

Re: Neighbourhood Decision Making Business Case

July 17, 2022

Dear Chair and members of the CPSC,

I am interested in expanding the Neighbourhood Decision Making Program and would like to make sure that a business case for doing so is included in the next annual budget deliberations for debate, possible amendments and potential adoption.

As a default business case to be decided upon by the next council I suggested the target figure of \$100,000 per ward for 2023. Though there are multiple options for financing the program, I recommend that we amend the annual surplus policy such that the first \$1.4 million is divided evenly among the 14 wards for this program with the remainder to be subject to the policy as it exists now.

Some of the numerous justifications for this business case are listed below:

- The program has been a success at the present levels of support.
- There are always excellent ideas which do not receive the highest votes and could be financed if the budget for the program was increased.
- Giving smaller communities a better chance to have their ideas supported will create greater equity.
- Ward constituents could have the opportunity to apply for more substantial investments.
- An expansion of the program aligns well with our strategic plan.
- A trial expansion in 2023 will greatly assist the next council in determining the appropriate levels of investment for the next multi-year budget.
- The financing source addresses, to an extent, the desire to have surplus amounts returned to the taxpayers.

As suggested previously, the amounts and financing source can be amended during budget deliberations but I think it is important that a case for this expansion is ready to come forward. I offer the following motion and hope that you will support expanded neighbourhood decision making along these lines:

That staff BE DIRECTED to include in the 2023 annual budget deliberations, a business case for expanding the neighbourhood decision making program to \$100,000 per ward, financed through an amended annual surplus policy with this program given top priority.

Sincerely,

Michael van Holst
Ward 1 Councillor