



## **Staff Report for Council Meeting**

**Date of Meeting:** July 7, 2021

**Report Number:** SRCM.21.06

**Department:** Office of the City Manager  
**Division:** Strategy and Government Relations

**Subject:** **SRCM.21.06 Green and Inclusive Community Building Grant Application**

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### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to submit an application for funding to the Federal Ministry of Infrastructure and Communities Green and Inclusive Community Building Program for energy-saving capital improvements at the Central Library, and further approve the City's portion of the costs should the application be successful.

### **Recommendation(s):**

- a) That Council endorse the City's submission of an application to the Federal Ministry of Infrastructure and Communities Green and Inclusive Community Building Program funding program for energy-saving capital improvements at the Central Library; and
- b) That, should the grant application be successful, Council approve the City's allocation of 20% of the Central Library capital improvement project cost, not to exceed \$600,000 to be funded from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund between 2021-2026, with in-year funding values to be determined.

### **Contact Person:**

Paolo Masaro, Executive Director, Infrastructure and Engineering Services

Nick Kalyvas, Director, Director, Facility Management

Ashley Dickinson, Coordinator, Strategy and Government Relations

### **Report Approval:**

**Submitted by:** Lise Conde, Manager, Strategy and Government Relations

**Approved by:** Mary-Anne Dempster, City Manager

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All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

### **Background:**

On April 14 2021, the Federal Ministry of Infrastructure and Communities announced the launch of the Green and Inclusive Community Building (GICB) Program. As part of Canada's 'Strengthened Climate Plan for a Healthy Environment and Healthy Economy', the GICB program will deliver \$1.5 billion in funding over the next five years to infrastructure projects that improve the places where Canadians gather, access services, and connect with others in the community, while saving energy, cutting pollution, and generating jobs.

Funding applications for green and accessible community building retrofits, repairs or upgrades valued between \$100,000 to \$3 million can be submitted on an ongoing basis. The GICB will fund 80% of project costs for projects with a total value of up to \$3 million. As the application intake is ongoing, grants will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The capital improvements funded by GICB must be in support of community buildings that serve high-needs, underserved communities. The application requires that the submitted project forecasts energy usage reduction of at least 10% over baseline consumption and will consider projects that can be completed over the next five years (by March 2026).

Staff have identified Richmond Hill's Central Library branch as the best facility candidate for this grant opportunity in consideration of the criteria and objectives of the fund. Due to the technical nature of the funding program criteria, the specific scope of the retrofit/upgrades that will be included in the application are in process of being determined.

While Council endorsement is not an explicit requirement of the application, in submitting an application to the GICB, the City is committing to securing the necessary capital financing to be sourced from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund to proceed if the project is approved for federal funding. As such, and in consideration of Council summer recess, staff are seeking advanced Council endorsement of the submission of an application to this fund for energy-saving capital improvements to the Central Library. This approach ensures the City is positioned to submit the application as soon as is possible, with a secured commitment to fund the City's portion of the work should the application be approved.

Having this work 80% funded by a grant makes it especially advantageous for the City and taxpayers to approve the remaining 20% commitment outside of the normal capital budget process, which is why this is being brought forward to Council for consideration.

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If the City is not successful with the grant, this work will proceed through regular approvals to move forward in capital planning.

### **Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:**

Staff are requesting that Council approve a capital expenditure of up to \$600,000 (20% of maximum project cost) for energy-saving capital retrofits and/or upgrades at the Central Library, contingent on successful award of up to \$2.4 million towards the project (80% of maximum projects costs) through the Green and Inclusive Community Building grant program. As a green infrastructure investment, the City's portion of the funding is eligible to be sourced from the Federal Gas Tax Reserve Fund.

This project and financial approval is contingent on funding being received and will not be advanced in the event that the GICB application is not successful.

While the GICB fund does not commit to an application review and/or funding award timeline, the program provides funding for work from 2021-2026. The grant-contingent \$600,000 requested through this report will be incurred over this time period, with specific in-year draws to be determined based on funding award and subsequent project execution timing.

### **Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities 2020-2022:**

Pursuing the Green and Inclusive Community Building fund grant is in support of Fiscal Responsibility, one of Council's 2020-2022 Strategic Priorities. Additionally, as one of the primary objectives of this funding program is to assist community buildings in reducing energy consumption, the Central Library capital improvements requested in the funding application will be energy-saving upgrades, in support of a second Strategic Priority, Balancing Growth and Green.

### **Climate Change Considerations:**

The proposed Green and Inclusive Community Building fund application will pursue capital retrofits at the Central Library that will contribute to climate change mitigation by conserving energy, helping to lower the City's GHG emissions.

### **Conclusion:**

The Government of Canada announced the Green and Inclusive Community Building Fund, a 5-year \$1.5B investment in support of green and accessible community building retrofits, repairs or upgrades for facilities that serve underserved and/or high need communities. Staff are preparing an application for capital improvements at the Central Library that will meet the funding criteria. Council approval is required for the City's portion of the project costs, should the funding application be successful.

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### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCM.21.06 Green and Inclusive Community Building Grant Application.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Jun 17, 2021

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Lise Conde - Jun 16, 2021 - 8:41 AM**

**Nick Kalyvas - Jun 16, 2021 - 10:27 AM**

**David Dexter - Jun 16, 2021 - 11:08 AM**

**Paolo Masaro - Jun 16, 2021 - 2:34 PM**

**Kelvin Kwan - Jun 16, 2021 - 4:37 PM**

**Darlene Joslin on behalf of MaryAnne Dempster - Jun 17, 2021 - 7:51 AM**