



The Corporation of the City of Cornwall Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Protection and Enhancement Policy

Department: Planning, Development and Recreation

Parks and Landscaping

Policy Number: TCNVPEP-2019-03-25

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Background and Purpose

Section 270 (1) (7) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25 requires a municipality to adopt a plan which describes how to protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation.

The following is a summary of the various policies employed by the Corporation of the City of Cornwall which are aimed at protecting and enhancing the City's tree canopy and natural vegetation.

Tree Planting Policies for New Development

Subdivision Development – Boulevard Tree Planting and Parkland Dedication Requirements

The City's standards for all new subdivision developments are outlined in detail within the Department of Infrastructure Planning's Subdivision Manual. As part of the subdivision development process, Developers enter into a contractual agreement with the municipality called the "Subdivision Agreement". This

Subdivision Agreement is a binding contract which specifies the Developer's obligations, including boulevard tree planting and parkland dedication. Typically the Subdivision Agreement stipulates one new boulevard tree for every building unit. (ie. One boulevard tree for every single family dwelling, and two boulevard trees for semi detached dwellings, etc). All new boulevard tree plantings are to be native tree species and shall be in conformance with the City's tree planting specification. Also the Subdivision Agreement typically specifies that a minimum of 5% of the overall development be dedicated as parkland, unless determined by the Department Manager that the neighbourhood already has adequate parkland. In the event that the neighbourhood is determined to already have adequate parkland, the Developer is required to provide the City with cash in lieu of a parkland dedication valued at 5% of the raw land value of the entire development.

Site Plan Development – Landscaping Requirements

Development sites subject to site plan approval are required to supply a landscaping plan as part of the review process. Proponents are typically encouraged to include a high degree of landscaping elements typically on private lands which includes planting of a variety of species and callipers as defined in the site plan design guideline manual. There is a key focus on landscaping major streets and City entrances. Every effort to protect and preserve existing mature trees shall be made where practical. It should be noted that removal of trees from the site will likely mean that a higher level of landscaping will be required to compensate. Various City staff will provide commentary during the site plan review process to ensure that the proposed landscaping plan is in concert with their respective by-laws and the governing site plan design manual.

City Tree Management Operation Policies

There are a number of circumstances in which the removal of a City owned tree is required. The following explains the tree replacement policies that are in place to protect the City's tree canopy

City Initiated Tree Removals and Replacement Plantings

There are a number of conditions in which a City owned tree may require removal, such as due to poor health condition, or a tree may be causing damage to private property, etc. If a City tree is deemed to require removal, the Parks and Landscape Dept. endeavours to plant replacement trees at a 1:1 ratio. As much as possible, staff attempt to locate the replacement planting in the same location

as the removed tree, however there are occasions where the same location is not suitable for a new planting. In those circumstances the replacement tree will be planted in a more suitable location. All replacement plantings shall be native species and shall be in conformance with the City's tree planting specifications.

Tree Removals Resulting from City Construction Projects and/or Infrastructure Repairs

Some tree removals are required as a result of the City's infrastructure renewal projects or as a result of underground infrastructure repairs. Typically, such work is initiated by the City's Municipal Works and Infrastructure Planning Department. Whenever there is a concern that such work may impact the health of a City tree, the Parks and Landscape Department will assist by reviewing the impact and make a recommendation as to whether the tree should be removed. Upon the completion of the project/work the Municipal Works and Infrastructure Planning Department work with the Parks and Landscape Department to replace any removed trees with replacement plantings. All replacement plantings shall be native species and shall be in conformance with the City's tree planting specifications.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) Management Plan

The City has implemented a management plan to deal with an invasive species, the Emerald Ash Borer, which is an insect that attacks and kills ash tree species. At the beginning of the plan in 2014, the City identified approximately 3500 ash trees located on City owned land (boulevards, parks, City building properties, City owned woodlots). The EAB Management Plan includes three main activities: the removal of infected trees, TreeAzin injection treatment, and planting replacement trees. Each year staff review the condition of the City ash tree inventory and identify infected trees requiring removal and contractors are retained to remove said infected trees. The plan includes a tree replacement strategy at a 1:1 ratio. As much as possible, staff attempt to locate the replacement planting in the same location as the removed tree, however there are occasions where the same location is not suitable for a new planting. In those circumstances the replacement tree will be planted in a more suitable location. All replacement plantings shall be native species and shall be in conformance with the City's tree planting specifications. The plan also includes a TreeAzin injection treatment which is intended to prolong the life of specific ash trees on City boulevards and parks that have been identified and characterized as significant. The purpose of the treatment is not to save the tree from its inevitable demise, but is intended to prolong the life of the treatment until such time that

removal is required. This delay in the removal of the treated tree will provide new plantings in the area the opportunity to become established so that when the treated tree is removed the impact to the canopy in the vicinity won't be as severe.

Potential Threats

There is always the potential threat that other invasive species similar to the Emerald Ash Borer or diseases (such as Dutch Elm Disease) may threaten the health of the tree canopy in Cornwall and the surrounding area. Staff from the Parks and Landscape Department endeavour to participate in industry conferences, education and network opportunities.

Natural Vegetation

Naturalization of Public Spaces

The Parks and Landscape Department completed a review of its grass cutting operations in 2018 and identified areas for naturalization. Reducing grass cutting operations wherever possible, allows areas to return to their natural state, providing increased opportunities for new tree growth thus improving the City's tree canopy. The Parks and Landscape Department will continue to look for new opportunities to reduce grass cutting operations wherever possible and to naturalize areas.