Minutes – Standing Policy Committee on Community Services – June 30, 2026

REPORTS

Item No. 3 Contribution Agreement with Government of Canada for Old Exhibition Park Sensory and Nature Play Areas (Mynarski Ward)

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and recommended to Council:

1. That Enabling Accessibility Grant funding from the Government of Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada) to support the development of sensory and nature play areas at the Old Exhibition Grounds Park, in the amount of up to $125,000.00, be ratified.

2. That the contribution agreement entered into, executed and delivered on September 9, 2025, between the City and the Government of Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada) be ratified.

3. That authority be retroactively delegated to the Chief Financial Officer to negotiate and approve the terms and conditions of the contribution agreement with the Government of Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada) in accordance with this report, and such other terms and conditions deemed necessary by the City Solicitor / Director of Legal Services to protect the interests of the City.

4. That, subject to approval of Recommendations 1, 2, and 3, Council approve a $125,000.00 budget increase for the Community and Neighbourhood Parks Program, and that this funding is not to be subject to City overheads.

5. That, subject to approval of Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4, Council approve a new Capital Project # 1853004426 (Appendix A) in the amount of $125,000.00 within the Community and Neighbourhood Parks Program to support the development of sensory and nature play areas at the Old Exhibition Grounds Park and related grounds improvements. The final budget will be equivalent to the grant funding obtained by the City under the terms of the contribution agreement.

6. That, subject to their approval by Council, Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 be made effective retroactively to September 1, 2025.

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

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Allard,

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in and forwarded to the Executive Policy Committee and Council.

Carried

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: Contribution Agreement with Government of Canada for Old Exhibition Park Sensory and Nature Play Areas

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

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
D. Domke	J. Berezowsky	B. D'Avignon, acting for T. Graham	M. Dryburgh, acting for J. Dunford

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City received a grant in 2025 from the Government of Canada to help improve Old Exhibition Park. Improvements would include the development of sensory and nature play areas.

The City entered into a contribution agreement on September 9, 2025, with the Government of Canada.

The Public Service recommends Council approve:

- Acceptance of the grant;
- Entering into the contribution agreement; and
- An increase of $125,000.00 to the 2026 budget for Community and Neighbourhood Parks capital programs per contribution agreement.

Due to the short timeline for the award of grants, the agreement was signed to facilitate the receipt of funding. The Public Service is now seeking retroactive approval from Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Enabling Accessibility Grant funding from the Government of Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada) to support the development of sensory and nature play areas at the Old Exhibition Grounds Park, in the amount of up to $125,000.00, be ratified.

2. That the contribution agreement entered into, executed and delivered on September 9, 2025, between the City and the Government of Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada) be ratified.

3. That authority be retroactively delegated to the Chief Financial Officer to negotiate and approve the terms and conditions of the contribution agreement with the Government of Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada) in accordance with this report, and such other terms and conditions deemed necessary by the City Solicitor / Director of Legal Services to protect the interests of the City.

4. That, subject to approval of Recommendations 1, 2, and 3, Council approve a $125,000.00 budget increase for the Community and Neighbourhood Parks Program, and that this funding is not to be subject to City overheads.

5. That, subject to approval of Recommendations 1, 2, 3, and 4, Council approve a new Capital Project # 1853004426 (Appendix A) in the amount of $125,000.00 within the Community and Neighbourhood Parks Program to support the development of sensory and nature play areas at the Old Exhibition Grounds Park and related grounds improvements. The final budget will be equivalent to the grant funding obtained by the City under the terms of the contribution agreement.

6. That, subject to their approval by Council, Recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 be made effective retroactively to September 1, 2025.

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

REASON FOR THE REPORT

Council approval is required in order to enter into the contribution agreement with the Government of Canada, to accept third party funding, to establish a Capital Project, and to increase a Capital Budget.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

If Council does not ratify the receipt of funding and associated contribution agreement, the City would be required to repay funds received from the Government of Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada). The 2026 Community and Neighbourhood Parks Program Capital Budget will be increased by $125,000.00.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

In 2018, the community expressed concerns about the proposed North District Police Station development impacting outdoor recreation and green space at the Old Exhibition Grounds Park. Council approved $14.1 million in capital funding in the 2021 and 2023 budgets through the Recreation and Library Facilities Investment Strategy. A portion of the funding is allocated to the

redevelopment of the Old Exhibition Arena with a new multi-use recreation facility and offices for Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC). Funds of $900,000 were allocated to the redevelopment of the sport courts and green space at the Old Exhibition Grounds Park.

In 2022, ParticipACTION engaged the City of Winnipeg to partner on the development of a ParticiPARKS project. ParticiPARKS are inclusive and accessible outdoor physical activity and recreation spaces that are being designed in select communities in Canada as part of a pilot project funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. The redevelopment of the Old Exhibition Grounds Park provided a great opportunity to incorporate a ParticiPARKS project to meet the unique needs of the community and provide access to nature in an equity deserving neighbourhood.

On June 29, 2023, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services directed the Public Service:

1. To continue with the ParticipACTION program to perform a ParticiPARK "Idea Jamming" design charette with community stakeholders and residents of the Old Exhibition Park neighbourhood, aided by Bienenstock Natural Play.

2. That upon development of the Old Exhibition ParticiPARK design, the Public Service seek approval from Council to enter into a third-party agreement with ParticiPARK and Bienenstock Natural Play to request funding grants to complement the City's allocated $900,000.00 capital park improvement fund and engage with ParticiPARK and Bienenstock Natural Play to construct all or a portion of the design as feasible.

In September 2023, ParticipACTION and Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds hosted a community “Idea Jam” at the Old Exhibition Grounds Park to engage with the community and explore what a ParticiPARKS project could provide at this location. A survey was also conducted to solicit community input. The project team, led by the designers at Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds, incorporated the community input into a concept plan that included key elements for the redevelopment of the Old Exhibition Grounds. This concept plan was shared back with the community and stakeholders.

In 2024, the City entered a Memorandum of Understanding with ParticipACTION outlining the roles and commitment of each organization for the further development and implementation of the ParticiPARK project. This assignment of duties included ParticipACTION working to secure revenue to support the construction of the proposed ParticiPARK design. Subsequently, ParticipACTION prepared funding application materials for Employment and Social Development Canada’s Enabling Accessibility Fund. During the application process ParticipACTION informed the City that their operations moving forward would be limited and subsequently halted due to the termination of their operational funding for the program. The City completed the application and was successful in the second round of selection. Due to the short timeline for the award of grants in the second round of funding, the agreement was signed to facilitate the receipt of funding and we are now seeking retroactive approval from Council.

A funding agreement was entered into on September 9, 2025, for $125,000 to support the ParticiPARKS project. The funding has been received and is currently in deferred revenue, pending approval of this report. If Council does not approve, then any funding received would be returned to Employment and Social Development Canada’s Enabling Accessibility Fund.

The ParticiPARK project is planned as part of the first phase of work for the Redevelopment of the Old Exhibition Grounds Park. Additional phases of work have been identified for future implementation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement

Date: May 26, 2026

Project Name:

First Year of Program **2026**

Contribution Agreement with Government of Canada for Old Exhibition Park Sensory and Nature Play Areas

	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Capital					
Capital Expenditures Required	$ 125,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budgeted Costs	-	-	-	-	-
Additional Capital Budget Required	$ 125,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Funding Sources:					
Debt - Internal	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Debt - External	-	-	-	-	-
Grants - Government of Canada - Employment and Social Development Canada	125,000	-	-	-	-
Reserves, Equity, Surplus	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funding	$ 125,000	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Additional Capital Budget Required	$ -				
Total Additional Debt Required	$ -				
Current Expenditures/Revenues					
Direct Costs	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Incremental Revenue/Recovery	-	-	-	-	-
Net Cost/(Benefit)	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -
Less: Existing Budget Amounts	-	-	-	-	-
Net Budget Adjustment Required	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -

Additional Comments: Capital Expenditures are comprised of $125,000.00 which will be funded by the grant to support the improvement of Old Exhibition Grounds Park. All costs will be charged to the new Public Works project ID#1853004426. The project is not subject to City overheads.

J. Ruby, 2026-05-26

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

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with:

- Legal Services

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

- **04-2 4.9 Inclusive Public Places**: Provide and promote the amenities, and the design and maintenance standards, necessary to ensure accessible, safe and sanitary conditions in gathering spaces frequented by the public.

- **04-2 4.11 Equitable Service Access:** Prioritize equitable access to recreation and parks systems, services, and infrastructure, in order to: enable active living; connect people and nature; create supportive environments; build community capacity; and achieve desired health outcomes, with a focus on children and youth.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Community Climate Resiliency 7.3. Preserve and Manage Parks and Natural Areas to Support Climate Change Mitigation

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

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

Related 10-year Objectives:

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

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

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

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

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works
Division: Parks and Open Space
Prepared by: J. Bell
Date: May 27, 2026

Attachment:

Appendix A – Public Works – General Capital Fund