

## **Attachment L – Report Back on Deer Management**

### **DEER MANAGEMENT**

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### Council Direction

On July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Council made the following motion:

*That the Mayor write to the CRD, the Premier and the Minister responsible and ask the Province to take a more active role in deer management. (Completed)*

*That Council direct staff to seek funding to work with the Urban Wildlife Stewardship Society to do populations counts and to have staff do an inventory of impacts.*

*That Council direct staff to report back if no funding is available.*

*That Council direct staff to review current regulations for fencing on private property, focusing on conflicts between urban gardens and urban deer, and report back to Council.*

#### **STATUS UPDATE**

The Province provides up to \$100,000 each year to municipalities to support the development of urban deer management plans through the Provincial Urban Deer Cost-Share Program. Deer population studies and impact studies have not received funding unless they occur concurrently with a deer population management strategy, such as culling or translocation.

The Province, Oak Bay, and UWSS are currently conducting an immuno-contraceptive research project that began in 2016. It involves three phases with the third phase beginning in late 2020. Afterwards, results will be analyzed to determine if immuno-contraceptives are an effective deer population management strategy. The Province will not provide funding for additional immuno-contraceptive research projects until it confirms the effectiveness of this research.

Esquimalt concluded a community survey and three-year deer population study in February 2020, and is waiting for the conclusion of the Oak Bay process.

Planning staff are in the process of recruiting a new position to undertake regulatory improvements related to planning and land use issues. Upon establishing this new position a work program reflecting Council's priorities will be established. It is noted that the Fence Bylaw, which was originally established to provide safety fencing around outdoor swimming pools, presents a number of challenges because it is outdated, unclear and difficult to administer. When the comprehensive review of fencing regulations occurs, it will also provide analysis and make recommendations related to urban deer.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommend that Council direct staff to work with interested municipalities to examine options for a regional deer management strategy after the conclusion of the immuno-contraceptive research project, and that staff include considerations for urban deer management during a comprehensive Fence Bylaw review.