

## **Review Of Policies, Procedures And Bylaws Relating To Wildland Fire: Recommendations to be Implemented In 2007**

Staff is supportive of implementing the following recommendations contained within the review in 2007 for properties within the Wildland Fire Hazard Development Permit areas determined by the City.

### **Landscape Level Risk Assessment**

**Recommendation 1:** The City should consider working with the Building Policy Branch to create a structure that would enable the municipality to better address wildland urban interface protection considerations. *(Preliminary dialogue only therefore no budget implication.)*

**Recommendation 2:** The City should lobby the province to identify and document hazardous fuel types on crown land that are not within the boundary of the City but that are adjacent to residential neighbourhoods that could be impacted by a wildland urban interface fire. Effort must be directed at encouraging the province to initiate a fuel treatment program for these lands and this may include coordinating lobbying initiatives with other local governments from within the Okanagan valley.

### **Subdivision Considerations**

**Recommendation 4:** In new subdivisions within the Wildfire Development Permit areas the City should require roofing materials that are fire retardant with a Class A and Class B rating. While it is recognized that wholesale changes to existing roofing materials within the City are not practical, a long-term replacement standard that is phased in over the roof rotation period would significantly reduce the vulnerability of the community. The City should obtain legal advice regarding the implementation of building requirements that are more restrictive than the BC Building Code.

**Recommendation 5:** The City must work towards improving access in existing areas of the community that are considered isolated and that have inadequate developed access for evacuation and fire control.

**Recommendation 6:** New subdivisions should be developed with access points that are suitable for evacuation and the movement of emergency response equipment. The number of access points and their capacity should be determined during subdivision design and be based on threshold densities of houses and vehicles within the subdivision.

**Recommendation 7:** Where forested lands abut new subdivisions, consideration should be given to requiring roadways to be placed adjacent to those lands. If forested lands surround the subdivision, ring roads should be part of the subdivision design. These roads both improve access to the interface for emergency vehicles and provide a fuel break between the wildland and the subdivision.

**Recommendation 8:** Proximity of hydrant locations to access points for forested parks should be a consideration during the design process for new subdivisions.

**Recommendation 11:** The City should adopt a consistent standard for Registered Professional Forester reports that are required as part of the Development Permit waiver process. This would ensure that hazard mitigation activities are consistent and appropriate within all subdivisions in Wildland Fire Development Permit Areas (a proposed standard is contained within this report).

### Management of City Parks and Green Spaces

**Recommendation 16:** The City should conduct an inventory of sensitive ecosystems identifying areas containing delicate vegetation, habitat, slope stability and erosion potential to ensure that fuel treatments and other park development do not negatively impact these important areas.

**Recommendation 18:** Consistent with the standards developed for wildfire covenants, the City should adopt a standard for fuel management in parks and green spaces (a proposed standard is contained within this report).

**Recommendation 19:** Heavily used trail networks within City parks, where ecologically appropriate, should be thinned and understory fuels removed up to 5-metres on each side of the trail network. Thinning will limit the ability of fire to spread and improve fire suppression capability throughout these heavily used corridors. (*Integrate treatments into existing fuel modification program.*)

**Recommendation 21:** Consultation should occur with the Parks Department during the subdivision development phase. This consultation should deal with: 1) Reviewing the wildfire hazard mitigation plans that are prepared by the developer's Registered Professional Forester (RPF) for areas being delivered to the City as park. 2) Site inspection of mitigation work prior to the City accepting new lands as park or open space. 3) Site mitigation plan review and site inspection of private portions of subdivisions. (Currently, Parks Staff do not review or inspect wildland fire mitigation plans on the private portions of subdivisions. These areas are evaluated by the Subdivision Approving Officer. Developer employed RPFs are supposed to sign off on their work plan but this is inconsistent. To ensure professional and un-biased evaluation of private lands within a subdivision the Subdivision Approving Officer should have access to a professional evaluation of both the work plan and the work completed by the developer.) (*Items 1 and 2 can be implemented in 2007*)

**Recommendation 22:** The City should always require the developer to mitigate the fire hazard on forested lands before they become the property of the City.

### Other Considerations

**Recommendation 25:** Public education programs should be enhanced by 1) Integrating a unit of “FireSmart” and wildfire safety into the local primary school curriculum promoting the principles of community wildfire protection at a young age in order to improve awareness over time. This unit could be part of a general emergency preparedness teaching program. 2) Create a “FireSmart” sticker program where Fire Department staff attend residences and certify them as meeting “FireSmart” guidelines. *(Dependant on budget approval for new Fire Department staff.)*