



TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH STORMONT

Title: Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy
Schedule "A" to By-law No. 2019-016

Department: Planning/Economic
Development

Date: February 20, 2019

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 270(1)(7) of the Municipal Act (2001) requires municipalities to adopt and maintain policies with respect to the manner in which a municipality will protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation within the municipality. In addition to fulfilling its legislative requirements, the Township recognizes the benefits that a healthy tree canopy and natural vegetation can have including:

- Reducing air pollution;
- Improving water quality;
- Providing habitat for flora and fauna;
- Mitigation against of erosion and subsidence; and,
- Providing public amenity and increasing property values.

To that end, the Township of South Stormont has developed the following statement of policy regarding the protection and enhancement of the Township's tree canopy and natural vegetation. In addition to promoting the enhancement and protection of the Township's tree canopy and natural vegetation, this policy is intended to supplement and assist with the implementation of existing Official Plan policies as they relate, but are not limited to; Significant Woodlands (OP Section 5.5.4); Environmental Approvals (OP Section 3.5.1.9); and, Open Space, the Natural Environment and Natural Heritage Features (OP Section 3.5.2.8).

2. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all lands within the Township of South Stormont.

It is the intent that this policy statement shall constitute the tree canopy and natural vegetation policy for the Township. Nothing in this policy is intended to conflict with existing standards or policies of the Township, and this policy does not take priority over any by-laws, plans, resolutions, or agreements passed by Council pursuant to the Municipal Act or Planning Act.

Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict normal farm practices as defined by the Normal Farm Practices Protection Act, including agroforestry.

3. GOALS

The goals of this policy are to:

1. Reduce the unwarranted loss of trees and natural vegetation in the Township and seek opportunities to increase tree coverage and supplement natural vegetation, where possible;
2. Improve data collection and implement regular monitoring of tree coverage and natural vegetation;
3. Encourage the conservation of trees and natural vegetation through *Planning Act* approvals; and,
4. Encourage the implementation of best practices as they relate to managing, conserving, and enhancing the tree canopy and natural vegetation in the Township.

4. POLICIES

Based on the above-noted goals, the following policies shall apply to tree canopy and natural vegetation within the Township of South Stormont.

Goal 1:

Reduce the unwarranted loss of tree coverage in the Township and seek opportunities to increase tree coverage and natural vegetation, where possible.

- Support, and participate where possible, in tree planting efforts by conservation authorities and other organizations or private enterprise.
- Where appropriate, and within financial capability, continue to acquire, through land purchase/dedications, conservation easements, and donations, woodlands, wetlands, and other natural heritage areas and features, and employ best practices in their maintenance.
- Maintain departmental, individual and associated roles and responsibilities for the management of Township-owned areas of woodlands and other natural areas.
- Encourage and support collaborative initiatives between the Township, developers, farmers, public/private agencies and general public that seek to preserve and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation.

Goal 2:

Improve data collection on tree canopy and natural vegetation and implement regular monitoring of tree coverage.

- Assist and support with monitoring and reporting on tree coverage and natural vegetation throughout the Township on a regular basis.
- Contribute to the development and implementation of a region-wide natural heritage study, including mapping and land use policies.
- Partner with local conservation authorities, the United Counties of SDG, other local municipalities, and the Province to share and improve data on tree canopy and natural vegetation.

Goal 3:

Encourage the conservation of trees and natural vegetation through *Planning Act* approvals.

- Ensure that the Official Plan and any local secondary plans maintain current and appropriate policies addressing tree canopy and natural vegetation.
- Encourage the retention of mature trees and natural vegetation, and the planting of native tree species when reviewing applications under the *Planning Act*.
- Explore opportunities to develop design guidelines, municipal standards, and other guidance documents that address the maintenance and enhancement of tree canopy and natural vegetation.

Goal 4:

Encourage the implementation of best practices as it relates to managing, conserving, and enhancing the tree canopy and natural vegetation in the Township.

- Encourage best practices in the maintenance of tree canopy and natural vegetation through resource and information-sharing on the Township website, pamphlets, newsletters, and other publications.
- Participate in professional associations and/or develop professional relationships with other municipalities to share forest management best practices.
- Explore the development and implementation of municipal staff training to enhance awareness of tree health and of proper tree protection practices during construction and maintenance activities.

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| Drafted By: Peter Young Director of Planning/EDO | Last Revision Date: | Approved Date: |
| | | February 20, 2019 |