



MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, April 8, 2024
5:30 pm
CKF Boardroom, Langley City Hall
20399 Douglas Crescent

Present: Mayor Pachal
Councillor Albrecht
Councillor Mack
Councillor Solyom
Councillor Wallace

Absent: Councillor James
Councillor White

Staff Present: F. Cheung, Chief Administrative Officer
K. Hilton, Director of Recreation, Culture and Community Services
C. Johannsen, Director of Development Services
S. Kennedy, Fire Chief
K. Kenney, Corporate Officer
D. Leite, Director of Corporate Services
D. Pollock, Director of Engineering, Parks and Environment

Mayor Pachal began by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is on the traditional unceded territory of the Katzie, Kwantlen, Matsqui and Semiahmoo First Nations.

1. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the April 8, 2024 special meeting agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

2. **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Council commence Committee of the Whole.

CARRIED

a. Presentation of the Draft Urban Forest Management Strategy and Next Steps

Presentation from Camille Lefrancois, Urban Planner, Diamond Head Consulting

David Pollock, Director of Engineering, Parks and Environment advised that the purpose of this presentation was to provide an overview of the process to date, and next steps, in the development of the draft Urban Forest Management Strategy. He introduced Camille Lefrancois, Urban Planner, Diamond Head Consulting who provided a PowerPoint presentation on the following:

- Project Overview
 - What is an urban forest?
 - Components of Langley City's urban forest
 - tree in agricultural areas
 - yard tree
 - natural forested areas
 - park tree
 - streamside tree
 - street tree
 - landscaping tree
 - green infrastructure
 - Why do we need trees in cities?
 - Trees provide many benefits:
 - Provide habitat for wildlife
 - Enhance air quality
 - Store and sequester carbon
 - Provide recreational space
 - Improve mental and physical health
 - Stabilize steep slopes
 - Cool hot spots and reduce AC/fan use
 - How does Langley City recognize trees?
 - Langley City's Official Community Plan recommends:
 - Need for tree preservation, protection, and enhancement
 - An Urban Forest Strategy to expand and strengthen existing tree canopy
 - What will the Strategy do?
 - Understand the current condition of the urban forest
 - Develop a vision for the future
 - Establish objectives and targets
 - Provide guidelines for how we get there
 - Project Timeline:

- Spring 2023 – background research and urban forest mapping
 - June 2023 – Engagement 1: vision and values
 - Fall 2023 - Strategy drafting
 - Spring 2024 – Engagement 2: feedback on draft Strategy
 - Spring/Summer 2024 – Finalization of Strategy
- State of Langley City's urban forest - highlights
 - Canopy cover
 - Tree canopy is the area occupied by tree crown (leaves and branches) when viewed from above. Tree canopy is one of the most common metrics to assess the quality and extent of a forest.
 - Langley City's 2021 canopy cover is 17% (174 hectares)
 - Highest canopy cover in neighbourhoods south of the Nicomekl River
 - Most canopy cover is provided by private land
 - Canopy cover is slightly higher on public land than on private land
 - Decline from 20% in 2010 and 18% in 2016
 - Canopy cover by land use:
 - Highest canopy cover in:
 - Urban residential (30%)
 - Parks and open space (27%)
 - Suburban (27%)
 - Lowest canopy cover in:
 - Historic downtown core (1%)
 - Mixed employment (2%)
 - Industrial and transit-oriented core (3%)
 - Ecosystem Services
 - In 2021, Langley City's urban forest provided **\$3.7 million in benefits** for:
 - Carbon storage + sequestration
 - Stormwater management
 - Air pollutant removal
- Community values and priorities
 - Public engagement
 - Two phases of public engagement
 - **Phase 1 – June 2023**
 - To understand the community vision, concerns, and aspirations for the urban forest
 - **Phase 2 – Spring/summer 2024 (upcoming)**
 - to seek feedback on the draft Strategy and establish implementation priorities
 - Phase 1 Engagement:
 - A vision for the urban forest:

- An expanding and healthy urban forest composed of diverse and native species that are large and mature
- Other ideas raised were:
 - Providing shade and cooling
 - Supporting wildlife habitat and biodiversity
 - Enhancing walkability and access to greenspaces
- Satisfaction levels with current service levels for trees in parks and along streets identified
- Draft strategic framework
 - Identifies what we want and how we get it
- Draft Vision
 - Components of vision – what is valued by the community
 - Langley City's urban forest features a wealth of mature trees and a diversity of native and climate-adapted species that foster a healthy, connected community and ecosystems, delivering benefits to all residents.
 - Setting Canopy target
 - Target by 2050
 - Considerations:
 - Anticipated development and impacts on trees
 - Strategy recommendations on tree retention and planting
 - Draft Goals – Overview of 'Big moves'
 - Goal 1: Protect and enhance
 - **Strategy 1.** Improve policies and regulations to achieve a better integration of the urban forest within the built environment
 - **Strategy 2.** Enhance ecosystems to support biodiversity and access to nature
 - **Strategy 3.** Grow the urban forest with a focus on tree resilience and equity across neighbourhoods
 - Goal 2: Manage
 - **Strategy 4.** Acquire and integrate tree asset information to the City's asset management system
 - **Strategy 5.** Transition to a more proactive urban forest management program
 - **Strategy 6.** Evaluate and maintain sufficient staffing and budget resources to deliver defined urban forest service levels
 - Goal 3: Partner
 - **Strategy 7.** Create opportunities to build relationships and work on reconciliation with local First Nations through urban forest management

- **Strategy 8.** Support and expand initiatives to involve community members, landowners, and organizations in urban forest stewardship
 - Goal 4: Monitor
 - **Strategy 9.** Regularly monitor and report on urban forest change
 - **Strategy 10.** Continuously explore options to collect information and adapt practices to changing conditions
- Next steps
 - Draft Strategy finalization
 - Environmental Sustainability Committee presentation
 - Phase 2 engagement on draft Strategy

In response to questions from Council members, Ms. Lefrancois and staff advised that:

- the recommended percentage of canopy cover for a community has evolved over time and is now more reflective of what is reasonable given a community's population density, development patterns and land uses; in Langley's case, there is definitely potential to grow the canopy on the city's north side;
- normally the amount of canopy cover is focused on trees; however if Council wishes, community gardens can be included in the plan;
- There isn't one specific definition of a significant tree, often it's defined based on its value to the community;
- a recommended tree species list wouldn't normally be a part of this type of strategy, but rather would be identified through regulation, such as a tree bylaw; Mr. Pollock added that the City's Design Criteria Manual does include a large range of acceptable tree species and this list can be revised to include specific species the City wants to encourage developers to use, particularly those that will be more adaptable to climate change;
- 216 people completed the Phase 1 community engagement survey;
- although not specifically focused on in the plan, fire safety is relevant to species recommendations in terms of which species are more flammable in dry conditions (ex. coniferous trees); and how close to buildings certain species should be planted;
- as part of the strategy, a tree equity score is used which looks at populations and areas where there may be an inequity in the number of trees as compared to other areas of the city with a higher income demographic;
- the Zoning Bylaw doesn't specify a baseline percentage of required landscaped area for developments based on lot size; it's important to ensure there is adequate soil volume to accommodate the number and size of trees being planted;

- the required amount of trees in developments can be determined through tree density per hectare or tree canopy percentage;
- other possible greening methods for developments include trees in planters, green walls or roof, street trees, parkland acquisition;
- with respect to whether a developer adding a planting area would be considered as part of lot coverage, Carl advised that staff aren't proposing to increase lot coverage for properties south of the Nicomekl;
- this strategy will not inform the Fraser One Way project; however, under current requirements, street trees are required to be placed every 9 metres; trees of a certain size will be planted with the focus being to have the appropriate medium and infrastructure to facilitate their growth.

Council discussed:

- potential for greening the City's industrial areas;
- the low satisfaction levels with respect to current service levels for trees in parks and along streets reflected in Phase 1 of the community engagement;
- potential for establishing fruit trees on public property around the city as part of food security;
- community gardens as part of supporting food security;
- that a tree protection bylaw may be one of the recommendations of the strategy;
- establishing a value for trees with corresponding cost to developers for removal of existing trees;
- alternate methods of engaging the community in the survey;
- desire to rank tree protection as an immediate priority;
- adding trees to areas of inequity in the city is a priority;
- potential to plant larger street trees at the outset for the Fraser Hwy. one way project in order to develop a tree canopy sooner and considerations in doing so.

3. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE - RISE AND REPORT

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT Committee of the Whole rise and report.

CARRIED

4. **RATIFICATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

N/A

5. **MOTION TO HOLD A CLOSED MEETING**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Council Meeting immediately following this meeting be closed to the public as the subject matter being considered relates to items which comply with the following closed meeting criteria specified in Section 90 of the *Community Charter*

(2) (b) the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and a provincial government or the federal government or both, or between a provincial government or the federal government or both and a third party.

CARRIED

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the meeting adjourn at 6:22 pm.

CARRIED

Signed:

MAYOR

Certified Correct:

CORPORATE OFFICER