



Corporate NO: R121 **Report** COUNCIL DATE: May 29, 2000

REGULAR

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **May 11, 2000**

FROM: **General Manager,** FILE: **8390-001**
Parks, Recreation and Culture

SUBJECT: **Morris Delegation/Request to Remove Trees from Park Land at 8200 - 150 Street**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council receive this report for information.

INTENT

On November 8, 1999, Mr. Don Morris appeared as a delegation before Council-in-Committee to request that mature coniferous trees on park land behind his and two other neighbours' homes (see map, Appendix 1) be removed because they shed large branches during wind storms. On November 29, 1999, at Regular Council, Council supported the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission decision to retain the trees and resolved '*that Parks, Recreation and Culture carefully monitor the impact of tree branches on neighbouring properties over a period of six months and report back to Council*'. The intent of this report is to provide the results of the monitoring of the impact of tree branches to private property over the course of the past storm season.

BACKGROUND

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission had received a delegation from Mr. Morris on July 14, 1999 where he requested removal of the subject trees. Commission requested staff to work with Mr. Morris to gauge local community interest in the trees and on October 6 Commission reviewed the issue and decided to adhere to the Council-adopted *Urban Forest Policy, Tree Preservation in Municipal Developments*, and resolved to retain the trees.

The delegation to Council by Mr. Morris was an appeal of the decision made by the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission to not remove the subject trees.

DISCUSSION

Appendix 2 of this report, *Summary of Facts Related to the Trees*, contains the detailed facts relative to this issue and were presented to Council on November 29, 1999. These facts were considered in the decision to retain the trees and implement a monitoring period to assess the impact of tree branch loss to private property.

From December 1, 1999 to April 25, 2000, a City of Surrey arborist monitored branch loss from the park trees to neighbouring property following any winds in excess of 50 kilometres per hour. In addition to regular monitoring, staff were prepared to respond to any resident request regarding branch loss. The detailed results of the monitoring are contained in Appendix 3, *Results of Tree Branch Impacts*.

During the monitoring period there were four storms in excess of 50 kilometres per hour where the winds reached as high as 90 kilometres per hour. Although the winds were predominantly from the south or Southwest, which would result in branches falling onto neighbouring private property, it is evident from the results that the number of branches landing on private property were few and caused no apparent damage to private property. Over the course of the last six months, the Parks Division did not receive any notification of tree branch impacts from the neighbouring property owners.

The trees had been pruned by the City previously; between the second and third storm they were pruned again with the objective of reducing the wind sail potential of the branches that are located on the trees' east-west axis. The pruning entailed the selective and careful removal of less than 20% of the leaf area of certain east-west axis branches, using a new arboricultural technique. Although the last storm in January registered the highest winds of the four storm events, the result was no loss of branches, perhaps due in part to the most recent pruning.

It should be noted that most trees recently have had holes drilled into their trunks on the north side of the trees, approximately six to eight inches deep. The origin of the drill holes is unknown; however, staff will need to monitor the health of the trees for some time to determine the overall impact of the drill holes on the health of the trees. Often drill holes are followed by an attempt to kill the tree with toxic substances poured into the holes.

SUMMARY

At the request of Council, staff have monitored the impact of tree branches falling from trees on undeveloped park land located at 8200 150 street, onto neighbouring properties. Over the course of the most recent storm season, from December 1, 1999 to April 25, 2000, few branches of significant size fell onto the adjacent private properties, with no resulting damage to private property. Staff will continue to monitor the health of the trees over the next year due to holes found to have been recently drilled into the trunks of the trees.

Don Hunter

General Manager

Parks, Recreation & Culture