

Adaptation in Action Budget Adjustment

ISSUE

The City of Saskatoon (City) was successful in an application to ClimateWest Adaptation in Action Program for the City's project on the Economic Value of Natural Assets in a Changing Prairie Climate. A budget adjustment is required to add approved grant funds to Capital Project P.10093 Natural Areas Protection and Health. Additionally, approval is required to have the Mayor and City Clerk to have the authority to execute the agreement under the Corporate Seal.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Capital Project P.10093, Natural Areas Protection and Health be increased by \$50,000 funded from the ClimateWest Adaptation in Action Program;
2. That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized to execute the Agreement from ClimateWest 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

Applications to ClimateWest's Adaptation in Action program were accepted until February 20, 2024. The program had a total of \$300,000 in funding available to support projects up to \$50,000 that:

- Build understanding about the range of plausible future climate conditions and how these may impact communities, businesses, governments, and/or organizations;
- Bridge Indigenous and Western scientific knowledges to better advance climate adaptation and resilience;
- Identify and assess climate risks and vulnerabilities that result in learnings that can apply across the region; and
- Develop information or communications materials that enable adaptation action and investment.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The project being completed with \$50,000 in ClimateWest Adaption in Action funding will assess the environmental, social, and economic values of natural assets in the prairies and the associated services they provide. The study will build upon and refine previous work completed by the City of Saskatoon and Meewasin (i.e., the *Natural Asset Valuation Pilot Project* and *An Estimate of the Economic Value of Meewasin Valley's Natural Capital*), while also working with the Natural Assets Initiative (NAI) to determine methodologies that generate more comprehensive results. This is driven by

the need for more locally appropriate data that can help build the business case for investments in natural assets. Results are anticipated to be relevant to other prairie regions.

The following outputs are expected to support climate adaptation and natural asset management by a broader prairie audience:

- Economic estimates that can be extrapolated to natural assets across the prairie region in areas with similar climatic conditions and hazards.
- An articulated process or methodology to apply climate risk and ecosystem services benefits in decision-making. This output may be applicable beyond the target audiences in the prairie region as many climate impacts expected in the prairies are also expected in other Canadian regions.
- Results could inform policies, plans and strategies, which could support communities that are working on Climate Adaptation Strategies, natural areas policies or processes, or similar work.
- For communities in the prairies facing development pressures (in particular, greenfield development), this work will elevate the role of natural assets within urban decision-making. The results from the valuation could be used to guide decision-making and support alternative ways to think about development scenarios in an urban context.
- The cost-benefit analysis could be used to compare a natural asset approach against a business-as-usual scenario and identify where natural asset investments could effectively offset costs on other departments or sectors.
- The natural asset valuation could support annual budgeting estimates for the maintenance and monitoring of natural assets and their associated services. This could support operations and maintenance costing for the maintenance of natural capital.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total cost of the project is \$105,320 with ClimateWest Adaptation in Action Program contributing \$50,000. Sufficient funding for the City's portion of costs is available in Capital Project P.10093 Natural Areas Protection and Health, as well as in operating for City of Saskatoon staff In-Kind contributions.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

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

NEXT STEPS

Upon execution of the Agreement, Administration will proceed with procuring a consultant to prepare the study and final report. Results of the study will be integrated into the City's Natural Areas Portfolio and asset management processes.

REPORT APPROVAL

Written by: Jeremy Meinema, Senior Financial Business Partner
Reviewed by: Kari Smith, Director of Finance
Approved by: Clae Hack, Chief Financial Officer

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