



Corporate Report

NO: R193

COUNCIL DATE: JULY 26, 2007

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: Mayor & Council DATE: July 25, 2007

FROM: General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture; Acting General Manager, Planning and Development FILE: 6300 - 01

SUBJECT: Tree Planting, Tree Removal and Parkland Acquisition in Surrey

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

At a recent meeting, Council expressed an interest in receiving an update on tree removal and tree planting efforts in the City as well as an update on parkland acquisition. The intent of this report is to provide Council with such an update.

BACKGROUND and DISCUSSION

Tree Planting on Streets and Parks

The City has a strong history of tree planting, both along its streets and in its parks. The success of these efforts was evident when Council celebrated the planting of Surrey's 50,000th boulevard tree in Clayton in May of this year. Our many well-treed parks are also a testament to Council's commitment to creation of a well-managed urban forest in the City.

Under Council Policy U-2, all city roads are designed to incorporate trees. Based on this direction, all new residential development areas are planted with street trees at a rate of approximately one tree every 12m along each side of local streets. Arterial and collector road projects also incorporate trees in both the medians and boulevards. The City has established a *Green City* program. This program includes provision for trees to be planted in older well-established residential areas of the City where no trees were planted at the time of development. **In total, 3,540 new shade trees were planted on city streets in 2006.**

When new parks are constructed, or older parks are renovated, shade trees are planted to beautify the parks, and to achieve the other natural benefits of the urban forest. Between the city's *ReLeaf Days*, *Maple Leaf Day* and *Arbor Day* tree planting and tree planting that has occurred in conjunction with new park development, **1,163 new shade trees were planted in city parks in 2006.**

The City's natural area forests and greenbelts lose trees to storms, disease and to the impacts of development of adjacent lands. Through Surrey Natural Area Program (SNAP), Salmon Habitat and Restoration Program (ShaRP), the Eco-Rangers, service clubs and contracts issued by the City directly, trees are planted back into damaged forest areas to re-establish natural park lands. **In 2006, more than 13,376 native trees were planted in our city's forest areas.**

Based on funding made available through the Parks Capital Program, from funding associated with arterial road widening, and through funding from the Green City Program, planting of trees in Surrey in 2007 will likely equal or surpass the 2006 levels.

Tree Cutting Permits and Tree Replacement

In 2006, the City issued tree-cutting permits for the removal of 10,349 trees including 1,590 hazardous trees. Trees that are hazardous are permitted to be cut down without a requirement for replacement trees to be planted. A total of 12,735 replacement trees were required.

Council adopted tree Protection Bylaw No. 16100 on September 25, 2006, which enhanced the City's ability to protect trees. During the first six months (January to June) of 2007, the City issued permits for the removal of 7,151 trees primarily related to land development projects. As a condition of these permits, 8471 replacement trees were required including \$794,375, which was collected as cash for replacement trees that could not be planted within the development sites but which will be planted in other areas of the City by contractors hired by the City of Surrey. As a comparison, during the first six months of 2006 (prior to the adoption of Bylaw No. 16100), the City issued permits for the removal of 5,512 trees with 4,423 replacement trees being planted. (See Appendix 1 – Summary Table)

Full Effect of New Tree Protection By-law (No. 16100) Still to Come

It is noted that the full positive effects of By-law No. 16100 have not yet been fully recognized in 2007 since By-law No. 16100 provided a 12 month "grace" period to "in stream development applications" to be processed under the old Tree Preservation By-law. The former Tree By-law did not require the same level of tree protection and tree replacement as By-law No. 16100. The 12-month period expires on September 25, 2007, the 1-year anniversary of the adoption of By-law No. 16100, after which all development applications will be required to follow the requirements of By-law 16100. As such, the ratio of replacement trees that will be planted in the City in comparison to the number of trees removed will improve even further after September 25, 2007.

Parkland Acquisition

The dedication and acquisition of parkland falls into four general categories that relate to growth, functionality, linear connectivity and areas of special significance including waterfront properties. (See Appendix 2 - detailed descriptions of the categories) Over the last five years the City has purchased 175 acres (71 hectares) of parkland. In addition to the parkland purchased, the City also received 243 acres (98 hectares) of parkland through the development and subdivision process resulting in an **overall increase of 418 acres of parkland during the past five years.**

Growth is the largest acquisition category and is driven by the need to purchase parkland to meet the needs of Neighbourhood Concept Plans. These are often adjacent to schools but also include other park categories. The Functional category relates to the purchase of properties to complete the consolidation of existing parks or to expand these sites to meet future needs. The Linear Connection category includes the purchase of land in support of the Greenway Plan and also to acquire natural linkages for environmental purposes. It is important to note that in recent years, linear connections have been one of the most requested feature by Surrey residents for walking and cycling opportunities. The purchase of Special Areas and Waterfront properties varies over the years based on the need to acquire significant and unique properties for the purposes of waterfront access, protection and preservation of natural features and for tourist related benefits. Acquisitions in this category include properties on the Nicomekl River, land adjacent to Brownsville Bar on the Fraser River and the two remaining Wickson properties at Blackie's Spit in South Surrey.

The City currently has a total of 6,000 acres of parkland; approximately 55% of the parkland is comprised of natural areas. Natural areas contain urban forests, riparian areas and passive natural grassland.

How Yin Leung,
Acting General Manager,
Planning & Development

Laurie Cavan
General Manager,
Parks, Recreation and Culture

[http://surrey.ihostez.com/content/uploaded/59d3f4178085479a8918966364c266b3-tree planting removal & parkland acquisi.doc](http://surrey.ihostez.com/content/uploaded/59d3f4178085479a8918966364c266b3-tree%20planting%20removal%20&%20parkland%20acqui...)
M 7/16/10 8:55 AM

Appendix 1 Tree Removal & Replacement Summary
Appendix 2 Parkland Acquisition Categories

Summary of Tree Removal and Replacement in 2006

Number of Protected Trees Removed	8,759
Number of Hazardous Trees Removed	1,590
Total Number of Trees Removed	10,349
Number of Replacement Trees Required	12,735
Trees Planted Under Other Programs	18,079
Total Trees Planted	30,814

Summary of Tree Removal and Replacement in 1st Six Months of 2006 and 2007

Year	2007	2006
Number of Protected Trees Removed	7,151	5,512
Total Number of Replacement Trees Required	8,469	4,423
Trees Planted Under Other Programs	10,000	9,500
Total Trees Planted	18,469	13,923

PARKLAND ACQUISITION CATEGORIES

Parkland Acquisition falls within four categories:

Growth

This category of park acquisition is related to the City's growth. Acquisition is mainly concentrated in the developing neighbourhood and usually follows the Neighbourhood Concept Plans approved by Council. The major acquisitions in this category are related to Parks adjacent to Schools but also include other categories of park.

Functionality

This category relates to existing parks that had not been all acquired over the years. Very often it may take years to complete major park acquisition as staff usually try to achieve negotiated settlements with current owners.

Linear connections

This category covers mainly the Greenway Plan and some natural linkages. One of the most requested facilities by Surrey residents is more walking and cycling opportunities. To that effect, Council approved in 1996 the Greenway Plan which has been implemented since.

Special areas of significance and Waterfront

This category covers key city objectives such as waterfront access, protection of natural features or tourism related acquisitions as outlined in the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan and Council directions.