

**Agenda – Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks –  
December 2, 2016**

**BUDGET REVIEW**

**Item No. 3                      Parks and Open Space Division Service Levels**

**STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:**

On September 19, 2016, the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks referred the estimated budget shortfall of \$13.6 million for Parks and Open Space Delivery Service (Appendix A) to the 2017 Operating Budget review process.

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DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

On September 19, 2016, the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks referred the estimated budget shortfall of \$13.6 million for Parks and Open Space Delivery Service (Appendix A) to the 2017 Operating Budget review process.

On March 7, 10 and 11, 2016, the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks directed that the Winnipeg Public Service report back to Standing Committee within 60 days with an update on the funding of the Parks and Open Space services outlined in Attachment A.

## Attachment A

### Parks and Open Space Service Level Information

February 6, 2009

Neighbourhood/Community Park Maintenance Cycles (9 cycles) 2008 Budget - \$3,000,000.00	add 7 cycles; restores service levels of late 80's Provides for weekly mowing instead of every 17 days	\$ 2,400,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mowing</li><li>• Trimming</li><li>• Litter collection</li></ul>		
Playground Maintenance 2008 - \$40,000.00	establish 3 dedicated crews May to Oct (1 per area); restores service levels of 20 years ago providing high level of playground maintenance/safety	\$ 309,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Replenish safety stone</li><li>• Repair perimeter edging</li><li>• Remove weeds, litter, hazard (current program – only done if higher priority tasks are complete)</li></ul>		
Park Building and Amenity Maintenance & Repair 2008 - \$100,000.00 – Buildings 2008 - \$150,000.00 – Amenities	740,000 bldgs 650,000 amenities restores service levels of 20 years ago (i.e. life cycle management)	\$ 1,390,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pavilions, picnic shelters, washrooms, etc.</li><li>• Fencing</li><li>• Goal posts</li><li>• Benches</li><li>• Picnic tables</li><li>• Back stops</li><li>• lighting</li><li>• Trimming</li><li>• Litter collection</li></ul>		
Shrub Bed Maintenance 2008 - \$210,000.00	establish dedicated crews of 3 persons in each of 3 Areas; restore service level of 20 years ago. Restore, replace and properly maintain shrub beds	\$ 340,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Replacement plantings</li><li>• Watering</li><li>• Pruning</li><li>• Mulching</li><li>• Weed control</li></ul> <p>(currently only done on a sporadic basis as other priorities allow)</p>		
Ditch Mowing 2008 - \$75,000.00	add 2 mowing cycles to restore service of 15 years ago; better control weeds and drainage	\$ 155,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mow ditches for vegetation and snow drifting control (currently once per year) drainage</li></ul>		

<p>Spring Boulevard Clean-Up 2008 - \$1,200,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove abrasives from regional and designated collector</li> <li>• Provide for more residential boulevard spot cleaning (e.g. corner lots)</li> </ul>	<p>add 1 week of nights (25% increase); more thorough cleaning and response to residents</p>	<p>\$ 310,000</p>
<p>Natural Areas Maintenance (current standard – some Volunteer and/or green team clean-up on a very limited basis) 2008 - \$5,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Litter collection</li> <li>• Noxious weed removal/control</li> <li>• Pathway maintenance</li> <li>• Native species planting</li> </ul>	<p>establish 3 dedicated 3 person crews May to Oct; establish ability to clean natural areas and reduce weed and litter complaints</p>	<p>\$ 263,000</p>
<p>Winter Park Pathway Maintenance 2008 - \$220,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinstatement of pathway clearing</li> </ul>	<p>reinstate maintenance to the standard of approximately 15 years ago; 1 operator in each of 3 Areas; satisfy citizen requests</p>	<p>\$ 124,000</p>
<p>Athletic Field Aeration and Top Dressing (currently 1 cycle per year) 2008 - \$250,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aerate</li> <li>• Top dress</li> </ul>	<p>add 1 cycle to meet standard and develop higher quality fields</p>	<p>\$257,000</p>
<p>High Profile Park &amp; Athletic Field Fertilization (currently 1 cycle) 2008 - \$250,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fertilize for healthy turf and decrease weeds</li> </ul>	<p>add 1 cycle to meet standard and develop higher quality turf</p>	<p>\$ 257,000</p>
<p>Athletic Field Irrigation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide 1” of water per week from May to September for quality turf and playing surface</li> </ul>	<p>install and/or repair, upgrade and operate irrigation systems</p>	<p>\$ 500,000</p>
<p>Park Turf Repairs currently \$390,000 for 1010 parks and open space sites 2008 - \$390,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeding</li> <li>• Sod repairs</li> <li>• Minor drainage</li> <li>• Repairs</li> <li>• Grading</li> </ul>	<p>Reinstate service levels similar to 20 years ago; establish higher levels of safety and address citizen and user group complaints</p>	<p>\$ 412,000</p>

<p>Tree Pruning 2008 - \$1,100,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cyclical tree pruning in street ROW and parks to preserve and enhance the urban forest</li> </ul>	<p>Meet Municipal standard; \$ 1,500,000  move from 12 year cycle to 7 year cycle; increase health of Urban Forest; reduce hazardous conditions</p>
<p>Citizen Tree Pruning Requests  2008 - \$1,800,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backlog of 3,400 requests – currently minimal to no service based on other priorities</li> <li>• Additional funding to catch up on service requests</li> </ul>	<p>add one-time funding to \$ 700,000  catch up; eliminate 5 year backlog, satisfy citizen requests</p> <p>following years retain funding to manage on-going service requests (700 per year) (\$165,000)</p>
<p>Tree Planting (current level 1,300 trees per year)  2008 - \$800,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average cost for tree, delivery, soil, Installation and 2 year maintenance is \$800.00</li> </ul>	<p>increase tree planting from \$ 2,266,000  1,300 to 4,200 to meet municipal standard of 1.5% of tree inventory</p>
<p>Dutch Elm Disease Surveillance Program  2008 - \$400,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently 1.5 cycles annually</li> <li>• Identifying trees for more rapid removal lessening spread of disease</li> </ul>	<p>increase to 2 city-wide \$ 206,000  surveillance cycles annually; to ensure early identification and rapid removal to better control spread of DED</p>
<p>Elm Tree Basal Spraying  2008 - \$130,000.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently \$130,000</li> <li>• 160,000 elm tree inventory</li> <li>• One of the most effective components in combating DED</li> </ul>	<p>increase from once every \$ 278,000  3 years to once every 2 years</p>
<p>Weed Control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional timely spring to fall mowing</li> <li>• Additional timely and more effective late summer/fall herbiciding</li> </ul>	<p>increase mowing and \$ 500,000  herbiciding of parks, boulevards and open space by 80% (restores 1980's service levels)</p>
<p style="text-align: right;"><b>Total: <u>\$ 12,167,000.00</u></b></p>	

# ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

**Title: Parks and Open Space Division Service Levels**

**Critical Path: Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks**

## AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
D. Domke	L.Escobar, P.Eng., P.T.O.E.	M. Ruta	D. McNeil

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Winnipeg's parks and open space system consists of over 3,000 hectares of park lands which contribute to the enjoyment and quality of life for the City's citizens and visitors. It promotes physical and psychological health, strengthens our communities and makes our city a more attractive place to live and work.

For decades, the majority of Parks and Open Space Division (POS) service levels have been slowly declining. In recent years, this decline has become more pronounced as the City has grown. Resources have become focused on public safety and basic services such as grass mowing and litter pickup. As a result, a number of services such as shrub maintenance, boulevard repairs, ditch mowing, pathway maintenance, edging and irrigation services have been reduced or eliminated.

Service levels have been further reduced by the expansion of over 100 hectares of new park and boulevards over the last few years. The increased demands of expanding parks inventory combined with aging parks infrastructure are no longer sustainable within existing funding levels.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

That this report be received as information.

## REASON FOR THE REPORT

At its March 7, 10 and 11, 2016 meeting, the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks directed that the Winnipeg Public Service report back to Standing Committee within 60 days with an update to the funding of the Parks and Open Space services outlined in Attachment A.

At its July 11, 2016 meeting, the Standing Policy Committee on Protection, Community Services and Parks granted an extension of time of 30 days for the Winnipeg Public Service to report back on the matter.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

Public safety issues continue to be addressed within existing resources. Basic services such as mowing and litter pickup continue to be the focus of the existing operation; however, these

services are now becoming further diminished by increasing inventory. Significant public dissatisfaction has occurred this year, and will likely continue to occur in the future.

The Public Works Department has identified a current operating budget shortfall of approximately \$13.6 million (Appendix A) based on previously defined service levels. Without additional funding, this deficit will continue to grow annually with inflation and as the City continues to expand. To better understand and quantify the magnitude of this shortfall, existing service levels must be reviewed and confirmed. This is a significant undertaking, and further work is required in this area.

## **HISTORY / DISCUSSION**

For decades, the majority of Parks and Open Space Division (POS) service levels have been slowly declining. In recent years, this decline has become more pronounced as the City has grown. One notable exception is that tree pruning, planting, and removal service levels have significantly improved.

The decline in services has resulted in two outcomes. First, resources are now focused on ensuring public safety. For example, both new capital and significant operating resources have been directed to upgrading and maintaining higher risk assets such as children's play structures. Secondly, in order to provide basic services such as grass mowing and litter pickup for these areas, decisions were made to reallocate resources from other services. As a result, shrub maintenance, boulevard repairs, ditch mowing, pathway maintenance, edging and irrigation services have been reduced or eliminated.

In general, the result is that many older parks look 'tired'; landscaping is deteriorated, fencing is broken, building envelopes are compromised, athletic fields have worn areas with bare soil and other amenities such as benches, tables, lights and signage are overdue for replacement.

This matter has only been exacerbated by the expansion of the parks inventory over the last number of years. Since 2010, over 100 hectares of parks and boulevards in new developments have been added without additional funding to support their maintenance. In 2016, basic park services are beginning to fail in peak periods. The Parks and Open Space Division is now forced to reduce *key* services including mowing and trimming in some areas to remain within approved budgets.

The increased demands of expanding parks inventory combined with aging parks infrastructure are no longer sustainable within existing funding levels. Although the Division continues to prioritize public safety issues, the ability to provide basic service to the citizens of Winnipeg has been compromised.

At its May 12, 2008 meeting, the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee recommended that the Parks and Open Space Service Levels and Values outlined in a report dated March 7, 2008, be restored to the 2009 Operating Budget in the total amount of \$10,885,000 and forwarded to the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works for consideration during the 2009 Preliminary Operating Budget deliberations.

At its May 26, 2008 meeting, the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works referred the May 12, 2008 recommendation of the East Kildonan-Transcona Community Committee to the 2009 Preliminary Operating Budget process.



## CONSULTATION

In preparing this Report there was consultation with: N/A

## OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

- **Promote the use of rivers and riverbanks** (*A Sustainable Winnipeg*)
  - Facilitate public access to rivers and riverbank lands.
  - Encourage the use of Winnipeg rives for transportation through provision of boat launches, docks and other accessibility improvements.
- **Support waterway management** (*A Sustainable Winnipeg*)
  - Protect and prolong river access and recreation opportunities during the ice-free season.
- **Protect and enhance the urban forest** (*A Sustainable Winnipeg*)
  - Increase the stock of trees through tree planting programs, and encourage tree planting by others.
- **Protect and preserve the environment** (*A Sustainable Winnipeg and Our Winnipeg – Environment*)
  - Recognize and preserve Winnipeg’s parks, green spaces and riverbanks as green oases in our urban setting.
  - Enable the protection of ecologically significant lands.
  - Promote the use of rivers and riverbanks.
- **Plan for sustainable and connected recreation and leisure infrastructure** (*OurWinnipeg – Recreation and A Sustainable Winnipeg*)
  - Maximize the use of existing facilities, including converting or consolidating to meet emerging community needs while minimizing operating costs.
  - Develop and maintain a system of regional sports fields in accordance with recognized needs.
  - Apply green building standards and universal design to the construction and renovation of city-owned facilities.

## SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works Department  
Division: Parks and Open Space Division  
Prepared by: D. Domke, Manager of Parks and Open Space Division  
L. Nichols, Parks Investment Strategies Coordinator  
Date: July 14, 2016

## ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A – Estimated Funding Shortfall for Parks and Open Space Division Service Delivery

**Appendix A: Estimated Funding Shortfall for Parks and Open Space Division Service Delivery**

Service	Sub-Service	2010 Approved Budget*	Service Level Recovery (incl. 2010 CPI)	Inflation 2011-2016 (Winnipeg CPI)	Increase in Inventory (3%)	2016 Proposed Budget	2016 Approved Budget	2016 Shortfall
Parks and Urban Forestry	252 - Park Amenity Maintenance	1,251,700	1,816,400	383,400	102,200	3,553,700	3,718,900	165,200
	253 - Athletic Field Maintenance	896,200	1,022,100	239,700	63,900	2,221,900	2,339,500	117,600
	255 - Park Pathway Maintenance	357,300	-	44,700	11,900	413,900	262,500	(151,400)
	256 - Park Planning/Development	765,800	-	95,700	25,500	887,000	1,559,100	672,100
	257 - Tree Planting	1,340,400	2,284,100	453,000	120,800	4,198,300	1,690,400	(2,507,900)
	259 - Dutch Elm Disease Control	3,004,800	487,900	436,500	116,400	4,045,600	3,676,600	(369,000)
	261 - Weed Control	708,900	504,000	151,600	40,400	1,404,900	747,900	(657,000)
	262 - Natural Areas Management	741,400	265,100	125,800	33,500	1,165,800	855,400	(310,400)
	263 - Playground Management	1,118,900	311,500	178,800	47,700	1,656,900	694,700	(962,200)
	264 - Winter Amenity Maint	1,008,100	125,000	141,600	37,800	1,312,500	1,163,300	(149,200)
	265 - Boulevard Maintenance	2,321,400	312,500	329,200	87,800	3,050,900	2,526,700	(524,200)
	251 - Park Grass Maintenance	5,593,600	2,575,400	1,020,900	272,200	9,462,100	7,368,800	(2,093,300)
258 - Tree Pruning & Removal	4,009,900	2,217,600	778,300	207,500	7,213,300	4,309,700	(2,903,600)	
City Beautification	061 - Litter Collection	3,069,400	-	383,600	102,300	3,555,300	3,063,000	(492,300)
	062 - Public Gardens/Landscaping	3,628,500	342,700	496,300	132,300	4,599,800	3,697,900	(901,900)
	348 - Regional Street Cleaning	509,700	-	63,700	17,000	590,400	-	(590,400)
	063 - OrnLight/Flag,Banner/PubArt	240,200	-	30,000	8,000	278,200	184,300	(93,900)
Snow Removal	354 - Parks,Snow,Ice Remove	2,397,900	-	299,700	79,900	2,777,500	948,400	(1,829,100)
<b>Subtotal Parks &amp; Urban Forestry, City Beautification &amp; Snow Removal</b>		<b>32,964,100</b>	<b>12,264,300</b>	<b>5,652,500</b>	<b>1,507,100</b>	<b>52,388,000</b>	<b>38,807,100</b>	<b>(13,600,000)</b>
Police Resp	292 - Contract Policing	54,200					-	-
Crime Prev	113 - Park Patrol	1,103,600					-	-
Insect Control	201 - Insect Control	-				7,009,100	7,009,100	
<b>Subtotal Police Response, Crime Prevention &amp; Insect Control</b>		<b>1,157,800</b>				<b>7,009,100</b>	<b>7,009,100</b>	
								-
<b>TOTAL PARKS &amp; OPEN SPACE DIVISION</b>		<b>\$ 34,121,900</b>				<b>\$ 59,397,100</b>	<b>\$ 45,816,200</b>	<b>\$ (13,600,000)</b>

\*adjusted to remove budget for Assiniboine Park