

Parks Operations – Urban Forestry – Urban Biological Services – Spring/Summer 2020 Service Levels

SUMMARY

	Staffing Level	Budget Impact	Comments
Typical Urban Forestry & Urban Biological Services Staffing Levels	63 staff	No Impact	Maximum Level of Staffing (June, July and August)
A. Recommended 2020 Staffing and Service Levels - Moderately Reduced Service Levels	55 staff	\$92,000 Favourable	Safety and Asset Preservation Focus. Non-safety service requests, elm and weed inspection, pruning and stumping activities slightly reduced. Assumes 8 fewer labourers are hired this season and associated savings on materials, service and supplies.
B. Option: Near Typical levels of staffing and service	63 staff	No Impact to staff budget, however, additional transportation, & supply costs in a range of \$15,000 to \$25,000	With additional adjustments of safety protocols, changes to staff scheduling, plus additional transportation considerations to travel to work locations in multiple vehicles, there could be the opportunity to bring back the 8 additional seasonal staff.

MODIFIED 2020 SERVICE LEVELS

Modified levels of Urban Forestry and Urban Biological Services will be necessary to safely operate programs while ensuring that Saskatchewan Health Authority's safe physical distancing and gathering requirements are met throughout these operational areas.

The recommended 2020 service level activities will be provided by a staffing level of approximately 90% of historical levels. Service Level adjustments prioritize employee and public safety, as well as asset preservation of urban forestry and mitigation of nuisance pests, weeds and tree diseases. This entails the care and maintenance of approximately 110,000 public trees.

Urban Forestry	Typical Service Level	A. Recommended 2020 Service Level	B. Near Typical Service Level
Pruning and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-safety service requests inspected within 5-10 days • One in 7 year boulevard tree pruning • One in 13 year park tree pruning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-safety service requests inspected within 20 days • In-house cyclical pruning productivity reduced by 40% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical

Urban Biological Services	Typical Service Level	Recommended 2020 Service Level	B. Near Typical Service Level
Ground Squirrel Control	Park, Sport Fields and Non Park Areas	Prioritize Sport Fields protection with other control requirements addressed as labour is available.	Park and Sport Field areas. Non Park control requirements addressed as labour is available.
Mosquito Control	April through September	May through September	May through September
Issuance of Elm Infractions and Weed Orders	Orders to support nuisance abatement, asset preservation and safety.	Orders that support asset preservation and safety only.	Typical

Discussion/Analysis

Environmental and Health Monitoring

Municipal Dutch Elm Disease (DED) and Weed inspection service to support provincial DED legislation and Weed Act will continue at an asset preservation level of service.

Provincial West Nile Virus (WNV) monitoring and treatment of vector *Culex tarsalis* service will continue.

Near typical levels of staffing and services have several considerations and potential risks, as outlined below.

Health and Safety

Near typical levels of staffing and service will add strain to the limited supply of Personal Protective Equipment, washroom access, burn rate of cleaning supplies and the ability to monitor cleaning procedures. Potential shortages of these supplies and equipment will impact the health and safety of employees and the continuity of maintenance activities.

Transportation of Employees

Urban Forestry (UF)-Urban Biological Services (UBS) vehicle inventory will not be adequate to support the near typical level of staffing and service. COVID-19 safe distancing and transport protocols will limit the number of employees to a maximum of one to two employees per work truck depending on the size and configuration of truck, availability of PPE, and proper cleaning procedures being followed. It is estimated that UF/UBS will require alternate transportation options for employees to support a near typical level of staffing and service. Options such as employees using their personal vehicles, or transport by chartered bus, would need to be coordinated, however there would be additional costs associated with bus/vehicle rentals could be required.

Supervisory Capacities

In addition to their regular responsibilities, Urban Forestry and Urban Biological Services supervisors will have COVID-19 specific duties that will include training, developing additional COVID-19 procedures and ensuring additional sanitation and physical distancing procedures are being followed. Also, more frequent monitoring of cleaning and PPE supplies will be required. Supervisory resource capacity may not be adequate to deal with the multitude of additional responsibilities associated with a near typical level of staffing and service. This lack of capacity may result in inadequate employee training and orientation and increased risks associated with a reduction of overall employee health and safety.

RECOMMENDATION

Continue with the delivery of the recommended service level "A" for the Urban Forestry - Urban Biological Services program as described in this report.