



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: July 22, 2024
To: Community Services Committee
From: Victoria Trotter, Council Committee Coordinator
Report Number: COM24-006
Attachments: Stratford Invasive Plant Plan,
Invasive Plant Management Training

Title: Stratford Invasive Plant Plan 2024

Objective: To consider a recommendation from the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee to adopt the 2024 Stratford Invasive Plant Plan.

Background: In early 2023 the Ecological Working Group of the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee met with the Manager of Parks, Forestry and Cemetery to discuss how to best deal with invasive species and the process to move forward with the development of an invasive species management plan. At the March 2, 2023 meeting, the following motion was made by the Committee:

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee recognizes the value and recommends the development of an Invasive Species Management Plan for the City.

At the May 23, 2023 Regular Council meeting, Council adopted the following recommendation of the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee:

THAT the City of Stratford recognizes the value of an Invasive Species Management Plan for the City as a first step towards the goal of reducing invasive species in the City;

AND THAT staff be directed to develop an Invasive Species Management Plan for consideration of Council;

AND THAT Lot Maintenance By-law 94-2008 be amended to include Japanese Knotweed and Phragmites in the list of noxious weeds.

The Manager of Parks, Forestry and Cemetery contacted the Invasive Species Centre in Sault Ste. Marie, who have provided technical experience and produced substantial

supporting material for invasive species plans. The Invasive Species Centre provided a three-step proposal for the City of Stratford to develop a strategy for staff and volunteers to manage invasive species.

At the December 7, 2023 meeting, the following motion as made by the Committee:

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee spends \$13,842.50 (HST included) from their 2023 Budget for a proposed Master Plan for Invasive Species as presented by the Invasive Species Centre, to continue their work by creating an Invasive Species Management Strategy for the City of Stratford.

Analysis: In April 2024 the Invasive Species Centre completed the Stratford Invasive Plant Plan (the Plan) and Invasive Plant Management Training.

At the May 2, 2024 Energy & Environment meeting the following motion was made by the Committee:

THAT the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee recommends that Stratford City Council adopt the Stratford Invasive Species Plant Plan and for City staff to follow its recommendations.

The Plan states invasive species are considered one of Canada's greatest threats to the survival of our native biodiversity and provides recommendations on management, prevention, and strategies.

A high-level overview of prevention includes staying informed on emerging and arriving threats, enhanced monitoring for Watch List species in priority areas, increase in public awareness and introduction of new policies.

Management includes continuing with current trail inspections, tracing the pattern of infestations, implementing control of high priority species, identifying potential candidates for eradication and incorporation of research and adaptive management.

The Plan recommends establishing a small, annual baseline funding amount as part of the implementation of an invasive plant strategy. Baseline funding would need to be a part of the annual budget process.

Staff in the Community Services Department have reviewed the Plan and have no concerns with adoption subject to the understanding that recommendations in the Plan will be implemented as funding allows.

The Plan recommends including funds in the annual budget to meet the recommendations and reduce invasive species in the City. The Plan does not include the costs associated for completing the recommendations. Staff will be reviewing the Plan

and including the financial impacts of implementation in the departmental workplans and budget for 2025 and subsequent years.

Financial Implications:

Financial impact to current year operating budget:

The impact on the 2024 budget is reflected in the costs approved for the plan. While this project was authorized in 2023, the payment of phases two and three, along with an offsetting transfer from reserve occurred in 2024, resulting in a variance to the 2024 budget for both the revenue and expense lines, and no bottom-line impact.

Financial impact on future year operating budget:

To be determined.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities:

Work Together for Greater Impact

This report aligns with this priority as reducing invasive species will require support from the community.

Alignment with One Planet Principles:

Land and Nature

Protecting and restoring land for the benefit of people and wildlife.

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Stratford Invasive Plant Plan be adopted;

AND THAT staff be directed to implement the recommendations contained in the Plan and to include sufficient resources and funding in the annual budget process for Council’s consideration.

Prepared by: Victoria Trotter, Council Committee Coordinator

Recommended by: Tatiana Dafoe, City Clerk

Karmen Krueger, CPA, CA, Director of Corporate Services

Joan Thomson, Chief Administrative Officer