



Report to: Council

Report Date: January 14, 2014

SUBJECT: Request a Disaster Declaration for the Public Assistance of Ontario
Disaster Relief Assistance Program
PREPARED BY: Andrea Tang, Manager of Financial Planning

RECOMMENDATION:

Whereas the City of Markham recently experienced a severe ice storm from December 21-22, 2013, the effects of which continued until late December 2013; and,

Whereas the City has experienced substantial damage to municipal property and infrastructure; and,

Whereas other municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area ("GTA") similarly experienced the effects of the severe ice storm on municipal property and infrastructure;

Now therefore be it resolved:

- 1) That the staff report dated January 14, 2014 entitled "Request a Disaster Declaration for the Public Assistance of the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program (ODRAP)" be received; and,
- 2) That Markham Council request the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing ("MMAH") to declare the City of Markham a "disaster area" for the purposes of the Ontario Disaster Relief Assistance Program (ODRAP); and,
- 3) That the Province consider providing funding related to the severe ice storm costs from sources other than ODRAP given the extent and magnitude of the damage experienced in the City of Markham; and further,
- 4) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

To obtain Council approval to make a request to MMAH to declare the City of Markham a "disaster area" for the purposes of ODRAP.

BACKGROUND:

The City of Markham endured an extreme winter storm from December 21-22, 2013. Staff monitored the weather situation closely beginning December 18, 2013, and Markham's Emergency Operation Centre was activated on December 22, 2013.

Freezing rain and ice pellets led to ice accumulation of approximately 1 inch, resulting in power outages due to fallen trees and tree limbs onto the overhead power lines. At the peak of the power outage period, as many as 17,200 Markham PowerStream customers were without power. Residents were displaced from their homes, or stayed in their homes in uncomfortable circumstances. Businesses were impacted from the disruptions, in some cases were rendered in-operable due to power outage.

Despite the extreme weather conditions, Markham Forestry crews and PowerStream crews worked around the clock to mitigate and restore the situation. Markham Forestry crews were deployed to assist PowerStream in clearing trees that were blocking road access, as well to deal with emergency tree safety issues. It is estimated that approximately 10,000 trees were damaged during the storm.

Preliminary estimated response and recovery costs ranges from \$9.6M to \$13.2M. Further updates regarding the total costs of the ice storm will be presented to General Committee on a regular basis.

A comprehensive presentation from City Staff and PowerStream Staff was made to General Committee on January 8, 2014 (Appendices A and B).

DISCUSSION:

The Province of Ontario administers ODRAP. The purpose of the program is to assist those whose essential property has been extensively damaged as a result of a sudden, unexpected natural disaster.

The Program contains a public component that offers financial assistance to affected municipalities for disaster response and recovery. The Program provides financial assistance within the declared disaster area to restore damage public infrastructure to pre-disaster condition, when the cost of the restoration exceeds the financial capacity of the affected municipality and community at large.

In order to be eligible for ODRAP, the MMAH must make a declaration of a disaster area. To make a request, Markham Council must adopt a resolution requesting a disaster declaration for public assistance and forward this resolution to the MMAH within 14 working days from the date of the disaster. Staff has received confirmation from MMAH that a request from the City is required by January 14, 2014.

The public component of ODRAP provides assistance to municipalities when damage is so extensive that it exceeds the capacity of the affected area to manage. Municipalities within the declared disaster area may receive repayment and/or reimbursements of up to 100 percent of the eligible costs for uninsured municipal damage associated with the disaster.

Examples of eligible losses and costs under the public component include:

- ☐ Clearing and removal of debris and wreckage, including removal of trees and limbs if public safety is endangered;

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- ☐ Overtime for employees and those hired for disaster response/relief effort, or to backfill for regular employees deployed for disaster response/relief efforts;
 - ☐ Incremental administrative costs related to disaster relief committee;
 - ☐ Activation of the municipal emergency operations centre;
 - ☐ Municipal owned equipment costs or equipment rental costs;
 - ☐ Emergency communication;
 - ☐ Repair and restoration to pre-disaster condition of uninsured facilities (e.g. parks infrastructure); and
 - ☐ Evacuation and shelter of people and animals, including incremental expenses.

Regular salaries, insurance deductibles, equipment costs and lost revenues are not eligible costs under ODRAP.

In addition to the municipal Council resolution, municipalities must submit a municipal disaster information report containing at least a preliminary estimate of public damage losses within 14 working days of the disaster. Additional updates can be submitted to the MMAH as more accurate damage assessment information becomes available.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The preliminary estimated costs associated with the ice storm ranges from \$9.6M to \$13.2M, which includes costs incurred-to-date and estimated future recovery expenses. Response costs are estimated between \$2.6M to \$3.2M, and recovery costs are estimated between \$7.0M to \$10.0M. These costs are preliminary estimates and are subject to change. Further updates regarding the total costs of the ice storm will be presented to General Committee on a regular basis.

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:

Not applicable.

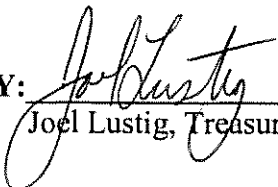
ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

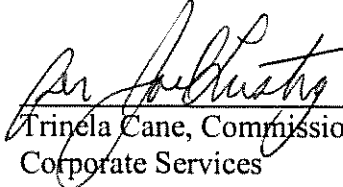
Not applicable.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Not applicable.

RECOMMENDED

BY: 
Joel Lustig, Treasurer


Trinela Cane, Commissioner,
Corporate Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A: "Ice Storm – December 2013" presentation by City of Markham

Appendix B: "City of Markham Ice Storm 2013" Presentation by PowerStream