

2017 Participatory Budgeting Pilot Results and Funding Allocations

Date: December 22, 2017

To: Budget Committee

From: City Manager

Wards: 33, 35, and 12

SUMMARY

This report authorizes the Acting Chief Financial Officer to fund the cost of community improvements chosen by residents through the 2017 Participatory Budgeting (PB) Pilot in the amount of \$690,000 gross, \$0 debt from the Parkland Acquisition Reserve Fund, and \$15,000 gross, \$0 debt from the Public Realm Reserve Fund.

2017 was the last year of the City's three-year PB Pilot in three neighbourhoods: Oakridge (Ward 35), Rustic (Ward 12), and across all of Ward 33. In the Pilot, residents propose, develop and vote on local community improvement projects. Each community had up to \$250,000 this year to spend on capital projects on City-owned property. This year's votes concluded in December and residents from these three neighbourhoods selected a total of 14 community projects at a total cost of \$705,000.

City staff will continue the evaluation of the Pilot and will report to City Council in 2018 with recommendations regarding participatory budgeting in Toronto.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the Acting Chief Financial Officer to adjust the following 2018 Preliminary Capital Budgets to fund the 14 Participatory Budgeting Pilot projects detailed below:

- a. The Parks, Forestry and Recreation 2018 Preliminary Capital Budget be increased by \$690,000 gross, \$0 debt for:

The following Ward 33 projects to be funded from Account XR2207 Parkland Acquisition - North District Local Development Reserve Fund at a cost of \$220,000 gross, \$0 debt:

- Exercise Park in Parkway Forest Park - \$75,000 gross, \$0 debt;
- Seniors Exercise Park in Godstone Park - \$50,000 gross, \$0 debt;
- Pleasantview Park Improvements - \$20,000 gross, \$0 debt; and
- Shawnee Park Recreation Improvements - \$75,000 gross, \$0 debt.

The following Ward 35 projects to be funded from Account XR2205 Parkland Acquisition - East District Local Development Reserve Fund at a cost of \$225,000 gross, \$0 debt:

- Upgrade Lighting in Madelaine Park - \$45,000 gross, \$0 debt;
- New Junior Playground in Madelaine Park - \$100,000 gross, \$0 debt;
- Water Bottle-Filling Station in Oakridge Park - \$20,000 gross, \$0 debt;
- Improve Pathway at Madelaine Park - \$50,000 gross, \$0 debt; and
- Water Bottle-Filling Station in Prairie Drive Park - \$10,000 gross, \$0 debt.

The following Ward 12 projects to be funded from Account XR2203 Parkland Acquisition - West District Local Development Reserve Fund at a cost of \$245,000 gross, \$0 debt:

- Exercise Park in Maple Leaf Park - \$75,000 gross, \$0 debt;
- Lights Around Maple Leaf Park Reservoir - \$50,000 gross, \$0 debt;
- Walking Path Around Maple Leaf Park Reservoir - \$100,000 gross, \$0 debt; and
- Chess Tables in Maple Leaf Park - \$20,000 gross, \$0 debt.

b. The Transportation Services 2018 Preliminary Capital Budget be increased by \$15,000 gross, \$0 debt for the following project to be funded from Account XR1410 - Public Realm Reserve Fund:

- Shawnee Park Accessibility Improvements - \$15,000 gross, \$0 debt.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of the recommendations contained in this report will result in an increase of \$705,000 to the 2018 Preliminary Capital Budget for Parks, Forestry and Recreation (\$690,000) and Transportation Services (\$15,000).

This increased capital investment will be fully funded through the following Reserve Funds: XR2207 Parkland Acquisition - North District Local Development Reserve Fund (\$220,000); XR2205 Parkland Acquisition - East District Local Development Reserve Fund (\$225,000); XR2203 Parkland Acquisition - West District Local Development Reserve Fund (\$245,000); and XR1410 - Public Realm Reserve Fund (\$15,000).

The Acting Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its February 15, 2017 meeting, City Council adopted the 2017 Capital and Operating Budgets, which identified funding sources for 16 community projects selected by residents in 2016 Participatory Budgeting voting (EX22.2r)

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.EX22.2>

The City Manager reported on the 2015 Participatory Budgeting Pilot experience, in which residents voted for seven community improvement projects at a total cost of \$435,000. On February 17, 2016, City Council adopted the 2016 Capital and Operating Budgets (EX12.2), which authorized the City Manager to extend the Participatory Budgeting Pilot for two additional years, provide each area up to \$250,000 each year, and add a temporary staff position in the City Manager's Office to implement the Pilot.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.EX12.2>

At its March 10, 2015 meeting, City Council adopted the 2015 Capital and Operating Budgets (EX3.4), which included consideration of the City Manager's report 2015 Participatory Budgeting Pilot. City Council authorized the City Manager to undertake a Participatory Budgeting Pilot in Ward 33 and the neighbourhoods of Rustic (in Ward 12) and Oakridge (in Ward 35), with each receiving up to \$150,000 in capital funding.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2015.EX3.4>

COMMENTS

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is an engagement process where City residents propose and vote on community investment projects. These projects are funded through a pre-determined portion of a municipal budget. PB has been practised in various forms in cities around the world, including by Toronto Community Housing, to involve and empower the public in local decision-making. Toronto's three-year PB Pilot engaged residents in Ward 33 and the neighbourhoods of Oakridge (Ward 35) and Rustic (Ward 12). The City Manager is evaluating the Pilot and will report to Council on the findings and recommendations in 2018.

Summary of the 2017 Participatory Budgeting (PB) Pilot Process

The City Manager's Office coordinates the PB Pilot in collaboration with local councillors and Parks Forestry and Recreation, Social Development Finance and Administration, Transportation Services, Toronto Public Health and Strategic Communications. Key components of the PB Pilot in 2017 included:

- **Community outreach and idea collection (June-September 2017).** City staff promoted the PB Pilot and encouraged participation by reaching out to residents and community networks at local festivals and events, social media, a website and printed materials distributed through summer camps, at community centres and libraries, and mailed to all households. Residents were invited to submit their ideas for potential PB funding at events, at information tables and online. The City

collected approximately 235 ideas for consideration, ranging from new playgrounds to pedestrian safety measures to neighbourhood beautification.

- **Proposal development and shortlisting (October 2017).** City staff reviewed all ideas against PB eligibility criteria, for example, potential projects needed to cost \$250,000 or less, be fundable through the capital budget and be located on City-owned property. Eligible ideas were then brought back to each community for discussion. Residents selected 6 to 8 projects to appear on each area ballot for voting. The ballots were posted online and information distributed through community newspapers in advance of the voting dates. Ideas not selected for the ballot were forwarded to the local councillor and appropriate City divisions for consideration.
- **Voting (December 2017).** Two voting dates were held in multiple locations in each pilot area. Anyone 14 years or older who lived in the pilot area could choose up to three projects from a ballot. A total of 375 people cast votes for PB projects in 2017.

2017 Voting Results

Residents selected 14 projects with a total cost of \$705,000. The results are described in Table 1.

This report recommends that City Council authorize the Acting Chief Financial Officer to fund the projects in Table 1 from the appropriate capital funding source.

Table 1: Final 2017 PB Projects by Area, Total Ballots and Total Votes¹

<p>Ward 33: Total Ballots: 277 / Total Votes: 722 / Total cost: \$235,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exercise Park in Parkway Forest Park (\$75,000) An outdoor fitness park will offer opportunities for people of all ages to exercise.• Seniors Exercise Park in Godstone Park (\$50,000) This outdoor fitness park would be open for people of all ages, with specific equipment geared to seniors.• Pleasantview Park Improvements (\$20,000) Three new benches will increase seating, and play structure will be re-painted.• Shawnee Park Recreation Improvements (\$75,000) Existing amenities will be enhanced with a small sports pad for ball hockey/hopscotch/rollerblading, a "bench fit circuit" with 7-8 fitness benches, and pickleball will be added to one or more tennis courts.
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¹ Residents were invited to vote for up to three of the projects on the ballot.
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- **Shawnee Park Accessibility Improvements (\$15,000)**

The existing pathway through the park will be made more accessible by adding curb cuts and path connection at Shawnee Circle and Micmac Crescent.

Oakridge: Total Ballots: 45 / Total Votes: 136 / Total cost: \$225,000

- **Madelaine Park Lighting Upgrade (\$45,000)**

Existing poles and lights will be upgraded with brighter, more energy-efficient LED lighting.

- **New Junior Playground in Madelaine Park (\$100,000)**

The existing play structure on the north side of the park will be replaced with new junior equipment and rubberized ground surface.

- **New Water Bottle-Filling Station in Oakridge Park (\$20,000)**

A new water bottle-filling station will be installed near the playground and splash pad.

- **Madelaine Park Pathway Upgrade (\$50,000)**

The existing pathway will be replaced and widened to improve access and safety.

- **New Water Bottle-Filling Station in Prairie Drive Park (\$10,000)**

A new water bottle-filling station will be mounted on a wall near the playground.

Rustic: Total Ballots: 53 / Total Votes: 149 / Total cost: \$245,000

- **Exercise Park in Maple Leaf Park (\$75,000)**

An outdoor fitness park will offer opportunities for people of all ages to exercise.

- **Lights Around Maple Leaf Park Reservoir (\$50,000)**

Three or four new light poles will be installed around reservoir for safety.

- **Pathway Around Maple Leaf Park Reservoir (\$100,000)**

A gravel pathway will allow people to walk safely around the reservoir.

- **Chess Tables in Maple Leaf Park (\$20,000)**

Two outdoor chess tables and seating will be erected in Maple Leaf Park.

Summary of All Years of PB Pilot

Together, 37 projects were selected through PB voting between 2015 and 2017, costing a total of \$1,870,000.

PB Pilot Project Implementation

The City seeks to complete the selected PB projects within 12 to 18 months of each year's vote, to align with capital budgeting and spending timelines. All projects from the 2015 PB Pilot cycle have been installed, and 2016 projects have been completed or are in planning/procurement stage. The City will endeavour to complete installation of the 2017 projects by spring 2019.

Parks Forestry and Recreation is coordinating design and installation of PB projects on parkland, and Transportation Services-Public Realm leads the implementation of projects on sidewalks and other public spaces. The City Manager's Office communicates progress of project implementation to residents via the PB website and social media feeds. The success in meeting implementation timelines is being evaluated as part of the pilot project.

Project Evaluation

The City is evaluating the PB Pilot throughout its implementation to consider its success and options for future participatory budgeting initiatives in Toronto. Participation rates, idea types, projects supported, impact on civic engagement and community empowerment are all being examined through surveys and interviews with participants, City divisions and stakeholder organizations. The City Manager will report on the PB Pilot results, its evaluation and recommendations to City Council in 2018.

CONTACT

Meg Shields, A/Director, Strategic and Corporate Policy, 416-392-0523
Meg.Shields@toronto.ca

Josie Lavita, Executive Director, Financial Planning, 416-397-4229
Josie.Lavita@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Peter Wallace
City Manager