



Local Enhancement & Appreciation of Forests

Improving city life one tree at a time

October 5, 2012

Dear Mayor Ford and City Councillors,

We do not support the recommendations in a staff report titled "Repurposing of the Sustainable Energy Funds and New Funding Model for City Energy Projects" dated September 24, 2012.

We are extremely pleased to see the City wanting to invest in the Tree Canopy capital program and we whole-heartedly support increased funding in order to cope with the costs of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation. However, we have serious concerns about taking money from one important environmental initiative to pay for another important environmental initiative.

As pages 15 to 17 of a November 28, 2011 staff report titled "Sustainable Energy Plan Capital Budget Analyst Notes" show, the Sustainable Energy Funds have a proven track record in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and electricity use while leveraging almost \$7 in private sector investment for every \$1 lent. Moreover, the Funds have created over 7,100 person years of work. These funds have just begun to tap into the massive energy conservation potential that exists by retrofitting Toronto's buildings.

Eliminating these highly successful revolving loan funds makes no financial sense.

In addition, please consider that with the abrupt loss of approximately 860,000 ash trees (an estimated 8.4% of our canopy), energy conservation programs will be even more important for Toronto. Shade and windbreak provided by trees result in considerable energy savings (studies by Akbari demonstrate that three strategically placed, mature trees can provide up to 40% reduction in air conditioning needs for an average Toronto home). With the loss of so many trees to Emerald Ash Borer our city's energy consumption will go up significantly. Now, more than ever, we need programs like the Sustainable Energy Revolving Loan Fund, to help Torontonians conserve energy.

That's why we urge City Council to maintain the Sustainable Energy Funds and, through the 2013 budget process, find the funds required to ensure the city's tree canopy program can properly deal with the Emerald Ash Borer infestation. Please do not sacrifice one necessary environmental program for another.

Sincerely,

A simple, curved line representing a handwritten signature.

Janet McKay
Executive Director