



## Legislation Text

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TAMRMS#: B06

### **Bylaw 34/2017 - Urban Beekeeping Bylaw - Time Specific 5:30 p.m.**

Presented by: Lenore Mitchell, Senior Planner

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. That Bylaw 34/2017, being the Urban Beekeeping Bylaw, be read a first time.
2. That Bylaw 34/2017 be read a second time.
3. That unanimous consent be given for consideration of third reading of Bylaw 34/2017.
4. That Bylaw 34/2017 be read a third and final time.

#### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information regarding the proposed Urban Beekeeping Bylaw for beekeeping in the City of St. Albert. In addition, the purpose of this report is to outline the consultation with the public, city departments, and external associations that are knowledgeable about beekeeping.

#### **COUNCIL DIRECTION**

On February 6, 2017 Council passed the following motion:

(CM- 17-003)

That Administration develop policies, registration, and bylaw amendments, likely to the Animal Control Bylaw and the Land Use Bylaw, to permit beekeeping, funded with up to \$15,000 from the Stabilization Reserve. The policy recommendations, registration, and permit process would be based on research of other municipalities, Provincial Acts and regulations, departmental coordination, public consultation, consultation with authorities in beekeeping, and provincial apiculturist.

#### **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

##### Research/Data

In preparation of the Bylaw, Administration conducted a best practice research on urban beekeeping guidelines and regulations across various municipalities in Alberta and British Columbia, including: City of Edmonton, City of Grande Prairie, Town of High River, City of Fort Saskatchewan, City of

Vancouver, City of Kamloops, City of Burnaby, District of North Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, and District of Oak Bay. Administration has also been in discussions with City of Edmonton administration regarding the lessons learned from their urban beekeeping program. The regulations and/or guidelines in place across the researched municipalities provided a basis for the development of the proposed City of St. Albert Urban Beekeeping Bylaw. The proposed Urban Beekeeping Bylaw requires that beekeepers comply with Provincial Acts, particularly the *Bee Act* for Alberta and the *Animal Health Act*.

To get a first-hand look at beehives and to ask questions related to beekeeping, Administration visited the bee yard of Craig Toth, the President of the Edmonton District Beekeepers Association. Information provided by Craig Toth assisted in the preparation of Bylaw 34/2017.

The intent of the Urban Beekeeping Bylaw is to establish the scale and size of allowed hives, and to create a safe habitat for bees as well as for humans.

### Bylaw Content

Bylaw 34/2017, Urban Beekeeping Bylaw, was prepared as a standalone bylaw. The Land Use Bylaw does not have any regulations on bees, and as a result it was not necessary that it be amended. The Animal Control Bylaw was directed towards dogs, and it was decided that rather than amending the Animal Control Bylaw to incorporate urban beekeeping, it was best to create a standalone Urban Beekeeping Bylaw.

Bylaw 34/2017, the Urban Beekeeping Bylaw, includes the following regulations:

#### Licence Application Requirements:

No person shall own or keep honey bees unless properly licensed as provided in this Bylaw. Before the issue or renewal of a licence, the owner of the hive must submit:

- Beekeepers name, address, and contact information;
- Written permission from registered property owner and/or the lessee/licensee to install hives on the property;
- A drawing that shows the hive location on the property, and applicable setbacks;
- Proof of success in urban beekeeping training;
- Proof of support and assistance from a mentor for the first year;
- A disease and swarm control plan;
- A certificate of registration with Provincial Apiculturist; and
- A Premises Identification (PID) number.

Responsibilities and general regulations for beekeeping and the sale of bee products:

- Provides good husbandry practices and maintenance practices;
- Ensures residential beekeeping is for personal use only; and
- Requires a Business Licence for non-residential properties to sell bee products.

#### Hive Requirements:

- Must include a bottom board, a hive cover, and a maximum of four supers;

- Be located a minimum of three metres from all property lines, or within a rear yard enclosed by a solid fence or hedge a minimum of 1.8 metres in height;
- Residential Parcels: A maximum of two hives, and;
- Nonresidential Parcels: A maximum of two hives on an area less than 929 m<sup>2</sup>, up to four hives on parcels equal to or greater than 929 m<sup>2</sup>.

#### Proposed Annual Beekeeper Timeline

January - Able to apply for St. Albert Urban Beekeeping Licence

March - Purchase bee packages

June - June 30 is the last day to register with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development

Late July to mid September - Harvest honey

### **STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS OR ENGAGEMENT**

As part of the research for writing the Bee Bylaw, Administration did public engagement, consulted with City departments, and asked external stakeholders for assistance; a summary of the engagement and consultation is in attachment titled Stakeholder Communications and Engagement.

In short, information about the proposed Bee Bylaw was posted on the City's webpage and social media. At the TD Clean and Green RiverFest on May 13, a booth was set up with staff and a bee expert interacting with the public about the proposed bylaw. As part of getting feedback on the proposed Bee Bylaw, a short online survey was conducted from May 11 to May 27, 2017, the survey results are in attachment titled Urban Beekeeping Survey Responses.

Meetings were held with several City departments to get feedback on the proposed bylaw. A draft of the bylaw was also sent to external stakeholders to assist in writing the bylaw so that it did not conflict with provincial regulations and the proposed regulations enabled safety for humans and healthy beekeeping.

### **IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)**

#### Financial:

The 2018 budget will include additional licence fee revenue of \$600 (based on an estimated 15 licences issued). This revenue item will be reviewed in subsequent years as better understanding of the actual uptake is known.

#### Legal / Risk:

The proposed bylaw will formalize a requirement to obtain a licence to keep bees. If the licence is not complied with, fines can be levied or the licence can be revoked.

#### Program or Service:

None at this time.

#### Organizational:

The urban beekeeping application process will have some demands of staff, such as: Reviewing applications, issuing Urban Beekeeping Permits, and enforcing the Urban Beekeeping Bylaw.

## ALTERNATIVES AND IMPLICATIONS CONSIDERED

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

Alternative 1. Do not pass the proposed bylaw. Urban beekeeping would not be permitted in the City of St. Albert.

Alternative 2. That Administration incorporate regulations for solitary beekeeping within the Urban Beekeeping Bylaw as outlined within the attachment entitled "Solitary Beekeeping Regulations".

## STRATEGIC CONNECTIONS

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

- SOCIAL - We are a friendly and inclusive community of passionate equals, where everyone feels a sense of belonging. We believe that community starts with the person next door.
- ECONOMIC - We prosper and excel through a strong and diverse economy that is supported by forward-thinking commerce, outstanding local businesses, and a dynamic downtown core.
- NATURAL ENVIRONMENT - We protect, embrace and treasure our deeply-rooted connections with the natural environment through championing environmental action.
- CULTURE - We are proud of our storied history that has fed and nurtured our festive and culturally-rich community.

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.

Long Term Plans

Municipal Development Plan:

- 1.2 CityPlan 2007 Vision and Guiding Principles: *Support conservation efforts to minimize negative human impact on the environment and enhance environmental sustainability.*
- 10.0 Environmental Management of Natural Areas: Strengthen the protection of sustainable natural areas and minimize the negative impacts of development on natural areas.

Environmental Master Plan (2014):

- Our Vision for Land: *City programs work to maintain and expand green space, biodiversity and connectivity to wildlife. The City supports and encourages voluntary involvement in stewardship activities.*
- Goal 4: *Preserve and manage trees, parks, and natural areas.*
- Policy: *The City of St. Albert is committed to maintaining a healthy natural environment and ensuring its sustainability for future generations.*

Social Master Plan: Sense of community and connectedness.

St. Albert Natural Area Conservation and Management Plan: Consideration of placement of bee hives and houses in community gardens, public parks, and other public spaces.

Integrated Pest Management Plan: Consideration of appropriate management strategies for potential nuisance and pests that may occur with the introduction of urban beekeeping.

Recreation Master Plan: Consideration for programs related to urban beekeeping. This may touch on eating locally and urban agriculture. Explore opportunities to collaborate with Recreation Services, as they offer programs and oversee community gardens.

#### Corporate Objectives

- Deliver programs and services that meet or exceed our standards.
- Ensure our customers are very satisfied.

#### Council Policies, Bylaws or Federal/Provincial statutes

- Alberta Bee Act and Regulation (Provincial)
- Alberta Animal Health Act (Provincial)

#### Other Plans or Initiatives

- The St. Albert Heritage Site Functional Plan: Consider opportunities for urban agriculture at the proposed gardens at the Heritage site.

Report Date: September 5, 2017

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Committee/Department: Infrastructure and Development Services

General Manager: Glenn Tompolski

City Manager: Kevin Scoble