

**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PARKS, TRAILS AND RECREATION**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Held at Saanich Police Building, Kirby Room  
**Wednesday, January 13, 2010, at 5:00 p.m.**

Present: Chair: Councillor Paul Gerrard  
Vice-Chair: Councillor Wayne Hunter (arrived 5:25 pm)

Members: Jim Anderson (arrived 5:45 pm), Terrance Berscheid, Marnie Faust,  
Byron Postle, Martin Roberts, Jill Vivian, Tom Wood (arrived 5:15 pm)

Staff: Rae Roer, Parks Manager; Cory Manton, Urban Forestry, Horticulture  
and Natural Areas Manager; Adriane Pollard, Environmental Services  
Manager; Tania Douglas, Recording Secretary

Guests: From the Environmental Advisory Committee:  
Councillor Vicki Sanders (arrived 5:55 pm), Harry Drage, Mary Haig-  
Brown, Roberta Hesselgrave, Paul West, Ken Whitcroft

Regrets: Daryl Dagneault

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**DRAFT URBAN FOREST STRATEGY**

The Chair noted that this evening's meeting is to receive a presentation from staff, for discussion at a subsequent committee meeting.

The Parks Manager and the Urban Forestry, Horticulture and Natural Areas Manager provided information regarding the Draft Urban Forest Strategy, and the following was noted:

- The strategy is the result of extensive consultation with Council committees, the community and staff. It is based on a review of existing Saanich policies and bylaws.
- An online questionnaire was completed by over 200 residents.
- Staff request committee members provide feedback on the purpose, intention, vision, goals, and priorities of the draft document.
- Staff members hope to provide a report in March 2010 that outlines the costs associated with implementation of the Urban Forest Strategy.
- The strategy is divided into two parts; a policy component, and an implementation plan.
- The policy outlines the purpose, definition, benefits, process, vision and goals. The purpose is to provide policy that will enhance the urban forest over time and address risk management and urban design issues that face the community.
- Some environmental, social and economic benefits noted in the strategy include air quality improvement, carbon uptake and storage, reduction in stress and mental fatigue, contribution to local food production, and an increase in property values.
- Goals of the strategy are to protect trees and enhance the forest canopy, respond to the changing environment, engage the community, promote effective management, and enhance aboriginal practices.

- The implementation plan includes incorporating strategies into all Sustainable Saanich plans to help attain Saanich's goals of environmental integrity, social well-being, and economic vibrancy. Action items stem from the implementation priorities.
- The next steps are to finalize the draft review process by end of January 2010, meet with consultants to review comments and feedback, finalize the Urban Forest Strategy, and review with Advisory Committees prior to submission to Council.

A discussion ensued and staff members responded to comments and questions as follows:

- Carbon benefits are noted in the strategy; having an inventory of trees and maybe rainwater intake would help in calculating how much carbon is being taken in.
- The Saanich G.I.S. system can measure canopy cover, and the reference to "canopy" is used frequently. Staff will review the document to ensure that it is referenced correctly.
- Priorities are identified in this document. Tree Bylaw amendments will need to occur, and staff will have to examine how to inventory trees. All bylaws and policies need to tie into each other.
- Priorities identified in this document are for the next 1-5 years. Many more priorities will need to be addressed in the next 5-10 years. Costs need to be determined.
- Documents such as the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, Regional Growth Strategy, Integrated Storm Water Management, soil management and stream management documents, natural areas strategies etc, are mentioned in the draft but the links are not shown. Staff will review this.
- Groundcover ecosystems are mentioned in the draft, but not in detail. The focus is on trees.
- Performance indicators are listed in the draft however no reporting goals are mentioned. Staff will review this.
- It was noted that the Garry Oak ecosystem seems most prevalent. Staff will review the suggestion to reference more ecosystems.
- The goals listed are all important. Rather than numbering the goals staff will consider using bulleted lists.
- The Green Infrastructure Fund has no mechanism in place to enhance the urban forest. It was suggested that there could be development cost charges, or penalties charged to owners for removing trees from property.
- The development community could be educated regarding green/integrated landscape systems. Education on how to encourage encroachment of the forest onto urban land could be beneficial.

There was debate about whether the draft document should be more focused with ecosystem management as opposed to an urban forestry strategy. Staff noted that:

- The document is meant to address the trees and forest system.
- There is concern that the document could become too broad; most goals and strategies are for managing the urban forest.
- This strategy is intended to be an overriding document that identifies priorities, and the costs associated with implementation of the strategy.
- At this time, staff would like feedback on the purpose, intention, goals and priorities of the draft.

The Chair thanked staff and committee members for their feedback.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday January 28, 2010.

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Chair

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

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Committee Secretary