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2020 OPERATING BUDGET BRIEFING NOTE

Possible Donation Matching Program for Tree Planting Relating to the GrandTrees Climate Change Initiative

Issue/Background:

- A motion adopted by Budget Committee at its meeting on Friday, January 17, 2020 requested that Parks, Forestry and Recreation explore the potential to implement a donation matching program to support tree planting as proposed by the GrandTrees Climate Change Initiative.
- GrandTrees Climate Solutions, a non-profit fund raising organization founded in 2019, is focused on climate change initiatives and is seeking to raise \$1 million for tree planting in the Greater Toronto Area through a walk to be held on May 10, 2020 at Evergreen Brick Works.
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation have met with the group and it has been agreed that the funds raised would be well suited to complement the City's tree planting grant program.
- Each year, the City's grant program awards up to \$0.75 million in funding on a 50-50 cost sharing basis to tree planting organizations such as the Highway of Heroes Tree Campaign and LEAF resulting in a net impact of \$1.5 million annually for tree planting.
- GrandTrees has announced partnerships with Evergreen, Forests Ontario, and the Highway of Heroes Tree Campaign who are all City of Toronto partners as well.
- Since 2017, Urban Forestry has awarded \$2.25 million through its granting program for planting partnerships; which has resulted in a \$4.5 million investment in the tree canopy.

Key Points:

- Urban Forestry currently plants approximately 125,000 trees annually through its public and private planting programs. In 2020-2021, Urban Forestry will plant an additional 26,000 trees with grant funding from the Federal Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund (DMAF).
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PF&R) supports the work of the GrandTrees fund raising organization and has invited them to partner with us in granting funds to tree planting organizations through expansion of the City's existing Tree Planting Partnership Program.
- The City of Toronto is partnering with GrandTrees for their inaugural GrandTrees Walk event on May 10, 2020, by facilitating the planting of 75-100 trees with participants on a site along the walking route as well as a ceremonial planting at the kick off of the event.

Questions & Answers:

- Where will trees be planted with the money raised by GrandTrees?
 - GrandTrees has not identified how much of the money raised would go towards tree planting in Toronto. Their partners include organizations that plant trees within and outside of Toronto.
- How many trees could be planted by the City of Toronto with additional funds?
 - There is currently no further space for additional trees to be planted on public land.
 - Based on historical data for private land planting programs, a contribution of \$100,000 to the City of Toronto could result in an additional 1,200 trees and shrubs being planted.

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