

	Town of Qualicum Beach	Policy Manual
	Subject: Buildings and Grounds Pruning, Trimming and Removal of Trees on Town-Controlled Lands	
	Policy Number: 4002-4	

Purpose

This Policy recognizes the importance of trees in the Town of Qualicum Beach. These trees: provide wildlife protection and habitat for birds, clean our air by capturing floating particles, cool our air in the summer, reduce greenhouse gases, and, in some cases, are historically significant, all while adding to our quality of life by buffering noise and providing outstanding scenery. The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide direction to employees for the maintenance or removal of trees to ensure that trees on Town-controlled lands are managed appropriately and for public safety, while addressing concerns of the community;
- provide clear and consistent procedures for dealing with trees on Town-controlled property;
- establish a process to respond to requests for tree maintenance or removal.

This policy does not apply to actions taken in an effort to mitigate interface fuel reduction or during emergency interface fire responses.

Policy

1. The Town of Qualicum Beach will only permit removal of those trees on Town-controlled land that, in the opinion of the Parks Foreman, meet one or more of the following conditions:
 - (1) present an immediate hazard to workers or public
 - (2) may cause damage to public or private property
 - (3) constitute a visual traffic hazard
 - (4) have structural defects that cause the tree to be hazardous
 - (5) cannot be retained due to conflict with overall approved development or infrastructure plans
 - (6) are part of an approved revegetation/preservation plan, certified by a geotechnical engineer if on a hazardous slope
 - (7) a request for the removal of trees on a road right of way or laneway is received from the owner of a residential dwelling located within 10 metres of the tree(s),
 and in situations where these conditions cannot be addressed through pruning or trimming.

Approved: 3 May 00

Amended: 14 Jul 03, 9 Jun 08, 7 Dec 09 & 13 Aug 2012

Approved By: Council

2. The Town does not permit topping trees. The former common practice of topping trees has had the single biggest detrimental effect on the health and aesthetic appearance of trees. It has been demonstrated that this practice incurs more long-term management costs than other methods of controlling growth. Topping is not permitted on Town-controlled land, except where re-topping is the only alternative to tree removal.
3. The Town does not permit removal of trees on Town-controlled lands due to falling debris such as leaves, pine cones, seeds, etc.
4. The Town does not permit removal of trees on Town-controlled lands due to blocked views, with the exception of those trees in the established View Corridors of Laburnum Road, Garrett Road, Arbutus Street, Rye Road, and Yambury Road and in the established Pedestrian View Corridor at the north end of Whitmee Road, except as permitted in this policy.
5. The Town does not permit removal of trees on Town-controlled lands in designated Ecological Greenways and Hazardous Slopes, as identified in the Official Community Plan, except through an approved Development Permit.
6. The Town does not permit removal of trees on Town-controlled lands within established buffer areas and parks, except as permitted in this policy.
7. The Town does not permit removal of trees protected by tree protection bylaws, except through the process identified in the applicable bylaw.
8. Property owners/residents must apply in writing for permission to prune, trim, and/or remove trees on Town-controlled land. Property owners/residents must obtain written approval from the Town of Qualicum Beach prior to commencing any pruning, trimming and/or removal of trees on Town controlled land.
9. Any proposals to remove or modify trees on Town-controlled land must minimize the loss of privacy for adjacent

property owners, and where possible, enhance natural beauty and privacy, both in the short and long term.

10. For Town-controlled lands within Development Permit Area H1 – Hazardous Lands, as identified in the 2011 Official Community Plan, geotechnical stability shall be the highest priority, and alterations to vegetation must comply with the DP Area H1 – Hazardous Lands Guidelines.

Procedure

1. All written correspondence/applications regarding vegetation, e.g., tree bylaw issues, notification of hazard trees, etc., shall be forwarded to the Parks Foreman for review.
2. The Parks Foreman will provide a recommendation to the Superintendent of Public Works, Parks & Buildings and Director of Planning regarding approval. Applications not receiving the approval of the Parks Foreman, Superintendent of Public Works, Parks & Buildings and Director of Planning shall not proceed.
3. All work must be done by a certified contractor who has received prior approval from the Town to conduct work on Town-controlled land, further, the contractor must be WorkSafe BC insured.
4. All pruning, trimming and/or removal of trees shall be entirely at the expense of the resident/property owner.
5. All debris shall be removed from the site and disposed of in an environmentally sensitive manner and at the expense of the resident.
6. Any person who damages a tree on Town property shall be liable for all costs associated with the repair or replacement of the damaged tree. The Town will proceed civilly to recover any such costs and will file a report with the RCMP if any tree is damaged intentionally.

Responsibility

Parks Foreman
Superintendent of Public Works, Parks & Buildings
Director of Planning

References

"Town of Qualicum Beach Tree Protection Bylaw No. 559, 1995" defines Tree Preservation Area;

"Town of Qualicum Beach Tree Protection Bylaw No. 559.02, 2004" defines protected trees;

"Town of Qualicum Beach Official Community Plan Bylaw No. 700, 2011" defines location of greenways and hazardous slopes, development permit areas G1-G12 Ecological Greenway Areas and guidelines, and requirements for development permit to alter land or vegetation;

2007 Town of Qualicum Beach Community Wildfire Protection Plan;

"Town of Qualicum Beach Fire Bylaw No. 569, 1997".

Standards:

"Town-controlled land" means Town-owned property (includes road right of way and parks) and crown land, but excludes Town land leased to others;

"Tree" means a long-lived woody perennial plant, either deciduous or evergreen, that has a height greater than 5 metres (15 feet).

Distribution

Council
Management
Public Works, Parks & Buildings Department