

Budget Committee Minutes

Meeting No. 7

November 6, 2019, 9:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Council Chamber

Members	Councillor Amanda Collucci, Chair	Councillor Keith Irish
	Councillor Andrew Keyes, Vice-Chair	Councillor Reid McAlpine
	Mayor Frank Scarpitti (ex-officio)	Councillor Karen Rea
	Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton	Councillor Khalid Usman
Regrets		
Roll Call	Regional Councillor Jim Jones	Bryan Frois, Chief of Staff
	Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer	Matthew Vetere, Manager, Budgeting
	Trinela Cane, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Phoebe Fu, Director of Environmental
	Services	Morgan Jones, Director, Operations
	Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community & Fire Services	Laura Gold, Council and Committee Coordinator
	Arvin Prasad, Commissioner Development Services	
	Joel Lustig, Treasurer	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Budget Committee convened at 9:34 AM with Councillor Amanda Collucci in the Chair.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None.

3. BUDGET PRESENTATION

3.1 CONTINUATION OF THE REVIEW OF 2020 DIRECTORS BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Morgan Jones, Director of Operations provided the 2020 Operations Department Budget Presentation.

Staff provided the following responses to the 2020 Operations Budget Presentation:

Greenhouses & Flower Baskets

Many municipalities do not have a greenhouse. Markham has a greenhouse so it can purchase plants at a low cost and store them in the greenhouse until they fill out. The greenhouse is also used to assemble flower baskets prior to transferring them to a City facility or streetscape. The City would need to hire a company to assemble the baskets if it did not have the greenhouse. Staff are always looking at ways to do things more efficiently.

Staff were complimented on the 2019 Main Street Unionville flower baskets.

New Work Yard in the East End of Markham

The new east work yard will be in operation by the fall of 2020. The new east work yard is important to providing a consistent level of service across the City of Markham.

Communication

Staff are looking at ways to improve communication to residents in regards to moving their vehicles from the street when there is a snow event, so that they do not get a ticket. The improved communication strategy will be presented to the General Committee on November 18, 2019.

Salt

Staff anticipated that the City will have enough salt to manage its winter operations this winter.

Vehicle Rental Cost Increase

It was clarified that the increase in the vehicle rental cost is due to more vehicles being needed to serve new areas of Markham. The vehicles are rented versus purchased due to them being used on a seasonal basis.

Horticulture

Staff will look at adding the Pan Am Centre to the City's Horticultural Community Centre Program to improve the horticulture at the facility. Planting the right species of plants is key to the success of the vegetation planted at City facilities.

Property Maintenance

The property located at 55 Parkway Avenue is not a facility that the Operations-Parks Department manages.

Committee suggested that the maintenance of a property should be considered when purchasing land to ensure there is adequate City resources to maintain the property.

Planting of New Trees and Boulevard Tree Pruning

The City is striving towards having a 30% tree canopy. In reaching this goal, it is first working towards protecting its existing tree inventory. Boulevard trees are being pruned in order of priority. The pruning can be prioritized based on the age of the subdivision (which is also the age of the boulevard trees), and based on data analytics collected by the City's Contact Centre. The new Tree Pruning Program will help maintain the health of the City's trees.

Residents can receive approval from the City to hire an arborist to prune their boulevard tree if they like.

The City now requires a larger set-back in new developments to allow trees to grow. The City is also in the process of developing a Forestry Plan, which will provide guidelines in regards to where trees should be planted. The plan will also look at how trees should be addressed through the City's lifecycle.

Safety Issues

The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services conducted two safety audits of the City's Operations Department, and no safety issues were identified. Both staff and student workers are trained on workplace safety.

Review of the Operations Capital Budget

Staff provided the following responses to the 2020 Operations Capital Budget Items:

Operations-Roads

20182 – City Owned Entrance Features Rehabilitation Program

The gateways included under this Capital Budget item require immediate attention. A report will be brought forward to the General Committee in early 2020 on City's Gateway Program.

A Committee Member noted that gateways should not be put on private property.

20183 – City Owned Fence Replacement Program

The City's fences are replaced based on the recommendation from the condition assessment.

20193 – Retaining Wall Repair Program

Staff confirmed that the City will fix any damage to the adjacent houses plantings due to the repairing of the retaining wall.

20194 – Storm Water Retention Pond Maintenance Program

The Operations Department is responsible for planting vegetation around the storm water management pond to ensure it functions as intended.

Operations-Parks

20198 – Boulevard/ Park Tree Replacement

The cost of planting these trees is higher due to mature trees being planted. The cost of planting a tree increases based on the size and maturity of the tree.

20208 – Parks Interpretive Signage Implementation – Phases 1 of 3

This Capital Budget item is to create signs that tell the story behind the naming of a park. The signs will be put up at all parks that have been named.

20211 – Recycling Containers Replacement

Staff confirmed they are looking at creating standards with respect to the placement of waste and recycling containers at parks.

20214 – Shade Structure Refurbishment

Staff confirmed that the shade structures at both the Millennium Band Stand and the Church Street Parkette will be refurbished as part of this project.

Operations – Fleet

20225 – New Fleet Parks

Most seasonal Operations-Fleet vehicles are leased. Vehicles that are purchased are maintained both internally and through outsourcing. All of the City's fire vehicles are purchased, and maintained internally.

Staff indicated that a Green Fleet Strategy is underway and will be completed in 2020.

The Operations Department provides feedback on the design of a park. Operations and Urban Design staff work together on the designs of new parks to ensure the park can be easily maintained.

Operations-Utility Inspection & Survey

There was no discussion on these Capital Budget Items.

Operations – Business & Technical Services

20231 – Growth Related Parks Improvements

Staff will advise Councillor Karen Rea if there will be a volleyball net added to Reesor Park, as part of the growth related parks improvements.

Moved by Councillor Andrew Keyes

Seconded by Councillor Khalid Usman

That the Operation-Roads Capital Budget Items be approved as presented.

Carried

Moved by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

Seconded by Councillor Keith Irish

That the Operations-Parks Capital Budget Item be approved as presented.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Karen Rea

Seconded by Councillor Reid McAlpine

That the Operations-Fleet Capital Budget Items be approved as presented.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Reid McAlpine
 Seconded by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

That the Operations-Utility Inspection and Survey Capital Budget Items be approved as presented.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Khalid Usman
 Seconded by Councillor Keith Irish

That the Operations - Business and Technical Services Capital Budget Items be approved as presented.

Carried

3.2 CONTINUATION OF THE REVIEW OF 2020 CAPITAL BUDGET

Phoebe Fu, Director of Environmental Services provided the 2020 Environmental Services Budget Presentation.

Staff provided the following responses to the 2020 Environmental Services Budget Presentation:

Stormwater Ponds

Stormwater Ponds serve a function and it is regulated under the Ontario Water Resources Act, which require cleaning to remove sediment to maintain pond capacity. When removing sediment from a pond, the environmental impact (such as wildlife) is mitigated according to regulatory requirements. The frequency of this work is once every 20-25 years based on sediment levels, the community can enjoy the pond again once the work is complete.

In the design of storm water ponds for the future, staff were requested to review the opportunities of placing them underground. It is recommended that staff conduct a cost benefit analysis, especially in expansion areas where land is limited.

Water Safety

Staff confirmed that Markham's water is safe to drink.

Water and Tax Billing

Staff confirmed that Alectra manages the City's water billing. Residents receive their water bill bi-monthly, as part of their Alectra bill. Residents have the option to sign up for e-billing through Alectra.

Staff were encouraged to continue to promote e-billing. It was suggested that in the future the City should consider charging more for mailing out tax bills.

Review of the Environmental Services Capital Budget

Staff provided the following responses to the 2020 Environmental Services Capital Budget Items:

Environmental Services – Infrastructure

20233 –Bridges and Culverts –Condition Inspection

Staff will follow up with Councillor Irish in regards to the Valley View Park pedestrian bridge that is currently closed.

20239 - Streetlight Poles & Cable Replacement

Staff confirmed that LED cobra style streetlights with concrete poles are being installed in the Varley Village. The height of the poles installed will be determined based on an analysis conducted by staff.

Staff were directed to re-investigate the possibility of installing decorative streetlights with LED lights in the Varley Village.

20244 –Structures Program Full Time Staff

This Capital Budget item is for an existing staff position that supports the City's Structures Program. The position and associated work are funded through Life Cycle.

Environmental Services – Stormwater

20250 – Water Quality Improvements and Geese Control

Staff will ask the Operations Department if there are plans to naturalize the east north side of Too Good Pond, as a geese control measure. This measure was successful on the south side of the pond.

Environmental Services – Waste

There was no discussion on the Environmental Services-Waste Capital Budget Items.

Environmental Services –Waterworks

There was no discussion on the Environmental Services-Waterworks Capital Budget Items.

Corporate Wide Capital Budget Items

20268 – Corporate Capital Contingency

The Corporate wide capital budget item is the contingency fund for all corporate projects.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton
Seconded by Councillor Reid McAlpine

That the Environmental Services-Infrastructure Capital Budget Items be approved as presented.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Khalid Usman
Seconded by Councillor Andrew Keyes

That the Environmental Services - Stormwater Capital Budget Items was approved as presented.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Keith Irish
Seconded by Councillor Reid McAlpine

That the Environmental Services-Waste Capital Budget Items be approved as presented.

Carried

Moved by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton
Seconded by Councillor Khalid Usman

That the Environmental Services-Waterworks Capital Budget Items be approved as presented.

Carried

Moved by Councillor Khalid Usman
Seconded by Councillor Andrew Keyes

That the Corporate Wide Capital Budget Item be approved as presented.

Carried

4. NEW BUSINESS

None.

5. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Budget Committee meeting will be held on November 8, 2019 at 9:00 AM.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The Budget Committee adjourned at 12:04 PM.