



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHAPPLE
BY-LAW NUMBER 1700

BEING A By-Law to adopt a policy for Tree Canopy for the Corporation of the Township of Chapple.

WHEREAS Bill 68, Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act requires that a municipality shall adopt and maintain a policy with respect to tree canopy;

AND WHEREAS this policy is required by March 1, 2019.

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHAPPLE ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

That the Township of Chapple adopt a tree canopy policy to protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation in the municipality. See attached Schedule A.

Read a First, Second and Third Time and

FINALLY PASSED this 12th day of February, 2019.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Reeve", written over a horizontal line.

Reeve

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Reggie Johnson", written over a horizontal line.

CAO/ Clerk Treasurer

SCHEDULE "A"

Policy Objective

Maintain, enhance and protect the forest.

Background

The Modernizing Ontario's Municipal Legislation Act, 2017 (Bill 68) received Royal Assent on May 30, 2017. The Act requires municipalities to adopt a policy with respect to the manner in which the municipality will protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation in the municipality.

Municipal Forest

The term municipal forest refers to trees within a municipality, encompassing trees located on private and public land, for this policy the application of the term shall only be for trees located on publicly- owned lands.

An emerging trend among municipal governments is the consideration of the forest as a vital part of the municipal infrastructure as the forest significantly contributes to the quality of life in a municipality.

Most forestry studies classify those benefits into three sections:

Figure 1.1 Forest Benefits



The combination of environmental, community and economic benefits establish the municipal forest as an essential Township asset.

However, the benefits the municipal forest provides to its local community may be susceptible due to threats that can harm or destroy green infrastructure and natural capital. Arborists across Ontario identify the following risks:

1. Urban intensification;
2. Insects and diseases (Chestnut Blight, Dutch Elm Disease, Asian Long-horned Beetle and the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)); and
3. Climate change and severe weather events (snow storms, wind storms, ice storms, and rain events).
- 4.

The purpose of this policy is to formalize processes which must be undertaken to maintain, enhance and protect the forest on municipal land. This document shall provide a forestry management blueprint.

Green Infrastructure

The Township of Chapple categorizes the stewardship of green infrastructure into three sections:

1. Maintain (Maintenance)
2. Plant (Enhancement)
3. Protect (Protection)

The three-prong approach aligns with the provincial mandate, is comparable to other municipality's procedures and addresses the needs of the Township' forest. While developing this approach, emphasis has been placed on the sustainability of the approach, ensuring that the forestry operations are feasible when considering budget and personnel availability. Other larger municipalities may have more robust policies. However, the Township of Chapple is unique and this plan reflects the Township's challenges and expectations.

Maintain (Maintenance Practices)

Maintaining existing green infrastructure will remain a central management approach. Most forestry management plan developers assert that a fundamental element of expanding the municipal forest is the cultivation of existing trees as large-stature trees and well-established trees provide a more significant share of benefits. Continuing to enhance the municipal forest by planting and not preserving the existing municipal forest is not sustainable and will only increase risk and an unhealthy municipal forest. Therefore, the Township will maintenance its existing municipal forest.

The Township will review facilities on a routine basis. If it is identified that a tree is a danger, dead or dying, the tree will be removed. If a tree has overhanging branches, impedes structures, obstructs sightlines, etc., it will be pruned or removed.

Plant (Planting Practices)

The Township is committed to planting trees where it is reasonably feasible in order to enhance municipal facilities and canopy and will follow good planting practices to ensure the quality and longevity of the new trees ultimately fostering a balanced and sustainable municipal forest.

The planting of trees on public land is the responsibility of the Township and its staff, however, under the following circumstances non-employees of the Town may plant trees on public land:

- Contractors hired by the Township;
- Community volunteers authorized in advance by the Township; and
- Land developers in new subdivisions as per approved subdivision agreements.

The Township restricts the planting of trees on public property to Township employees and those authorized by the Township. The restriction is necessary to ensure the planting in appropriate locations and suitable species.

Protect (Removal of Trees)

As mentioned above, the tree canopy is susceptible to external forces. Because of this, the protection of existing trees is crucial, especially large stature and well-established trees. To protect the existing municipal forest, the Township shall only remove trees under the following circumstances:

- The tree is dead or dying;
- The tree causes a hazard and needs to be removed to mitigate risk;
- The trees impede site lines and/or drainage;
- Emergency work;
- Installation or reconstruction of Township infrastructure; or
- At the discretion of the Maintenance Supervisor, or their designate.

The policy allows for trees to be removed to install infrastructure. During the pre-construction process, staff are to consider alternative approaches to limit the removal of trees.

Additionally, only the Township and contractors authorized by the Township shall have the responsibility of removing trees on public land. Limiting removal authorization is to ensure the tree canopy is responsibly managed and to mitigate risk.

Severe Weather Event Policy

During a severe weather event Public Works operators or forestry contractors for the Township will respond to residents and emergency services on a priority basis. Emergency crews will prioritize fallen trees that are blocking main arterial roads, or public trees which have fallen on buildings or hydro lines as soon as crews can be dispatched. Furthermore, Public Works crews may need to leave a site to attend another call; the crew will return at a later date and time to complete the original request. Emergency crews will address and resolve other requests at a later time.

All forestry debris after a weather event may be taken to the following locations:

Township of Chapple Waste Disposal Sites (limited hours)

Invasive Species

Invasive species are considered plants that disrupt the natural balance of an ecosystem, often aggressively spreading over a specific area. The Township may use the following different control mechanisms, if/as required. Some of the varying methods may include:

- Pulling
- Cutting
- Burning
- Chemical control (may be used for Hogweed removal by professionals)

Moving Forward

This document provides a basic outline for forestry management for public lands within the Township of Chapple. The policy will be reviewed and amended by Council on an as needed basis.