

# Low Carbon Economy Fund Application Intake

## ISSUE

The Government of Canada is accepting applications for the Low Carbon Economy Fund. The Administration is requesting City Council Approval to submit applications for the Civic Conservatory, and per a previous report, a City of Saskatoon (City) owned Organics Process Facility.

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That City Council approve and direct the Administration to submit an application for the Civic Conservatory to the Low Carbon Economy Fund;
2. That if any applications are successful, the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the agreement(s) from the Low Carbon Economy Fund under the Corporate Seal; and
3. That if required, the Senior Financial Business Partner be granted delegated authority to sign and submit progress reports and financial claims related to the project.

## BACKGROUND

The Low Carbon Economy Fund (LCEF) was originally launched in 2017 with the program goals being the reduction of Canada's GHG emissions, generate clean growth and build resilient communities. To be eligible under the Challenge Fund, projects are required to result in GHG emissions reductions in 2030 (70% of project score) and align with Canada's goals for net-zero emissions by 2050 (15% of project score). The remaining project score is related to non-GHG benefits such as clean growth, the environment, Indigenous leadership and health and safety.

At its June 28, 2021 meeting, when considering [Civic Conservatory Renewal Options](#), City Council resolved:

1. "That Option 3 – "Restoration Plus" as the basis for capital planning and potential funding applications through other government funding programs with consideration of future expansion in the design (Option 2), be approved."

At its January 9, 2024 meeting, when considering the [Long Term Organics Processing Options – Low Carbon Economy Challenge Application](#), the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services resolved in part:

1. "That the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services recommend to City Council that the Administration be directed to include a City-owned Organics Processing Facility for submission to the Low Carbon Economy Challenge Fund;"

The recommendation from the January 9, 2024 meeting will be considered at the same City Council meeting as this report on January 31, 2024.

## **DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS**

### Civic Conservatory

The Civic Conservatory was originally built in 1964 and had attracted over 80,000 visitors annually prior to closing in 2017. Condition assessments indicate that while the existing concrete columns and beam structures are adequate, the remainder of the building envelope, roof design, mechanical systems, health and safety measures and accessibility are all in need of replacement prior to reopening. The June 28, 2021, Civic Conservatory Renewal Options report detailed options on the extent of the retrofit for future applications for government funding. In general, the project involves the following components:

- Repair and renewal of the roof;
- Replacement of the glazing to a more energy efficient and bird-friendly glass product;
- Installation of an upgraded heating and cooling system;
- Restoration of the walled garden adjacent to the south elevation of the Civic Conservatory;
- Repair of the east (river side) heritage brick wall; and
- Enhancements to address accessibility of the conservatory area, which may include addition of an external walkway/ramp.

As the Civic Conservatory and the adjoining Mendel Building (now housing the Nutrien Wonderhub) is a designated municipal heritage property, any retrofit and/or expansion must proceed in a way that is sensitive to the heritage character-defining elements. A Class D cost estimate for the work from the June 28, 2021 report was \$6.0 million and is currently being updated.

### City Organics Process Facility

While development and analysis of the options for Organics Processing continues, the Standing Policy Committee on Environment, Utilities and Corporate Services has recommending to City Council that a City-owned organics processing facility project be included in the submission projects, to the LCECF program. If approved, through a separate report at today's meeting, the Administration will make it clear in the application that City Council will be making a decision on the matter in the coming months.

City Council approval is required to give the Mayor and City Clerk the ability to execute the Agreement on behalf of the City. Additionally, more Federal funding programs are requiring a resolution of City Council to give Administration the ability to submit claims and project status reports on the program. Administration is also requesting approval that the Senior Financial Business Partner be granted delegated authority to sign and submit any progress reports and financial claims related to the project to meet all the administrative requirements of the funding program.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The LCEF will cover 50% of eligible costs of a project up to \$50.0 million. Currently the Civic Conservatory has no funding available for the City portion of costs and would need to report back regarding funding options if the application is successful.

**OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no privacy, legal, social or environmental implications identified.

**NEXT STEPS**

The Administration will report back to City Council at the appropriate time to create capital projects for those that do not have an existing project, also to report on funding plans for the project.

**REPORT APPROVAL**

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