

Dear Paul,

Thank you for your comments on behalf of the Greenspace Alliance. While I agree that the budget consultation process can sometimes be superficial, I do appreciate, as a Councillor, the work you are doing drawing attention to greenspace funding. I have discussed your recommendations with staff and can provide the following information as to where these different projects are sitting.

Overall, the City of Ottawa is faring well in terms of meeting the greenspace targets of our Official plan. The City continues to seek opportunities for additional greenspace acquisition and better management of our natural areas. Our recently released green bond in fact included land acquisition and management as a category so that we may have that option to fund future acquisitions. Here are some more specific details on our various greenspace related initiatives:

**Urban Forest Management Plan:**

There will be no budget asks for the UFMP for the 2018 Budget, because the first items stemming from the UFMP will be done with existing resources and include:

- Tree By-law Review (which will include tree compensation and incentives for tree conservation),
- formation of internal and external urban forest working groups,
- Urban Forest Canopy Cover Study,
- internal outreach and engagement (which will be ongoing),
- significant woodlands,
- the forested areas maintenance strategy, and
- the assumption of trees in new developments.

Staff plan to come forward to the new term of council in very early 2019 to update them on the UFMP and to make a budget ask at that time to complete other items that require additional resources.

**Greenspace Targets:**

Staff last reported on the accessibility to greenspace target in 2012. It was subsequently dropped from the regular strategic reporting requirements. Nick Stowe did the last analysis and prepared the 2012 report, which he sent a piece of:

“The City already appears to have substantially met its target for this measure. Based on a GIS analysis using greenspace zoning designations and the most recent block census data, 99.8% of Ottawa's urban households appear to lie within 400 metres (a five minute walk) of a protected urban greenspace. Urban greenspace was defined as any area within the urban boundary and the National Capital Greenbelt with one of the following zones: Environmental Protection (EP), Open Space (O1, excluding golf courses), Community Leisure Facility (L1), Major Leisure Facility (L2) or the Experimental Farm (L3). Some minor error is to be expected in the results due to the non-alignment of some census blocks with the urban boundary, the probable inclusion of some leisure facilities lacking greenspace, and the probable exclusion of some public greenspaces in institutional zones. However, an informal sampling of some of the data suggests that these errors are minor and not significantly biased one way or another.”

He also said, “the Greenspace Master Plan is now more than 10 years old and in need of a refresh. It should be updated to incorporate our urban expansion areas and to reflect the Urban Forest Management Plan. A refresh of the GMP isn't on our 2018 work plan, but could be included in our work plan for the next term of council in 2019. That would be good time to re-visit this measure and assess the success of our policies.”

**Natural Area Acquisitions:**

This budget line will see *an increase* in funding in the 2018 budget.

Urban Account: Current balance \$0.0. \$170,000 new money proposed in draft 2018 budget.

Rural Account: Current balance \$1.1 million. \$340,000 new money proposed in draft 2018 budget.

In addition, we have just transferred \$1.65 million from the Environmental Resource Area Acquisition Reserve Fund to a temporary account for Shea Road Woods. We also rely on parkland dedication to fund acquisitions of which we have a possibility already lined up for 2019. Green Bonds as well as partnerships are both possible ways we can increase our acquisitions in the future.

**Green Bonds:** As the City moves forward with its Green debenture, I will keep your recommendations in mind. The Green Bond identifies the following as an eligible project:

“Sustainable management of natural resources, including but not limited to, protection and restoration of natural assets, wetlands, forests and waterways”, which is certainly promising.

Thank you again for participating in this process and I look forward to your involvement in the greenspace and urban forest management work that is to come.

Sincerely,

David Chernushenko  
Chair of the Environment & Climate Protection Committee  
Councillor, Capital Ward  
City of Ottawa