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September 21, 2020

City Council Meeting September 28, 2020

His Worship Mayor Clark and Members of City Council:

Re: Environmental Sustainability Reserve – Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee – Feedback (CK 1815-1)

On September 8, 2020 the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities & Corporate Services resolved that the report *Environmental Sustainability Reserve* be forwarded to the Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee (SEAC) for feedback.

On September 10, 2020, SEAC reviewed the Approval Report for amendments to *Council Policy No. C03-003, Reserve for Future Expenditures*, which are required for the inclusion of an Environmental Sustainability Reserve and resolved to have the SEAC Greenhouse Gas Subcommittee draft feedback ahead of the September 28, 2020 City Council meeting. This summary reflects the views of SEAC.

Support for the Environmental Sustainability Reserve

SEAC endorses the establishment of an Environmental Sustainability Reserve. Having a consistently funded reserve fund will improve council's ability to implement its sustainability strategies. It will also improve the ability of council to leverage external funding by accessing unplanned fund matching opportunities that will occur outside standard budget cycles.

Goals for the Environmental Sustainability Reserve

The Environmental Sustainability Reserve should be performance-driven by prioritizing the effective achievement of quantifiable sustainability outcomes.

The fund should focus on funding initiatives that are difficult to fund elsewhere, those not well suited to accessing existing reserves, annual operating budgets, or the Green Loan Program.

The fund should be accessible to initiatives arising from all departments and not just those from the Sustainability unit. For example, projects arising from the Active

Transportation Plan and Transit should also be considered. Spending for cycling infrastructure is justified as an effective tool to reduce GHG emissions.

Application of funding

In support of these goals, criteria supporting the application of funds from the Environmental Sustainability Reserve should consider:

1. *Performance-driven:*

- Measurable Impact – Prioritize projects that demonstrate greater quantifiable positive environmental outcomes related to waste, water, energy, GHGs and ecological systems.
- Confidence – Prioritize projects where there is a high degree of confidence that the environmental outcomes will be successfully achieved.
- Permanence – Long-term or continuous environmental benefits should be prioritized over short-term, one-time benefits.

2. *Ensure “additionality”.*

- Environmental additionality – Projects that produce environmental benefits that would not have otherwise occurred under business as usual or standard practice. (i.e. Only elements that go above and beyond compliance with existing guidelines and bylaws could be eligible).
- Financial additionality – Projects that would not otherwise occur due to lack of financial return, market incentives (higher cost or lower revenue) or regular access to funding.
- Technological additionality – Leads to accelerated deployment of new technology or approaches that would not have otherwise occurred. Projects that are “First of its kind”, or act as a pilot project or steppingstone to broader adoption.
- Social additionality – Projects that lead to increased adoption of sustainability among populations that would normally experience social barriers to participating.
- Legal additionality - Projects must be above and beyond what is required by the City of Saskatoon by law or regulation. (i.e. If the federal or provincial government mandates that a certain activity is now required, new costs associated with compliance would not be eligible).

3. *A Prevention Hierarchy*

- Projects focused on avoidance, reduction and mitigation of environmental impacts should be prioritized over adaptation, reclamation, and off-setting initiatives.

4. *Leveraging Funding*

- Projects that leverage additional external funding in the achievement of sustainability outcomes should be prioritized

Demonstrate Effectiveness to Support Increased Fund Contribution

Demonstrating effectiveness early on by tracking and reporting on the outcomes of funded initiatives is important to rationalize continued growth and contribution to this fund. Reporting could extend beyond waste, water energy, and ecological measures to include citizen engagement and participation. Total dollars leveraged from other sources should also be tracked.

We recommend increasing contributions as the current amount is very small compared to the number of identified sustainability initiatives and it would have minimal ability to leverage the funding that is anticipated from other levels of government to support GHG reduction.

Like all new policies, projects and programs being considered by the City of Saskatoon, the Triple Bottom Line Policy should be used to inform decisions related to this fund.

The Committee respectfully requests the above matter be considered at the September 28, 2020 meeting of City Council.

Yours truly,

Erin Akins, Chair

Saskatoon Environmental Advisory Committee