



REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Mayor and Councillors**

Subject: Urban Forest Management Strategy Update

File #: 5240-01

Doc #: 188279

From: David Pollock P.Eng.
Acting Director of Engineering, Parks &
Environment

Date: June 19, 2023

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council receive the "Urban Forest Management Strategy Update" report for information.

PURPOSE:

The City of Langley is characterized by a well-developed urban core framed by distinct natural areas including forested parks, wetlands, and agricultural lands. These areas support high levels of biodiversity and provide high-value recreation opportunities. Urban trees along streets, in parks and in private yards make up the remainder of Langley's urban forest, which provides important benefits to the community.

Diamond Head Consulting Ltd. (Diamond Head) has been retained to develop an Urban Forest Management Strategy (UFMS) with a 30-year planning horizon to provide a City-wide approach to urban forest growth and management.

A draft Urban Forest Report Card has been prepared by Diamond Head and is attached for perusal.

The intent of this report is to provide a general overview of the tasks to be undertaken in the development of the UFMS and receive any preliminary comments from Council.

POLICY:

The City's Official Community Plan (OCP) includes a number of policies to address the natural environment and climate change, including "Policy 5.19: Create an Urban Forest Strategy in order to expand and strengthen the existing tree canopy."

COMMENTS/ANALYSIS:

The ongoing growth in the City of Langley, along with the impacts of climate change is increasing stress on the City's urban forests.

To respond to these challenges, the City of Langley has commenced a City-wide approach to urban forest management, establishing a 30-year planning horizon to determine a clear direction for urban forest growth and management until 2050.

Recognizing that the urban forest is an important contributor to biodiversity and climate resiliency within a rapidly densifying environment, the UFMS will provide baseline information regarding the urban forest and incorporate actions and timelines to grow, manage, and protect the urban forest, thereby assisting the City meet targets for climate action and the natural environment. The UFMS will provide strategic guidance for implementing best management practices, regulatory tools, and design guidelines that respond to the current challenges and provide short, medium, and long-term guidance to shift urban forest management towards achieving the City's strategic objectives.

A Request for Proposal was issued on BC Bid and Diamond Head Consulting Ltd. selected as the successful proponent.

The overall goal of the UFMS project is to develop a strategy that establishes a clear community-supported vision, methodology, and framework for the management of the urban forest over the 30-year horizon, including:

- Understanding the current condition of the urban forest.
- Addressing current challenges facing the urban forest.
- Development of a vision for the future.
- Establishment of objectives and targets.
- Development of guidelines for implementation of the UFMS.

Engaging the public, community partners and stakeholders is critical and the City has launched a community engagement strategy to solicit input. There are a number of online resources for residents to provide input including a survey and mapping tool. A virtual Open House will be held on June 27, 2023 and Diamond Head will attend the July 13, 2023 meeting of the Environment Sustainability Committee.

Feedback from Council and the public will be incorporated into the development of a draft Urban Forest Management Strategy, expected in the third quarter of 2023. A second round of community engagement will take place over the Fall and Winter of 2023 with the finalization and endorsement of the UFMS in early 2024.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

The development of the Urban Forest Management Strategy is included in the current Financial Plan and the current level of funding is adequate.

Respectfully Submitted,



David Pollock P.Eng.
Acting Director of Engineering, Parks & Environment

Attachment:

1. Draft Report Card

DEPUTY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

I support the recommendation.



Darrin Leite, CPA, CA
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer