

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM19.19	ACTION			Ward:All
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Establishing Responsibility for Planters and Tree Pits in the Public Rights-of-Way - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee . A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Shelley Carroll, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services to consult with the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and report to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee in the first quarter of 2017 to clarify maintenance rules and responsibilities for private property owners with regards to planters and tree pits in public Rights-of-Way, including boulevard areas.
2. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services to consult with the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and explore alternative ways to increase awareness and notify adjacent property owners of their responsibilities to maintain planters and tree pits in the Right-of-Way, and to develop a strategy, including remedial and cost recovery options for dealing with negligent owners.
3. City Council direct the General Manager, Transportation Services, to consult with the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and provide a cost estimate for the City to assume full responsibility for maintaining tree pits and planters in the Right-of Way.

Summary

In the lead up to World Pride 2014, my office, the Church Wellesley Village Business Improvement Area, and the City of Toronto made extraordinary effort to ensure the Church-Wellesley village was putting its best face forward to the world. Thirteen new public art installations, Toronto's first parklet program, and a massive fireworks display encompassed some of the more noticeable initiatives, but smaller scale interventions took place as well.

Wellesley Street East from Yonge Street to Jarvis Street has a series of nine tree planters in the public right-of-way that have long been neglected and fallow. My office worked with the Church-Wellesley Village BIA on securing donated plant material, soil, and tools, and with a

group of local volunteers replanted the pits in advance of World Pride. Working with Parks, Forestry and Recreation, we were able to ensure the new flowers and greenery were maintained for the duration of the international festival.

Unfortunately, the end of World Pride saw the return of the status quo, with the planters once again falling into disrepair. Due to the lack of clarity around who is responsible for maintaining and replanting, tree pits across the City often become receptacles for garbage, cigarette butts, and drug paraphernalia. These eyesores foster a negative image of the City for residents and tourists alike. Without proper on-going maintenance, the millions of dollars we have invested in our street furniture will have been wasted.

It is in the City's interest to create a clear policy and communication strategy identifying parties responsible for maintaining public infrastructure in the rights-of-way, with a mechanism for ensuring costs incurred by the City due to negligent property owners are borne by the negligent owners themselves.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM19.19