



Beaver Management Guidelines October 2006

1.0 Purpose

To establish beaver management guidelines in line with the City's Environmental Policy, that reflect a balanced approach to coexist with beavers while addressing flooding control, infrastructure integrity, native tree and shrub assets and public safety within the City of St. Albert on public lands.

2.0 Guidelines

2.1 Timeline

Representatives from Public Works, Office of Environment and Environmental Advisory Committee will review these guidelines on an annual basis.

2.2 Beaver Management

(A) Trained Public Works staff will record any beaver activity during the unfrozen period of the year as part of their regular inspection procedures (minimally in June and October). The following information will be collected:

- i) Population estimate based on number of lodges and/or visual sightings
- ii) Dam locations and sizes
- iii) Immediate areas of feeding,
- iv) Types and numbers of trees being removed

(B) Trained Public Works staff will assess any potential impact to public properties using the collection of data outlined in section A. Unacceptable beaver activity will be reported to Office of Environment and determination of action will be decided upon by Office of Environment and Public Works staff.

(C) Unacceptable beaver activity may include:

- i) Cutting City managed trees 6 cm or greater in diameter at breast height (DBH) that have special value or may cause a safety concern
- ii) Tunnelling under walking trails
- iii) Tunnelling under areas mower operators drive in groomed park areas
- iv) Interference with culverts or infrastructure
- v) Prospective flooding issues in the event of a large runoff
- vi) Activity in high use public areas that may put the beaver or public health at risk.

(D) If active management is deemed necessary, the management of beavers will initially be carried out through a non-invasive approach, following all provincial and federal guidelines, where applicable, such as:

- i) Special trees with ecological or aesthetic value in predetermined areas of feeding will be protected through wire skirts, exclosures or river edge beaver fence. Additionally, other trees and shrubs, where there are large quantities and have advanced regenerative capability should be left unprotected for the use of beaver
- ii) Dismantling of beaver structures through methods least destructive to the environment

- iii) Removing debris, and/or
- iv) Other non-invasive deterrents that do not harm the beaver.

(E) If non-invasive management techniques are not applicable or are ineffective, the City will consider retaining a licensed professional to live trap and relocate the beaver following all provincial and federal guidelines. Some considerations when relocating beaver are:

- i) Signage will be posted at strategic locations to notify the public that trapping activities are occurring in the area
- ii) Relocation should occur during the time of year when beaver will have adequate time to re-colonize, this is typically between May and August
- iii) Attempt to move beaver within the watershed and/or a maximum distance of 10-15 kilometres
- iv) The relocation destination should be predetermined and proper permission will be obtained
- v) Move only to areas where there is a high probability of beaver survival once relocated
- vi) Once beaver has been relocated prevention and exclusion techniques should be implemented at the site to prevent the area from being re-colonized by another beaver.

(F) Destroying beaver will be considered after all other management tools have been exhausted or when an emergency situation has arisen. Once the beaver is destroyed, prevention and exclusion techniques will be implemented at the site to help prevent the area from being re-colonized by another beaver. Beaver remains will be disposed of appropriately.

(G) Unacceptable beaver activity will lead directly to live trapping and/or destroying in the following man made water bodies: Lacombe Park Lake, Grandin Pond, upper and lower Heritage Lakes and any other stormwater retention ponds.

3.0 Other Management Considerations

- Beavers will not be prohibited from moving up and down the Sturgeon River
- Relocation sites and permits for control should be kept up to date for quick response