

Schedule 'A' to By-law No. 1325-19

Urban (Stirling and Springbrook)

Tree Trimming, Removal & Replacement Policy

Policy Statement

Council of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon recognizes the need to enhance the tree canopy and natural areas in the whole township with the adoption of Tree Canopy Policy. The Council recognized the environmental importance of maintaining and increasing the tree canopy in the settlements of Stirling and Springbrook as trees provide shade, shelter, habitat and sequester carbon both in wood and soil as well as adding to the beauty of the settlements. Trees play a vital role in mitigating climate change. Council has to achieve a balance between the maintenance of existing trees and establishment of new ones. Paramount is the responsibility of ensuring public safety and avoiding unwarranted damage to infrastructure, storm water management systems, water pipes and sewage pipes. Council has to meet all provincial minimum maintenance standards in relation to roads and sidewalks.

Council recognizes Ontario Hydro is responsible for ensuring trees do not impact hydro lines.

This policy relates to trees on municipally owned land; along road allowances in the urban areas, in parks and the Stirling Cemetery. The overall objective is to develop an urban forest with a healthy diversity of native trees and shrubs.

In order to enhance the tree canopy in the township, the council will agree to have any tree replaced that is removed with trees and/or shrubs native to eco-district 6E. Suitable locations within the settlement areas, parks and cemetery will be identified

Most trees in Stirling are privately owned, and the council will also work to find ways of engaging and encouraging residents to plant trees and to care for existing trees on their property and how to avoid damaging trees on public land.

All public works staff will be expected to be able to identify common tree species, recognize tree diseases and signs of ill health and are aware of the need to protect trees. The preservation and protection of trees shall be an important consideration in all Municipal operations.

Council will organize workshops for staff and residents and will also make appropriated information available on the township website.

Background

Most of the publicly owned trees, sugar maple, silver maple and oak, in Stirling were planted in the nineteenth century when many of the houses were built. Few trees have been planted on public land since then. In Stirling and Springbrook many of the mature trees are showing signs of age and environmental stresses. As the climate changes, environmental conditions including drought, heat, cold, ice storms and high winds are expected to become more severe and common. A number of these mature trees have already been lost, and many others will require close monitoring.

There are many self-seeded black walnut trees in the village of Stirling. For nearly ten years the Township of Stirling Rawdon has supported the community trees giveaway. There has not been a systematic planting of street trees or trees in the parks. The Stirling Horticultural Society and the Stirling Legion have planted trees around the covered bridge and the library. There has been a large number of Sugar maples and other native species planted by Stirling Agricultural Society and private citizens at the Fair Grounds and by the Hastings County Museum of Agricultural Heritage at Farmtown Park and the Stirling Cemetery. All these trees were carefully watered each summer until they became established.

To develop effective tree management, budgeting and scheduling; the township will commission a tree inventory of trees on the street and trees in the parks and cemetery in Stirling and Springbrook, which will be completed by an ISA Certified Company.

A detailed inventory will enable the council to plan and budget for tree maintenance work and set up an annual planting program. It will also provide a database linked with the council's asset management plan

Authority for management of trees on public land

The authority for this policy shall be by the approval of the Council of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon;

And whereas, Section 62 of the Municipal Act, 2001 C. 25 states "a municipality may, at any reasonable time, enter upon land lying along any of its highways, to inspect trees and conduct tests on trees; to remove decayed, damaged or dangerous trees or branches of trees if, in the opinion of the municipality, the trees or branches pose a danger to the health and safety of any person using the highway.

No person shall injure or remove a Municipal tree or tree with any portion of the tree located on Municipal property. No person shall carry out work within the critical root zone of a tree on Municipal property unless the written approval, prior to commencing any work has been obtained from the Municipality.

The Urban Tree inventory is the basis of an effective tree management program. A tree inventory provides information such as tree health, species, size, location and recommendations as to care and maintenance, along with a template to assist staff with reporting requirements. This information is used to generate reports that can help public works in their strategic planning, such as the development of maintenance plans and management plans, as well as be a tool to engage residents in enhancing the urban forest.

The inspection and removal of decayed, damaged or dangerous trees or branches of trees is authorized by the Municipal Act and shall be at the discretion of the council or if instructed the Public Works Manager with reference to the Tree Inventory and appropriate reporting will be completed.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the proper management of urban trees and the development of diverse mixed aged tree canopy. This is to be balanced with public safety and the protection of infrastructure

It sets out requirements for an urban tree inventory including identification of places suitable for tree or shrub planting, the procedures to be followed before authorizing tree trimming or if necessary, removal of trees on public land, road allowances, parks and the cemetery.

General

This policy shall be administered by Council with direction to the CAO-Treasurer and the Public Works Manager through the Urban Tree Inventory database. Council will review this policy regularly to judge its effectiveness.

Definitions

"Council" - means the council of the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon.

"Public Works Manager" - means the Public Works Manager for the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon or his/her designate.

"Road Allowance" - means a common and public roadway, street, avenue, parkway, driveway, or any part thereof, including bridges, which is intended for or used by the general public for the passage of vehicles and/or pedestrians and includes the area between the lateral property lines thereof.

"Settlement" - the urban areas Stirling and or Springbrook.

"Township" - means the Corporation or the Township of Stirling-Rawdon.

"Tree" - means a plant having a permanently woody main stem or trunk which is 1.4 meters or more and having a diameter of 10 cm, ordinarily growing to a considerable height, and usually developing branches at some distance from the ground.

"Tree Stump" - means the lower end of a tree remaining in the ground after most of the stem or trunk has been cut off.

"Street trees" - grow within the public road allowance and are not managed by Ontario Hydro.

"Tree Canopy" - refers to all the trees within the urban area.

The policy includes the following sections

1. Urban Tree Inventory
2. Tree Removal
3. Tree trimming
4. Tree Replanting and new planting
5. Hiring of contractors
6. Memorial trees
7. Communication with residents
8. Disposal of wood

1. Urban Tree Inventory:

It is essential to have a detailed inventory of trees in public ownership, GPS location, age, height, species condition, and management recommendations is part of the asset management for the township. A full inventory of trees will allow work to be planned ahead of time and budgeted for. The Township will have details of all years and be able to record all work done on them. Notice can be given to the public ahead of time as work is to be done, and they will be able to check the register. Trees will be classified as to health, expected longevity, and management requires (See appendix)

It is important to build the knowledge and expertise of public works staff about trees and tree care, including basic tree identification, recognition of tree diseases, and prevention of damage to trees.

2. Tree removal

Council will grant the removal of trees if necessary for road widening, road maintenance, and sidewalk upgrade. The public will be notified as part of the notification about future road works.

Unless there is an emergency council will follow the recommendation in the Urban Tree Inventory and safeguard trees.

In an emergency, where a tree poses an immediate threat to public safety or there is an immediate risk to causing structural damage to adjacent buildings, the Public Works Manager can authorize the removal of a tree. Staff will ensure proper documentation is completed and the Tree Inventory is dated. When staff are conducting tree removals, they will ensure health and safety is maintained at all times and will follow procedures as set out in Schedule "A" attached

- **Tree Stump Removal**

The Township may remove tree stumps if any portion of the stump is located on municipal road allowance or right-of-way or on the property line between a municipal road allowance or right of way, if:

1. The tree was removed by the Township of Stirling-Rawdon, and
2. The stump is deemed by the Public Works Manager to interfere with an adjacent sidewalk or municipal utility, and
3. In the case where a stump is located in part on private property, the adjacent property owner has signed a consent form authorizing the work.

3. Tree Trimming

Within the course of their work, staff may be required to trim trees along road allowances, parks and cemetery as governed by the Urban Tree Inventory. Trees may be pruned along the road allowances if;

1. The tree branches are obstructing the visibility of an intersection, or road sign;
2. The tree identified in the inventory as needing pruning to remove dead sections, and has not been scheduled for removal.
3. The tree branches shade a portion of the road causing ice to form.
4. Branches overhang sidewalks maintained by the municipality which interfere with pedestrian traffic or maintenance equipment.

4. Tree Replacement and planting

The council will either replant a new tree either in the proximity of the felled trees or in another appropriate location. The aim is to increase the number of trees in the village and replacement trees may not necessarily be planted in the same place. The Urban tree inventory will identify areas suitable for tree and shrub planting. Township Council will review these areas with the Public Works Manager and develop plans for annual tree planting in the spring or fall. Where possible saplings will be planted in prepared holes with appropriate fertilizer, staking and mulching. They should be watered for two or more years to make sure they are established. To ensure at least one tree gets established more than one replacement tree will be planted.

Tree Replacement will be native trees or shrubs as per Schedule "B" attached. The type of tree and specific location will be determined by the Township to ensure that these plantings will not interfere with snow removal, future traffic sightlines, below ground utilities or sidewalks.

All new tree plantings will be added to the tree inventory.

5. Hiring of contractors

If the Township Staff are not able to prune or fell a tree, the task may be contracted out, following standard council procedures (i.e. Procurement policy)

6. Memorial trees

If property owners wish to request a tree be planted for example in memory of someone, they shall in writing send a request to Township Council, and at Township Council will consider their request at their next available meeting.

7. Communication with residents

The council will hold computer records, i.e. Tree Inventory, of all publicly owned trees in Stirling and Springbrook with information about location, species, condition and prescribed management.

Before the trimming and/or removal of tree(s), notice will be posted on the Township website, and the notice will include the approximate date, location along with the contact information.

In the event of municipal tree removal, the Township will make every effort to mark the tree with an orange dot paint as is current arboricultural practice to identify the tree at least one (1) week before the start of work unless there is an emergency.

8. Disposal of Wood

When a tree is felled the wood that is remaining will be taken to the public works yard if not spoken for and/or removed prior to the Public Works Department getting there. There must be a written record kept of who took the wood (if not sure please note that).

"Appendix A"

All Safety procedures should be referred to the Township's Health & Safety Policy.

All public works staff will be expected to be able to identify common tree species, recognize tree diseases and signs of ill health and are aware of the need to protect trees by not parking beneath them, dumping road material around them or carrying out unnecessary work within the critical root zone.

The Public Works Manager is responsible for ensuring that workers are trained and that the policy/procedure is followed.

"Appendix B"

As a rule, council will plant native and shrub species found in Eco-District 6E because they are adapted to this area and support a diversity wildlife. In the parks, Council may wish to consider planting ornamental, fruit or nut trees traditionally planted in this area.

Native trees

American Beech	Fagus grandifolia
American Chestnut	Castanea dentata
Basswood	Tilia Americana
Bitternut Hickory	Carya cordiformis
Black Cherry	Prunus serotina
Black Walnut	Juglans nigra
Hackberry	Celtis occidentalis
Hop hornbeam (ironwood)	Ostrya virginiana
Hemlock	Isuga Canadensis
Hard Maple	Acer saccharum
Red Cedar	Juniperus virginiana
Red Maple	Acer rubrum
Red Oak	Quercus rubra
Red Pine	Pinus resinosa
Shagbark Hickory	Carya ovata
Yellow Birch	Betula alleghaniensis
White Birch	Betula papyrifera
White Cedar	Thuja occidentalis
White Elm	Ulmus Americana
White Oak	Quercus alba
White Pine	Pinus strobus
White Spruce	Picea glauca

Native shrubs

Dogwood	Cornus
Hazel	Corylus cornuta
Highbush Cranberry	Viburnum trilobum
Nanny berry	Viburnum lentago
Serviceberry	Amelanchier laevis
Shrub Willow	Salix