



REPORT

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Meeting Date: September 15, 2020
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TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services in consultation with the General Manager of Finance, Risk and Supply Chain Management

SUBJECT: Funding Applications for Green Rainwater Infrastructure Asset Management and Rain City Strategy Nomination for UBCM's Community Excellence

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council approve two funding application to support Green Rainwater Infrastructure Asset Management Planning: (1) \$15,000 from Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Asset Management Planning Program and; (2) \$50,000 from Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Municipal Asset Management Program Grants;

FURTHER THAT the City of Vancouver commits contribution up to a maximum of \$100,000 funded from the approved 2020 Capital Project Budget for Green Infrastructure Implementation.

- B. THAT council support the nomination of the City of Vancouver's Rain City Strategy for the Excellence in Sustainability Award through the Union of British Columbia Municipalities' 2020 Community Excellence Awards.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks Council endorsement for two funding grant applications (with a value of \$65,000) and one award application related to the Rain City Strategy and green rainwater infrastructure (GRI) implementation. The Rain City Strategy is a 30 year plan to transform how rainwater is managed in Vancouver and includes three GRI Implementation Action Plans to guide our water infrastructure implementation work. GRI within streets and public spaces serve

as essential water infrastructure assets, vital to meeting our regulatory obligations around liquid waste and environmental protection as well as numerous service outcomes. GRI assets are designed to help restore and mimic the natural water cycle in our urban environment, to divert rainwater from the pipe system, reduce combined sewer overflows (CSOs), clean rainwater runoff pollutants and support climate resilience and healthy ecosystems, among many other co-benefits for the community.

Within the Rain City Strategy Streets and Public Spaces Action Plan, developing a GRI Asset Management Program was identified as a top priority. Well established asset management ensures cost-effective service outcomes and that GRI maintains its functional levels of service to meet intended water quality and volume targets, and preserves the value of our asset investments over time. These funding applications will support implementation of the Rain City Strategy and the development of a GRI Asset Management Program.

Further to the asset management program grant applications, this report recommends endorsement of an award application for the 2020 Union of BC Municipalities' (UBCM) Excellence in Sustainability Award, which will be announced on Sep 23, 2020 at the UBCM 2020 Convention. The Rain City Strategy is an innovative, progressive and sustainable approach to rainwater management that has received National (4 awards) and Provincial recognition (2 awards) for its vision, leadership and transformative approach. Refer to Appendix A for awards received to date. The award application through UBCM would be an opportunity to raise the profile of Vancouver's leadership and efforts in this sphere within BC, with the Province and peer municipalities while also drawing attention to the value and potential of holistic and integrated approaches to rainwater management and the associated positive impacts for communities.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

On November 5, 2019, Council adopted the Rain City Strategy and related Green Rainwater Infrastructure Implementation Action Plans and directed staff to begin implementation as part of the 2019-2022 Capital Plan.

The Rain City Strategy builds on and reinforces many City and Park Board strategies and priorities, including:

- VanPlay: Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan (2019)
- Motion – Accelerate combined sewer overflow mitigation (2019)
- Resilient Vancouver Strategy (2019)
- Climate Emergency Response (2019)
- Motion – Watershed Revival (2019)
- Motion – 1995 Greenways Refresh (2019)
- Motion – False Creek to the Fraser River Blueway (2019)
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (updated in 2018)
- Motion – Mandatory Green Roofs (2018)
- VanPlay: 10 goals to shape the next 25 years (2018)
- Cambie Corridor Utility Servicing Plan (2018)
- Rain City Strategy Update (2017)
- Complete Streets Policy Framework (2017)
- Green Building Policy for Rezonings (2016)
- Biodiversity Strategy (2016)
- Citywide Integrated Rainwater Management Plan (IRMP) (2016)

- Healthy City Strategy (2014)
- Urban Forest Strategy (2014)
- Transportation 2040 (2012)
- Greenest City 2020 Action Plan (GCAP) (2011)

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager supports approval of the recommendations. The Rain City Strategy establishes an ambitious new vision for a more holistic and integrated approach to water management in Vancouver. Implementing Green Rainwater Infrastructure is a core component of our rainwater management systems and supports Council directions around clean water, resiliency and healthy urban systems while also supporting objectives related to the climate emergency, affordability, equity and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

REPORT

Background/Context

On November 5, the Rain City Strategy was unanimously adopted by Council. To date, the City has delivered 240 GRI assets, with planning and construction for several more projects underway. Proper asset management is critical to the long-term function of these essential parts of the City's drainage network. An asset management plan will ensure cost-effective service delivery while meeting performance outcomes around water quality, water volume, and CSO reductions. GRI also provides a number of co-benefits, including urban heat island reduction, biodiversity enhancement, and has the potential to reduce vulnerabilities within communities to water-related climate change impacts along with providing more equitable ecosystem services in communities. All of these co-benefits rely on proper asset management to ensure their long term function and effectiveness. Asset management planning for GRI is a priority for supporting affordable water servicing plans for high growth areas such as the Cambie and Broadway Corridors and for capital delivery for the 2019-2022 Capital Plan for Green Infrastructure Implementation.

UBCM's Municipal Asset Management Program assists local governments in delivering sustainable services by extending and deepening asset management practices within their organization. Grants of up to \$15,000 are available to support activities that advance a local government's asset management planning or practices, and that facilitate better integration of asset management planning with long term financial planning.

FCM's The Municipal Asset Management Program (MAMP) funding supports Canadian municipalities in making informed infrastructure investment decisions based on stronger asset management. They fund a broad spectrum of asset management activities, including asset management assessments; development of asset management plans, policies and strategies; asset-related data collection and reporting; asset management training and organizational development; and knowledge transfer around asset management. Grants covering 80% of total eligible project costs up to a maximum of \$50,000 are available. Intake for this program is ongoing.

Council resolution confirming support of both the UBCM and FCM Asset Management Program grants is required as part of the application process.

The UBCM Community Excellence Awards have been offered since 2004 to recognize and celebrate UBCM members that have implemented projects or programs that demonstrate excellence in meeting the purposes of local government in BC. The awards are designed to profile promising practices and to encourage local governments to learn from the success of other members in order to implement changes in their own communities. The Excellence in Sustainability award recognizes UBCM members that incorporate a long-term sustainability lens to planning, policy and practice.

Council endorsement of the nomination is required as part of the award application process. The preliminary award application was submitted to UBCM by the June 30, 2020, deadline, and will be considered by UBCM, subject to Council endorsement of the application per this report. The awards ceremony will be a virtual event this year, hosted on Sep 23, 2020 as part of the UBCM Annual Convention (Sep 22-24, 2020).

Strategic Analysis

Asset Management Planning and Implementation

Asset management is an integrated process bringing together planning, finance, engineering and operations to effectively manage existing and new infrastructure to maximize benefits, reduce risks and provide satisfactory levels of service to community users in a socially, environmentally and economically sustainable manner. The Streets and Public Spaces Action Plan of the Rain City Strategy identifies the need to establish a GRI Asset Management and Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Program. This program will establish the foundations for an optimized service delivery and governance model for managing the City's GRI assets that is adaptable, scalable, and sustainable over the long term.

To achieve this, the City will apply the grant funds towards the following activities:

- Developing and implementing service delivery models for GRI asset management at the City
- Completing financial planning and projections as well as business case development for asset management programs
- Exploring options for sustainable funding mechanism for long-term asset management, and
- Establishing GRI governance structures amongst the various Engineering Department branches to clarify roles, responsibilities and accountability for the City's GRI assets.

UBCM Community Excellence Award for the Rain City Strategy

The Rain City Strategy is a strong candidate for the Excellence in Sustainability Award, as it takes into account all 4 pillars of sustainability (social, cultural, economic, and environmental) as outlined by UBCM. The Rain City Strategy provides a 30-year roadmap for advancing green infrastructure (GI) implementation to meet the sewer and drainage needs of the growing and changing city – integrating GI solutions into land-use decisions, infrastructure upgrades, community plans, and urban design. It is an example of how holistic and integrated planning can support municipalities in meeting their purpose to foster sustainability, provide services for community benefit, provide stewardship of public assets and exhibit good governance. This award would recognize the hard work, dedication, and leadership of City Staff and Council in developing an influential and community-changing strategy.

Implications/Related Issues/Risk

Financial

The grant applications require that the City commits to fund a portion of the initiatives costs if the grants are awarded. Upon approval of the grants, the City will fund the commitment up to a maximum of \$100,000 from the 2020 Capital Project Budget for Green Infrastructure Implementation Planning program.

Risk Management

GRI is an essential part of Vancouver's drainage and water management infrastructure systems, complement our piped infrastructure and provide important risk mitigation benefits related to the water quality impacts of our sewer and drainage system (combined sewer overflows and rainwater run-off pollutants) and climate resilience (flooding, sea-level rise, urban heat and drought). Ensuring proper planning for asset management and investment decision-making over the lifecycle of our GRI assets is critical to building a sustainable and prudent asset management and implementation.

CONCLUSION

GRI asset management supports infrastructure investments that help us meet our regulatory obligations and align with council priorities around equity, the climate emergency, affordability, and servicing for a growing city. The City has an opportunity to apply for \$65,000 under the FCM and UBCM Municipal Asset Management Grant Programs to support these goals and to ensure that GRI assets are tracked, operated and maintained as an integral part of the City's drainage network.

The UBCM Community Excellence Awards nomination for the Rain City Strategy is an opportunity to recognize the innovation and dedication of Council in moving forward an important initiative that support cultural, social, economic and financial sustainability for the community related to holistic and integrated water management.

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Awards received by the Rain City Strategy:

Organization	Award	Status and Announcement
Canadian Society of Landscape Architects	National Award of Excellence for Planning and Analysis	Awarded - May 12, 2020
Canadian Water and Wastewater Association	National Awards: (1) Waters Next Award - Stormwater Projects and Technology (2) 2020 Project of the Year Award – Rain City Strategy (3) 2020 Water Steward of the Year Award - Melina Scholefield	Awarded – Jun 11, 2020
Canadian Institute of Planners	National Award of Excellence – Climate Change Planning	Awarded- July 8, 2020
Planning Institute of BC	Gold Award for Excellence in Policy Planning – City and Urban Areas	Awarded – June 23, 2020
BC Water and Wastewater Association	Excellence and Innovation in the Water and Waste Industry Award	Award to be announced in Fall 2020