



REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Mayor and Councillors**

Subject: Council Policy No. CO-88, Habitat Compensation Works on City Land

File #: 5240.01

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From: Rachel Ollenberger
Manager of Engineering Services

Date: May 26, 2025

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT “Council Policy No. CO-88 “Habitat Compensation Works on City Land” be approved.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to present a new “Council Policy No. CO-88 Habitat Compensation Works on City Land” for Council’s consideration. This Policy will outline the compensation protocol for habitat replacement on City lands when the replacement cannot be accommodated on the property under redevelopment.

COMMENT

The City has a number of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) outlined in the Official Community Plan (OCP) which states development within “Low to Moderately Low” sensitivity value is strongly discouraged but where it is unavoidable, the value of the lost habitat must be replaced at a ration of 2:1. Every effort is to be made to provide appropriate compensation on the lands under development however if this cannot be achieved, with approval from Council, the applicant may be able to relocate the habitat compensation requirements to land owned by the City as outlined in the March 10, 2025 report to Council titled “Proposed Habitat Compensation Areas” attached to this report.

Following the March 10, 2025 Council Meeting staff has prepared Council Policy No. CO-88, Habitat Compensation Works on City Land, appended to this report. The proposed policy identifies a number of City-owned lands as a "habitat bank" where a Developer may request the use of part or all of the lands to undertake habitat compensation works in support of their development application, subject to additional considerations and requirements for the use of that land.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

Where a Developer seeks to access the City's habitat bank to undertake habitat compensation works in support of a development application all costs related to the identification of habitat loss and the preparation and construction of compensation works are to be borne by the applicant under a compensation agreement with the City.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Require all compensation for loss of habitat to be accommodated on the site under re-development. This may significantly limit the re-development of properties within ESAs due to their relatively small size; or
2. Development applications requiring habitat compensation greater than that available on site would be required to identify appropriate locations for compensation. This could include both private and City owned land and staff would review on a case-by-case basis. This alternative would require considerable amount of staff time and may also limit redevelopment potential if alternate sites cannot be found.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rachel Ollenberger, ASCT
Manager of Engineering Services

Concurrence:



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

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

I support the recommendation.



Francis Cheung, P. Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment(s):

1. March 10, 2025 Report: "Proposed Habitat Compensation Areas"
2. Council Policy No.CO-88: "Habitat Compensation Works on City Land"