



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Municipal Hall
1229 Esquimalt Road
Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1

Legislation Text

File #: 20-401, Version: 1

REQUEST FOR DECISION

DATE: August 24, 2020

Report No. CSS-20-014

TO: Laurie Hurst, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Blair McDonald, Director of Community Safety Services

SUBJECT:

Deer Study Proposal

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council review the Deer Study Proposal and direct staff to enter into a contract with the proponent to engage in a deer immunocontraception study in the Township for the upcoming three years.

RELEVANT POLICY:

Animal Management Bylaw, 2015, No. 2841

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE:

Healthy, Livable and Diverse Community; control deer in partnership with other governments; seek Provincial approval of deer management strategy, subsequent to the results of the Oak Bay pilot project.

BACKGROUND:

At the March 16, 2020 Council meeting, Council passed the following motion:

MOTION # 1:

- 1) That Esquimalt staff work with Dr Fisher and UWSS to determine ways that concurrent work done in Esquimalt may inform and assist but not duplicate the Oak Bay [OB] Project;
- 2) That the Township of Esquimalt initiate conversations with Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations to inform future applications to Province regarding deer research and management, recognizing First Nation consultation is a Provincial responsibility;
- 3) That the Township of Esquimalt complete application to the Province to allow for a Deer study and immuno-contraception through the above information for potential ability to action in the fall of 2020, and to submit for funding assistance through PUDOC (Provincial Urban Deer Cost Share

Program) at the fall 2020 intake.

The proposal before Council is for a study of the efficacy of immunocontraception of Black-Tailed deer.

ISSUES:

1. Rationale for Selected Option

In July of 2020, staff received a report from Dr. Jason Fisher entitled "Black-Tailed Deer Population Size and Management in Esquimalt, British Columbia" (attachment #1). The report lays out the processes, procedures and costs to conduct a deer population and immunocontraceptive study similar to one conducted in Oak Bay. The study would occur over a three year period.

2. Organizational Implications

Staff time would be required to liaise and assist Dr. Fisher and his team where appropriate. Additionally, should the program begin it will inevitably generate calls of concern to the Township. These demands can be met within current staffing levels and within existing programs.

3. Financial Implications

As is laid out in the report, the costs of the three year project would be approximately \$373,000.00, which averages to approximately \$125,000.00 per year. There is the potential that some funding will be made available from the Province to help offset costs, however, the maximum funding available annually is \$20,000 per project/municipality and there is no guarantee that this amount will be received by the Township. There are currently no budget funds set aside for this project. The funding would need to be allocated in the 2021 through 2023 budget years to fund this project. Some of the funding would be required in the 2020 budget year to allow Dr. Fisher to seek approval to conduct the study, and also to apply for provincial funding in this year, should Council approve this project. This funding would not be in addition to the funds as detailed above.

4. Sustainability & Environmental Implications

Any sustainability and environmental implications will become more evident as the program progresses.

5. Communication & Engagement

Previous communication with the Department of National Defence has revealed that DND would prefer to participate in a region wide deer control initiative however have indicated they would be prepared to participate with Esquimalt once the final results of the Oak Bay Study are available. Dr. Fisher's report has been provided to DND biologists for their information and to inform any future decisions DND may wish to make relating to urban deer management.

The Township will assist Dr. Fisher and his team in communicating details of the program and activities that residents may see in their neighbourhoods should the program be realized.

Prior to approval of this study, the Province will consult with potentially impacted First Nations communities.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. That Council review the Deer Study Proposal and direct staff to enter into a contract with the

proponent to engage in a deer immunocontraception study in the Township for the upcoming three years.

2. That Council review the Deer Study Proposal and direct staff to take no further action in relation to the proposal and to advise the proponent as such.
3. That Council provide alternate direction to staff.