



Report Number: EC2025-0739

Meeting: Executive Committee

Meeting Date: 2025 July 22

NOTICE OF MOTION

RE: Accelerated Poplar Tree Replacement and Sidewalk Repair Program

Sponsoring Member(s) of Council: Councillor Andre Chabot, Councillor Peter Demong

WHEREAS poplar trees make up approximately 19 % of the public tree inventory population and have historically been widely planted in Calgary's established communities due to their rapid growth, hardiness, and ability to provide quick shade and windbreaks;

AND WHEREAS poplar trees have aggressive, expansive root systems, which may cause heaving, cracking, and displacement of adjacent sidewalks resulting in costly replacements and creating accessibility barriers for residents, particularly those with mobility limitations;

AND WHEREAS previous tree planting policies permitted poplars in close proximity to sidewalks, resulting in sidewalk damage that created challenges for residents, which prompted the current policy requiring poplars to be planted at least 10 metres from sidewalks;

AND WHEREAS sidewalk damage caused by poplar roots is a recurring issue in many established Calgary neighbourhoods, leading to increased replacement costs and ongoing accessibility concerns;

AND WHEREAS the City of Calgary currently has a Poplar Removal Policy that allows residents, under certain conditions, to pay for the removal and replacement of a problematic poplar tree;

AND WHEREAS the City of Calgary manages the poplar population of approximately 100,000 trees through a systematic life-cycle program, guided by the Urban Forest Strategic Plan, for the removal of poplars that are dead, dying, or pose a threat to public safety or infrastructure;

AND WHEREAS Urban Forestry identified in 2024 that there are approximately 4,000 public poplar trees over 50 cm Diameter at Breast Height that meet the criteria for removal in Calgary;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Council directs City Administration to report back through Infrastructure and Planning Committee by end of Q1, 2026, with a recommendation for an accelerated program to replace declining poplar trees within 3 metres of sidewalks in established communities with alternative tree species that have less invasive root systems;

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Administration include in its report the impacts on the urban tree canopy and provide a recommendation that for every poplar tree removed and replaced with an alternative species, another poplar tree be planted in a more suitable location.

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Administration include in its report the financial implications of both the tree and damaged sidewalk replacement, with the program to be delivered at no cost to residents;

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AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that Administration include poplar lifecycle planning as part of the Urban Forestry Strategic Plan update.

Attachment:

1. Notice of Motion Checklist