

<p>5. SCHOOLYARD TREE PLANTING GRANT PROGRAM - UPDATE</p> <p>MISE À JOUR SUR LE PROGRAMME DE SUBVENTIONS POUR LA PLANTATION D'ARBRES DANS LES COURS D'ÉCOLE</p>

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive this report for information

RECOMMANDATION DU COMITÉ

Que le Conseil prenne connaissance du présent rapport.

DOCUMENTATION / DOCUMENTATION

1. Acting Deputy City Manager's report, City Operations, dated 28 September 2015 (ACS2015-COS-PWS-0033).

Rapport de la Directrice municipale adjointe par intérim, Opérations municipales, daté le 28 septembre 2015 (ACS2015-COS-PWS-0033).

2. Extract of Draft Minute, 5 October 2015.

Extrait de l'ébauche du procès-verbal, le 5 octobre 2015.

**Report to
Rapport au:**

**Environment Committee
Comité de l'environnement
5 October 2015 / 5 octobre 2015**

**and Council
et au Conseil
14 October 2015 / 14 octobre 2015**

**Submitted on September 28, 2015
Soumis le 28 septembre 2015**

**Submitted by
Soumis par:
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Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE

File Number: ACS2015-COS-PWS-0033

SUBJECT: Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program - Update

**OBJET: Mise à jour sur le Programme de subventions pour la plantation
d'arbres dans les cours d'école**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Environment Committee recommend Council receive this report for information.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité de l'environnement recommande au Conseil de prendre connaissance du présent rapport.

BACKGROUND

This report provides an overview of the successes of the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program during the 2011-2014 Term of Council.

The mandate of the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program (formerly the Community Partnership Tree Planting Grant Program and the Community Tree, Reforestation and Environmental Enhancement (TREE) Planting Grant Program) is to improve and enhance Ottawa's existing urban and rural forest cover by creating partnerships with the community for tree planting initiatives in schoolyards.

The Community Partnership Tree Planting Grant Program was established by the former Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton (RMOC) in 1999 after the North American Ice Storm of 1998. In 2006, the Program was included in the Council approved "Trees and Forests Maintenance Program, Quality Standards and Improvement Implementation Strategy" ([ACS2006-PWS-SOP-0005](#)) which outlined specific goals for its urban and rural forests and the proactive approach towards the maintenance and protection of these green assets.

In 2007, the City of Ottawa Environmental Strategy's goal to be a green and environmentally sensitive city was supported by the Community Tree, Reforestation and Environmental Enhancement (TREE) Planting Grant Program. The Program was a four year initiative that aimed to enhance the City of Ottawa's urban and rural forests through the planting of 100,000 trees between 2007 and 2010. The Program played a crucial role in achieving this initiative's target to plant 100,000 trees. The Program had several initiatives that relied on community groups, schools and individual residents to plant trees for the betterment of their local neighbourhoods.

At the May 11, 2010 Planning and Environment Committee Meeting, the Chair requested that the Public Works Department prepare a report outlining the next steps in the tree program, in light of the fact that the City's current tree planting program was coming to an end. In response, the Council approved "Growing a Healthy Forest for the Nation's Capital" report ([ACS2010-COS-PWS-0009](#)) proposed a multi-faceted program that would plan, protect, plant and maintain a healthy forest for future generations in the city of Ottawa. In order to continue the positive steps the City had taken through the Community TREE Planting Grant Program, a new Community Based Tree Planting Program was recommended. This report outlined the importance of engaging communities in the improvement of their neighbourhoods and was integral to increasing the quality of life in Ottawa. The report proposed the continuation of the Tree Planting Grant Program. This Program provides funding for schools, local interest groups and other not-for-profit organizations for tree planting projects.

The evolution of the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program has made a direct impact on the various tree planting targets set by Council, and allowed schools to receive hundreds of trees for their schoolyard. Since its creation in 2001, the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program has worked with more than 250 partners city-wide. On average, the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program awards approximately \$50,000 per year in funds and/or in-kind services to 14 - 16 different tree planting projects throughout the city. This funding and in-kind support has resulted in over 180 new trees planted annually in the various communities across the city.

DISCUSSION

The 2015-2018 City Strategic Plan has set specific goals in an effort to provide an environmentally sustainable Ottawa to its residents. The Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program directly contributes to the City's overall tree planting target in support of environmental sustainability, and has the goal of improving and enhancing Ottawa's existing urban and rural forest cover by creating community partnerships for tree planting initiatives in schoolyards. The Program offers community groups and other not-for-profit interest groups associated with the school the opportunity to take a lead role in deciding where trees are needed the most in their neighbourhoods. The Program's approach ensures that benefits are not only achieved for student use of the outdoor space, but also for the neighbourhood as a whole.

This report directs Council to reaffirm the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program for the 2015-2018 Term of Council. Not reaffirming the Program would put an end to the partnerships established with student or parent councils, environmental/garden clubs and other not-for-profit interest groups associated with the school for tree planting opportunities and projects.

Groups or associations wishing to obtain further information on the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program can visit ottawa.ca, or one of the City's Client Service Centres to obtain Buckslips on the Program.

Eligible Projects

Tree planting projects on school property within the city of Ottawa are eligible to apply for the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program. Applications are accepted from Student or Parent Councils, environmental/garden clubs or other not-for-profit interest groups associated with the school. Applications from school principals, teachers or other representatives of the school or school board are not eligible to apply.

Funding will not be awarded for projects that have already been started or completed. Groups may receive funding in successive years; however priority will be given to those groups who have not received past funding. Furthermore, groups receiving funding will not be eligible for tree planting funding through other City of Ottawa grant programs within the same year.

Projects are eligible for funding to cover the purchase and installation of trees only.

Application Deadline

Applications must be received by the City on or before June 1 of each year. Applications that are approved will be planted, or have funding awarded, for the spring season in the following year. A minimum of one site visit with a City representative is required as part of the grant review process, and must be completed between June 1 and December 1 of the application year.

To date, there are 22 applications received and pending for 2016.

Expenditures and Reporting

Funding must be spent, and projects completed, within 18 months of grant approval. For projects that have received grant funding dollars, submission of receipts is required within three months of expenditures. A final project report is due by May 1 in the year following project installation, and must include the number of trees planted, an evaluation of the tree maintenance program and photographs of the new plantings. The City reserves the right to reduce or reject a previously approved funding application if the required documentation is not submitted within three months of project completion. Recipients must acknowledge the City's support from the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program in any news articles or related promotional material related to the project.

Follow-up inspections by Forestry Services staff may be conducted to verify plant installation and use of appropriate maintenance techniques, as well as to suggest appropriate measures if issues arise. After the tree is planted, it is the recipient's responsibility to ensure that the trees are watered and maintained to facilitate healthy growth and establishment, and that the trees remain in their planted location.

Forestry Services staff will report back to Council on the number of trees planted under this program as part of the strategic initiatives reporting process. Additionally, Councillors will also receive an update each spring and fall on the total amount of trees planted within their Ward.

Funding Levels

The maximum grant funding level in any one year is \$10,000. Grants may be awarded in funds (up to \$500 per tree) or in trees supplied and planted by the City of Ottawa's Forestry Services Branch. No fund matching is required on the part of the applicant. The number of projects awarded each year is subject to the availability of City funds for this program. A limited number of schoolyard projects each planting season will be awarded with trees. The selection of these projects is at the discretion of Forestry Services.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

The Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program is a city-wide program, and therefore schoolyards in rural communities are eligible for inclusion in the Program.

CONSULTATION

No consultations were required as part of this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to implementing the recommendation in the report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with this report or its recommendations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report. The funding is within the existing Forestry Base Budget.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no direct accessibility impacts related to this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The City of Ottawa's Strategic Plan has set specific goals for its urban and rural forests and takes a proactive approach towards the maintenance and protection of these green assets. The Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program directly supports the priority of environmental sustainability through tree planting initiatives in schoolyards, which benefits both the schools and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program aligns to Strategic Initiative 19 – Increase Forest Cover, under the 2015-2018 Sustainable Environmental Services Strategic Priority, Strategic Objective ES1 – Support an Environmentally Sustainable Ottawa. These tree planting projects will preserve and enhance forest cover and ensure the sustainability of the urban and rural forest.

DISPOSITION

Upon approval of this report, Forestry Services will continue administering the Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program in accordance with the City of Ottawa Grants and Contributions Policy.