

## Request for Recommendation

## Finance and Administration Committee



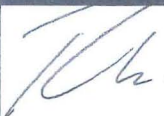
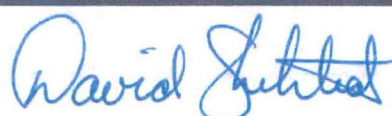
Type of Decision							
Meeting Date	February 2, 2016			Report Date	January 26, 2016		
Decision Requested	Yes	X	No	Priority	X	High	Low
	Direction Only			Type of Meeting	X	Open	Closed

Report Title
Options for Enhanced Forestry Services

Budget Impact/Policy Implication	Recommendation
<p>X This report has been reviewed by the Finance Division and the funding source has been identified.</p>	<p>1) THAT the City of Greater Sudbury approve a budget option for one time funding in the amount of \$408,281.00 to address the backlog of forestry activities within rights of way;</p> <p>2) AND THAT staff prepare a plan addressing the unfunded liabilities associated with the management of urban forestry outside of municipal rights of way.</p>
Background Attached	Recommendation Continued

Recommended by the Department
<p><i>Tony Cecutti</i></p> <p>Tony Cecutti General Manager of Infrastructure Services</p>

Recommended by the C.A.O.
<p><i>Kevin Fowke</i></p> <p>Kevin Fowke Interim Chief Administrative Officer</p>

Report Prepared By	Division Review
 Randy Halverson Manager of Operations	 David Shelsted Director of Roads and Transportation Services

## Background

Over the years, the City has implemented tree planting programs within public rights of way (ROW) that is intended to create a healthy urban forest canopy in residential areas. The City is also responsible for the maintenance of trees contained within park lands as well as other miscellaneous municipally owned property (along creeks, ditches, unopened road allowances, etc....).

This budget enhancement proposes two options for consideration. Firstly, one time funding to address the backlog of Forestry issues within ROWs; secondly, creating an inventory of the unfunded liabilities for trees found outside of ROWs and ensuring budget options for the required work to address trees found outside the ROW is included in the 2017 budget process.

*Trees provide a number of benefits and the City of Greater Sudbury strives to increase urban tree cover. A healthy urban forest in a residential area should have at least 25% tree canopy. Some of the benefits of a healthy urban forest include:*

- 1. Trees clean the air. According to the American Forests, a U.S.-based non-profit organization, just 100 trees can remove two tons of carbon dioxide from the air every year. Researchers from the U.S. Forest Service recently found urban trees in 10 American cities removed many tons of air pollutants, including very small particulate matter (PM 2.5) that's linked to several negative health effects in humans.*
- 2. Trees capture and hold water. Trees slow the flow of storm water so when it rains, more water can be evaporated back into the air or slowly released into the soil. Although most effective during light storms, urban trees are estimated to be worth billions of dollars just in terms of their collective storm water control functions in cities like Portland, Oregon and Washington, D.C. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation reports that trees produce between 30-per-cent and 50-per-cent less runoff than lawns.*
- 3. Urban trees help reduce household heating and cooling costs. They can moderate the climate around your home by keeping the temperature cooler in summer through shading and possibly warmer in winter by reducing wind.*
- 4. Trees provide habitat and food. We want to encourage local wildlife, like birds and*

*pollinators, because of their essential services, but edible fruit trees are also a great source of local food for our community. Local organizations can help harvest excess fruit from your yard and small orchards have been added to a number of community gardens.*

*5. Trees improve the look of your neighbourhood and of your property. Studies have found that people are willing to pay a premium of five per cent or more for houses with trees than ones without.*

*TD Economics reports that maintaining urban trees makes sense. In Toronto, for example, every dollar spent on tree maintenance returns \$1.35 to \$3.20 worth of benefits to residents.*

*The bottom line is that trees are good for us, the environment and our wallets.*

#### Budget Option for Enhanced Forestry Activities within ROWs

Over the past several years the requests for tree pruning or tree removals has increased significantly for trees within ROWs. The main reasons for the backlog issue are the age of the urban forest, the number of requests for tree pruning /tree removals and the number of staff (Utility Arborists) available qualified to complete the work. If this budget enhancement option is approved, the forestry services described herein will be completed utilizing a contract service. Project management services will be provided by existing forestry staff.

The following table highlights the total cost to address the backlog in forestry related activities.

Activity	Average Cost	Number of requests in the backlog	Subtotal
Pruning	\$172.20	950	\$163,590.00
Removals	\$472.06	350	\$165,221.00
Stumping	\$529.80	150	\$79,470.00
<b>Total Cost</b>			<b>\$408,281.00</b>