

Ecological Master Planning Funding – Business Case #61

There are three parts to this. The budget impact is not until the last year (2027) because of a legislative change of what Development Charges can be used for. However, the next DC by law is now planned to come into force and effect Jan 1, 2028 which may affect the 2nd and 3rd parts of the case.

First Part: In 2024 there is a request for \$50,000 (.01% or 22 cents in 2024 but at the end of the 4 year cycle there is NO INCREASE) to do the Council directed bi-annual review of the Environmental Management Guidelines. This document was updated in 2021 (after 15 years). Not currently funded.

Budget impact:

2024 – increase of \$50,000

2025 – DECREASE of \$50,000

2026 - increase of \$50,000

2027 - DECREASE of \$50,000

Second and Third Parts: Conservation Master Plans and Post development EIS compliance monitoring. No budget impact until 2027 when Development Charges can no longer be used (legislation change). The next DC by law will start in 2028, making for a possible change to these parts of the business case.

Budget impact:

NO IMPACT ON 2024-2026.

2027 – increase of \$170,000 for both (Increase of 76 cents on the budget in 2027)

ESA Management – Business Case #62

To restore staffing level to the level of 2014 in 2024 (one new member of the ESA Team) and increase it by another staff person in 2026. Total increase for four years is \$1.32. ESA Management consists of five elements:

- Monitoring and enhancing including invasive species management
- Enforcement of provincial and municipal regulations and by laws
- Overseeing and implementing hazard tree policies to keep trails safe
- Developing and maintaining the trail system
- Community education

Budget impact:

2024 increase of \$140,000 (0.02% - 63 cents)

2025 increase of \$6,000 (0.00% - another 2 cents)

2026 increase of \$143,000 (0.02% - another 64 cents)

2027 increase of \$7,000 (0.00% - another 3 cents)

Use of ESAs has increased since COVID and has not returned to pre COVID levels. The team has also been involved in working with the city with encampments. The amount of land has increased without an increase in staffing stretching resources even further. Also since 2015, there have been 6,900 new

housing units built within 500 m of the 12 ESAs. As you will note on page 728 of the budget document, most of their time has been spent on trails and less on monitoring and enhancing the natural resource.

As with a growing city that needs more fire protection, you can't really add part of a truck and part of a crew, at a certain point, you build the firehall and staff it with the equipment and people you will need for the present and the future, the need for extra staff in the ESA team has reached that point.

An alternative would be to wait a year on the new hire, or add one position in 2024 and the second position in 2027. Or some other combination, but one additional staff only replaces what was lost in 2014 and reflects the increase in land being managed.

The risk of doing nothing is continued degradation of city property (ESAs)

SILVER CREEK – BUSINESS CASE #63

To implement a recommendation of the Sub-watershed Plan and Conservation Master Plan for the Coves that has been left undone for over 10 years. This will improve the trail connection with an accessible link between Southcrest Ravine and Euston Park as well as improve ecological health in the Coves subwatershed and ESA.

Budget impact (capital levy):

2024 – increase of \$200,000 to update 2018 restoration design work (0.03% or 90 cents)

2025 – increase of \$1,600,000 to do the work (0.2% or \$8.06)

2026 – decrease of \$1,800,000

Risks include siltation of the Coves ponds harming fish habitat and risking violations of the Fisheries Act (see page 734 of budget document).