

Public Hearing Binder

The general purpose of proposed “**Colwood Urban Forest Bylaw No. 1735, 2018, Amendment No.3, Bylaw No.1735-03, 2025**” is to provide Council with proposed amendments to the Urban Forest Bylaw, along with supporting rationale for each change.

Within the electronic binder, please find a copy of:

1. Staff Report to Council (June 9 2025)
2. Staff Presentation (June 9 2025)
3. Proposed Bylaw
4. Notice of Amending Bylaw (June 9 2025)

Minutes and videos of Council are publicly available and can be accessed through the following link:

- [City of Colwood - Home \(civicweb.net\)](http://civicweb.net)

To: CAO – Jason Johnson
Submitted: May 21, 2025
From: Mairi Bosomworth
RE: Amendments to Urban Forest Bylaw

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Colwood Urban Forest Bylaw No. 1735, 2018, Amendment No.3 , Bylaw No. 1735-03, 2025 be considered for 1st, 2nd and 3rd reading.

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

To provide Council with proposed amendments to the Urban Forest Bylaw, along with the supporting rationale for each change.

STRATEGIC PLAN (*environment*)

This initiative supports Council strategic objectives of Environment: Colwood Values Natural Assets, and supporting the following tactics:

- Amend the Urban Forest Bylaw to enhance tree protection, advance education campaign with respect to bylaw changes.
- Advance the Urban Forest Strategy through adoption, consider funding options for plan actuation.

Official Community Plan

Amendments to the Urban Forest Bylaw also support a number of policies in the OCP, including:

- Policy 10.3.3.1 - Urban Tree Canopy and Green Spaces - Improve, increase the area of, and protect urban tree canopy and other vegetated areas throughout the City.
- Policy 11.2.3.4 - Tree Protection and Enhancement - Protect existing trees that do not pose danger to humans, support weather and wind protection, and enhance the overall tree canopy and forest ecosystems.

BACKGROUND

Tree permit applications continue to be the most frequently submitted application type received by the Planning department. In 2024, a total of 77 tree permit applications were submitted, accounting for 49% of all applications that year. Current regulations in the Urban Forest Bylaw regarding tree removal are relatively permissive, making it fairly easy for property owners to obtain approval for tree removal.

To address this, staff are recommending several amendments to the Urban Forest Bylaw. These proposed amendments aim to make the application process more rigorous, which is expected to

reduce the overall number of applications. In addition, the amendments are intended to support the City's broader goals related to tree canopy preservation and urban forest stewardship.

The proposed bylaw amendments are aligned with the recommendations outlined in the draft Urban Forest Strategy. Staff are bringing these amendments forward in advance of the strategy's formal adoption to ensure timely implementation - particularly ahead of the busier summer and fall seasons.

Once the Urban Forest Strategy has been endorsed by Council, staff will return with any additional Bylaw amendments that may be required. This phased approach is expected to streamline the implementation process and ensure alignment between the Bylaw and Strategy.

DISCUSSION

The following section summarizes the proposed amendments to the Urban Forest Bylaw.

Application Fee

Currently, the fee structure for tree permit applications is as follows: \$75 for the first tree, an additional \$25 for each subsequent tree (up to 5 trees), and a flat rate of \$200 for applications involving the removal of five or more trees.

A review of other fees across other municipalities within the CRD indicates that Colwood's current rates are generally in line with regional averages. See **Table 1**. However, when considering the staff time and resources required to process each application, staff believe there is justification for adjusting the fee structure.

Staff recommend implementing a flat fee of \$100 per application, regardless of the number of trees proposed for removal. This change reflects the administrative effort involved in processing each application, which does not vary significantly based on the number of trees being removed. A simplified, flat-rate fee structure will also improve clarity for applicants and streamline the permitting process.

Table 1 - Summary of Application Fees

Municipality	Application Fee	Notes
Colwood	\$75 \$25 \$200	Cut or remove one tree Cut or remove each additional tree up to 5 Cut or remove more than 5 trees
Victoria	\$50-\$250	Dependent on the size of the site
Saanich	\$0-\$50 \$30 per additional tree	Dependent on the type of activity
View Royal	\$0-\$100	\$100 for priority processing
Metchosin	\$40	For the first 50 trees
Sidney	\$250	

Security for Replacement Tree

Under the Urban Forest Bylaw, applicants proposing to remove a tree are required to replace it, with the replacement ratio depending on the total number of trees removed annually. To ensure trees are replanted, the City collects a security deposit of \$250 per replacement tree. Applicants must submit a photo once the tree is planted and another photo one year later. If the tree is in good condition after one year, the security deposit is refunded. Colwood's security cost is low compared to other municipalities in the region. See **Table 2**.

In some cases, however, applicants choose not to replant a tree, forfeiting their deposit. Unfortunately, the current \$250 amount is insufficient for the City to plant a replacement tree on their behalf. While the relatively low deposit may encourage compliance by keeping the process accessible, it does not adequately cover the City's costs when replanting is not completed.

Staff recommend increasing the security deposit to \$750 per replacement tree. This adjustment would better reflect the actual cost of tree planting and maintenance, and provide a stronger incentive for applicants to follow through with replanting requirements.

Table 2 - Summary of Security Amounts

Municipality	Security	Notes
Colwood	\$250	
Victoria	\$0-\$2,000	With some exceptions
Saanich	\$300-\$700	Dependent on the reason for removal
View Royal	120% of the total replacement cost and maintenance for 1 year	
Metchosin	120% of the total replacement cost and maintenance for 3 years	
Sidney	\$750	

Cash-in-Lieu of Replacement Trees

The Urban Forest Bylaw allows applicants to provide a cash-in-lieu payment instead of planting a replacement tree, but only if the Director determines that the lot cannot reasonably accommodate a new tree. This option is common in many municipalities.

Currently, Colwood has the lowest cash-in-lieu rate in the region, making it a less burdensome alternative to replanting. See **Table 3**. While the City's priority remains on on-site tree replacement, the low fee may unintentionally discourage replanting. To better align with regional standards and encourage more on-site planting, staff recommend increasing the cash-in-lieu amount to \$750 per tree. This amount remains reasonable compared to other municipalities and better reflects the true cost of planting and maintaining a tree in public spaces.

Table 3 - Summary of Cash-in-Lieu Amounts

Municipality	Cash-in-Lieu Amount	Notes
Colwood	\$250	
Victoria	\$2,000	

Saanich	\$300-\$700	Dependent on the reason for removal
View Royal	\$500	
Metchosin	N/A	
Sidney	\$750	

OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES

THAT Council consider one of the following options:

Option 1: The staff recommendation; OR

Option 2: THAT staff provide additional information before Council considers an amendment to the Urban Forest Bylaw; OR

Option 3: THAT amendments to the Urban Forest Bylaw be denied

Option 4: That Council consider another option

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

Prior to 1st reading of the amending Bylaw, a notice will be posted on the City's website and in 2 consecutive issues of a local newspaper in accordance with the Public Notice Bylaw No. 1933.

TIMELINES

June 9, 2025 - Public Input and 1st, 2nd and 3rd Readings

The public will be invited to provide input. Council will consider 1st, 2nd and 3rd reading of the amending Bylaw.

June 23, 2025 - Adoption

The amending Bylaw will be adopted.

CLIMATE CONSIDERATIONS

These proposed amendments would make the process of tree removal more stringent, which could lead to a decrease in the number of removal requests. By discouraging unnecessary tree removal, the City would be better positioned to meet its tree canopy targets and advance broader goals of environmental stewardship. This approach aligns with Strategy N3-2 of the Colwood Climate Action Plan, which focuses on climate mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity, and equity. Key actions under this strategy include enhancing protections for mature trees, ensuring no net loss of tree canopy cover, implementing tree replacement ratios, and prioritizing tree planting in neighborhoods with less than 30% canopy coverage.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION

By increasing the application fee, security deposit, and cash-in-lieu fee associated with tree permits, the City will generate additional revenue from tree-related activities. These higher fees may also serve as a deterrent to unnecessary tree removal, encouraging greater compliance with tree protection regulations and reinforcing the importance of preserving the urban forest.

CONCLUSIONS

The proposed amendments to the Urban Forest Bylaw aim to align the City's fees with other municipalities in the region, to support the achievement of tree canopy targets, and ensure that fees reflect the actual costs associated with tree planting. Staff recommend that Council proceed with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd reading of the amending Bylaw to advance these objectives.

Attachments:

[Bylaw 1735-03 Urban Forest Bylaw \(1\)](#)

[Staff Presentation-Urban Forest Bylaw Amendments](#)

Approved by:

Yazmin Hernandez, Director of Planning
Jason Johnson, Chief Administrative Officer

Status:

Pending
None

Urban Forest Bylaw Amendments

Presented by Mairi Bosomworth, Senior Planner
Council Meeting
June 9th

Purpose

- Recommend proposed amendments to Urban Forest Bylaw
- Aligned with:
 - Strategic Plan
 - OCP



"Urban Forest Bylaw" No. 1735, 2018

(With amendments to April 29, 2022)

Consolidated for convenience only:

All persons making use of this consolidation are advised that the amendments have been consolidated for convenience only, and that the original bylaws should be consulted for all purposes of interpretation and application of the bylaw.

Includes Amendments:

Bylaw No. 1735-01 Adopted July 15, 2020



Background

- Tree permits accounted for 49% of applications in 2024
- Bylaw is relatively permissive
- Consistent with Urban Forest Strategy



Amendment #1

Update Application Fee

- Change fee to \$100
- Generally aligned with fees in other municipalities
- Simplify fee structure

Municipality	Application Fee	Notes
Colwood	\$75 \$25 \$200	Cut or remove one tree Cut or remove each additional tree up to 5 Cut or remove more than 5 trees
Victoria	\$50-\$250	Dependant on the size of the site
Saanich	\$0-\$50 \$30 per additional tree	Dependant on the type of activity
View Royal	\$0-\$100	\$100 for priority processing
Metchosin	\$40	For the first 50 trees
Sidney	\$250	

Amendment #2

Update Security for Replacement Tree

- Change fee to \$750
- Low compared to other municipalities
- Align with actual cost to plant a tree

Municipality	Security	Notes
Colwood	\$250	
Victoria	\$0-\$2,000	With some exceptions
Saanich	\$300-\$700	Dependant on the reason for removal
View Royal	120% of the total replacement cost and maintenance for 1 year	
Metchosin	120% of the total replacement cost and maintenance for 3 years	
Sidney	\$750	

Amendment #3

Update Cash-in-Lieu

- Change fee to \$750
- Low compared to other municipalities
- Align with actual cost to plant a tree

Municipality	Cash-in-Lieu Amount	Notes
Colwood	\$250	
Victoria	\$2,000	
Saanich	\$300-\$700	Dependant on the reason for removal
View Royal	\$500	
Metchosin	N/A	
Sidney	\$750	

Staff Recommendation

That the Urban Forest Bylaw Amendments be considered for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Readings.

Option 2: Council request additional information

Option 3: Council deny the amendments

Option 4: Another option as selected by Council

DRAFT

Thank you!



**CITY OF COLWOOD
BYLAW NO 1735-03**

A BYLAW TO AMEND BYLAW NO.1735 BEING THE "COLWOOD URBAN FOREST BYLAW"

The Council of the City of Colwood, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. CITATION

This Bylaw may be cited as "Colwood Urban Forest Bylaw No. 1735, 2018, Amendment No. 3, Bylaw No. 1735-03, 2025".

2. AMENDMENT

Bylaw No. 1735, the "Colwood Urban Forest Bylaw, 2018" is amended as follows:

a) Replace schedule A with the following:

Application Fee (non-refundable)	\$100
Security for Replacement Trees	\$750 per tree
Cash-in-Lieu	\$750 per tree
(1) Retained Trees	
a) Protected Tree	\$2,500 per tree

READ A FIRST TIME on the day of , 2025

READ A SECOND TIME on the day of , 2025

READ A THIRD TIME on the day of , 2025

ADOPTED on the day of 2025

Mayor

Corporate Officer

NOTICE OF AMENDING BYLAW

Colwood Urban Forest Bylaw No. 1735, 2018, Amendment No. 3, Bylaw No. 1735-03,
2025

MEETING:	Regular Meeting of Council
DATE and TIME:	Monday, June 9, 2025, 6:30pm
PLACE:	Council Chambers, 3300 Wishart Road, Colwood BC

NOTICE IS GIVEN that Council of the City of Colwood will consider First, Second and Third Reading on Monday, June 9, 2025, at 6:30pm in relation to the proposed “**Colwood Urban Forest Bylaw No. 1735, 2018, Amendment No.3, Bylaw No.1735-03, 2025**”.

PURPOSE: To provide Council with proposed amendments to the Urban Forest Bylaw, along with supporting rationale for each change.

SUBJECT PROPERTY: This Bylaw applies to the lands within the City of Colwood.

INSPECTION OF MATERIALS: Copies of the proposed bylaw and related materials can be viewed at www.colwood.ca/news.

We want to hear from you!

WRITE TO US

The deadline for written submissions is 12:00 pm on the day of the meeting and must include your name and civic address.

- Email corporateservices@colwood.ca
- Mail/Drop-off: City of Colwood, 3300 Wishart Road, Colwood, BC V9C 1R1

SPEAK TO COUNCIL

In Person: The public is welcome to provide comments in person during the public participation portion of the meeting.

Electronically: To pre-register to speak please contact corporateservices@colwood.ca up until noon on the day of the meeting.

NEED MORE INFORMATION? Contact Planning at (250) 294-8153 or planning@colwood.ca.



