

Staff Report to Council

Title: Municipal Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Ad Hoc Committee Update

Report Number: CAO General-2023-23

Director: Chief Administrative Officer

Manager: Manager.

Meeting Date:
Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Date to be considered by Council:
Wednesday, October 11, 2023

Recommendation:

That Council extends the timeline for receiving recommendations from the Municipal Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Ad Hoc Committee from September to November 2023.

Executive Summary:

The Municipal Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Ad Hoc Committee (ad hoc committee) is requesting an extension of time to bring forward a recommendation about both a policy and a by-law to regulate and preserve trees on private property.

Strategic Priorities:

B.6-Protect and preserve our environment

Financial Considerations:

Additional staff time and committee member time is required to continue with the project.

Policy:

Municipal Act, 2001 requirement for policy as per S. 270 (1) 7 to adopt and maintain a policy that identifies the manner in which the municipality will protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation in the municipality.

Context and Background Information:

The Ad Hoc Committee has completed its work associated with the Municipal Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy for recommendation to Council and continues to work towards a draft of a Tree Preservation By-law associated with trees on private property. The committee has heard from municipal and county staff on planning, development, building, administration, and implementation of a new Tree Preservation By-law. There is consideration to hearing from an external arborist.

Seven committee meetings have been called, although the committee has experienced lack of quorum and the need to cancel due to scheduling challenges. A consideration for future ad hoc committees is that perhaps summer months are too difficult a time to require people to come together for regular meetings.

The committee would like to continue its work and bring forth a coordinated presentation for both the policy and the by-law for council's consideration and is requesting that council extend the time period by two months (November 2023). This requires staff resources to be available for a longer period of time to the committee which will result in other projects being deferred or delayed.

Consultation Overview:

Previous public consultation on a private tree preservation by-law has been included for the committee's consideration. There has been no additional public consultation.

If a new public consultation process is deemed necessary additional time and resources will be required.

If a significantly different approach to tree preservation on private property is determined to be an avenue for consideration the public should be consulted before a by-law is presented to council.

The regulation of trees on private property has generated considerable interest from members of the public both for and against such a regulation.

Origin:

Recommendation of outgoing Council to consider Draft Private Tree Preservation By-law in 2022

Requirement for Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy

Appointment of Ad Hoc Committee to make recommendations regarding by-law and policy.

Implementation Considerations:

The final recommendation from the committee will include implementation implications including resource capacity, success factors, and anticipated timelines.

Risk Analysis:

A policy related to tree canopy and natural vegetation is mandated for all municipalities in Ontario. Adopting a policy will demonstrate that the municipality is in compliance with the legislation.

Being clear on what the expectations are for developers and the community will help staff to provide consistent messaging about the expectation of the municipality for trees and natural vegetation.

Attachments: N/A

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