



Municipal Tree Removal Policy

Department:	Transportation, Recreation, Infrastructure
Policy Number:	009-2026
Effective Date:	August 10, 2026
Approved by:	Resolution
Review Period:	Every 5 years

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish minimum standards for the removal of Township-owned trees in a manner that protects public safety, supports the health and sustainability of the municipal tree inventory, manages risk and municipal liability, ensures decisions are consistent and based on documented tree assessments, and provides a communication plan for affected residents and stakeholders.

Scope:

This policy applies to the assessment and removal of Township-owned trees located on municipal property, including road allowances, boulevards, parks, trails, facilities, open spaces, and other lands under Township jurisdiction.

This policy does not apply to privately owned trees, except where action is authorized by legislation, agreement, easement, emergency circumstances, or another lawful authority.

Policy Statement

The Township recognizes municipal trees as valuable community assets that provide environmental, social, aesthetic, and economic benefits.

The Township shall manage tree removal activities using a risk-based approach that balances public safety, operational requirements, environmental stewardship, infrastructure protection, and responsible asset management.

Tree removal shall only be undertaken when supported by documented inspection findings and one or more approved removal criteria identified in the associated Tree Removal Standard Operating Procedure. Where an emergency necessitates immediate tree removal before inspection and documentation can be completed, the information shall be documented as soon as possible after the emergency.

The Township retains sole authority over the management and removal of Township-owned trees.

Removal Criteria

A Township-owned tree may be removed when one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The tree presents an unacceptable risk to public safety.
- The tree is dead, dying, structurally unsound, or beyond recovery.
- The tree has been significantly damaged by weather, disease, insects, or other factors.
- The tree interferes with municipal infrastructure, approved construction, or operational requirements and no reasonable alternative exists.
- Removal is required to comply with legislation, regulations, utility requirements, or emergency response activities.
- Removal forms part of an approved municipal project or land management initiative.

Replacement and Mitigation

Following the removal of a Township tree, replacement planting or other mitigation measures may be considered where practical and appropriate, taking into consideration:

- Site suitability
- Available space
- Operational requirements
- Budget considerations
- Urban forest objectives

Roles, Responsibilities, and Compliance

Council: Approve and support the implementation of this policy through the allocation of resources and funding, as required.

CAO / Senior Management: Ensure compliance with this policy, associated procedures, and applicable legislation

Municipal Staff: Conduct inspections, manage and perform tree removal activities, maintain required records, and carry out responsibilities in accordance with this policy, the Tree Removal SOP, applicable legislation, and established safety standards.

Contracted Service Providers (Arborists and Specialists): Conduct tree inspections, risk assessments, and tree removals, and provide technical recommendations and

professional expertise to support the safe and effective management of Township-owned trees.

Related Documents

- Municipal Tree Removal Standard Operating Procedure