

City Council**Motion without Notice**

MM11.36	ACTION			Ward: All
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Mechanical Vacuum Leaf Collection Program - by Councillor Stephen Holyday, seconded by Councillor Brad Bradford

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.
* This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Stephen Holyday, seconded by Councillor Brad Bradford, recommends that:

1. City Council establish a Mechanical Vacuum Leaf Collection Program which mirrors the 2022 program, starting January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2024, that is funded through Transportation Services operating budget to a maximum of \$1.624 million, or such lesser amount set by the General Manager Transportation Services, at their sole discretion, based on their view of Transportation Services' budgetary requirements.

Summary

The Mayor's 2023 budget, passed in February 2023, contained two troubling service cuts. The first was a reduction in city tree maintenance budget, and the second was the deletion of the mechanical vacuum leaf collection program.

The mechanical vacuum leaf collection program is a highly valued service by residents in many parts of the city, and in particular Etobicoke, due to the dense mature urban forestry canopy which covers city streets and public places. The mechanical vacuum leaf collection program provides an easier and less costly way for residents to ensure leaves that have accumulated on the public right of way in front of their homes are efficiently collected without the need to purchase and fill paper collection bags. In some cases, residents are required to fill dozens and dozens of bags with leaves that accumulate from city trees along the street. This is an onerous task for many, including seniors. The efficient collection of leaves promotes safer streets, and helps avoid blockages of storm water and snow melt water. It is also a service which enhances the support by residents for planting additional trees.

Recently notices were distributed by the City to residents to inform them that the collection program has been terminated, and that they may no longer set out leaves in the manner they have over the past several decades. This has created tremendous concern and prompted calls to restore the program.

This notice is urgent because sufficient time is needed for the staff to plan a 2024 program. In light of the Speaker's ruling on October 11, 2023 to allow the placement of a motion regarding future budgets, a motion of this type to may now be considered in order.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM11.36