



**Council Member Motion**  
**For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

---

**Date:** February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**From:** Councillor Jeremy Loveday and Councillor Laurel Collins

**Subject:** Maintaining the City of Victoria's Cherry Blossom Heritage

---

**Background:**

Victoria, the City of Gardens, lies nestled beneath a protective canopy of trees – our urban forest.

An urban forest includes all of a community's trees, shrubs and groundcover and the soils in which they grow. Parks, natural areas, boulevards, and residential gardens are examples of some of the many and diverse treed areas that make up the urban forest.

The City of Victoria manages over 40,000 trees within its parks and boulevards. Many of these trees are nearing the end of their life cycle. The City is keeping close tabs on its valuable tree inventory to prevent injury or property damage. At the same time, it needs to think about how best to invest in and ensure Victoria's urban forest is healthy, safe and abundant in the future.

Cherry Trees arrived in the City of Victoria as a gift from the Japanese Community in the 1930's. The Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society states that the first 1000 cherry trees were a gift to the City of Victoria, which was made using prize money the Japanese community had won for their float in a parade recognizing the City of Victoria's 75 anniversary.

Ornamental flowering cherry trees require a moderate to high availability of water. However, even though climate change adaptation may mean that cherry trees will not be a viable option for all locations where they are presently growing, City staff have continued to replace cherry varieties where they will continue to thrive.

While City staff is implementing the best approaches for ensuring a healthy urban forest for future generations to enjoy, it is important that the City retains some of its cherry blossom heritage and the beauty and cultural significance that comes with these trees.

**Recommendations:**

- 1) That Council recognizes the historic importance and symbolic significance of cherry blossom trees

2) That Council direct staff to include the historic importance and symbolic significance of cherry blossom trees when considering what trees to plant and direct staff to report back with options for maintaining an ongoing presence of Cherry Trees as part of a regular update on the implementation of the City's Urban Forest Master Plan

3) That Council request that the Mayor write to the Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society to express appreciation for their historic gift and clarify the City's policy regarding Cherry Blossom Trees.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Loveday', with a stylized, cursive script.

Councillor Loveday

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laurel Collins', with a cursive script.

Councillor Collins