I'm sorry. The request was?

Councillor Wyatt: Was to have Mr. Jack step forward because there's no administrative report.

Madam Speaker: Is there a matter of clarification or what are you requesting?

Councillor Wyatt: Yeah, like I don't know the history of this. I don't know what the origin, where did this come from? Was this…you know, it just seems to be kind of out of the blue. There's no report attached to it requesting this, and I just don't know. I like to hear some more from our senior staff member to explain what the decision is being requested. Are we requesting…are we actually approving this here today or are we actually requesting a report? What is…can you clarify?

Madam Speaker: Okay, thank you. I'll align…allow questions for clarification. Mr. Jack, sure if you could come to the podium, please. Thank you. Mr.… Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: Yeah. Thanks, thank you, Mr. Jack. So, just to clarify, Public Service be directed to waive all landfill tipping fees to the Southern Chiefs' Organization and that Public Service work with them to clarify specific hours, locations over their hazardous materials can be dropped in the Brady Road Resource Management Facility. So, there's no report tied to this. Could I ask why?

Michael Jack: Yeah. Thank you to the Councillor, through you, Madam Speaker. Just to give you an oversimplified summary, I guess, the initial request for this waiver of tipping fees did come from SCO, as an organization themselves came I believe directly to the Mayor's Office. I know I saw it in writing when it was received, so I may have been copied. And in discussion with the Mayor's Office, this was something that the Mayor was supportive of and was considering bringing a motion to have Council consider the request that there's an estimate in the preamble, I believe it's 257,000 that was provided by the department informally when the Mayor's Office indicated that they were supportive. So, provided that…of course, it's just an estimate at this point. But in any event, so it was done by way of motion. So, again, through you, Madam speaker, you're correct in noting, Councillor Wyatt, there's no admin report. This was…this was essentially the Mayor wanting to advance this by way of motion.

Councillor Wyatt: And just for clarification as well, then, the way the motion is worded, this is a decision, if voted on today, if Council votes in the affirmative, the tipping fees will be waived. This is not requesting a report at this point. We are estimating that the amount is 257,000. That's a high-level estimate you mentioned. There's going to be no follow-up report on this other than the…well, actually, I don't see any follow-up report on this the way it's worded right now.

Michael Jack: Just in response to that, through you Madam Speaker, that is correct. The way the motion is worded simply provides the waiver and that waiver will be provided when SCO is accessing landfill with those materials.

Councillor Wyatt: And what…is there any other, to your knowledge, I realize I haven't given you much notice on this, is there any other…in terms of the Hudson's Bay project, is there…was there any, at the time when it occurred, was there any other ask made of the city that we are already coming to the table on in terms of this project? Because it seems to be…this is a one-off in terms of that whole project. What is the entire scope of our involvement if any at this point? Do you know or do you need to take it under advisement?

Madam Speaker: Councillor Wyatt, that's sort of out of scope with what's before us. It's the tipping fees.

Councillor Wyatt: Well, I want to know the big picture.

Madam Speaker: Certainly, get back to Councillor at a later date, but if you'd like to answer briefly, go ahead.

Michael Jack: Thank you, through you Madam Speaker. Yeah, I do believe it was before Council to consider a TIF under the City's TIF policy now. I would want to go back and confirm that that was formerly brought and approved. I could have that for you probably in a few moments when I'm back to my seat. But yeah, that's where we stand for now.

Madam Speaker: Thank you.

Councillor Wyatt: And my last question is, are there any other asks coming above and beyond this? Do we know at this point?

Madam Speaker: Mr. Jack.

Michael Jack: Yeah, through you Madam Speaker. I…beyond that, I certainly can't confirm whether any other asks will be forthcoming, that this is the only one that is pending at the moment as far as I'm aware.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Jack. Last question, Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: CAO? Yeah, it's regarding tipping fees. We waive tipping fees…well, we're coming to the season where lots of tipping fees get waived. Do we…does the Public Service report on how much we're…how many…how much tipping fees we're waiving for all of the neighbourhood clean-ups and some of the bulk waste clean-ups and so on?

Michael Jack: Through you, yeah, through you Madam Speaker. Again, I'll confirm for you, Councillor Eadie. I do think solid waste likely reports on that figure, and if not, that we can provide that to you. We would be tracking that. I will check whether or not there's an annual update that solid waste is providing. I can't tell you certainly at the moment.

Madam Speaker: Okay, thank you, Mr. Jack. Councillor Wyatt, would you wish to continue with your speaking time?

Councillor Wyatt: Yeah, I'll just say this.

Madam Speaker: We'll resume the clock.

Councillor Wyatt: Sure. Thank you. I mean I'm not going to oppose this, Madam Speaker. I guess my concern is that I always like to see an administrative report. I like to see what we've already brought to the table for this organization, no different than we treat any other organization here, and frankly…and frankly, it's also for the City to safely be able to know what we're contributing because these things get lost. And it's now…we don't have a…and I appreciate there might be an issue of timing here, but we've seen how reports can be moved quickly on other matters, but I understand the work that they're doing. I think it's fantastic. I'd like to also know if there's going to be other future asks coming forward in terms of the project happening here. I'm not going to stand in the way of this. I'm not going to oppose it, but I just don't…I hope this doesn't become a practice of the Mayor's Office, so thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Because I know an individual Councillor wouldn't typically be able to do this. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Wyatt. Councillor Mayes, followed by Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Mayes: It's proof nobody watches Water and Waste Committee unless they sit on it. We actually had a perfect debate about this, now Water and Waste Committee. It…the project is important. The project is good. There is no report. This…I certainly wasn't involved in any of these negotiations. It was presented to us and there you are. We raised it at Water and Waste. The motion wasn't there, but we raised it in the budget discussions because we went last after EPC. So, what is the budget implication? The response from the admin was in essence we're already in the hole, we'll just have to find it, a rather dangerous precedent in some ways. My other point was it seemed hard on Councillor Gilroy. It seemed hard on Councillor Gilroy at EPC to say to her, what's your funding source for your UN Safe Cities thing, and then to have this come in with no funding, so, it's just… well, we'll just have to find it. So, it does to me set a precedent. I was told, no, no, it's only for transformative projects. How do you define transformative? Well, no, well, you know, we don't. So, there you go. That's the precedent we'll be setting and I'll be hearing argument that the seniors project on Beliveau Road is transformative and, therefore, we should waive the tipping fees and others will do the same and away we will go. Also, this is particularly interesting in the context of what we passed in the budget just yesterday that says we're going to have a whole new grant system next year. Well, this isn't a grant we're just waiving the fees for somebody. So, some Councillors started looking into how much U of Winnipeg is paying in frontage levies to see, well, if it's not a grant, if they're not on the grant list anymore, could we start waving this, that do? How much do you pay in water? How much do we waive that? So, I mean it's a good project. Councillor Wyatt's right on that. However, this does, it's out there, it does public, it does set precedent. To me, it does. We'll see how it all works out. We'll see how it would define transformative. We'll see in the next year discussion, there's going to be some losers on the grants debate, right? We're going to have a whole process. We're going to have…some people are going to win, some are going to lose and then there's going to be the scramble. Well, I don't want a grant. No. We already had that with Water and Waste. That wasn't a grant. That was a subscription we were paying to U of M, so it's not really a grant. You can't cut it. So, we'll see where this ends up in terms of waiver of water costs to frontage levies or anything else, but for today, I'm supportive. I wasn't part of these negotiations, but I think it's worth doing. But certainly, they… there's a mend at yesterday's budget, I think you can certainly say that, and you can

certainly say there's no identified funding source here other than its less revenue, and if that…if we're so fat in the landfill business that we don't even need to care about $257,000 in revenue, that's a whole different concern, frankly. So good project. I'll support it, but I suspect this will be cited in some future debates.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Mayes. Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So today, we have a transformative opportunity before us that not only revitalizes our downtown, but also embodies the spirit of collaboration, the government-to-government work, sustainability and community empowerment, and I stand here wholeheartedly, no surprise, perhaps, this is in the Fort Rouge-East Fort Garry Ward to support the motion to waive all landfill tipping fees for Southern Chiefs' Organizations as they undertake that monumental task of redeveloping former Hudson's Bay Company building, now Wehwehneh Bahgahkinahgohn project and I want to acknowledge Grand Chief Jerry Daniels, Joy Cramer, Jennifer Moore Rattray, and the whole team. This project is not just about bricks and mortar Madam Speaker, it's about breathing new life into a historic landmark and understanding new histories with in it. Now the SCO's ambitious vision and dedication, we have the opportunity to transform this iconic space into a hub of innovation, culture, community engagement and be a part of their actions towards that end. So, whether it's the housing for all ages or the paddle wheel I long to see a crate in the sky building all of that and more. I want to say something of SCO's commitment to re-purposing materials and diverting waste from landfill. I think this speaks volumes about their environmental stewardship, so fitting it went to our environmental chair and standing policy committee given the commitment to sustainability and green buildings. Every step of the way, including Number Ten's architects own that was here today as the Chair of Welcoming Winnipeg, architects own…Number Ten Architects' own Ms. Merasty, this is an exciting milestone today, if I can speak personally Madam Speaker as the local Councillor and the Chair of Property and Development. Waiving all landfill tipping fees for SCO is a gesture. It's not just a gesture of goodwill. It's a strategic investment for sure in our downtown and the well-being of our community. There's an estimated savings for them of over 250,000 dollars in tipping fees. It's an estimate. But that resource, those resources we know, it won't be a secret, it's going to go to creating a more vibrant, inclusive space that benefits us all in the downtown. Furthermore, the collaborative efforts between SCO and community groups to re-purpose those materials is exciting and it's an excitement that we could all be a part of, Madam Speaker. So, by working together, we can achieve really remarkable outcomes and pave the way for more sustainable and resilient future. No doubt, Madam Speaker, you know the last vote disappointed me. I'm looking for unanimity amongst Councillors here. Let us seize this opportunity to promote sustainability. Let's seize this opportunity, uplift our downtown to work shoulder to shoulder with SCO. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Oh, and Madam Speaker, with four minutes left, I'll just add. This is exactly the kind of motion I want from my mayor, a city building motion, Madam Speaker, and I'm happy to support Mayor Gillingham in this city building.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Rollins. Any further speakers? Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just quickly wanted to say, though, just in terms of the report, so the way I have been reading this, this is a government-to-government, we're voting on a government-to-government agreement as Southern Chiefs' are a level of governance of the Indigenous people of this land and it is appropriate that it comes through our Mayor who is the intergovernmental spokesperson for the City of Winnipeg, although that doesn't mean there couldn't have been a report. What we have is an estimate that must have come from our expert in solid waste, public servant, I can't remember the gentleman's name at the moment, sorry, but I think this is a good thing to do. It would be interesting to know what influence it would have on the budget, but I can tell you specifically the Public Service does not prepare a report, estimate what tipping fees will be waived on behalf of various organizations in this city. And they're done all the time. There's a form and an application that has to be done. The approval comes from the Public Service, although this is…seems to be a substantial amount of money. However, we have different thresholds about what the CAO or whatever and sounds like the CAO wasn't really consulted that much. I find that troubling, actually. And so, but I'll leave it at that. We have to support this. I think this is…this is good that we're contributing, you know, the Indigenous peoples, Southern Chiefs' are moving to make a building that, you know, ended up here, just think about it, it was owned by the Hudson's Bay Company. Hmm. Reconciliation. They get to improve it. Take a building. They did receive it from the Hudson's Bay or whoever owned title to it at the time and I think we should help facilitate as Councillor Rollins has said, let's facilitate this and get it done. They're spending…there's millions of dollars being spent on that building, so anyway, I'll leave it at that.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Eadie. Any further speakers? Seeing none, Madam Deputy Mayor, you can close.

Deputy Mayor Lukes: All right. Thank you very much. I'll just be very brief here. I can't think of a more transformative project than overhauling the former Hudson's Bay building. It's a massive piece of infrastructure in our downtown and the Southern Chiefs' Organization is diving right into it, and as a partner in this project, as a government partner in this project, I think this is one way, and I'm sure, I think to another question here, I think there will be more ways that we'll be asked for a contribution, but I think that this is one way that the City of Winnipeg can make a contribution. So, I know we don't

have a definition of transformative, but I honestly think this is an incredible project and will really, really transform downtown. So, with that, I guess, Madam Speaker, we call the vote.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. All those in favour? Contrary? That's carried. Madam Clerk.

Item 13 - CentreVenture Mandate

Madam Speaker: Madam Deputy Mayor, do you wish to introduce the item?

Deputy Mayor Lukes: This is an item that the Mayor pulled. I think he probably pulled it to really highlight the focus that the new mandate CentreVenture has. I'm not really going to speak to it in detail. The report's in front of us. We've got a lot more to speak to. I don't know if anybody else wants to speak to it in light of the time. There's some big items still yet to talk to, so call the question, unless someone else wants to speak to it.

Madam Speaker: Okay. I'll call the vote on Item 13. All in favour? Contrary? That's carried. Okay, we'll now move into by-laws, yes. By-laws, Madam Deputy Mayor, do you have those handy?

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS - 1ST READING ONLY

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Okay. Sorry. All right. I'll move that By-law 39/2024 be read a first time.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 39/2024.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS - 2ND AND 3RD READINGS

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Okay. I'll move that the following by-laws be read a second time, By-law 90/2023, 5/2024, 22/2024.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 90/2023, By-law No. 5/2024, By-law No. 22/2024.

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Okay. And I will move that By-laws No. 90/2023, 5/2024 and 20…22/2024 be read a third time and that same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Madam Speaker: All those in favour? Contrary? Carried. Okay. Next section. It's By-law 40.

EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS - THREE READINGS

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Let's all continue. There's a lot of by-laws here. Sorry. I'd like to move that the following by-laws be read a first time. By-law No. 40/24, 41/2024, 42/2024.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 40/2024, By-law No. 41/2024, By-law No. 42/2024.

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Okay. I'd like to move that By-laws No. 40/2024 and 42/2024 both inclusive be read a second time.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws No. 40/2024 to 42/2024.

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Okay. I've never had so many by-laws to read. Now I'd like to move that rule be suspended and By-laws No. 40/2024 and 42/2024, both inclusive, be read a third time and that the same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Okay. We have question period for…

Deputy Mayor Lukes: Bring it on.

Madam Speaker: Okay. No questions. We'll move on to the next. Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT DATED MARCH 7, 2024

Councillor Rollins: Madam Speaker, I'll move Items 1, pull 2, move 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. So moved, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Okay. We will stand down 2, of course, has an amending motion, Portage and Main. Any others? Okay, seeing none. I'll call the question on Item 1, 3 through 11. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Madam Clerk.

Item 2 - Portage and Main Intersection – Implementation of a Phased-Approach to Below and At-Grade Improvements

Madam Speaker: Okay, and noting there is amending Motion 1 and amending Motion 3, going with this item. We'll get the movers an opportunity to introduce their motions, amending motions after the Chair has introduced the item. Madam Chair.

Motion No. 1
Moved by Councillor Rollins,
Seconded by Councillor Browaty,

BE IT RESOLVED that Item 2 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development dated March 7, 2024, be amended as follows:

- *Delete Recommendation 3 and replace it with the following:*

  "3. That the Public Service be directed to prepare the scope of work and budget to assess the condition of the below-grade concourse to determine the steps, costs, and traffic impacts required to decommission and close the concourse to public access, and to refer that project forward for Council consideration prior to the 2025 Budget Review Process."

- *Delete Recommendation 5 and replace it with the following:*

  "5. That the Public Service consult the tenants of the concourse, the property owners on the 4 corners and other downtown stakeholders, consistent with the previous rounds of consultation about the intersection, on the process and timing of the at-grade opening and the decommissioning of the concourse and include the findings in the report back to Council outlined in Recommendation 3."

- *Add the following new Recommendation 10 and renumber the remaining recommendation accordingly:*

  "10. That the Public Service consult with the Winnipeg Arts Council in an effort to address concerns related to the public art that is located in the concourse."

Councillor Rollins: Yes, thank you. Madam Speaker, thank you very much. I want to say I appreciate this moment in time, Madam Speaker, as I stand at Council with a motion that has taken some doing by members of Council and I want to acknowledge the work of a Councillor that might surprise many Winnipeggers when I utter my colleague's name. Why? Because we hold opposing viewpoints. But no one is more important than your competitor at understanding how you might, you know, sharpen your arguments, Madam Speaker, and be a better Councillor, and so I want to acknowledge,

you know, someone who got us here today and that is Councillor Jeff Browaty, Madam Speaker. It's important to note that Councillor Browaty's ward and wards like his, you know, voted a certain way in a plebiscite and that voters in the Fort Rouge-East Fort Garry Ward, the core of the city that I represent, Madam Speaker, voted another way. And it's important to note that the number of compromises and the changes that many Councillors around this table have come to over the years, new information that they were provided, where hearts and minds were changed and actually, a whole bunch of work that is before us and that is why, Madam Speaker, and I'm going to mention another Councillor here, someone who I have a privilege of now working with that I didn't when once upon a time he voted in favour of a plebiscite, Madam Speaker, and that's Councillor Shawn Dobson. Councillor Shawn Dobson of St. James, Madam Speaker, has taught me a thing or two about this file, and what he needs to look and see and see a clear line of sight going forward, which was much the discussion we had at the Standing Policy Committee, at Property and Development, Madam speaker, when the motion, the first motion was unanimously passed, and I want to thank Councillor Duncan, Councillor Dobson and Councillor Matt Allard, of course, for his enduring voice on Portage and Main and all things urbanist and AT. The original motion, Madam speaker, that came from Property and Development, the Standing Policy Committee that is to advise Council on these matters contained a few elements, and I'll introduce them here. That an at-grade vision for Portage and Main intersection and an opening of an at-grade pedestrian crossing of Portage and Main be approved. That's the first two, Madam speaker, in a nutshell, and that the Public Service be directed to assess the condition of the below-grade concourse, Madam speaker, to determine the steps required to decommissioning. And that the Public Service be authorized to negotiate with property owners at the four corners, Madam Speaker. And that the Public Service consult with the tenants of the concourse and other downtown stakeholders consistent with rounds of consultation about the intersection on the process and timing of an at-grade opening, and by the way, Madam Speaker, we had to pick a date and so we picked July 1st, 2025, Madam speaker, as a standing policy committee. And that 13 million be approved to facilitate the initial opening design in construction requirements, and that corresponding debt and finance charges be included and it names them and that Public Service be authorized to enter into sole source agreement with an engineering consultant to expedite all the engineering services, the preliminary design, the detailed design, the contract administration and post-construction services, all of which, Madam Speaker, I expect to see. That a request for preliminary design engineering engagement in 2025 in conjunction with the rapid transit downtown corridors, preliminary design study be referred to the 2025 budget review and that all officers do all things necessary. Madam Speaker, in the intervening time, I've said a few things. I've said that I'm going to work with the Chair of Public Works, Deputy Mayor Janice Lukes, shoulder to shoulder on what comes next and that we're going to do so at our respective standing policy committees. At the time at the standing policy committee, we had a robust discussion with the Public Service. We had a robust discussion on the motion and we continued that discussion, Madam Speaker, because each and every councillor around this table is invested in the downtown as we learned through the s-path, even as, you know, we agreed to disagree on same items or as, Madam Speaker, the Mayor tied Councillor Browaty and I together so that we did the work of collaboration in earnest and we all remember that moment. Perhaps it's time to talk about that. And that continued, Madam speaker. And so today, I…if you would like, I would like to share a bit of my time with Councillor Browaty to introduce the amending motion, the amending motion that amends this one on Item No. 3, Item No.5, and produces a new No. 10 on public art, Madam speaker. It is with some sensitivity and with some romance given my start of my career, and I'll introduce a portion of it to Councillor Browaty and…

Madam Speaker: And he will have his additional speaking time.

Councillor Rollins: Yeah. But I did want in earnest to share the time because it is with some romance and my early start to my career at 303 Main Street that I…that I spent a lot of time in the concourse, a lot of the time at the dollar store getting dollar bouquets as a…in my young married life to bring home. And so, while they are some of my residents, but certainly the business owners of Councillor Santos, Madam Speaker, I…we care about them. So with a line of sight to the concourse, a line of sight to speaker after speaker that came to say this is still important, we drafted, we have time between Standing Policy Committee and Council sometimes to draft amendments, to listen to each other a little bit more and to get it right, and it is a full line of sight today that I'll introduce the original motion and spend some time with…listening to Councillor Browaty if he wouldn't mind taking the rest of the time, Councillor Browaty, through the Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Rollins. I think Councillor Browaty wanted to speak later during his speech…

Councillor Browaty: I appreciate the offer. I'll talk to it later.

Madam Speaker: That's correct, and that is the practice in this chamber as well. Councillor Rollins, just one moment here. Yeah, it's your amending motion. Next speaker is Councillor Wyatt. Your opportunity to introduce amending Motion 3.

Motion No. 3
Moved by Councillor Wyatt,
Seconded by Councillor Schreyer,

AND WHEREAS in 2018 65% of electors voted to keep Portage and Main closed in a Plebiscite held for the Winnipeg elector;

AND WHEREAS the City of Winnipeg now has precedent to hold a Plebiscite re Portage and Main;

AND WHEREAS new information has come to light regarding the costs involved to maintain the underground concourse at Portage and Main and to address existing crumbling sewer infrastructure;

AND WHEREAS the Mayor, as a candidate, was quoted in the Winnipeg Free Press saying "I don't support re-opening Portage and Main at this time. The question was asked during the last election and the result was very clear. It would be disrespectful to the public to ignore that and go in a different direction right now."

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Item 2 of the Report of the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development dated March 7th, 2024 be amended as follows:

- *Add the following new recommendations and renumber the remaining recommendation accordingly:*

  "10. That the implementation of Recommendations 1-9 be subject to the affirmative results of a plebiscite, and that a plebiscite be held containing for the following question:

  Do you support the opening of Portage and Main to pedestrian crossings? YES/NO

  11. That the requirements of the City of Winnipeg Plebiscites policy be waived, with the exception of the 2/3rds vote required to establish a plebiscite question."

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: You did get an email, Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: I know.

Councillor Wyatt: I'd just like to read the amendment. Whereas in 2018, 65% of electors voted to keep Portage and Main closed in a Plebiscite held for the Winnipeg elector and whereas the City of Winnipeg now has precedent to hold a Plebiscite re Portage and Main and whereas new information has come to light regarding the costs involved to maintain the underground concourse at Portage and Main and to address existing crumbling sewer infrastructure. And whereas the Mayor, as a candidate, was quoted in the Winnipeg Free Press saying "I don't support re-opening Portage and Main at this time. The question was asked during the last election and the result was very clear. It would be disrespectful to the public to ignore that and go in a different direction right now. And therefore, be it resolved that Item 2 of the report of the Standing Policy Committee dated March 7, 2024 be amended as follows: Add the following new recommendations and renumber the remaining recommendation accordingly: No. 10. The implementation of recommendations 1-9 be subject to the affirmative result of a plebiscite, and that a plebiscite be held containing for the following question. Do you support the opening of Portage and Main to pedestrian crossing? Exactly the same question that was asked in 2018. And as recognized that the Council apparently has adopted a policy, two-thirds vote will be required on the question. I think the argument has been made that there's new information. I don't…I think one of our presenters this morning was very clear. A lot of the information pertaining to the work being done is regular maintenance information, underground work of a nature that we would have to do no matter what with regards to the intersection. Whether we open it or close it, whether we actually do anything with regards to the concourse. A lot of the sewer work, underground work has to be done and it's kind of being thrown in as part of an engineering study and saying, well, if we're going to be doing work on it, maybe we should do the sewer work at the same time, which makes sense. However, if you're going to do the sewer work and you're not doing anything with the concourse, you can also make the reverse argument that that work really shouldn't be part of this. We're not comparing apples to apples. And in fact, we are inflating the cost of the work being done for the purpose of making the case that the concourse should now be closed, and thus Portage and Main open. And I guess that's the concern that I have here, Madam Speaker, is that we're trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the citizens of Winnipeg. They're smarter than that. They'll read through this. And I guess I question also, Madam Speaker, the fact that not a lot of time has passed since the plebiscite. I don't think anything materially has changed significantly since the plebiscite. Our infrastructure has gotten worse since that period of time. And the other part that really hasn't changed here and the report doesn't do anything to address this, and that is what we know is going to happen at this intersection the minute it's opened,

as according to our engineers, the Standing Committee of Public Works, we are going to have pedestrian-vehicle collisions. And nothing in the report does anything to mitigate this, especially if you're closing the concourse. We're going to ensure probably greater numbers of pedestrian-vehicle collisions and nothing is being done to assure or mitigate that potential and to reduce injuries and potential fatalities that could occur according to our own engineers. They've informed us, members of the committee, and eyes of the members that they're of the…I guess their opinion is not official because they weren't in the report, but they've informed myself and other members of the committee that there will be people who will be injured at this intersection the minute it's open, and there will be fatalities. And nothing in my mind could draw a clear line to prevent injury or death than this decision in terms of that intersection. And I find it ironic as well because prior to me returning here on Council, this council spent a lot of time about reducing speed limits and making it safer for pedestrians, the need for everybody to be safe on our roads and be able to ride your bike and separate bike paths, separate bike corridors on existing roads, and a lot of it had to do around safety, get the speed limit down another 10 kilometres. You know, that will ensure, if somebody, a pedestrian is hit, the pedestrian may suffer injury, but not death. And yet, Madam Speaker, we seem in a rush to do this, to open it up without any kind of concern for the pedestrians who are going to be crossing that intersection. Any kind of mitigation strategies for that may come later I'm sure will, but I don't know, maybe it won't. There's no reassurance on that, and that really is a concern to me, considering that we could be doing something here that we might regret later. And frankly, the…I understand that there's a motion by…that's been brought forward to amend, but…and I welcome that motion. I think I'll support that motion, but I really believe that we set a precedent. Nobody could imagine if we ever wanted to amend the constitution again of this country, would it be done without a national referendum? We set that precedent with Charlottetown Accord. We set the precedent now on Portage and Main, where a system of government based on precedence. So, you know, the citizens of Winnipeg weighed in. If the Mayor of the city had not been very clear in the last election, maybe I can see it where he changed his position, but he was very clear in his statements in the last election, and I'm not too sure about his opponent running, but his opponent didn't win. He did. And so that's all we have to go by. I think a lot of Winnipeggers may have changed their vote come the civic election, a very narrow campaign if he had spoken very strongly that he was of the other opinion. Now, can elected officials change their mind based on new information? Absolutely. And they should be encouraged to do so. But frankly, I don't think the information here is that new. We knew these thing…we knew the concourse was, you know, aged, we knew the work had to be done. We knew the underground sewers there, you know like throughout our entire city, need work. There's not really new information here, Madam Speaker. It's being dressed up as that. And so I'm really struggling with…to understand the rationale of why this is being rushed, the way it's being rushed, with the lack of long-term planning going on, and, you know, I'm all in favour of making a decision, but let's just make this decision with all the information, especially since we spend so much time as a city going over in the past, previous term, how to mitigate and make our streets safer for pedestrians and the like, and this doesn't seem to do that. This seems to go in a different direction. So those are my introductions to this. I don't think this is the end of the world. Plus, I would probably be attached to a…would be attached mostly to the next civic election. I want to thank Councillor Browaty as well for the leadership he showed back in 2018 to make that happen, but I hope that same leadership is there today by Councillor Browaty when it comes to that and he represented his constituents well and the citizens of Winnipeg well and they appreciated the fact that they had a chance to weigh in on the issue. You know, we don't always go to plebiscite under certain things, but this is a historic corner, a corner that's well used and a corner by the way that's well used because we haven't finished the inner ring road system of our city. Finish the inner ring road system, you may not hear from the trucking association that was here before us today. Right? That they can actually go around instead of having to go through the middle of the city, which is what they do now when they're loading their cargo containers in Transcona. They try to get out to the airport in the St. James Industrial Park. Go sit at the corner of Notre Dame and Portage at 12:00 noon and watch how many trucks in a 30 minute period start rolling through there with the cargo containers coming from the east side of the city going to the west, right through the heart of the city, right through Portage and Main because we haven't completed the inner ring road system through the whole city. Portage and Main will still be busy. Maybe if we finish that, it would take the pressure off here, make it a lot safer. Maybe that's the time we open Portage and Main. But until then, Madam Speaker, I think the request here for plebiscite is legitimate in light of the fact that it is done before. And our system of laws is based on precedent. We gave the citizens a chance to weigh in. And let's give them a chance again, if the information, if the Free Press poll is correct, then they'll vote accordingly and we'll see the result. If it's not, then we'll know that as well. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Wyatt. Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: Thank you, Madam Speaker. And I know that Councillor Wyatt wasn't here for some of the discussions that we had taken place previously on this, so I'm going to share a little bit of what I know about this project because it's something I firmly believe in and something I believed in from the beginning and I will be supporting Motion No. 1. I will not be supporting Motion No. 3 and I want to talk a little bit about why and what I learned from this. This isn't even…we heard that this isn't even the…even when it was one of the busiest corners, I still believed in opening it up. We got a lot of work in determining what that's going to look like still, so the…you know, our administration, Madam Speaker, will have to do their due diligence, and this might not be a for scramble. This might be just one way that people are actually walking across the way. So, we'll minimize. They're going to, of course, minimize as much as they can any kind of confrontation

between cars and trucks. I mean that's the goal of our traffic engineering department, and I have full faith that they can do that. They have done this all over North American cities. They can sure do it in little old Winnipeg. So, I have complete faith in them. And then just a short block away, not even a city block, not even one of my city blocks, the street is open and it doesn't even have the collisions that I have within my own ward, the numbers of collisions, and that is a busier intersection than some of my wards where I see collisions happening. So, Madam Speaker, there's still work to be done. We are going to be opening up this intersection, but our administration is going to come back with what that's going to look like, and at that time, we'll be able to ask a little bit more questions on safety and on all that jazz that comes around from opening up that intersection. But at the end of the day, I don't want to hear fear-mongering either that there's going to be a bunch of incidents there because that's not the data that we've seen in the past, that's not the data we're seeing across North American cities where they are opening up these intersections and making these viable places for everybody, and I think that that's what we want to do here in Winnipeg, look at equity and making sure that people can cross the street and we heard loud and clear from our community within that section that they want to see this a priority with the city, and I appreciate that all the city has a voice in this and, yes, our downtown is everybody's, but I think a higher voice needs to go from the people that are choosing to live in our downtown, choosing to be downtown, walking on our streets at night, and going into the stores and shops that are in our downtown and trying to bring downtown alive again, Madam speaker, and that's what I think we're trying to do with opening Portage and Main. And so, there's still a lot more work to happen with our public…with Public Works and determining what that's going to look like, but it's really important that we don't create fear, because that's what we did in divisiveness in the last…when we debated this the last time. And clearly, we know the history, if we look at what's going on across cities, across North America, across the globe, Madam Speaker, where they have way more traffic than we do, that people are crossing the streets, so we don't have far to look from many destinations across the globe. So happy to support 1 and will not be supporting 3. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Gilroy. Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I rise to support the original motion and Motion No. 1, the original report and Motion No. 1. I will not be supporting Motion No. 3. I want to thank Councillors Rollins and Browaty for their work on Motion No. 1. Really add just to some specifics to what was already contained within the…I think the content and the intention of the original recommendations that are before us in this report. Forty-five years ago and one month, in February of 1979, the intersection at Portage and Main was closed to pedestrian traffic and the concourse below grade was opened. We have known for some time that repairs need to be made to the underground concourse, specifically to the membrane. We've known that water has been leaking in that space and that work needed to be done. What we didn't know in 2018 when the original plebiscite was called was the information we have now. What we didn't know in 2022 when all of us had our names on a ballot, and I have my name on a ballot for mayor, was the information we now have today that is before us that includes the fact that the related works to repair the membrane would be $73 million and up to five years of construction delays and traffic delays at the intersection because the work would have to be done primarily from above ground to repair that membrane. It's been widely reported already that I did ask the staff what would the cost be to decommission the concourse, and they gave a very broad range, a range that is, in fact too broad and we know we need specificity on it. They gave us a range of 20 to 50 million dollars. And that's why the original motion that Councillor Rollins moved a couple of weeks ago, I want to thank her for that where they called for the Public Service to do more work. Now the amending motion, Motion No. 1, asks really specifically for the costs associated and the traffic impacts of…and another related costs of the scope related to decommissioning the concourse, and I'll, again, want to express my appreciation to the Councillors Browaty and Rollins for the work on that. It also includes in Motion 1, a call for the Public Service to consult with Winnipeg Arts Council an effort to address concerns related to the public art located in that concourse. I think we've heard the concerns related to us by some and we do want to try to address that with the help of our friends at the Winnipeg Arts Council. This matter has been a point of discussion in this city for a long, long time. Yes, Portage and Main is a historic intersection. We're celebrating our 150th anniversary this year, and for every one of those 150 years, the intersection has been important to Winnipeg. The first store built outside of the Fort was located at the northwest corner of Portage and Main where Mr. McKinney built a hardware store there and that forever shaped our downtown and the way our city has spread. A lot of significant events in the history of our city have been located, taken place at Portage and Main. Everything from celebrations to protests have seen that intersection as the site of their event. But as I said before, in many times prior to this meeting, there are 10,000 intersections in this city that people cross at-grade. At the end of the day, this is just an intersection, and I think when we take a look at the information that is provided to us now on the cost to repair the membrane and the associated works, including traffic delays and construction delays at the intersection at street level of up to five years, I think it is time, and I call upon us to make what I believe is the practical alternative, to choose to open the intersection to pedestrian traffic at grade, to do so, ask our staff to get that work done and get the intersection open to coincide in the summer of 2025 with the change in the transit routes and to get the information needed having the Public Service direct them to assess the condition of the concourse, determine the steps required to decommission the concourse, and to refer the project forward to Council consideration prior to 2025 budget review process, and that that work, the scope of that work include the budget and the traffic impacts and all the other information that will be required. Just recent information that we're getting from polling, and I know people have different views of polls, but it does seem that the public mood and view of the opening of Portage and Main is shifting. And I can't speak for anyone who was

surveyed in the poll. I can't speak for any other colleague in this chamber, but with new information that came to me related to the cost of repairing the membrane, it…and up to five years traffic delays, it changed my mind. That's what that new information did, and I think it's changing a lot of other people's minds as well. And so, I'm asking for all of us as Councillors to vote in favour of this initial report and Motion No. 1. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Councillor Browaty, followed by Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Browaty: Thank you very much, Madam speaker. Unlike others around this table, my opinion has not really changed. I do not support 24/7 crossings at Portage and Main to pedestrians at grade. That said, what has changed since COVID is the underground concourse is no longer open 24/7. Therefore, if we're going to be rebuilding the intersection at grade anyway, we're going to have to replace protective barriers, I think it's only fair and reasonable that we come up with a new barrier design that gets the best that allows the opening and closing of a barrier for rush hours. That said, I'm realistic. I've read the tea leaves. I understand that the votes on this table are such that opening the intersection to pedestrian crossings is going to happen. We're going to be spending the 13 million dollars to open up Portage and Main to pedestrian crossings for next summer. What concerns me, though, is the rushed plan to close the underground concourse without consulting, without knowing all the details. How much is that going to cost? How long is it going to take? What's going to happen to the assessment values in that vicinity in terms of lost rental rates because the different underground shopping malls aren't connected? What's going to happen to the value of the parking garage at the Artis building? Because there's 1,100 parking stalls that are no longer attached to all the Artis building connected to the underground concourse. We don't have those details. When Dillon did the traffic study, considering the opening prior to 2018, it was contemplated that the underground concourse was still going to be open. They were very clear. They optimized it for vehicular movements. Without the underground concourse, we're going to have to have a lot more light cycles, a lot more time to allow for pedestrians that cross the intersection. That's going to impact traffic even more. So, I think, you know, again, I've read the tea leaves. Portage and Main is going to open next summer. It's fairly historic. And I congratulate the Mayor and people around this table for moving that. I still think it's wrong. However, let's look at the alternatives and let's look at perhaps protecting the underground concourse. I used to work in the vicinity of Portage and Main. I used to work in the building connected to the concourse. When I was a kid in junior high school, I would take the bus from North Kildonan to downtown to the Canada Post building. I was the president of the computer club. We had a mailbox there. Days before the internet, I'd go down there to get computer club newsletters from around the world. We were the Winnipeg Apple User Group. There was also the Wellington Appeal Use Group from New Zealand, another WAUG, same acronym, but we had news letters that came from across Canada, and the States primarily, but I'd go after work, sorry after school, junior high school, downtown to the post office to get computer club newsletters. I'd take the skywalk and thought how cool is it and how safe did it feel being indoors, weather protected walkway system from Canada Post building, through the Cargill building. I think it was even before the 200 Graham building was there, through to Winnipeg Square. My dad was at the time a tenant in 220 Portage Avenue, the Royal Bank building, and he'd give me a ride home at the end of his work day. That would still actually be technically feasible because it doesn't go through the Circus, but regardless, the notion of being able to have a weather protected system to me then, as it is now, is sort of romanticized. I think it's cool that you can have a winter city that continues to function, that thousands of people are connected to the concourse that can go meet up at the food court for lunch. To me, that's still a big deal and I think that's still important. And again, as stated by our director of Planning, Property Development, our director of Assets and Project Management, that the last SPC of Property Committee, the membrane is at the end of its life. We understand that. But they said also there's nothing catastrophically wrong with it. And the decision to move forward needs to be made within three to five years. This gives us a chance to do that with full information. My ideal scenario, I'll be honest, is that we find a cheaper and…a way to fix the concourse, a better way, and benefiting property owners to connect to the concourse would share in the costs, at least the difference between closing it and keeping it open. Perhaps a third party who would want to take over the consortium of the property and take it off the city's books. That would be wonderful. While I expect the opening will cause new vehicular traffic backups, I do believe traffic will rebalance just like water, will find the path of least resistance. So, I'm committing here today, as I committed to the Mayor, I'm saying it on the public record, you know, next July, there's going to be some impacts to traffic and probably next September when everybody is back to school and back to work. Traffic then will be worse. I'm committed to not call for a closing of the above grade, at grade crossings for 12 to 18 months. 12 to 18 months. Maybe I will be ready at that point, Councillor Wyatt, to support a plebiscite towards looking at closing Portage and Main again. But at this point, I want to put on the public record, that I would not be the one calling for another closure right away. I also believe that the Circus is more needed now than ever before. I…next summer, I don't know if we appreciate the new transit route map is transformative for our transit system. There's total…the transit system I grew up with, same ones I used to take from my junior high school, downtown to get my computer newsletters, hasn't changed since those days. This is radically different, the new transit map. That bus that comes over to Israeli will no longer be taking Main and going down Portage Avenue. The Henderson Highway frequent bus will be going up to Princess, and take Princess through to the Midtown Bridge, out to the University of Manitoba. But there's going to be a lot of pedestrians, there's a lot of people. When they're switching buses, they may do so at Portage and Main. I've been to a number of European cities. It's very common and frequent that you take little not maybe as far down or somewhere, where you take little tunnels to get between both the bus stop and the other side of the street or even the bus stop and buses

that are in the middle of major large avenues. You take a little tunnel and you pop up to get on the bus that goes one way or the other…in the middle of the…in the middle of a major roadway, that was Warsaw. Similar things in Belgrade, Serbia that I've seen, but I think because a lot of people will have to change buses, they don't want to do that and take advantage of the underground route network that are there. So again, I thank the Mayor and Councillor Rollins for allowing this amendment to come forward. I'm going to shut up for a little while about being against the above ground crossings being allowed. I still think it's a mistake. But again, I will be supporting the…if the amendment passes, I will be supporting the motion as amended.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Browaty. Councillor Eadie, followed by Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Eadie: Thank you, Madam Speaker. So, closing the underground, my biggest pro…I have a huge problem. I talk about I might vote yes, but I have some conditions. And what I find very interesting here, Madam speaker, is that it's very clear that the main interest in moving this ahead is money just like the Arlington Bridge. Oh, that's too much money. I've got this other project I want to get done so that's going to get done. Forget about the people who've been using the Arlington Bridge for over 100 years. The underground, it's only been there since you know usable I guess since 79. And I just want to speak to all the people, disability, independence, according to one's ability. Cross disability, that's what the Independent Living Resource Centre is all about. And I heard a representative come forward, cross disability, that means…that means it's an organization. It doesn't care what your disability is. They are going to work to help you. So, people who are blind who don't like the CNIB, they can utilize service from the Independent Living Resource Centre. Because if an organization is building dependency, it's not good. So, let me just clarify why I'm going down this road. I heard the representative who you know talks about money is willing to let it close down. It doesn't work for him. That's clear. I get that. But what's the destination after 6:00 o'clock at the four corners? If nothing is open at those corners, Madam Speaker. And if you're looking at a destination, you have to contemplate where you're coming from and how you're arriving. I jump on a bus outside at city hall over here to get across Portage and Main. I jump on a bus that's accessible for wheelchairs. I get on that bus and I get off at the bus stop on the other side, Madam Speaker. It's accessible for me. And if you think about it and you're planning it, yeah, it took 45 minutes to get along a certain way. Now, if you're travelling around the whole circle. Why are you going all around? What's your destination? How are you getting there? What are you doing? The elevator at the Fairmont I believe will take you down into Lombard Place after 6:00 o'clock. And guess what, there's lots of activities happening at the Fairmont Hotel. There's a destination. I…again, I'm old enough. As a teenager, I walked…I was 19 when they closed it. But prior years, for a long time, I crossed at that intersection, not all the time because the more traffic, because when I got a bit older, you know what, I'd even make a decision then. Do I want to deal with Portage and Main and all the traffic? I'll tell you right now. You can say, "Oh yeah, pedestrians can cross at Leila and McPhillips." You know, if I have a disability, and I do, I never ever…if I'm going to the drugstore or if I'm going to the shopping centre or if I'm going to the Salisbury House whichever direction I'm coming from, I will not cross Leila and McPhillips. It's…there's so much traffic there. It's crazy. There's all kinds of turning and funk like, like…it's difficult. What I do is I cross over further south. There's a safer intersection to use. So, Madam Speaker, what I'm getting at here is if persons with disabilities want it open, yeah, you might have to roll your wheelchair a little bit further. But I envision rapid transit, the new frequent transit, still stopping even when the rapid transit comes and it's coming down the middle of Main Street, I still envision where the bus stop is today at Lombard. But guess what, Madam Speaker, there's no signals or anything to allow people to cross at Lombard. It's not a long way from Portage and Main. Water or whatever they call…water…whatever, that's not that far from that intersection. You can cross there. You can cross at Fort to Notre Dame. Notre Dame to Fort. You can actually…look at Memorial to the art gallery. Because Memorial is so busy but guess what they've got. They've got a pedestrian corridor right in the middle between St. Mary and Portage Avenue so people can get across. Why not implement that on the east Portage side? Like this is crazy. The only reason this is on the table is…oh, it's going to cost 73 million and delay traffic. Well, we do underground maintenance and work that all the really busy intersections, every…and we should probably do it more often, but we don't have enough money in the budget. But here's the thing. You build a piece of infrastructure, you can expect that it's going to take major renovation just like replacing a bridge. Eventually a bridge has to be replaced, Madam Speaker. That's you or you just say, you know what, we put money in a study for the Louise Bridge. You know what, we don't need the Louise Bridge. We don't have the money. We don't need the Louise Bridge. We don't need the underground where there are people who what you call with disabilities. I'm ambulatory. There's lots of people who are not blind, who are ambulatory, however, they have a disability. Those are the persons with disabilities using the underground. Yeah, it's not fair to wheelchair users. I agree. And making it perfect it's not there, but there's so many…anyway, like…but, you know, and then somebody who uses it well, well, I can't get around on the sidewalks in the winter so how can I get on the bus to get over…jump on an accessible bus for wheelchairs and just take a ride across the street? And so, I'm voting against all of it. Actually, I just want to make one final point about…and I voted no and I promoted no in 2018. And Madam Speaker, it was a plebiscite. I was very leery about it because if you put the Arlington Bridge up and say, "Oh, Winnipeggers, should we…"

Madam Speaker: Mayor Gillingham moves extension of two minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Eadie: They'll say…you say it to all Winnipeggers…you say, "Oh, should we replace the Arlington Bridge?" Like, most of them will say no. The people who want Kenaston widened, they're going to say no. This plebiscite stuff, I just…nothing would ever really get done. Really. I've seen some building school motions in Minnesota. It was a long time ago, but got defeated at an election time, a school, because nobody wanted to spend their tax dollars…they didn't want to…I'm going to save money. I don't care. You know, whatever. Anyway, so the whole thing about plebiscites…I mean I participated in that one for Portage and Main, but I still would've…even if we did and they were moving to open up Portage and Main, I still would've voted against it because we can make at grade more accessible at Lombard between whatever, you know, on Portage Avenue East. We can make improvements to the intersection to cross at water whatever…what is it, Sir William Stevenson Way. So, like there are things we can do that aren't far from the intersection. And remember, it's destination. So, when you hear about a study that took 45 minutes and they wanted to demonstrate the worst of it. But what was their destination, Madam Speaker? Because there's ways to plan it out. That's what I was taught. My mobility instructor taught me how to figure things out. Not only did she teach me to use the white cane and get around, she also taught me that I don't have to call the CNIB every time I've to go to a new different place. She gave me the independence. She left the CNIB because they were building dependency. We want to be independent as people who are blind. That's the organization that Mr. Stewart says he represents. He should represent all people with disabilities. Closing the underground is not a solution.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Eadie. Councillor Mayes, followed by Councillor Santos.

Councillor Mayes: Well, occasionally here we do get to vote on big ticket items and I think it's important that we give everybody a chance to speak to them. I continue to believe this process has being somewhat rushed, but I certainly will be supporting amendment 1, which I think deals with a lot of that. And I won't be supporting amendment 3, which I'll speak to in a moment. At two town hall meetings, because we didn't have much time from when this was announced to this vote today, I'd say one of them last night and oddly enough, everybody who showed up, I think, we're addressing their concerns. Ms. (inaudible) spoke with great passion about the public art piece where at least we have something in here about the Arts Council having some consultation. We had Tom Thiessen from BOMA showed up at the town hall and talked about the need to consult with the building owners and not to rush to close the concourse. We had Patrick Stewart, was going to show up. He also had the same view, don't, you know, re-open at grade, don't rush to close down to concourse. And a couple of people showed up last night, and Rick Watts is a friend of mine. He's done a lot for St. Vital and says, (inaudible) street naming (inaudible). So, Rick Watts said, "Look, I was there. I helped do the tile work on this in 79, 78, 77, whenever it was done." He said it was leaking within four years. So, I'm not sure if the membrane problems are relatively new. But he said, "Look. It's the iconic intersection. Don't rush it. Take a look at the concourse." So, I think, remarkably enough, in an exercise of democracy, everybody who showed up at these town hall meetings, we've done not a bad job of addressing those concerns. So that's why I'm pleased to see the amendment 1. So, we aren't going to rush it through on the concourse. A couple of other things, I do think there will be traffic implications. So, there will never be traffic implications. You cannot say, no, we won't allow pedestrians to be crossing when the three lanes are turning from eastbound to go north, which is the one left turn that it is allowed. It…just mathematically, that means it's going to be a new cycle in the light. It'll be delayed. That said, there's less traffic than some years ago. So, we'll get traffic study to take a look at what the implications are. Come back to that in a moment. Two more…three more things. Perhaps, the next Rollins good, Rollins bad. I think all the reference is wrong. I said a few years ago, I think referenda are the lowest form of democracy or something to those effects. I…I don't agree with that. I think referenda are often used in very important matters, Canadian Constitution, issue of draft in the war, Quebec separation. These tentatively reserved for big ticket items. So, I think it is a high form of democracy to which she might will say then why don't we use it on the street section and that would be a fair point. So, there was a vote. One of my constituents found that every bus that came from downtown to my ward came through that intersection and they'd all be delayed. Frankly, with the new transit master plan, a lot of that is addressed or alleviated. So, that's good. That's a concern that's been addressed. So, this is sort of a way of talking about what Councillor Wyatt is moving that I do think consulting with the public is important. I do think Referenda are important. Every ward but one voted no. I don't think the vote was some deliberate misinformation campaign as some in the media have suggested. To be fair to the former Mayor, it wasn't his motion to go to referendum. It was Councillor Lukes and Councillor Browaty or perhaps, Councillor Browaty and Councillor Lukes. So, it wasn't Mayor Bowman's strategy or plan to create a referendum as some sort of dodge. So, we had the referendum. It is important to note, a very good piece actually at the time, by Ryan Palmquist who was then aid to Councillor Allard, who said, "Look, the votes are not as simple as people are making out." Everybody close in in favour. Everybody suburbanized, bad against. No, it was much of Point Douglas Ward voted to keep it closed. Only one ward voted to open it. In my ward, one poll voted to open, but it wasn't the most northerly poll. Not at all. It wasn't Glenwood, it was Kingston Crescent. So Palmquist said a lot of this is class and education and it was more complicated than that. So, Rollins good. What she said yesterday which is let's try to have some spirit of seeing, yes. Suburb has some interest that are legitimate. Downtown has interest that are legitimate. Why don't we just talk about that instead of demonizing, instead of criticizing, instead of creating false narratives, false information. So, Rollins is good on that. So that was then, this is now. We have different information now. The Free Press poll, as their own pollster admits, Curtis Brown, one of the great NHL top players, by the way terrific, it's our dude said, "Look, we didn't ask what the concourse staying open because we didn't have that information." So, the vote in the Free…the poll was basically based on what…in

order to avoid 73 million in cost, how would you vote? So, it's gotten complicated again. But certainly, what the poll suggested in Free Press is a shift in opinion and the Mayor has said that for some time. And I think I doubted that, but I think I have to concede that. It does seem to shift in opinion pretty…not 100 percent, but I mean it's a fairly sizable shift in opinion and I did not see that March 1, but based on the town hall meetings I've had, I see it now. So where does that leave us? We should discuss the concourse. We should discuss what it would really cost. There's a net cost. It was never going to be 73 million saved that we could put toward the Arlington Bridge or anything else. It was always going to be a net cost, but 20 to 50 million is a pretty huge back of the envelope. Browaty was right on that. Back of the envelope number to say, you know, decommissioning the concourse and then this huge variable. Let's let the Public Service take a better look at that, come back with it, what can we do about the public art? What can we do about the disability access? Can we get the property owners to kick in? All valid points. All addressed in the motion. So, I think that's positive. So, pleased we aren't rushing to a conclusion here. We're saying, look, there's still more, some issues to be addressed. That said, the pedestrian crossing will coordinate with the transit master plan, which is a big ticketed item. So hopefully, I haven't…I do…I don't want to sound like I'm criticizing Councillor Rollins here because I did very much appreciate what she said yesterday about having some better appreciation of both the suburbs and the downtown and legitimate interest of both, and boy, we could get a lot done as a city if we could ever get into that head space. I don't know that if we can, but we can at least try. Final point, it's the long-needed dynamite to get a traffic study done on St. Mary's Road. So in this, it's an opportunity. So, very pleased to get 490,000 in the budget because this will impact traffic on Main, which becomes St. Mary's Road. God bless and the Transit staff get it. They're saying, okay, we're doing the study all the way down to Taché, only if you get the funding to study to come up to Taché. So we approved that yesterday. So, with Councillor Chambers, with Councillor Allard, we'll be taking a look at, it's not going to be an additional…it's not going to be an additional lane. It's going to be, hopefully, some bike improvements, some transit improvements, some improvements with the medians and we can coordinate this a little better. So perhaps, there may be a little bit of delay from Portage and Main, but we'll counteract it with some new work on St. Mary's. Wouldn't that be grand? So, I will be supporting amendment 1, but not amendment 3. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Santos, followed by Councillor Duncan.

Councillor Santos: All right. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Okay, so as the area representative, Portage and Main since elected in 2018, this is actually the first time I get an opportunity to debate this iconic location. And it fills me actually with quite a bit of pride to share this moment with all of you. I know the large discussion has been around cost, traffic flow, and the concourse. And I'm just going to talk a little bit about my personal experiences that I've had with the concourse because I used to work at Portage and Main, at 201 Portage and 360 Main Street for about 14 years when I was a legal assistant. And I actually walked the concourse throughout my whole time at, to and from City Place. One of my fondest memories was walking to a Jets game, seven months pregnant, and getting engaged. So, I have very good fond memories of walking it, but I actually don't have a lot of good memories as well of the concourse. The stores would be closed at 5:00 o'clock every day. It was never opened on weekends. And so, we as coworkers used to call it a ghost town. I remember there was an incident where coworker of mine actually was attacked at the elevators at 360 Main Street when she tried to access the parkade. So, when that occurred, I created actually a lunch hour self-defense class for my coworkers where I taught them how…my female coworkers how to defend themselves, and during that time, it was never safe to actually walk through the concourse after 5:00 p.m. The only time that actually was safe if you were going to and from Jets games. There's also the accessibility challenges, the stairs, the elevators never worked. I remember I would have to help, you know, women, mothers and strollers, carrying the strollers and helping them carry the strollers because the elevators never worked. Every day visitors to the concourse would get lost because the way finding signs were horrible. You couldn't figure out where you were going. And people would be asking where do I go, how do I get there? So, no wonder it's called the Circus. So therefore, in the mind, I'm of the opinion to actually change the way things operate and decommission the concourse in the near distant future. However, things could change when there more discussion between businesses and the public administration about better access to the concourse and business hours. With this in mind, I would be open minded to viable options when a report comes back to this council as stated in the amended motion, which I am supporting. And so, I hope my Councillor colleagues will bear with me for the rest of my comments because I'd like to take this debate from a different angle. One that is about optimism and the potential value uplifting of Portage and Main. Today, we gather to celebrate a place that is more than just an intersection. It's a symbol of our city's spirit, resilience, and progress. One point we had 3,600 people gathered together to create a living Canadian flag. We celebrated the Winnipeg Jets when they got into the playoffs. We celebrated the Winnipeg Blue Bombers winning the Grey Cup. But we had also drummed in a circle for children buried at residential schools. Portage and Main is not merely a crossing of roads. It's the beating heart of Winnipeg, Manitoba, from its humble beginnings as a bustling fur trading post to its current status as an urban centre of tall buildings. Portage and Main has been a witness to our shared history. Portage and Main is more than a concrete and asphalt intersection. It's a symbol of our resilience in the face of adversity. Despite harsh winters and economic challenges that we're facing, this intersection continues to stand tall and a testament to the determined spirit of Winnipeggers. I like to remind Council that back in November of 2023, we accepted an Exchange District Community Investment Strategy which has identified Portage and Main as a pivotal nexus for the revitalization of downtown Winnipeg. This strategy was accepted by the Property and Development Committee with the assessment…with the assistance of

my downtown colleague Councillor Rollins for the incorporation of it into the Downtown CentrePlan 2050. It underscores the urgent need to transform this surrounding area. And I want to quote it because I have it here. If you haven't seen it, it's a beautiful document. Portage and Main finds themselves in circle by surface parking lot, single purpose parking structures, underutilized land creating an environment hostile to pedestrians. The lack of essential amenities such as trees, public transit, bike lanes, and pedestrian friendly infrastructure has actually stifled the potential development and suppressed residential growth. However, by strategically investing in the revitalization of this area, the city has the opportunity to unlock its full of potential leading to a significant return of investment through increased property taxes and a thriving, vibrant downtown core. And now, as we look into the future, we have an unprecedented opportunity before us, an opportunity to open Portage and Main to pedestrians at grade level. A transformation isn't just about improving the flow of foot traffic, I believe it's about unlocking the new economic opportunities for our city. By making Portage and Main more accessible to pedestrians, we're not only creating a safer and more welcoming environment, we are also laying the ground work for economic growth and development. Studies have shown that a vibrant pedestrian friendly spaces attract more visitors, spur increased spending, and stimulate local businesses. Imagine, a bustling sidewalk, lined with cafes, boutiques and galleries offering unique experiences that reflect the rich tapestry of our city. Imagine, vibrant public spaces where residents and visitors alike can gather, connect, and celebrate our shared community. Opening Portage and Main to pedestrians isn't just about changing the physical landscape, it's about revitalizing our economy, creating jobs, building a destination that is inclusive, dynamic, and resilient. In reflecting upon the progress, we've made at Portage and Main, it's impossible not to acknowledge the stark contrast between the proactive measures taken by our current Mayor. I want to express my sincere appreciation to Mayor Gillingham for a steadfast commitment and I hope he realizes the potential of this iconic intersection like I do. Unlike previous Mayors which may have hesitated or faltered at the face of challenges, Mayor Gillingham has shown true leadership by championing initiatives that prioritize the well-being of our city. Through collaborative efforts and forward-thinking policies, we are witnessing tangible improvements at Portage and Main that will benefit Winnipeggers. So, I applaud this Mayor for doing what others could not. And let us to continue to support his vision for a brighter future. Let us seize this historic opportunity with courage and conviction. And let us continue to write the next 40-year chapter in the amazing story of Portage and Main.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Santos. Next is Councillor Duncan, followed by Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Duncan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I wasn't planning on rising to speak to this, but maybe to my point. A lot of residents in my ward are not impacted by the opening or closing or whatnot, of Portage and Main underground or at grade level to pedestrians. However, there does seem to be quite a bit of emotioned when the topic of opening Portage and Main to pedestrians is brought up. So, I thought I would take a stroll down memory lane to find out, first off, I'll get out of the way, Motion No. 1, I will be supporting here today. I think that as the elected officials we need to make the decisions that the residents of Winnipeg elected us to make. I think that it shame on Council at the time to push this off to residents in a plebiscite to make the choice. We're going to make a lot of tough choices here over the next two and a bit years that a lot of people aren't going to like, and a lot of people are going to love. So, we've got to live with that and we shouldn't be handing this off to somebody else to make a decision for us. Otherwise, maybe we need to reconsider what role we're in at this juncture in time. But our stroll down memory lane to Motion No. 3, which I will not be supporting today. I ask the question, what else has a plebiscite happened for in the city of Winnipeg's history? In 1940, there was a plebiscite to determine whether or not the right to vote be given to British subjects that have lived in Winnipeg for one year or more. In 1983, again, Winnipeggers were asked, do you support nuclear disarmament by all nations? Again, on that same ballot, there was the question around whether English and French should be used on documents issued by the provincial government. And then, again to my point, voters elect us to make decisions. I remember being a private citizen at the time, and thinking, my gosh, can these people not just make a decision on this? And then we come to the final plebiscite. On July…the decision was made to put the question for the October 24th election, do you support the opening of Portage and Main to pedestrian crossing? That doesn't make a lot of sense to me. And again, it does not make a lot of sense to me to ever see that on a ballot again. Again, it comes back to we are elected to make decisions. This is one of them. I think that to the precedent argument, are we going to find ourselves putting it out there at every occasion that a decision that impacts any Winnipeggers, whether it be at a corner or not, that we're going to have a vote over it and just let Winnipeggers come to the table with their vote over and over and over again. That doesn't make a lot of sense to me. My final point to this, which is very telling. At the time when this was put forward as a motion, the…one of the whereas', and for the folks at home that don't look at this type of thing, the whereas lead into therefore, be it resolves, which is the motion itself. It said as a whereas that the opening of Portage and Main to pedestrians will have significant impacts on the future of their downtown. Wasn't that telling. We now have a downtown that is in distress. And I don't think that having Portage and Main closed is helping that situation. We need to open up our streets. We need to make sure that we have a vibrant downtown and that includes the opening of Portage and Main. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Duncan. Next, Councillor Wyatt, your opportunity to close. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: If I can, it's my last chance, right?

Madam Speaker: That's right.

Councillor Allard: Okay. Sounds good. Well, I had some notes. So, I'll just go off the cuff. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Thank you to the Council. I thought I should speak. I think everyone has spoken. No, not quite. Madam Speaker, through you to Councillor Duncan, you weren't there at the time, but anyway, I'll get back to the topic. I agree. Referendums aren't…are dangerous. We're elected so that we can make informed decisions on behalf of constituents and then four years or whatever the election cycle is, later you get to see if they…if you did a good job or not, if you are running prophesy again. I want to commend, Madam speaker, through you to the Mayor, his recognizing…taking a tough position, I think, based on new information. I know that I had to…well, I ended up doing the same when I ran for the first time in 2014. I had committed to grade separation Marion and Archibald. I then had a monster report at $460 million, Class 5 estimate. It could have been 800 million dollars. I waited for the functional design. The community wanted me to say no right away, kill right away, but I held until the report came and then the Public Service said we couldn't afford it, and the community said they didn't want it, and so though I campaigned on it, I made that informed decision on behalf of the people who had elected me, and I'm still here. So, I guess they thought that may have been the right call. I did get a lot of kudos, too, for having changed position, based on new information. So, I think that is part of our role and one of the advantages of representative democracy. In terms of what, Madam Speaker through you, what Councillor Eadie was talking about and this past budget was certainly hit home in terms of the infrastructure deficit. The last number we had was 2.8 billion dollars I believe. Is that about right? Yeah, and so much of our city is crumbling. Portage and Main is no different. Pools are reaching deferred maintenance numbers that are…well, we're not maintaining a lot of our infrastructure. Whether it's roads or recreation facilities, and this is another example. So, I think it's another place where our hand is maybe not…well, it's a bit forced. If we're to spend the money here on…I heard a speaker earlier today talking about deferred maintenance and our responsibility to maintain the assets that we have. Well, we haven't done in the case of two pools in St. Boniface. We're have done in the case of Portage and Main, We've frozen taxes for about 30 years. And Madam Speaker, through you to the Mayor, congratulations for raising taxes for the first time in a long time that goes toward the operating budget, but I think…I think we probably need to go even farther than that like other cities are doing. But the Mayor was elected with that promise of his tax pledge. And in terms of the user, I guess I don't need to go down memory lane to think about walking around Portage and Main as somebody who uses the bus. It does add five to 10 minutes to my commute to get to the bus from here because even as an able-bodied person, you do have to take quite a detour. And, you know, this is a really odd thing, this intersection in Winnipeg. I think the Free Press poll is an indicator that public opinion has shifted. I also think polls can be even more accurate than referenda given that the pollsters look for a…like a random sample, representative sample of population. And so, I think people know a lot more since the referendum. And I think people know a lot…I think people didn't realize the cost and, you know, from…whether you look at the cost or whether you look at the amount of impact it would have on traffic anyway, I think this is really the opportune time to make that leap and become, well, I think the city that we want to become. I think it's hard to have a vibrant downtown where the vibrant downtown is…has a wall right in the middle of it. We want to encourage people to take other modes of transportation. I think this is the kind of policy that we need to be supporting. I also want to contest the idea that it is the windiest intersection in Winnipeg because in St. Boniface Ward, there's this one place, and there's wind tunnel. And I swear, the wind can push you so hard that it can almost knock you over so. In terms of the traffic and managing that, Councillor Browaty said, traffic flows like water. I think it does. I think if we go forward with this, and I think…I haven't read the tea leaves, but I think I've read the room. I think this is likely to go forward, and I think everything will be fine. I think everything will be actually better. And in terms of the arguments about property values being impacted, I think property values will only rise around the Portage and Main intersection if these barriers go down. And…no, okay. Yeah, so I'm surprised to be in this situation today. And I'm pleased that we've gotten to this point. And kudos on Mayor Gillingham for taking a tough stance and for the right reasons I think so. I'll leave it at that. Thank you. I will be supporting one, but not supporting three.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Allard. Councillor Wyatt. Councillor Schreyer, you've decided to speak. Go ahead.

Councillor Schreyer: Say a few words. I am in support of one of the amendments. I…it wasn't my idea five and a half years ago to have a referendum. I didn't think it was a bad idea. I don't regret it. The vote was 14-1 in Council. I hope my fellow Councillors don't regret their vote. I mean I'm not in favour of plebiscites for everything, but I thought it was a reasonable approach in which Council had consensus. I respect that decision to this day. I also respect that happens to be that our current Mayor, during the election, has said he was not in favour, at that time, of opening up Portage and Main. And I understand that things change, and sometimes that happens. And it is our prerogative to change our mind, especially when you can explain why. Having said that, this…it's…it is an important issue. It's a contentious issue. There's other issues that we brought up five years ago, that we didn't bring up today in terms of the for and the against…we brought up a lot of other information, new information. And on that basis, it's kind of taken the time away from dealing with issues that were concerns five years ago. These issues, to me, shouldn't be taken as a trend. So, concerns are concerns. What were concerns five or six years ago are concerns today. However, having said that, there's new reasons for considering opening up Portage and Main. And I'm openminded on this. It's…as Councillor Evan…I think Councillor Duncan has said that, you know, there's other more important issues, having said that. Sometimes we create a precedent that I respect. And in 2018,

we created a precedent that I don't think I should regret. I don't think Winnipeggers should regret. We can rethink it, but I certainly…I certainly don't regret it. I respect it. I respect that, and including the words of our current mayor while running for election for mayor. I respect those as well. And on the basis, given the seriousness of this including the Mayor giving explanation for changing consideration on this midway through the term, that once again, I guess go back to…go back to that convention that we've established. I don't think the Councillors here in this chamber that were there regret making. And on that basis, I'm in favour of a plebiscite on this issue and let all these issues be there for the consideration as we did two elections ago. And given the fact that, on the last election, we made a decision based on the idea that a current Mayor was not in favour of opening Portage and Main. On that basis, I think it's fair. And I think it's reasonable, and it's convention in this case as established by this council 14 to 1. Thank you. Miigwech.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Schreyer. Councillor Wyatt to close, on the amending motion.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you. And know it's been a long day, and I'm cognizant of that. I would just like to say, Madam Speaker, I thank all the speakers. I'd like to thank Councillor Schreyer for being seconder to the motion. I don't have any kind of false perception that it will pass. However, I would like to say that it's interesting to note that in the last council, effective October 28, 2021, Council instituted a policy that it now takes a two-thirds vote of members present to add or remove a plebiscite question to the ballot. It actually now takes a greater percentage to add a plebiscite question to the ballot than it does even with the clarity act for Quebec to separate from Canada, which I find quite interesting that we are so scared of the people of Winnipeg that we're not prepared to let them have a way in on a subject they've already weighed in on already and not that long ago. Now I want to thank Councillor Duncan for pointing out how few times we've actually used the plebiscite question, which is why we don't always run to it. And indeed, the nuclear arms race that time, I remember 1983. It was a scary time. We all thought the world was going to end. Can I tell you something, Madam speaker? Frankly, I think the question of putting it on the ballot is the very least of our worries today. The report before us, I'm definitely going to support the amendment. We know the parkade at Winnipeg Square. The revenue driven from that is largely driven for people who use, not only in the tower above, but all the towers at Portage and Main. They use that concourse. They walk through. They need that parking lot. There's no doubt the impact on the assessed value of that parking lot will be negative in the event that concourse is closed. So, I welcome that motion. There's no doubt in my mind that the shops of Winnipeg Square will be dramatically impacted and negatively. Go take a picture today of all the shops that are open there right now. Go a year after the concourse is closed and see how many are remaining. It will be a negative impact on the assessed value, which will directly impact our tax base. The same goes with the towers themselves. These firm, by the way, hire firms like Altus and others. That file their reassessments of Board of Revision based on spec, based on performance, and typically, they are very successful in obtaining some form of revised assessed value. And they share, and the client shares with them a percentage of that settlement, which can be quite significant at times to the firm that is applying on their behalf. They will be successful in applying, these firms. And I think in the long run, therefore, the underground concourse is crucial. Like Councillor Schreyer, I want to say that I appreciate the fact that the Mayor has changed his position since the last general election. And I, too, have changed my position on many issues over the years. You know, at one time I use to support budget freezes here until I realize that we're running the city into the ground, we didn't have enough money to fix roads and we had to do something about it. And I couldn't even believe that, not only did I change my position on the issue in terms of taxes, but so did Councillor Fielding who was one of the strongest, most adamant people against tax increases who, a chair of Finance, brought a tax increase that I never thought I would see Councillor Fielding support. But in light of what was the…which was really the challenges that we were facing as a city, and we are still facing. And that's why I appeal to members of Council including the Mayor that we have these great challenges. We have Kenaston, we have Chief Peguis, we have road congestion. There's actually a real simple solution to road congestion that we can implement. It's not hundreds of millions by the way. It's tens of millions, but not hundreds right across the city, but it will take money. If we have the courage to say that you know we've got to do something a little different here when it comes to our taxes. We have created tax room on the tax on…through thanks to the education taxes. But that's an example of where a change…your change based on new information. New information the Province is now giving part of the education tax back. We never thought that would ever occur. New information the Mayor argues that we need to reconsider this today. The same argument can be made. I would argue, Madam Speaker, that there's nothing to be fearful of when it comes to going to the citizens of Winnipeg and asking them their opinion on this matter. As a matter of fact, I think it encourages buying it. Buy in by the citizens of Winnipeg to buy in to the future of the downtown and where the downtown is going. It might even get some more interest going in our downtown and involvement in terms of improving it, making it safer, making it better overall. And that's a good thing I would think, and engaging them in this. Yeah, we don't do it for everything. Let's be honest. As Councillor, you know, Duncan rightly pointed out, rarely has this been used as a way of referendum, but this is an example of where we have done it. And I think the precedent has been set. It's a very reasonable request. I think to make that to go back to the people. It doesn't hold up the work. We're already delaying the work on the underpass, under the…concourse underground. It's been referred to the 2025 budget. So, therefore, we should have time for and to have a plebiscite. And by the way, it's not a referendum, Councillor Allard. It's a plebiscite. It's nonbinding. And it was always nonbinding. Nothing binds us to what the people would say. And it's more than just a poll. You're actually engaging the citizens who care. They actually go out and they vote. You know, and that to me shows a little bit more interest in the future of our city than those who just pick up the telephone and answer some

questions. So, I'll take their advice over a public opinion poll any day. So those are my thoughts. Again, I agree with Councillor Allard though. You know, it will be okay. It's always okay. It's repression and recovery actually. It'll be okay. Things will be okay no matter what. It will be all right no matter what happens we go forward on this. But the reality is we can engage the citizens of Winnipeg. We can improve the downtown. We need to keep that concourse open for the sake of those businesses and the towers. I'm glad to see that motion. I'll be definitely supporting that amendment as well. And I hope that that is reconsidered because I think that was done rather hastily with this whole thing coming forward at this point in time. Thank you very much, Madam speaker. I appreciate your chairing this meeting and for your patience after a long…two long days.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Wyatt. Mr. Mayor, your opportunity to close on this item. Oh, Councillor Rollins. Pardon me. Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: Thank you. Well, I do want to talk about words of generosity to Mr. Mayor. It is an honour to serve at the pleasure of Mr. Mayor's Chair. It's also an honour to have done this motion. There are complexities and nuances of major urban projects. Folks have come together to this chamber asking us not to rush or oversimplify many issues, including this one, issues can be influenced by various factors. And I'm proud equally of a Mayor who, in the face of new evidence, communicates, not only iconically, perhaps, folks this is just an intersection, but also outlines a really careful plan, works with the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development to consider the immediate cost, future cost, traffic disruptions and more. He worked, and as did his staff, and I want to thank them in the gallery today with the SPC on Property and Development with Councillors to reflect the needs and considerations in cost impacts and work that is going to be done here at standing policy committee, at council over time. And I do want to emphasize today, Madam Speaker, that this isn't about stifling democratic participation, but rather about ensuring informed decision making based on really comprehensive information and expertise. If we're rushing anything, Madam Speaker after this, it's rushing to get to that expertise and hear from experts. Bringing it forward, as we do at standing policy committee and at council like today. And it is true. I am skeptical of referenda, plebiscite. It's absolutely due to the trauma that results from divisiveness in my own family living across the Ontario-Quebec border in the 80s and 90s.

French Spoken: **(5:52:40-5:53:44)**
Councillor Rollins:

Councillor Rollins: It makes sense that we talked about Phil Fontaine today.

French Spoken: **(5:53:47-5:53:57)**
Councillor Rollins:

Councillor Rollins: On some respects, maybe more democracy. On others,

French Spoken: **(5:54:03-5:54:13)**
Councillor Rollins:

Councillor Rollins: So I believe in our standing policy committees and council as the form of debate and discussion and conflict resolution. It's here that I work, not somewhere else. But I really do want to speak to the sense that it's being rushed. What I said at committee, the time, the assessments needed, the impact, the communications, the public art, the traffic and more. It now, thanks to Councillor Browaty, thanks to the Mayor's Office, has a voice in the amendment. And I do support the first amendment. The amendments that I co-authored along with many authors. And one of those authors was informed by Councillor Eadie who wanted to see something change. Is seeing something change today. And I appreciate the conversation we had and, moreover, appreciate the patience from what was a fatigued Councillor that said, please, not another amendment the day after budget. But look what happened, Councillor Eadie, through you Madam Speaker. He is an enduring advocate. And the concerns on the underground, like Patrick Stewart who has spoke a couple of times at Council, who will continue to speak, I have no doubt, expressed support for opening but concerns with respect to the underground. And if anything today, like I said Madam Speaker, I characterize the rush to get the expertise, bring it forward from the underground to the light of day. What we can do this term is to consider what Winnipeggers truly want. Get them the information and, Madam Speaker, in this swing…in this chamber, we can take the big swings and get to work on that. Roll up our sleeves. And time has moved on and the concerns about safety and accessibility have moved on. But our commitment to work shoulder to shoulder, including with Councillor Lukes on some of the things we heard brought forward again today, with respect to mobility and traffic and more. Pedestrian friendly environment, the enhanced urban connectivity. I'm hearing it all Madam speaker, and there will be time for it all here. So in conclusion, I want to just heed those calls. I think we do in the original and the amending motion, and it is rare to have a Rollins-Browaty motion, but it is time to roll up our sleeves, get to work on a city's aspirations and values for a more vibrant community, Madam speaker. Perhaps a recorded vote will get us moving.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Rollins. With that, I call the question on amending Motion 1. All in favour? That's the amending motion moved by Councillor Rollins, seconded by Councillor Browaty. That's right. Sorry. We're going to vote on 3 first. Councillor Wyatt's motion, all if favour, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Schreyer and Wyatt

Nays

His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Eadie, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Rollins, Santos, and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma

Madam Speaker: Amending Motion 3 is lost. Amending Motion 1, all in favour, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Rollins, Santos, Schreyer, Wyatt, and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma

Nays

Councillor Eadie

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 13, Nays 1.

Madam Speaker: Amending Motion1 passes, and now the main item as amended. All in favour, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Rollins, Santos, and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma

Nays

Councillors Eadie, Schreyer, and Wyatt

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 11, Nays 3.

Madam Speaker: Item 2 passes as amended. Thank you. Councillor Rollins, will you move that we are passed 6:00 p.m., seeing the hour?

Councillor Rollins: So moved, Madam Speaker. And I'll be really quick about the by-laws.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried. We're going to recess for half an hour. And we'll reconvene with the by-laws. There have been requests for many for a half hour recess. Thank you.

Reconvened meeting of
Winnipeg City Council of
March 21, 2024 at 6:31 p.m.

Madam Speaker: Good evening. I'd like to reconvene our Council meeting of March 21st, 2024. We're on the Standing Policy Committee on Property and Development. Our chair, Councillor Rollins, the by-laws please.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS – 1ST READING ONLY

Councillor Rollins: I move that the following by-laws be read a first time, By-law No. 17/2024, By-law No. 27/2024.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 17/2024, By-law No. 27/2024.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT
CONSIDERATION OF BYLAWS – 2ND AND 3RD READINGS

Councillor Rollins: I move that the following by-laws be read a second time By-law No. 98/2022, By-law No. 21/2024.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 98/2022, By-law No. 21/2024.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I move that By-law No. 98/2022 and 21/2024 be read a third time and that same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Question Period for our chair. Any questions for Councillor Rollins? Any questions?

REPORT OF THE
STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON WATER, WASTE AND ENVIRONMENT
DATED MARCH 4, 2024

Madam Speaker: Okay, seeing none. Next committee is the Standing Policy Committee on Water and Waste and the Environment. Councillor Mayes, on the report noting that Item 1 was submitted to Council without a recommendation. So that will be stood down.

Councillor Mayes: Right. So, I'll call the question and then move item number…I'll introduce the report and move adoption of Item No. 2.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Item 1 - Climate Impacts of Infrastructure Improvements

Madam Speaker: Okay, just a moment. Do we have a…one? Madam Clerk, you read into the record, Item 1, yes. Councillor Mayes, you're intro…your opportunity to introduce the item.

Councillor Mayes: Well, if you are with me, I'll just call the question then, Madam Speaker. But no one will embark on the hours, perhaps, not knowing the speaker's position, on we go then. So number one is an odd item. EPC defeated the committee recommendations. So, it comes with no recommendations. Thus, I will move the standing committee recommendation. I don't know if now is the time I speak to that or not.

Madam Speaker: Yes. Your opportunity to speak to that.

Councillor Mayes: Okay. The very new Climate Action Resilience Committee has just been formed. I'm the Chair. Much credit to Councillors Allard, Rollins, Gilroy for pushing the concept forward, and it's been approved, and members have been named. There is a budget. There is a clerk assigned, there is staff assigned. My impression from comments made at the first meeting was that Councillors could simply make motions that directly refer matters to that committee. That was what I told Councillor Allard. Councillor Allard, therefore, brought forward a motion at the last Council meeting to simply

refer the matter to the Climate Action Committee. Unfortunately, there seems to have been some confusion in the ranks and I was told no actually, this is like any other referral. It has to go to a standing committee and then come back around. Standing committee heard from Councillor Allard at the committee and voted to amend, but still voted to refer the matter to the Climate Action Committee. The amendment was the original motion had a fair bit of discussion of the…committees should give recommendations on what other initiatives could be done with the funding if the road widening was not done. That seemed to introduce an almost infinite number of variables. You could do 12 running tracks and six pools. You could do three roads, four running track, et cetera, et cetera. So we took that out, said, let's have the Climate Action Committee, which has some purpose, gives us their thoughts on the climate impacts of this very large infrastructure project. This was not approved at EPC unfortunately. There was some comments oh well, there's a reconciliation aspect to this project, which is true, but it doesn't diminish the climate aspect. There were comments about…well, there's a CSO aspect to it. Why are you saying that it doesn't matter for the environment? We're not saying that. We are saying and Councillor Allard spotted this, not all of the sewer work is CSO work that would be done anyway. That was stated. That was not accurate. 27 percent of the 27 percent, that is sewer is 27 percent of this project and 27 percent of that is sewer work just because the road is being widened. It is more…there's more in…there's more in permeable surface. That is not work that would've been done anyway. So the bridge is important. Reconciliation is important, but climate is also important. That's why we have a new committee called the Climate Action Resilience Committee. We should get their thoughts on this. It's hundreds of millions of dollars this project. If we can't refer matters to the committee, are we simply saying we'll just do whatever you want, figure out whatever you want to randomly comment on and do so? Perhaps they will talk about this in Chief Peguis. I don't know. I probably encourage that as the Chair, frankly. I think this is an important initiative. Certainly, certainly in this term, we have given more weight to the opinion of the Planning Department. Certainly, the senior planners who have talked to me have grave misgivings about two major road projects. Is that Governance? Not in the slightest, but it does suggest there's a difference of opinion here and we would be well advised to get the in fact our newly appointed, newly created Climate Action Committee on a matter that's important to the environment, to climate change. So I'm continuing to move and we'll continue to support, referring the matter to the climate action committee, be it here, be it from our committee. It is a bit unfortunate procedurally that we've ended up back here at Council, but for today at least, I…we have to have this debate and vote on it. So, if it fails here today, I don't see any prohibition against raising it again at the committee since it seems to be the environment committee, the Standing Committee on Water, Waste and Environment that has jurisdiction over the Climate Action Review Committee or Resilience Committee. So none of this…none of this decides the later debate on Kenaston. None of it's an attack on anybody. The Mayor ran on it. I like people who trying to fulfil their election commitments because I have this quaint belief that elections should matter and we don't just…see here is the complaints departments and let the Public Service run this place. So if I was the Mayor, I'd say, hey, I ran on it. I want it, too. And that is fair. I think it's also fair for Councillor Allard to say, well, consider a little debate in the public about the environmental impact of this. So I don't think we need the Climate Committee to offer us 400 other possible configurations of the funding. I do think we need the Climate Action Committee to weigh in and say what are the possible costs here? What are the benefits, but what are the implications of doing this road widening for climate change? I get to close, too, I assume?

Madam Speaker: Yes, you do. Thank you. Councillor Gilroy.

Councillor Gilroy: Thank you, Madam speaker. I do…I do agree with Councillor Mayes and I do think this should move to the Climate Change Working Group. One of the things that we found out in the discovery when asking questions about the climate change initiative is that every time we see something and this is something about our CAO to hear. Every time we see something that comes through that says this meets our climate change target or this meets our poverty reduction target, that is not vetted by the people who write that…that those programs belong to. That is only done by the director. So that is something that really heavily concerns me that we are having all these papers that go through. We're thinking that it kind of has a staff of approval from the lead people that manage these projects, and they don't. So that's huge concerning. Now, I mean, I've been out there saying, you know, that I haven't supported the widening of Kenaston. And I also am somebody that knows I'm probably, you know, losing that vote. So, what I would like to see is that if those things are going to happen, how do we make them better for our climate change? If that project is going to happen anyways, what can we be doing, whether it's making sure that there's bike lanes, but also making sure there's one transit lane just for transit, and all those other things that we could be doing? There might be things around trees and what we can be doing around our sewer works and stuff to really highlight the environment. So, I think that this is an opportunity for us to have it looked at a different lens than what we're usually used to, which is just our Public Works Department building roads. And so, I do think that we should have a…I mean we do have a plan, a climate change action plan. We need to meet those targets. And you know, the decision…we are the decision makers that those decisions are to build these roads. I want to make sure that they are done to minimize at least, our carbon footprint as much as we can, and can assure other modes of transportation, and maybe look at other options that are opportunities that we might have in terms of climate change adoption in and around the road work that is being done, Madam Speaker. So I really encourage us to use these committees. Usually the people that sit on these committees are well versed in climate change. They have seen what other committees have done in terms of road work and in terms of encouraging people for other modes of transportation, and also, in knowing what kind of other adoptions that people have done in terms of climate change. So, you know, I want

to encourage us to use those people because that's not what the role I think of…when we send something to Public Works that they are not always looking at that through that lens, right? So, we have this committee. They do a lot of good work. They are gung-ho. Let's give them some work to do. If this road is going to be widened anyways, let's do it in the right way and let's look at climate change adoption and what we can do to improve…improve the situation if this is something that is going to be built anyways. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Gilroy. Next is Councillor Eadie, followed by Councillor Allard.

Councillor Eadie: Yes, Madam Speaker. I don't see any reason why it shouldn't be referred. There will be environmental impacts with any kind of construction of that nature. And as our chairperson has pointed out, Madam Speaker, so I just want people to know I'll be voting…I'll be voting in opposition to EPC's recommendation and which I believe means that the standing committee's decision would move forward, Madam Speaker. And so I would also mention, Madam Speaker, it's kind of interesting, there's a lot of studying that will…that is happening regarding that…

Madam Speaker: I just want to interject for a moment if I could because some Councillors did arrive later. The Chair Councillor Mayes moved the recommendation of the standing policy committee.

Councillor Eadie: He did?

Madam Speaker: So that's what's in front of us now. The recommendation before us for debate, Councillor Mayes, the Chair moved the recommendation coming out of the standing committee.

Councillor Eadie: Why? Oh, is it? How come it was stood, okay. I guess I'm going to follow the guidance that Councillor Mayes, okay, Chairperson Mayes. But anyway, well then, anyway, I can't see any reason why you wouldn't refer, but anyway, I would point out that, you know, I wonder how much traffic disruption will happen on Kenaston when they widen it. Same kind of traffic disruption as Portage and Main?

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Eadie. Next is Councillor Wyatt.

Councillor Wyatt: You know. It's a good question. It makes sense. We can add it I don't know this is something I know the Mayor has made a top priority for in terms of getting Kenaston done. Why aren't we doing this with all of our projects? Why aren't we doing with all of our projects…why didn't we do it with Portage and Main frankly because you're now going to have more cars idling. It's going to be stopping for longer periods of time. No, but seriously, seriously. Like why aren't we doing this, you know, and maybe we should…maybe frankly, if it is about climate change, it should have a higher level in terms of we put our Poverty Reduction Strategy up there with regards to oversight of our entire organization. This should have the same kind of lens maybe in terms of all projects. What is the cost of this? I don't see a budget tied to this in terms of what this is going to cost in terms of this…the analysis that's been acts…the impacts of the work. No doubt that…to do it property, you want a cost benefit analysis, but a cost benefit analysis based on environmental lens. Typically, a cost-benefit analysis is something that you're looking at minimum tens and thousands of dollars if there's no money for this unless there's money that we approved somewhere that I'm not aware of, but I don't see it here. I would prefer that this be referred that the matter go to a appropriate committee that we…I don't know. I mean the Mayor made a strong case in the election that Kenaston should be built since Winnipeg voted for it and I support that effort. I mean I see what's happening out there now on Kenaston. I avoid Kenaston at all cost and actually the people in the neighbourhood actually avoid Kenaston at all cost. They drive…I know I have friends who live down on Waverley West, they actually go through Councillor Mayes' ward to go home. It's insane what's going on. I agree that we should be looking at alternatives that are green. There's no doubt in my mind. I think Councillor Gilroy has some good ideas. You know maybe we should be saying that by 2045, all vehicles should be hybrid or electric or something, whatever the case may be. But this is kind of a one-off on a major capital project. We don't have the project technically in place yet with regards to the budget from I can see. If we can maybe build this in at that time, have that at the front end and build some amazing things we can potentially do on the environmental front. I would not be against that, of course. And I sure as heck know what it's going to come back with. You've got construction vehicles. You've got loaders. You've got cement trucks. You've got graders. Until Mr. Musk develops electrified loaders and graders and cement trucks, which are not quite yet there. They all produce carbon, and unless we're prepared to maybe do carbon offsets, planting a massive forest somewhere on the outside of the city or buying those offsets, and maybe that's built into the budget. But I just have a concern that we're kind of picking on something here, it appears. Then looking at this from a reasonable policy lens. So those are my thoughts, Madam Speaker. I did tell Councillor Mayes I was going to vote the opposite if new information has come to the floor. Now I've decided to move in a different direction, so thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Schreyer.

Councillor Schreyer: Thanks, Madam Speaker. Good points made all around here certainly including you know…you can't deny the reasonability of a reasonable policy lens. Speaking of which, it goes in fact, about nine months ago, Councillor Allard and I during question period to the Mayor took…both of us I guess to come to a conclusion or to get the answer that the Mayor was supportive of or that he did not say that we would not have a cost-benefit analysis on Kenaston, and so that is also something for consideration. I just thought I should mention that because it happened in this chamber and it's on record.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Any further speakers? Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Gillingham: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I will be voting against Councillor Mayes' recommendation here and the committee's recommendation on this matter. I appreciate what colleagues have said. I think Councillor Wyatt made some good points. Too often, this set of projects on Kenaston is referred to as the Kenaston widening, which is only one aspect. Seventy percent or 69 percent of the projects of Kenaston have nothing to do with the widening. There is combined sewer overflow work that needs to be done. There is accommodating Naawi-Oodena's project which will be absolutely transformative, the largest economic reconciliation project, the largest urban Indigenous economic zone in western Canada if not all of Canada. The bridges. We talked a lot about bridges in the last little bit. The bridge that is the St. James bridge that spans the Assiniboine River is in need of not only repair and replacement, but in need of redesign as well. If we don't address this project, and we're waiting on a response. We're waiting on the report back from our Public Service as to the full cost analysis and the scope of the project, and we haven't got that yet. These projects do need to proceed. This is a very narrow lens by which to cherry pick one of our projects and try to examine it. Would we also like to look at the economic impact? The economic reconciliation impact of not proceeding with accommodating a significant, historic Indigenous economic development zone? So I think that also, as Councillor Wyatt said, I think we also have to look at the fact that this is a reference to…I don't…who would do the work? There's no budget attached to this. There's no scope attached to this. Are we going to send every project to this, to this committee? So I think that you know, Councillor Mayes has said, you know, I'm paraphrasing that if it doesn't pass today that he may, you know, here the committee may look at, you know, coming back to it another time. I think that gives us more time to discuss matters perhaps. But I'm not supportive of this call and this examination at this time, and I encourage Councillors to vote against the Councillor Mayes voted, everybody voted yes. I'm encouraging everyone to vote no.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Santos.

Councillor Santos: I'm actually speaking a lot today. This one I'm going to do a little bit off-the-cuff because Councillor Mayes had asked me if I would be supporting the original motion. And I want to make it…the reason why I also actually helped craft the motion when we were on the Water and Waste Committee. But the reason why I crafted the motion was I had a very important discussion with the climate action policy group. They had mentioned to me that they do not actually review all documents that come through DMIS. When we have in the back of every report, we have consultations, we have the OurWinnipeg policy alignment, we have our Winnipeg Climate Action Plan alignment, we have the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Strategy alignment. So I asked do they actually look at every single document. And they said no, they don't. So I was actually quite shocked about that. So to Councillor Gilroy's point, you know, when we were debating about all these different documents, it came to me like how come when we have all these policies, most of the documents are not really being reviewed by the certain departments that we have literally assigned the most of this work to. So that's kind of where the crafting of helping the motion at that committee came from. But hearing from the Mayor and, you know, I don't actually always agree with my continuous colleague over Transcona Councillor Wyatt, but he brings up a really good point. You know, upon that reflection, you know, it's concerning that we have…we're going to set a potential precedent. You know, set by focusing solely on one specific project which is Kenaston. So I mean, while that's a crucial project and we should be looking at that, I think we should more have a consistent approach to everything and addressing our environmental concerns across all major infrastructure. So at this time, I will be not supporting the committee's that decision. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Santos. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: In my peril perhaps, Speaker Sharma, council colleagues. So where does this begin? For me, for Councillor Gilroy, for Councillor Gerbasi at the time, the Mayor asked for an advisory committee to the Mayor on what to do on climate action. At the time, the climate office was in the Planning Department, more or less sidelined from the corporate organization. I'm paraphrasing, but that was more or less the feeling. Councillor Gilroy, we got from the planner at the time was that, you know, Public Works is huge, Planning is little, and the CAO runs, mostly runs the show. So the recommendation we had was we had a few. I don't even remember what the others were, but the one substantive recommendation was that the climate office report to the CAO, and if we'd done that, then we wouldn't be having this conversation right now. Had we not moved this motion, Madam Speaker, through you to my colleagues and Councillor Mayes, we wouldn't have known that the climate action section of the reports is actually written by the authors and vetted by the director of the reports. So, we already have more information. And Madam Speaker through you to respectfully to

my colleague Councillor Wyatt, ideas like idling cars being, reducing idling cars being good for climate is false. From the big picture perspective, if that car wasn't on the road, it would not be 2,000-pound machine running at 80 kilometres an hour. That is a lot of energy, and it's being used. It's being burned with fossil fuels. Madam Speaker, through you to my esteemed colleague Councillor Wyatt, Councillor Wyatt proved the point of the induced demand arguments. Councillor Wyatt said that he avoids the intersection. That's exactly what happens with traffic planning on single passenger automobile trips is if there isn't the room, drivers know not to go and they don't, and so they change their plans. Some of their plans might include not taking the passenger trip. Some of their plans might include going another time. Anyway, that's all specific to Kenaston, but I think…I feel a bit betrayed by this whole process, not this council, but previously from the genesis of the idea of a climate office reporting to the CAO with a central function overlooking the entire organization, looking at transit, looking at all these to Councillor Mayes, planning, looking at all the functions of the city and how all of those functions could be evaluated in terms of how best to address climate action. Clearly, we don't have that because we, again, have a sideline climate office and we have in some cases authors that in almost all cases authors of reports, who do not have an education in climate action. And so I agree with the Mayor that we shouldn't be cherry picking. I agree that we shouldn't do one-offs. But I was the one to move that we have climate action as part of every report, and I don't feel that I got what…what I voted for, what Council voted for. If it's not the climate action office writing these reports, and I understand they may not have the resources to write the reports, then I don't think we're getting a real…we're not getting a real take from a climate expert. And in terms of the central function, I was talking to Councillor colleague earlier. I don't want us to engage in tokenism. I don't want us to engage in brainwashing. I don't want to do a nominal thing here and say, oh, look what we've done. But in the big picture, we've increased our missions as a corporation or as a community by, I don't know, I don't know what percentage. We don't know what percentage. We don't know what percentage because there was…there were two breaks now with the climate office. It was in Planning, then it was in the CAO's office. Now it's the environment committee. The reports don't connect. I've asked the Public Service, if the Public Service can connect the reports to see if we're actually making progress or not. We actual did I have an answer to that question. Madam Speaker, through you to Councillor Gilroy, we found out that the way that we met our climate change objectives as a city when former mayor Sam Katz was there is when Hydro, Winnipeg Hydro was uploaded to Manitoba Hydro. So…Glen Murray. Thank you for the clarification. And so it wasn't even in our…I mean, technically, our climate emissions went down as a corporation, but come on. It's still there with Manitoba Hydro. That wasn't a real win. And so we don't actually know how we're doing on climate change, climate action. And I agree we shouldn't cherry pick. I think we should have a climate lens on the budget. We should have a climate lens on every major capital project, including Kenaston. Otherwise, I worry that the climate action office is there to give us a pass on climate, and we're not making the substantive material changes that need to be done if we're actually going to see real results on climate action. And so that we're even having this debate is frustrating because Madam Speaker, through you to everyone here and some of you weren't here when we had these discussions, but we've gone like…we went one step forward and then one step back. No, we've done three steps. No, we've done one step forward, one step back. But we still have very limited information on how we're doing as a corporation or as a community on climate action. And the big wins aren't in the climate action office. The big wins are within the organization and in the departments themselves, like boosting transit rates. That's the biggest thing we could do is reduce that 30 percent greenhouse gas emissions from private vehicle travel that's residential. And then it's the buildings. And what are the business…what are the business cases for buildings for insulation, for replacing lights with LEDs? LEDs are amazing. They're like ten times more efficient than incandescents. I don't know how many times more than these halogen lights. Anyhow, I guess it's 7:00 o'clock and this session isn't really over, but if we're going to spend a big amount of money, we should probably know what the climate impact is. And idling cars is not…stopping cars, idling is not a win for the climate. I hope to never hear that again. I'm sure I will, but it's patently false.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Allard. Councillor Mayes to close.

Councillor Mayes: Well, if you don't want to listen to me on this, maybe you should listen to Gilroy and to Allard because that was a pretty good summary of why we had a climate action plan. If we don't care about it, then let's just rescind it. But if we want to actually do something with it, that's why presumably, we set up a Climate Action and Resilience Committee. Thanks to all none of you, who have come forward with ideas for what this committee could do, I guess you're concerned or too busy with all none of you giving me any ideas other than this one that Allard has brought forward. So you can now come in after this and claim something, but to date, no one's actually suggested anything the committee could do except Councillor Allard. Secondly, where will the money come from? What will they do? How quickly they forget. Maybe the full-time person we authorized in the 2023 budget to be paid out of the sewage reserve full-time WAPSO for a position funded to deal with climate action issues. Maybe that person could take it on because you voted to have that full-time person doing climate action initiatives. So maybe that person could actually do it since that's their job, which we fund or maybe they could use the 50,000 dollars of walking around money that was funded as well, to use Tim Shanks' term. Maybe they could use that because I don't know what else…nice lunches. I don't know what else that money was going to go to or what we're going to do. I suppose as Chair, I can bring up other items that we could look into, but not a good day for the climate action plan, not a good day for the committee. If you say, well, this is a very big project, but we don't want to just cherry pick stuff so we'll send nothing at all to you. Well, clearly, it's a project that attracts a fair bit of criticism from commentators in the media. It's certainly got some benefit. The Mayor has talked about reconciliation lens. Councillor

Rollins talked about the CSO aspects at EPC, but if we don't need the committee and if we don't need the climate action plan, let's just be done with it. Otherwise it is what Allard is saying. It is just tokenism. It is just the appearance of doing something. So I guess we'll just not do anything and sit around at the committee with our full-time staff person and debate the terms of reference or how often we are to have meetings or what, you know, what the order in the agenda should be, but got to at least appreciate Councillor Allard is trying to give the committee something from the elected people to do. Where do we go from here? I suppose we can just debate it at the Water, Waste and Environment Committee. But I appreciate what Councillor Gilroy is saying, which is you know there…sure, there is undoubtedly some benefits from this sometimes, but I guess we just don't want to admit what the potential environmental costs might be. We are going to get a cost benefit study done. I'm not sure why we have a climate action review committee at all quite frankly. If we're not going to do anything with it, and I'm not really sure why we have a climate change plan if we're not going to do anything about it. I mean why did we authorize 123,000 dollars for a full-time staff person? Perhaps some of you can come to the committee and talk about that. So in any event, continue to stand by what the committee unanimously said, which was to refer the matter to the Climate Action Committee. It's voted down. I get procedurally the…it's been unfortunate that it started here because that was the direction we originally got, but the Clerks now said no, the carriage rested the environment committee. So be it. We have somebody at community committee move a motion, it will probably come to the environment committee and away it goes I suppose. But for today, I have to say, I'm not going to win this vote. Councillor Allard, Councillor Gilroy, we're not going to win this vote, but what do you want done by this committee? Why do we have this climate change? Why are we funding a full-time position earning as much as we do? Why? Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Mayes. With that, I'll call the question on Item 1. All in favour, please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors Allard, Edie, Gilroy, Mayes, and Schreyer

Nays

Councillors Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Lukes, Rollins, Santos, Wyatt and Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma

City Clerk: The vote Madam Speaker, Yeas 5, Nays 9.

Madam Speaker: Okay. Item 1 is lost. Next, we'll move onto…yes, Councillor Eadie. We're going to do by-laws first. There are no by-laws actually. Question period, that's correct. Councillor Eadie, followed by Councillor Lukes.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON WATER, WASTE AND ENVIRONMENT
QUESTION PERIOD

Councillor Eadie: Yes, Madam Speaker. Given that Water and Waste…Water, Waste and Environment is dealing with issues that the Indigenous people of Winnipeg, Manitoba and Canada are concerned with…water pollution, care of our water, care of our air, care of our planet, proper stewardship. And I'm wondering if when Councillor Mayes, like I, signed onto the Indigenous Accord, whether he was thinking about reconciliation in terms of what we've been doing to the water, to the land, to the air.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Ironic question in the wake of that vote, but yeah, it's a good question in a broad philosophical sense. I think we, in recent weeks, I think the Mayor has made a commitment…well staff have made the commitment now to do a much better notice of sewage builds to those downstream including…I know the Mayor met with First Nations representatives on that issue as well as I believe some of the rural mayors. In that sense at least, we're doing more. I think the treatment of…well, if we can get going more quickly on these sewage plants that would certainly help with what we're doing on the water front. I think that's…I mean I don't think we're indifferent to it but I think, I mean, these things affect everyone, so, but yeah, certainly the impact on first nations downstream, frankly we've got to invest more in our CSO's and our North Main plant.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Second question Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Just wondering if, again, think of…do you think that this would undermine or cancel a reconciliation building project that's transformative? Do you think the results of this study wouldn't…do you think that the Indigenous people on that project might be, I think they would be interested in what environmental effects it will have.

Councillor Mayes: Fair enough, also, I mean, I was not involved in the negotiations around the tipping fees. I don't know what the Mayor's Office might be doing on these files so I…to some extent, I really can't answer that question. Thank you.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Next question. Councillor Lukes, followed by Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you. Councillor Mayes, can you tell us anything about the methane capture project that's going on at Brady? Since I started there's been many start-ups and stops of potential projects. What's the latest?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Thank you for the question and that is something we want to keep after the staff to get this thing to the finish line. Yes, Councillor Lukes is right in saying the number of starts and stops on this. A year lost going around the mulberry bush on issues when the whole while it was ITRS, the firm that's doing the flaring, has some sort of sole right or first right refusal to convert that to renewal, renewed natural gas. Our staff keeps saying we're close. We can get the Province to sign off. The Province keeps saying it's literally not on our desk, so we've got to get this thing nailed down, hopefully within the next month or so because we want to get this operational by 2026, so good question from Councillor Lukes. There's a whole CBC discussion of this today. St. Francis Xavier University measuring methane and we're like…we're right there. We can actually do this. We can do this. It's not costly. It's an initiative with the private sector, a company we've been dealing with for a decade, so is it us…is it the Province, let's get it to the finish line. It's got the wonderful acronym IGRSing. Easy to remember, so all we have to…we just need to get this thing signed off and get this going and we can do the (inaudible) article on the Uniter on this of all things, so not one of the big papers but yeah, this is a great opportunity to do something about methane. We've got to seize this opportunity.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Next, Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: Madam Speaker, implicit in Councillor Mayes' last remarks was a question, and so I would like to, you know, provide my top five to him at his…either now or at the committee. Which would he prefer is my question.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Would those be one-offs though that we just said we wouldn't be doing? I'm a little confused.

Councillor Rollins: Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Rollins.

Councillor Rollins: As I said, implicit in Councillor Mayes' last statements in the last item was a challenge. Give me agenda items. I have those right now, Madam Speaker. Would he like them right now?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Willingly as I predicted, no one got to me before I said it but right afterwards, no, no, no, we do care. So, get it to me sometime. It's a late night. Send it to me as you see fit or come to the next committee and we'll let you talk about it.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Rollins, final question.

Councillor Rollins: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I do care, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Onto the next speaker, Councillor Wyatt followed by Councillor Allard.

Councillor Wyatt: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I didn't stand the item down on the agenda, which was the fine, and, yes, I…but I did want to…recently, in the recent publication of the Selkirk Record, Winnipeg has got a bit of work to do with regards to our public relations, I guess you'd call it, with municipalities to the north of us. However, having said that, Mayor Pam Jackson, Mayor of Winnipeg Beach, Mayor Kevin Chudd of the RM of Gimli, critical but at the same time, not wanting to demonize the city over the recent break. They want to have a dialogue. You're referred to in the article, Councillor Mayes, that they had reached out to yourself as well. They speak about specifically, the RM of Gimli talks about plans to

hold a summit on the issue with First Nations communities, the Manitoba Métis Federation and other towns on the lake, the Province and the City and the quote is, “If the City wishes to show up for something like this”. And actually, this was…I stand corrected. This was Andy Damm who is a councillor in Gimli, so this is Gimli again, so the Council is working on this. Has there been any communication to the City that you’re aware of in terms of a conference, a summit with regards to the health of Lake Winnipeg and steps being taken to mitigate future issues like the sewage spill?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: I think the Mayor has met with a number of those elected officials from the RM. I wasn't there. I’m not sure who. I know the Mayor met with the First Nations reps. Folks from Gimli simply reached out to me a couple of times. Yeah, that’s all I know. I don’t know. I think we would go to any sort of summit. This is going to come down to getting some provincial and federal help, and trying to thread the needle on, you know, as I’ve said here before, my Winston Churchill impression. Maybe we have to go it alone if necessary on the CSO, and in return we get money for the biosolids from the Province or vice versa as it might be a risk that they want to impose on us. I don't know, but we do need to get some answers. Yeah, I don't think there's a problem with that. I’m not aware of any summit.

Councillor Wyatt: (Inaudible) the Councillor is about CSO’s and he’s been very consistent speaking about it. Is it…maybe there's an opportunity here with these individuals to the north of us becoming allies to the City when it comes it dealing with the Province and the Federal Government for funds for CSO or more dollars for CSO, considering that they have a stake in it as well. Maybe it's something that might be referred from yourself, Councillor to the Mayor's Office in light of the Intergovernmental Affairs nature of the file.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: The Mayor, to his credit, has been pretty dogged to use one of his terms, pretty dogged on trying to get additional funding from the Federal and Provincial Governments on the biosolids building. To the best of my knowledge we have never asked for CSO funding which was deliberate, because the North End plant was a higher priority. I think we have to sort of try and tie those two files together and get this…get a plan in place to get bio-solids and sustainable funding on the CSO. Maybe it's us on the CSO. We'll see, but in praise of the former Mayor Bowman, whatever he did in his second term, he was a great sewage mayor, which I’ve said before, which is somewhat facetious, but he was. Like we’ve got hundreds of millions of dollars, we got the North End phase one going, and we got a good chunk of the money we need on phase two, so hopefully we can nail that down and have a plan on phase two and CSO.

Madam Speaker: Final question.

Councillor Wyatt: Does the councillor see the potential of building these allies in these communities that, in effect, we may not have to be the ones to be asking for money from the Province for CSO when we have those municipalities saying you’ve got to make this a priority for Winnipeg?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Maybe I’m just tired of it all after all these years. I just want to get this…I don’t…in some extent yeah, great, we have allies. I don't know if that makes the difference now. We need…the Mayor is tired, too I’m sure, and wants to get this nailed down with the Feds and the Province. Leaving aside the third phase, it's a billion dollars, the nutrient removal. Let's at least just get nailed down the biosolids, and how do we do 60 million a year, inflation adjusted on CSO? If you can get those things done, we can leave here pretty proud.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Thank you, Madam Speaker. To, I guess, reverse, I guess, the line of questioning or debate from the last item, is it possible to get an update, Madam Speaker, through you to the Chair, on when…what's the latest with the green bin recycling, possibly the greatest climate action that this council may have voted for?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Yeah, some money in the budget that we voted for yesterday. Not a great deal that the moment comes in June or July. What's the biblical cometh the moment. What's the phrase I’m looking for? Cometh the hour. The hour is cometh in June or July to decide on what do we want to pick up. How often we want to do it? The timing in a way is perfect because we're going to have to be figuring out how do we go to market on garbage and recycling, what to bring in-house. It fits, so it will cost. How we're going to pay for it, how much it's going to be, stand by. I think we’ve…that needs comes to

a head in June or July. Shanks is out there. We're doing the markets sounding. We're getting some input, so I think we come to a vote in June or July.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Thank you Madam Speaker, through you to the Chair. I had this thought. Since the climate action responsibilities are within Water and Waste, would there be a way to have an island inside water and waste where there is that central function where we are looking at buildings' emissions? Where we are looking at climate change and those substantive actions that you can only have with the central authority? Would it be possible to do it inside the utility?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: I'm not sure I got that. We've staffed up. We've got somebody doing the seer work which is good. The building stuff, we've got people now on the Climate Action Committee as indicated. Yeah, I'm…yeah, if you could.

Madam Speaker: Councillor Allard, please restate.

Councillor Allard: Thank you Madam Speaker. Yeah, the question is since the Chairperson is both Chair of the Water, Waste and Environment Committee, given that we don't have reporting to the CAO's office, would it be possible to get those climate reports within the responsibilities of the Environment Committee itself? Like surely it has buildings, surely there's climate action that's possible within that stand-alone utility, I guess. I just can…I can take it off-line, too. It's getting late.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Mayes.

Councillor Mayes: Certainly not. The Committee is not going to review every report, I mean, during the Welcoming Winnipeg report, and everything else, there could be hundreds of reports. I think we've staffed up. That's the good news in the climate office. It isn't with the CAO. I think that was a mistake probably or at least a loss of some influence. But it is what it is. It's with the Water and Waste Utility, and we'll, you know, some works happening, and certainly on the composting, things are moving forward. That's about all I can say.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Seeing no further questions, that concludes question period under this committee. Next is the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services. Councillor Duncan, the Chair.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES DATED MARCH 6, 2024

Councillor Duncan: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. I'd like to advise Council that Item 3 has been laid over by the Executive Policy Committee for 30 days. I'd also like to introduce the report and move adaption of consent agenda Items 1, 2 and 4.

Madam Speaker: I'll call the question on 1, 2 and 4. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Question period for the Chair. Any questions for Councillor Duncan? Any questions? Next is the Standing Policy Committee on Public Works. Councillor Lukes, the Chair, the report dated March 5th.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS DATED MARCH 5, 2024

Councillor Lukes: Thank you. I'd like to move that Items 1 and 2 be approved.

Madam Speaker: Number one has been stood down. I'll call the question on Item 2. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Madam Clerk.

Item 1 - Arlington Bridge

Madam Speaker: Councillor Lukes to introduce the item.

Councillor Lukes: I'll let my colleagues speak to it first.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Eadie.

Councillor Eadie: Yes, Madam Speaker. I rise. I'll probably vote for this, but I want and I believe the CAO's in the room and we're all here around the council chamber here, Madam Speaker. I'm okay if they go…I didn't get a chance to listen to the standing committee meeting in terms of the first report here. It's my understanding the consultant was RFP out, did all these stats and there was kind of three steps to do in terms of looking at the Arlington bridge from the perspective of can you even rehabilitate it, Madam speaker. That was the first step, first phase. Now the consultant was out there. After…actually, the bridge was shut down for its usual quite expensive maintenance period, then it opened up and the consultant was working on looking at that bridge. And all of a sudden, oh, we got to close the bridge down because it's got serious problems. So, I mean someone walking on there probably isn't going to cause a problem, but any kind of weight on it sounded like it was quite dangerous. Now, step one. We had a dialogue with the Public Service and it was my understanding that we would be informed about the consultant's first step. They were to provide that information to our Public Service. Now before deciding to look at if we can rehab it or not, Madam speaker. Now I think this is a very important situation we have with the Arlington Bridge. I don't know why, and the consultant can't need another 180 days as it's calling for here. Says to look at rehabilitation options. And it's my understanding that the Public Service did not report any detail about the consultant first step and here we have this thing, we want 100 days, 180 more days to study. Like I want to know what the first step that the consultants did. What's their report that they gave to the Public Service, Madam Speaker? Let us know. Like we don't even know if there are any rehab options because we don't know what the consultant said in step one. But I'm sure it was the consultant who said oh, you got to close this bridge down. So they would be doing some work on it, Madam Speaker. Anyway, a lot I'd like to say about the Arlington Bridge, but I'll save that for another time when we actually have a serious report here Madam speaker, and we are supposed to…I was supposed to be informed. I believe Councillor Santos had an agreement there would be…you'll be informed what happen after step one. I'm just going to leave it there, but I think it's pretty serious that they're just calling for rehab options. The consultant I'm sure it was recommended that they close it. Where's their step one? I want to know the information, Madam Speaker. We're sitting here voting on this stuff. What are we voting on? Anyway, I'm going to leave it at that. I'll vote for the extension, but you know what? I'm not happy. I want to know step one what happened. Because here they want 180 days about options of rehabilitation, and there's no detail about…is it even…can even rehab it?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Any further speakers? Councillor Lukes to close.

Councillor Lukes: Thank you for your comments, Councillor Eadie. I'll see if I can line up the department to sit down and go through it with you and I and Councillor Santos if you're amenable to that. They came to committee. They wanted more time. They said the consultants needed more time and we wanted a robust report, so we gave them more time. But I will commit to trying to line up something where we can sit down with Mr. Neirinck and his team just to see where we're at here, a little more information if they can give it to us.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor Lukes. I'll call the question on Item 1. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Move into by-laws, Councillor Lukes. In a moment, yes. By-laws, Councillor Lukes.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS
CONSIDERATION OF BY-LAWS

Councillor Lukes: All right. More by-laws. I'd like to move that the following by-laws be read a first time, By-law 43/2024, 44/2024.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-law No. 43/2024, By-law No. 44/2024.

Councillor Lukes: I'd like to move that By-laws No. 43/2024 and 44/2024 be read a second time. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Clerk: By-laws No. 43/2024 and 44/2024.

Councillor Lukes: Okay, I'd like to move that the rule be suspend and By-laws No. 43/2024 and 44/2024 be read a third time and that same be passed and ordered to be signed and sealed.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? That's carried. Question period for the Chair, for Councillor Lukes. Councillor Dobson.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS
QUESTION PERIOD

Councillor Dobson: Yes, thank you very much. My question would be, we have potholes everywhere. Can we have an update, please on the pothole situation?

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Councillor.

Councillor Lukes: Okay, all right. Well, I was listening to the media again and I guess this has been the 77th warmest winter, or the warmest winter on record in 77 years, so, and a lot of mid-winter thaw is happening. So yeah, I think the pothole situation is just…it's horrendous. I think sadly, it's reflective of the amount of funding we have available to us to put into our roads. I think, you were all here yesterday. We heard how we get 10 cents on the dollar, on the tax dollar to put towards our infrastructure to maintaining it. Our roads are critical. They move transit buses. They move trade, goods, and the like. So, I'm happy to announce that two days ago, the Public Works Department brought back earlier 44 staff members that usually are involved in the spring cleanup and are putting them out on the pothole crews. So, there is probably, well there was eight to ten pothole crews going before these 44 people who came onboard. So, I think we're going to see a rapid fix of the pothole scenario for the time being. It's a real challenging situation. Like I mentioned yesterday, cities have up to 60 percent of the infrastructure that we have to continue to maintain. You know, we need our roads. We need to get around. We're thinking about, you know, if we don't have gas, what's going to happen? We're going to take the bus. How do we get around right? But we still need our roads to get around and we need our roads for transit. Transportation is the essence of the economy and business. So, the potholes are getting fixed. We're not counting them. There's too many to count but they are getting fixed. Right now, it's a cold pack. It's like a temporary filling. Sometimes they pop out, which is not good, but they are being filled and will continue to be filled throughout eternity I guess.

Madam Speaker: Any further questions of the Chair? Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Yes, Madam Speaker, through you to the Chair, I recall my, I think it was the year before the election, we had a similar winter, and I got the moniker "Pothole Allard" from an anonymous source. I still have the sign at home. But anyway, I'm reading this article here about how climate change is challenging jurisdictions that have freeze-thaw cycles, and I really don't have the answer, but what if this just keeps going on and on and on and every year our roads just get damaged at a rate where we can't catch up?

Madam Speaker: The question.

Councillor Allard: That's the question. I don't know the answer.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Madam Chair. Pothole Lukes, you shall answer.

Councillor Lukes: Well, you know what? I mean, I use this example. A lot of people say, you know, look at North Dakota. Similar climate. Look at their roads, right? Well, North Dakota has a completely different funding model. They have federal funding that helps address their roads. I use another example. I'm not pushing P3s, I'm just saying. The P3s that we have in the city that we can look at, Chief Peguis, and the William Clement Parkway, we see, like the William Clement Parkway I think was built 30 years ago. I remember when it was being built. Thirty years ago. It's beautiful. Why? It's being constantly maintained. So, I know the department, the Public Works Department, they are beavering away on all these new spats and all these new regulations and requirements to build longer lasting roads, which, I make the comparison, great. It's wonderful if we're, you know, buying a Beamer or a Jaguar, but if we're not maintaining it, what's the point? So, what do we do with our potholes? What do we do with climate change? I guess the answer is to continually look at different types of road construction. We are in…we are…our soils here move. I've…we are dealing with a sewer pipe that broke. It's not an old sewer pipe in my ward. But when you get to the bottom of it, I bet you anything it's because the soils have moved. So, Winnipeg is in a really challenging situation with the soils. The extreme temperatures of 40 below, 40 above, and then of course the challenges of our funding model. So, I know the department is actually working on a different type of asphalt

pothole mix that's more rubbery and sticky. It's not really a good scientific discussion on how it's composed, but I guess we're always going to be constantly looking at innovative new methods to deal with this issue because it certainly won't be going away, and maybe…maybe some of our roads do convert back to gravel at some point. I don't know what the answer is. But we definitely don't want to put all our money into roads, but we have to put some in to keep our economy going. So, it's a challenge. It will be a constant challenge unless we figure out another funding model for our roads.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Next question, Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through you to the Chair. The Chair, I guess, suggested something that I thought of, and that's the maintenance budget of roads. So, if the P3 providers are able to maintain pristine roads, is the issue that or would we be able to better address the issue by having more maintenance dollars on our roads, and do we know what the right...do we have the right balance for maintenance versus renewals because clearly, renewals are more expensive. Certain people benefit from renewals relative to maintenance. Certain people benefit from maintenance. Would we not be…would part of the answer perhaps be more road maintenance if we did have the money to do that?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Lukes.

Councillor Lukes: I think it's pretty obvious. If you look at William Clement and Chief Peguis that are continually maintained because of the funding model of the P3. I'm not promoting it, I'm just saying, that's the…I'd like to promote it but I don't want to get going on that topic. But it's maintenance. It's maintenance, and maintenance is money. So that is a greater portion of the answer.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. We'll close off question period under that committee. Next is the Standing Policy Committee on Finance and Economic Development. Councillor Browaty.

REPORT OF THE STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DATED MARCH 8, 2024

Councillor Browaty: Good evening. Best for last. It's my pleasure to move the report of March 8, 2024 and move Report No. 1 as consent.

Madam Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Chair. All in favour? Contrary? That's carried. We'll now have question period for Councillor Browaty. Any questions? Councillor Wyatt.

STANDING POLICY COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT QUESTION PERIOD

Councillor Wyatt: Madam Speaker, we still have a funding grant formula with the Province where they claw back pertaining to the historic transfer of social services. Has there been any contemplation? I know it's intergovernmental but in terms of any policy work done so that we could assist those who are still sick and suffering out in our city to fund initiatives, especially things that we're doing already, that have somewhat of a provincial scope in nature, to get a credit and then to potentially do other things in light of the unfair claw back that still exists with that program.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Browaty.

Councillor Browaty: Well, I do know under the previous government, the Department of Family Services and Housing had a budget, province-wide of over 4 billion dollars. So like looking, you know, at their budget compared to Winnipeg's budget, it's a massive amount of money. I know with the new government they've changed their departments around a little bit so I don't know what the more social services budget is post department realignment, but certainly a discussion to have. I know you have that…I do believe that claw back is still there. I don't remember off the top of my head what that number is. Again, the Mayor is the…in charge of intergovernmental relations. Obviously, you know, my AMM and FCM roles I do play a piece there as well, but surely something to bring up. And thank you for the question. Take it under advisement.

Councillor Wyatt: I think the Chair indicated that it's just shy of 22 million. Are you aware you indicated in previous council sessions here?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Browaty.

Councillor Browaty: I am now.

Madam Speaker: Any further questions? Councillor Allard.

Councillor Allard: I got a second wind. Not that big of a wind. Thank you, Madam Speaker. Through you to the Chair. Mentioning FCM, AMM, particularly FCM, is the Chair aware of any funding that we may or may not be taking advantage of as a municipality available through the FCM? I understand there's a bit of a gateway from the Federal Government to the City of Winnipeg, and there may be those types of like one-off grants through the FCM. The administration, from experience, is not always aware of them, so is there anything going on there?

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Browaty.

Councillor Browaty: The primary grant that the FCM actually administers is the Great Municipal Fund. I believe there are some announcements regarding that that have happened that are coming up. I don't have the specifics available right away. I think yeah, FCM does lobby the Federal Government in terms of Federal Government programming. You know, there has been delays. The Province is sort of a gatekeeper in many respects, and the former government arguably did delay some of the timing on some of the things like ICIP grant with the North End plant and some of the transit projects. That said, now that those are funded we are dealing with things like inflation and construction inflation and bus inflation. Everything has gone up in costs. In some cases, we're going to get less buses than we had originally planned for when we applied for the zero-emission bus program. So, there's some talk of maybe one other transit pod of a Federal program that we're maybe are not yet fully subscribed to and we are certainly going after that aggressively right now.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Any further questions? Seeing none. Councillor Duncan, will you move adjournment?

Councillor Duncan: So moved.

Madam Speaker: All in favour? Challenge the Chair. Contrary? That's carried.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Madam Speaker Councillor Sharma, His Worship Mayor Gillingham, Councillors Allard, Browaty, Dobson, Duncan, Eadie, Gilroy, Lukes, Mayes, Rollins, Santos, Schreyer and Councillor Wyatt.

Madam Speaker: Thank you. Meeting adjourned.

Council adjourned at 7:41 p.m.