Urban Forest Master Plan Implementation Update

Committee of the Whole
December 12, 2019

Purpose
To provide a summary of progress made and actions planned on the implementation of the Urban Forest Master Plan
What is the urban forest?

Benefits of the urban forest
Responding to the Climate Emergency

**COOLING**
Tree canopy >40% significantly lowers temperature on hot days

**CARBON**
Trees + soil sequester and store carbon

**RAINWATER**
Trees store rainwater in their canopies

Urban Forest Master Plan

**Goals**

1. Develop and maintain strong community-wide support for the urban forest;
2. Protect, enhance and expand Victoria’s urban forest;
3. Design and manage the urban forest to maximize watershed health, biodiversity, and the conservation of sensitive ecosystems; and,
4. Maximize community benefits from the urban forest in all neighbourhoods.
2019 Actions

• Expanded the Urban Forest Services team
• Developed a five-year implementation plan
• Updated the Tree Preservation Bylaw
• Engaged with community advocates
• Hosted the 14th annual Tree Appreciation Day
• Participating in the Trees in Cities Challenge

Updating Canopy Cover Estimates

Purpose

• Establish accurate baseline across the city
• Establish method that can be repeated accurately to effectively assess changes over time
• Identify hotspots of loss/gain
• Assess 3D canopy characteristics to better inform ecosystem services
Canopy Cover Assessment

LiDAR technology accurately captures actual tree canopy

New LiDAR Data in VicMap
Implementation Plan Priorities

1. **Resourcing**: building staff and financial capacity
2. **Tree Protection**: strengthening the protection of trees
3. **Monitoring**: acquiring data on the status and condition of the urban forest
4. **Tree Planting**: planting new trees and evaluating growing conditions
5. **Management**: maintaining the urban forest
6. **Stewardship**: involving citizens

**Resourcing**

- Urban Forest Services Team Recruitment
- Equipment
- Consultant Support
Tree Protection

- Comprehensive review and update of the Tree Preservation Bylaw
- Development of tree protection protocols

Monitoring

- Develop city-wide and neighbourhood tree canopy cover targets
- Acquire data on ecosystem services delivered by the urban forest
Tree Planting

- Develop Neighborhood Planting Plans to guide City planning and investment over the next 10 years

Stewardship

- Develop a Citizen Stewardship Plan
- Advance coordination of environmental stewardship activities
- UN Trees In Cities Challenge
Stewardship

Recommendation

That Council;

1. Approve the reallocation of $110,000 from the Tree Preservation Bylaw project to the priority Urban Forest Master Plan actions outlined in this report and;

2. Direct staff to amend the Urban Forest Master Plan to reflect the updated canopy cover estimates, shown in Attachment A.