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## Tree Conservation During Development

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Resolution No.: 530/2007

Lead Role: Chief Commissioner

Replaces: N/A

Last Review Date: August 25, 2011

Next Review Date: 08/2014

Administrative Responsibility: Planning & Development Services

### Special Notes:

- Cross reference with Policy SER-009-032, Biophysical Assessment, and Policy SER-009-035, Tree Management.
- Tree Conservation During Development Operational Procedures can be accessed in: EDMS EEP Environmental and Open Space Planning - 4030/10731/Tree Conservation Procedures

### Policy Statement

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Strathcona County shall have in place specific guidelines for Developers and their consultants to determine the protection required to conserve trees within the urban and rural areas of Strathcona County based on municipal, community and environmental needs.

Strathcona County shall ensure the conservation of trees during the process of developing land and constructing buildings and infrastructure. This will be accomplished by providing procedures to produce a:

1. Tree Conservation Report (TCR); and
2. Tree Protection Plan (TPP).

All Development initiated by a private sector developer or by Strathcona County shall be subject to this policy.

Short term success will be evident when construction is completed with minimal impact to conserved trees. Long term success will be evident when the conserved trees are sustainable and thrive for years after Development.

### Definitions

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- D1 Biophysical Assessment – means standards for an ecological assessment of a site as per Strathcona County Policy SER-009-032.
- D2 Conservation – means the planning, management and implementation of an activity with the objective of protecting the essential physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the environment against degradation.
- D3 Consultant – means a person preparing the Tree Conservation Report and Tree Protection Plan (qualified professional, such as consulting arborist, forestry consultant, forester, urban forester, landscape architect, biologist, plant ecologist).
- D4 Developer – means a private sector company, individual landowner or Strathcona County with the purpose of developing a parcel of land for residential, commercial, industrial or other use.
- D5 Development – means the activities defined as Development in the Municipal Government Act.

- D6 Development Team – means the Developer and appropriate private consultants.
- D7 Hazard Tree – means a standing tree, either alive or dead, having defects in roots, trunk or limb, which predispose it to mechanical failure in whole or in part and which is located that such failure has a probability of injury and damage to persons or property OR a tree situated in an area frequented by people or is located adjacent to valuable facilities and has defects in roots, stems, or branches that may cause a failure resulting in property damage, personal injury, or death.
- D8 Tree Conservation Report (“TCR”) – means an assessment of trees in urban and rural development areas for conservation planning.
- D9 Tree Protection Plan (“TPP”) – means those activities required during construction and maintenance to ensure the goals of the Tree Conservation Report are reached.
- D10 Tree Protection Zone (“TPZ”) – means undisturbed space needed for a tree to retain good health and vigor.

## Guidelines

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- G1 This policy is consistent with Strathcona County’s Strategic Plan to conserve and protect natural areas.
- G2 Trees make a difference in our environmental health by:
- reducing air pollution (release oxygen, settle out, trap and hold dust, ash, pollen and smoke particles)
  - fighting the greenhouse effect (act as a carbon sink, remove carbon from CO<sub>2</sub> and release oxygen)
  - modifying climate (lower air temperature through shade and evapo-transpiration, increase humidity, reduce glare, reduce wind velocity)
  - conserving water
  - reducing soil erosion
  - creating wildlife habitat and plant diversity (provide food and shelter for birds and animals).
- G3 Trees make a difference in our economic health by:
- reducing energy costs (shade reduces air conditioning costs, provide windblock)
  - increasing property values in residential areas
  - increasing economic stability (attract businesses, residents and tourists).
- G4 Trees increase our quality of life by:
- adding beauty to the community
  - improving human health by impacting our physical and mental health.
- G5 Tree conservation is considered at each step of development, from the initial concept for land use through design, grading and construction, to maintenance. Conserving trees has economic, environmental, and social impacts. For example:
- Both rural and urban communities expect conservation
  - Individuals support conservation, in that they pay more for treed residential properties, or for proximity to trees for amenity or privacy
  - Recognition that trees provide important environmental and social functions, such as energy conservation, pollution abatement, flooding control, and psychological health to residents

- G6 The intent is not only to retain trees within a development, but to prevent damage to trees during the construction and maintenance process.

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**Procedures**

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**P1 Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- (a) reduce tree damage and loss during development, and
- (b) provide for the maintenance of trees during the period between Construction Completion Certification (CCC) and Final Acceptance Certification (FAC).

**P2 Roles and Responsibilities**

1. Based on a Tree Conservation Report (TCR) that is prepared in conjunction with the Biophysical Assessment (Strathcona County Policy SER-009-032) at the Area Structure Plan (ASP), Area Concept Plan (ACP) or Conceptual Scheme stage of development, the Development Team will provide a Tree Protection Plan (TPP) at the Engineering Design stage of development. This plan will consist of recommended construction practices, specifically Tree Protection Zone Planning and Monitoring. This information is required during the Engineering Design stage to appropriately plan for construction. This plan will be submitted to Strathcona County in conjunction with Engineering and/or Landscape Design drawings. It will be the responsibility of the Development Team to ensure that all contractors adhere to the TPP during construction. If a Conceptual Scheme is being prepared, the level of detail in the TPP will be determined by Strathcona County and may be included at the Biophysical Assessment stage.

During CCC and FAC inspections, the TPP will be reviewed by Strathcona County representatives to ensure that the recommendations provided by Developer have been followed. This includes tree protection and maintenance.

The Development Team will ensure that the recommendations of the report and subsequent plan are adhered to during construction and maintenance.

2. The Planning and Development Department of Strathcona County is responsible to develop procedures to ensure the proper implementation of this Policy and to provide guidance to Developers and others in complying with the requirements of this Policy.
3. The Manager of Environmental & Open Space Planning has a review responsibility regarding the TCR and TPP. Representatives of Environmental & Open Space Planning will review the TCR and TPP, provide recommendations and conduct CCC and FAC inspections.
4. The Manager of Outdoor Recreation has a review responsibility regarding the TCR. Representatives of Outdoor Recreation will conduct CCC and FAC inspections.

The following flow chart illustrates how the Tree Conservation During Development Policy procedures fit into the planning and construction process. The procedures are specified with the Appendix to this document.

**Tree Conservation During Development Flow Chart**

