



November 20, 2019

Re: City-wide Private Tree Bylaw Implementation

Report Number: RPF-18-19

The members of the Burlington Sustainable Development Committee (SDC) are volunteer citizens who have been appointed by Council to advise on issues that relate to sustainable development.

SDC recognizes the importance and value of Burlington's urban forest and the critical role it plays in carbon sequestration, air pollution filtering, heat moderation as well as cleaning and reducing storm water run-off. The recent declaration of a climate change emergency for the City of Burlington serves to further highlight the importance of having a robust and healthy canopy to help the city combat the impacts of climate change.

SDC supports the City's vision for Burlington's urban forest as articulated in the July 2010 City of Burlington urban forest management plan (UFMP). The UFMP laid out a number of recommendations for the *maintenance and enhancement* of the urban forest. One of those recommendations, the establishment of a private tree by-law, is currently being considered by council.

Although SDC supports the *concept* of a private tree by-law, we do so with the proviso that the by-law is part of a holistic tree protection, preservation and reforestation strategy supported by a prioritized action plan with defined targets and measures. Such a by-law should be very clear in terms of its expected and measurable contribution to improving the overall quality of Burlington's tree canopy and achieving the City's stated goal of 35% canopy coverage by 2040.

SDC understands that maintaining and enhancing the urban forest is a significant and resource intensive challenge. For that reason SDC recommends the City revisit, revise (where appropriate) and reprioritize the most impactful recommendations from the 2010 UFMP report in order to develop and implement the 2020-2025 five-year management plan. This review should also take into consideration potential high impact "quick win" (e.g. restricting cash-in-lieu options for new developments) opportunities.

Further SDC recommends the next five year plan UFMP include the timely completion of a tree inventory, a 20 year new tree planting target to achieve the goal of a 35% canopy by 2040 as well as annual targets that make up the 20 year goal.

The SDC would like to be engaged in development of the five year urban forest management plan.

Members of the Burlington Sustainable Development Committee