

**Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee
August 2, 2012**

TO: Chair and Members of Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee



SUBMITTED BY: _____
Peter Stickings, Acting Director, Planning & Infrastructure

DATE: July 3, 2012

SUBJECT: Draft Urban Forest Master Plan – Status Update

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

October 6, 2011, Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee, Item 7.1.1: Draft Urban Forest Master Plan (*staff presentation*). HRM and Dalhousie University staff delivered a presentation on the release of the Draft Plan for public review and proposed to report back to the Standing Committee when the review was completed.

BACKGROUND

From October 2011 to July 2012, a public review of the Draft Urban Forest Master Plan was conducted by HRM and its Dalhousie University research partners. The public engagement process involved a detailed peer review of the Draft Plan by professional planners, landscape architects, arborists, and representatives of environmental groups that took place from October 2011 to January 2012. This was followed by a series of four public workshops in May and June, 2012. A web survey was also conducted during June and July, 2012.

DISCUSSION

The first draft of the Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) was peer reviewed during the fall and winter of 2011/12. The comments and recommendations provided by the reviewers resulted in extensive revisions to the Plan. A second draft was posted on the UFMP website in April 2012, for public review. Four public workshops were conducted during May and June, 2012, to seek community input on how to most effectively implement the actions of the UFMP and how to prioritize these actions. At these sessions, three main themes were discussed: trees in the public realm; trees in the private realm; and land use policies & by-laws. More than 100 citizens took part in the workshops and provided feedback through a prioritization exercise and comment sheets.

The workshops were attended by local residents and HRM Councillors as well as representatives from the development industry, institutional landowners, environmental groups, HRM advisory committees, utility companies, and government agencies. Over 400 individuals also completed an HRM online survey designed to gain better understanding of the public's implementation priorities for the UFMP. Reports concerning the workshops and online survey are available at: <http://www.halifax.ca/RealPropertyPlanning/UFMP/>

Work is currently underway to incorporate public feedback in the final chapter of the UFMP that will focus on Plan implementation. The chapter will establish implementation priorities for the Plan and will include an implementation schedule and associated cost estimates. It is expected that the UFMP will be completed by August and then presented to the Standing Committee in the Fall of 2012.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications for this report.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

October 2011- January 2012, peer review of the draft UFMP.

- Atlantic Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture
- Atlantic Provinces Association of Landscape Architects
- Ecology Action Centre
- Licensed Professional Planners Association of Nova Scotia

Four public workshops were conducted during May and June, 2012.

- Wednesday, May 16, Westphal Room, Cole Harbour Place
- Thursday, May 17, Kenneth C. Rowe Management Building
- Wednesday, May 23, Charles P. Allen High School
- Thursday, June 28, Kenneth C. Rowe Management Building

During June and July, 2012, a UFMP web survey was available at:

<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/UrbanForestMasterPlanSurvey/>

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Project meets all applicable Council approved Environmental Policy.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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