TORONTO Member Motion

City Council

Motion without Notice

MM23.26	ACTION			Ward:All

Toronto District School Board Solar Panel Installations - by Councillor Gary Crawford, seconded by Councillor Peter Milczyn

**** Notice of this Motion has not been given. A two-thirds vote is required to waive notice.***
**** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.***
**** This Motion has been deemed urgent.***

Recommendations

Councillor Gary Crawford, seconded by Councillor Peter Milczyn, recommends that:

1 City Council endorse and support the Toronto District School Board's applications to the Ontario Power Authority under the Feed in Tariff (FIT) program for approval of contracts to permit the installation of solar panels on up to 450 school rooftops.

Summary

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) has filed Feed in Tariff (FIT) applications with the Ontario Power Authority. If all of these contracts were approved, they would provide for solar panels on 450 school rooftops and would provide 66 MW of solar power to the grid. In May 2011, following a RFP process, the TDSB entered into an agreement with Schooltop Solar Limited Partnership (Schooltop Solar) to install the solar panels. In exchange for its share of the revenue from the solar installations, Schooltop Solar will repair school rooftops. The TDSB will also have a share of the revenue from this project. If the FIT applications are approved, the contract will provide the TDSB with much needed roof repairs to many of its schools.

In March 2012, the Ministry of Energy released a consultation document regarding a review of the existing FIT* program that contained a number of recommendations for rule changes regarding the application and assessment process for the FIT program. The comment period for the consultation document has closed and the Ministry of Energy will release the new rules for applying to the FIT program during the week of May 7, 2012. It is anticipated that the window of opportunity to apply will begin in late May 2012 and potentially be of a small duration. The TDSB has to reapply for at least 450 schools, which is a time consuming process, and wants to be in a position to do this before the window of opportunity closes. If this Motion was to go to the June meeting of City Council, the TDSB may not have enough time to make all its FIT applications before the window closes.

The TDSB has assumed no financial obligations or other risks in this project. All roof repairs and solar installations will be the responsibility Schooltop Solar, using designs approved by the TDSB and independent engineers, and employing reputable contractors at Fair Wage rates. All installations will be fully insured and under warranty.

The Ontario government has recently established a point system to assess and rank FIT applications. A resolution from Toronto City Council endorsing and supporting the TDSB's applications for FIT solar panel contracts on schools would be a significant help toward obtaining government approval of the FIT applications. The TDSB requests this resolution from City Council as soon as possible in order to have its FIT applications reviewed by the Ontario Power Authority in an expeditious manner without jeopardizing the Board's position in the queue of applicants presently before the Ontario Power Authority.

The Toronto District School Board has submitted the attached letter from the Board Chair assuring Council that there is no risk or potential liability to the City of Toronto if it endorses and supports the FIT applications.

*Please note that a FIT application has to be submitted for each school receiving a solar panel array.

(Submitted to City Council on May 8 and 9, 2012 as MM23.26)

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM23.26
(http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-46978.pdf)
(April 27, 2012) Letter from Chris Bolton, Chair, Toronto District School Board
(http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-47006.pdf)