

Parks Recreation and Culture Report PRC2024-13

To: Council
Date: October 22, 2024
Subject: Draft Tree Protection By-law Update
Origin: Parks, Recreation and Culture - Parks Branch

Recommendations

1. That Parks Recreation and Culture Report PRC2024-13, dated October 22, 2024 entitled “Draft Tree Protection By-law Update,” be received; and
2. That Council direct staff to complete the public consultation process related to the Draft Tree Protection By-law and report back to Council at the Council meeting November 19, 2024.

Purpose

To provide Council with an update on the Draft Tree Protection By-law including public outreach, consultation and communication.

Background

At Committee of the Whole dated October 8, 2024 Parks Recreation and Culture Report PRC2024-09 presented a Draft Tree-Protection By-law to Council. At this meeting Council approved in principle the enactment and implementation of the Tree Protection By-law as presented in the Report. Council provided direction to staff to perform further public consultation and to develop separate compensation standards for the exercise of good farming practice and the creation of new farmland. Additionally, Council directed staff to report back at the October 22, 2024, Council meeting for consideration.

Analysis

Expanded and Enhanced Communications

Parks Recreation and Culture staff have worked with Communications to update the website and social media messaging related to the Draft Tree Protection By-law.

Updates include information related to:

- The purpose of the By-law
- Exemptions under the Draft Tree Protection By-law for Private Property Owners
- How the By-law effects property owners separate from the York Region Forest Conservation By-law
- Access to property
- Appeals process

Continued Review of the Draft By-law for Added Amendments

Staff Continue to Review Public Feedback and Adjustments to the Draft Tree Protection By-law including:

- Access to private property
- An Appeals Process
- Further definition to exemptions
- Further definition to Fines and Penalties

Staff Continue to Work with the York Region Federation of Agriculture to support Normal Farm Practice

Staff have conducted several meetings with the York Region Federation of Agriculture in an effort to support normal farm practices within the Draft Tree Protection By-law.

Special provisions for normal farm practice include:

- Priority access for farm equipment
- Removal of trees to create additional farmland and to maintain farm operations

Staff are reviewing further provisions with the Federation including additional exemptions and a tree compensation program specific to support normal farm practice.

Financial Implications

None

Need For Public Consultation

This report is provided in public session. Public communication has been provided through the website and social media.

Alignment to Strategic Plan

Responsible Growth

Environmental Stewardship

Strategic Priorities:

“Ensure development occurs in an intentional, sustainable fashion, with a focus on preserving the Town’s cultural heritage and environmental features.”

“Support the stewardship, preservation, conservation, and enhancement of the natural environmental of East Gwillimbury.”

“Develop and implement policies that supports environmental sustainability and best practices.”

“Develop and implement programs and policies that support climate change adaptation, mitigation, and resiliency.”

Key Deliverables:

“Strengthen EG’s tree preservation and protection program.”

Conclusion

Staff will continue with public consultation and outreach and seek to report back to Council on November 19, 2024.

Appendices

None

Approval

Report Author and recommended by:

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General Manager
Parks Recreation and Culture

This report was approved by:

Mark Valcic
Chief Administrative Officer