



Legislation Text

File #: AR-17-237, **Version:** 1

TAMRMS#: B06

Urban Forest Management Plan

Presented by: Anthony Lake, Director

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP), provided as an attachment to the June 26, 2017 agenda report, be approved.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Council with the final updated version of UFMP after consideration of Council comments.

COUNCIL DIRECTION

On March 20th, 2017 Council passed the following motions:
(AR-17-001)

1. That the "Urban Forest Management Plan" provided as an attachment to the March 20, 2017 agenda report entitled "Urban Forestry Management Plan" be received as information.
2. That Council members review the Urban Forest Management Plan and provide comments to Administration by April 30, 2017.
3. That Administration present the final draft of Urban Forest Management Plan for Council's consideration by the end of Quarter Two, 2017.

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

Administration developed a Urban Forest Management Plan which is a long term strategic plan for managing the Urban Forest in the City of St. Albert, please refer to the attachment titled "City of St. Albert Urban Forest Management Plan." As with other City long term plans, this is meant to be used for planning purposes only and any financial or service level implications that may result from the UFMP would be brought to Council for their approval prior to being implemented.

On March 20, 2017, Council was asked to review the plan and provide comments or recommendations back to Administration by April 30, 2017. The following summarizes the comments received:

Council Comments

Some minor comments were received from one member of Council and included:

1. Definition of Pests

A question related to the definition of pests and *“if pests are actually pests”*.

- The definition of ‘pest or nuisance’ from the Act is:
 - *“an animal, bird, insect, plant or disease that is destroying or harming or is likely to destroy or harm any land, livestock or property in all or part of Alberta.”*
 - The Act and Regulation dictate that pests or nuisances must be controlled as they may have economic, social or environmental impacts. Pests must be eradicated and nuisances must be controlled.
- Answer: Yes, by definition of ‘pest’ from Alberta Agriculture, a pest is unwanted and must be controlled on land or destroyed. The difference between pest and nuisance is the method in which they are controlled. Pests are eradicated, nuisances are controlled and may impact biodiversity positively or negatively.
- Based on this comment the title of the section was changed to Pests, Diseases and Biodiversity.

2. Policies Needed

Several comments received related to the need for policy around standards and best management practices including:

- *“policies are needed for canopy cover targets, tree replacement standards and maintaining the current urban forest” and “why not update council policy, makes no sense without governance document reflecting best practices and plans.”*
- Yes, administrative policies will be developed as UFM plan is implemented.
- The tree maintenance and replacement standards are included in the Council approved Service Level Standards. The tree canopy cover targets will be incorporated into the 2019 update of the Council approved Environmental Master Plan.
- Additional policy development has also been recommended in the implementation section of the Plan.

3. Heritage Trees

A comment was noted that heritage trees “need markers to identify historical significance.”

- Yes, this will be accomplished through operations.
- Heritage Trees are to be identified through procedures within the Public Works operations protocols.

4. Other Communities Canopy Cover Targets

A comment was received that “to compare apples to apples, Sherwood Park should be used, not Strathcona County.”

- Strathcona completed their study using the entire county boundary. Analysis of data will be required to separate Sherwood Park from Strathcona and is not currently available.
- A footnote has been added to the report to indicate that the canopy measurements for Strathcona County include both rural and urban areas.

5. Population Forecasts

It was noted that population forecast in Section 3.3.2 Space for the Future Urban Forest was not the most up to date forecast - “currently reads that population will be around 100,000 people in 20 years, not our projection.”

- Based on this comment the statement in plan was changed from ‘around 100,000’ to ‘over 90,000’ as forecasts show 30,000 additional residents in 15-20 years.

6. Miscellaneous.

Other comments were regarding grammar and spelling corrections and were incorporated into the final draft.

Additional Comments

Statement 'principles of FireSmart' are followed and web address for FireSmart Canada was added to 4.2.5 Public Safety Section.

STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS OR ENGAGEMENT

N/A

IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

Financial:

Any financial implications related to the UFMP will be presented to Council through the traditional budget process.

Legal / Risk:

N/A

Program or Service:

Any program or service implications related to the UFMP will be presented to Council through the traditional budget process.

Organizational:

Any organizational implications related to the UFMP will be presented to Council through the traditional budget process.

ALTERNATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS CONSIDERED

If Council does not wish to support the recommendations, the following alternatives could be considered:

- a. Refer the Urban Forest Management Plan or Urban Forest Canopy Cover targets back to Administration to amend as per Council direction
- b. Take no further action on this matter.

STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

a) City of St. Albert Strategic Plan (Policy C-CG-02)

BUILT ENVIRONMENT - We build our community towards the future to sustain balanced development, with a reverent eye to the past, honouring our unique settlement history and distinct identity.

- *We build innovative, long lasting infrastructure that is efficient, minimizes the use of our natural resources and creates harmony between the natural and built environment.*

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT- We protect, embrace and treasure our deeply-rooted connections with

the natural environment through championing environmental action.

- *We strongly believe that maintaining and promoting our flourishing, expansive tree canopy for future generations is a shared duty.*

Governance Strategy - Council is committed to ensuring that the City of St. Albert is a responsive, accountable government that delivers value to the community.

Service Delivery Strategy - Council is committed to ensuring that the City of St. Albert is engaging residents to identify opportunities to improve delivery of services to the community.

b) Long Term Plans

- Municipal Development Plan
- Environmental Master Plan
- Recreation Master Plan
- Public Works Long Term Department Plan

c) Corporate Objectives

- Deliver programs and services that meet or exceed our standards
- Exercise strong fiscal management
- Ensure our customers are very satisfied

d) Council Policies, Bylaws

- C-EUS-01 Environmental Sustainability <http://stalbert.ca/uploads/files-excel/C-EUS-01_Environmental_Sustainability_Policy.pdf>
- C-IS-04 Urban Forest Management <https://stalbert.ca/uploads/legislative/C-IS_04_UrbanForestManagement.pdf>
- Dutch Elm Disease Bylaw 5/98 <<https://stalbert.ca/uploads/legacy/documents/Bylaw-1997-05-DutchElmDisease.pdf>>

e) Other documents

- Parks and Open Spaces Management Plan
- Grey Nuns White Spruce Forest Management Plan
- Natural Areas Conservation and Management Plan
- Municipal Engineering Standards

Report Date: June 26, 2017

Author(s): Anthony Lake

Committee/Department: Public Works

General Manager: Glenn Tompolski

City Manager: Kevin Scoble