

TORONTO STAFF REPORT

October 24, 2005

To: Works Committee

From: Lou Di Gironimo, Acting General Manager, Toronto Water

Subject: Funding to Accelerate Projects within the Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan to Expedite Tree Planting (City-wide)

Purpose:

To report on increasing funding to accelerate projects within the Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan to expedite tree planting.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

There are no financial implications to the City as a result of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

Background:

City Council, at its meeting of November 30, December 1 and 2, 2004, in considering Clause No. 11(s), Report No. 10 of the Works Committee titled "Feasibility of Increasing Tree Cover Similar to Fayetteville, Arkansas", approved the request that the acting Commissioner of Works and Emergency Services report back to the Works Committee as part of the 2006 budget process on including funding in the amount of \$500,000 to \$1 million to accelerate projects within the Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan to expedite tree planting, and on specific locations where these funds could best be spent.

Comments:

The Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan (WWFMMP) was developed based on a new philosophy which emphasized the control of rainwater at source to minimize stormwater runoff.

The Master Plan concluded that source control measures alone could not achieve the WWFMMP objectives in area watercourses and along the waterfront. As such, a hierarchical approach to stormwater management was followed, beginning with source controls (including increased vegetation and tree cover), followed by conveyance controls and then end-of-pipe controls. In terms of funding for source control measures, the Plan as approved by Council, includes funding for downspout disconnection, because this measure provides the greatest reduction in stormwater runoff volumes, within the suite of source control measures considered.

However, the City of Toronto is committed to increased tree cover through ongoing activities such as:

- the Tree Advocacy Program administered through Urban Forestry;
- the protection of the environment and increasing tree cover in new development through City Planning during the development review process;
- tree planting in connection with road reconstruction projects through Transportation Services;
- tree planting associated with stream restoration -- these projects are being undertaken within the first 15 years of the Plan implementation;
- stormwater management projects (eg. Ellis Avenue and Colborne Lodge Drive Stormwater Treatment Facilities); and
- public education campaigns in support of the implementation of the WWFMMP through Toronto Water.

Further, Toronto Water has established the Community Program for Stormwater Management which provides funding for community groups, supporting the goals and objectives of the WWFMMP. The program has allocated \$250,000 per year for the implementation of these types of projects. Proposals for tree planting projects, by community groups, are eligible through this program and have been funded.

There are other capital projects undertaken by Toronto Water, not within the WWFMMP, which have landscaping and tree planting components (e.g. plant expansion and/or landscaping projects). For example, Toronto Water is partnering with the Tree Advocacy Program and Parks, Forestry & Recreation Division to increase the number of trees at Water Treatment & Supply facilities and is budgeting a minimum of \$70,000 annually to receive matching funding from the program.

Conclusions:

Toronto Water, through the implementation of the City's Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan (WWFMMP), remains committed to advancing source control measures such as increased tree cover across the City. This is being accomplished through increased stream restoration projects which are being undertaken within the first 15 years of the Plan implementation, in the design of stormwater management facilities and by promoting the

benefits of increased vegetative plantings including trees through Toronto Water's public education campaign.

Toronto Water has also established the Community Program for Stormwater Management which provides funding for community groups, supporting the goals and objectives of the WWFMMP. The program has allocated \$250,000 per year for the implementation of projects such as tree planting by community groups.

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