

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE JUNE 3, 2002

THE BLACK CREEK PROJECT – FUNDING REQUEST (ITEM 4, BUDGET SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING OF MAY 27, 2002)

Recommendation

The Budget Sub-Committee recommends:

- 1) That staff provide the Black Creek Project (BCP) with copies of relevant sewer maps and related information; and
- 2) That the following report of the Commissioner, Development Services, dated May 27, 2002, be received.

Report of the Commissioner, Development Services

The Commissioner, Development Services requests direction regarding a partnership proposal and funding request from the Black Creek Project.

Purpose

This report has been prepared to inform Council of a two year partnership and funding request the Black Creek Project is proposing and of the water studies they intend to perform.

Background - Analysis and Options

The Black Creek is a tributary of the Humber River that originates in the City of Vaughan in the Rutherford Road and Highway # 400 area. The creek has been channelized and piped through much of it's length, with a number of stormwater management ponds contributing to the flow.

The Black Creek Project (BCP) has worked since 1982 and involved thousands of school children and volunteers to mitigate the degradation of the creek by: planting thousands of trees and shrubs, clearing tonnes of garbage from the creek and surrounding lands, completing erosion control projects and creating three wetlands. Despite these efforts, the quality and quantity of water and the wildlife habitat continue to be of concern.

The BCP intends to develop and implement a program to sample the storm sewers entering the creek, analyze the samples for contaminants, and work with the City to identify and eliminate the pollution sources. Construction and agricultural uses contributing the creek will be monitored. The BCP will identify potential sites for new storm water treatment ponds and wetlands.

The BCP will create and deliver an outreach program to encourage and assist businesses to control storm water runoff using various methods within their sites and practice environmentally friendly landscaping.

A representative of the BCP appeared before the Special Committee of the Whole on March 4, 2002 and presented their proposal. BCP identified the Great Lakes Sustainability Fund as their potential main funding partner and also named the City of Vaughan, Ontario Great Lakes Renewal Foundation and TD Canada Trust Friends of the Environmental as potential partners. BCP confirmed the Toronto and Region Conversation Authority, City of Toronto, Kodak Canada, Royal Bank and Lake Ontario Lake Keepers as funding partners.

The BCP is requesting that the City of Vaughan participate by supplying the following in-kind contributions:

1. Technical assistance from By-Law Enforcement and Public Works Wastewater Section to develop and implement water quality and quantity improvement actions and trace and eliminate pollution sources.
2. Cost of lab analysis for water samples taken in Vaughan up to \$10,000 annually.
3. Copies of relevant sewer maps and related information.

The biggest concern Public Works has with the partnership proposal is the staff time required for this project. It has been estimated by the BCP that this project would require approximately 35 days per year of staff time. This re-allocation of staff cannot be accommodated without negatively impacting scheduled maintenance programs. As such, if Council considers the BCP to be a priority, it is important to be aware that other wastewater maintenance works will not get done.

In terms of the request to fund up to \$10,000 worth of water sample analysis, funds have been tentatively included to the draft Water and Sewer budget to cover the cost of the water sample analysis, should Council wish to contribute to this aspect of the project.

The request for relevant sewer maps can be accommodated at minimal cost to the City.

Conclusion

The request for staff time cannot be accommodated without negatively impacting Public Works' scheduled maintenance programs.

Tentative funding to cover the cost of water sample analysis has been included in the draft Water and Sewer budget, should Council wish to contribute to this aspect of the project.

As the BCP made a deputation to Council requesting assistance from the City with this project, Council direction is respectfully requested concerning this application and partnership.

Attachments

N/A

Report prepared by:

Robert Meek, Manager of Environmental and Technical Services

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor Bernie Di Vona, Chair