

MISCELLANEOUS – TARGETED GRAZING  
CITY WIDE  
BYLAW 37P2017

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report responds to Council’s direction to investigate necessary bylaw amendments to allow the City to use goat grazing for land management and weed control on City lands in 2017.

Administration has identified that amendments to both the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) and the Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO) Bylaw are needed to enable the City to graze livestock on City lands. The RPO bylaw must be amended as it regulates livestock within the city.

This report includes only the amendments to the LUB. The amendments to the RPO Bylaw will proceed to Council in a separate report.

The LUB amendments define livestock grazing as “targeted grazing” and allow livestock, temporary fencing, working dogs and horses and temporary overnight accommodation for shepherds and shelter for working dogs and horses. “Targeted grazing” is proposed as an activity that is exempt from a development permit when conducted by or on behalf of the City on City-owned lands.

**PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION**

On 2016 November 07, Council voted to ADOPT, Moved by Councillor Woolley, Seconded by Magliocca, the SPC on Community and Protective Services Recommendation 4 contained in Report CPS2016-0825 be adopted, as follows:

“Direct Administration to investigate the necessary bylaw amendments to allow The City to use livestock grazing as a land management and weed control tool on City of Calgary lands in 2017”.

On 2015 September 28, Council voted to ADOPT, Moved by Councillor Colley-Urquhart, Seconded by Councillor Demong, that the SPC on Community and Protective Services Recommendation contained in Report CPS2015-0738 be adopted, as follows:

“That Council direct Administration to report back through the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services no later than October 2016 on the short-term suppression program’s effectiveness and costs, and on long-term recommendations for best practices on pest management including weed and dandelion control”.

On 2015 June 15, Council adopted NM2015-12 (Dandelion Control on City Property) and directed Administration to “prepare a report on effective dandelion control for the entire City including financial ramifications and return to Council through the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services no later than October 5, 2015.”

**ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION**

2017 June 01

That Calgary Planning Commission recommends **APPROVAL** of the proposed amendments to the Land Use Bylaw (1P2007).

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**RECOMMENDATION(S) OF THE CALGARY PLANNING COMMISSION**

That Council hold a Public Hearing on Bylaw 37P2017; and

1. **ADOPT** the proposed amendments to the Land Use Bylaw (1P2007), in accordance with Administration's recommendation; and
2. Give three readings to the proposed Bylaw 37P2017.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Administration recommends approval of the amendments to the LUB because they complement amendments to the RPO Bylaw to implement livestock grazing as a land management and weed control tool on all City-owned lands. The RPO Bylaw and LUB amendments provide the City with an additional method to manage weeds as required under the provincial Weed Control Act. Goat grazing reduces the use of herbicides, allows weed control near water bodies where there are limitations on the use of herbicides and on steep slopes and other similar areas where access can be a challenge.

**ATTACHMENT**

1. Proposed Bylaw 37P2017

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**ADMINISTRATIONS RECOMMENDATION TO CALGARY PLANNING COMMISSION**

Recommend that Council **ADOPT**, by bylaw, the proposed amendments to Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 (APPENDIX I).

**Moved by: A. Palmiere**

**Carried: 5 – 0**

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**REGULATORY DISCUSSION**

**INTRODUCTION**

On 2015 September 28, Council approved \$1.7 million in one-time operating funding and Administration was directed to pilot a short-term suppression strategy to control the visual impact of dandelions on City parks and boulevards. A goat grazing pilot in Confluence Park was undertaken in 2016 and it was indicated that goat grazing could be an effective weed management method. Goats are allowed to graze on Confluence Park because it is designated Special Purpose – Future Urban Development (S-FUD) and livestock grazing is included in the “Extensive Agriculture” use. This use is only allowed in two districts and is generally used for the cultivation of crops and grazing of livestock. It was acknowledged that amendments to more than one bylaw would be needed to extend goat grazing to other City properties, as not all of them are allowed to have Extensive Agriculture. Administration also felt that since the purposes of goat grazing was primarily for weed control, it did not meet the intention of Extensive Agriculture.

The CPS2016-0825 report on the pilot project in Confluence Park found that goats can efficiently and effectively target broadleaf weeds such as thistle and dandelions while the park remained open to users. Subsequently, in 2016, Council directed Administration to investigate the necessary bylaw amendments to allow livestock grazing for land management and weed control on all City-owned lands in 2017.

**DESCRIPTION OF TARGETED GRAZING**

The purpose of this report is not to report on the detailed management methods, effectiveness, cost or impacts of using goats or other livestock for weed and grass control in Calgary, as this has already occurred in various reports including CPS2016-0825 and is guided by the City’s *Integrated Pest Management Plan*. Rather, the purpose of this report is to propose a method to allow only the City or its contractors to use livestock to manage weeds and grass on City-owned lands in accordance with Council’s direction to Administration.

The number of goats used in targeted grazing varies on the size of the park and the amount of weeds. The pilot project in Confluence Park comprised about 35 hectares and 100 goats were used with up to three shepherds on horseback. Priority areas for the City are the larger parks such as Confluence, Ralph Klein and Nose Hill. Targeted grazing usually occurs when weeds are growing, from late June to early August. The goats defoliate the weed which allows the growth of other beneficial plants and controls the spread of the weed. The goats are herded by Shepherds and/or herding dogs. Temporary fencing can be installed quickly to focus the goats when there is a highly weed infested area. Other positive impacts of goat grazing include reducing the fire fuel load, controlling invasive species and improving wildlife habitat through reducing vegetation density.

Calgary Parks has developed operational guidelines that include methods of communication with other City business units, including communication with Water Resources when activities are in the floodway and flood fringe.

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**EXISTING METHOD OF LIVESTOCK REGULATION IN CALGARY**

The RPO Bylaw regulates livestock in the City. Section 27 of the RPO Bylaw states “No person shall keep Livestock in any area of the City except where the keeping of Livestock is allowed under The City of Calgary Land Use Bylaw”.

Further, section 14(2) of the RPO Bylaw prohibits animals other than dogs being in off-leash areas, section 25 requires that animals do not cause damage to property or chase other animals, and section 26(1) limits the use of horses in parks.

**PROPOSED METHOD OF REGULATION**

The use of livestock to manage grass and weeds is also called targeted grazing. Targeted grazing differs from traditional grazing based on the goal – the goal of traditional grazing is livestock production while the goal of targeted grazing is the modification of plant communities.

The proposed LUB amendments in APPENDIX I contain a definition of “targeted grazing” as a temporary activity where livestock are used for land management purposes, and includes the use of temporary fencing and temporary accommodation for shepherds and herding dogs and horses.

The amendment also proposes “targeted grazing” should be exempt from requiring a development permit when undertaken by or on behalf of the City, and adds it to the list of uses and developments retroactively included in previously-approved DC Direct Control Bylaws in Section 21(1), in order to allow it on City-owned parcels designated DC District, such as Nose Hill Park.

In order to implement the targeted grazing program on all City-owned land the RPO bylaw needs to be amended. This amendment will proceed to Council in a separate report.

**CONSULTATION & PUBLIC FEEDBACK**

During the course of the targeted grazing pilot project, 95 percent of the 40 service request calls placed with 311 were positive.

The City also held open houses on 2016 November 15 and 25, inviting a wide variety of stakeholders to provide input on a number of topics, including urban grazing. Forty-four of 57 written comments on urban grazing received at the open houses supported the use of livestock to manage weeds and grass on city-owned land, with some comments giving support conditional on it saving money as compared to the alternatives.

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APPENDIX I

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO LAND USE BYLAW 1P2007

1. The City of Calgary Land Use Bylaw, being Bylaw 1P2007 of the City of Calgary, as amended, is hereby further amended as follows:
  - (a) Renumber subsection 13(136) as subsection 13(135.1).
  - (b) Insert the following subsections:

**“13(136)        *“targeted grazing”* means the temporary use of livestock for managing land to alter plant communities and lands for specific invasive plant species and landscape management goals, and may include:**

    - (a) Temporary fencing;
    - (b) Herding dogs and working horses;
    - (c) Shepherds to manage livestock, herding dogs and working horses; and
    - (d) Temporary portable overnight accommodation for shepherds, herding dogs and working horses.”
  - (c) Insert the words “and ***developments***” after the words “following ***uses***” in section 21(1).
  - (d) Delete the “.” in subsections 21(1)(d) and 25.1(f) and replace with “; and”.
  - (e) Delete the word “and” in subsections 21(1)(c) and 25.1(e).
  - (f) Insert a new subsection 21(1)(e) as follows:

**“(e)        *targeted grazing* on ***City*** owned lands carried on by, or on behalf of, the ***City***.”**
  - (g) Insert a new subsection 25(1)(g) as follows:

**“(g)        *targeted grazing* on ***City*** owned lands carried on by, or on behalf of, the ***City***.”**