

The Corporation Of The City Of North Bay

By-Law No. 2025-109

**Being A By-Law to Adopt The City of
North Bay's Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy**

Whereas section 270 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, as amended, provides that a municipality shall adopt and maintain policies with respect to how the municipality will protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation in the municipality.

And Whereas Council passed Resolution No. 2025-400 at its Meeting held on Tuesday, November 25, 2025, authorizing the Tree Canopy and Vegetation Policy.

Now Therefore the Council of the Corporation of the City of North Bay Hereby Enacts as Follows:

1. That the Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy attached as Schedule "A" hereto is hereby adopted.
2. This By-Law shall take force and effect upon being passed.

Read a First Time in Open Council this 9th day of December, 2025.

Read a Second Time in Open Council this 9th day of December, 2025.

Read a Third Time in Open Council and Enacted and Passed this 9th day of December, 2025.

Mayor Peter Chirico

City Clerk Karen McIsaac

THIS IS SCHEDULE "A"
TO THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH BAY
BY-LAW 2025-109



Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy

Issued: November 2025	Revision Dates:	Approved by Council: 2025-
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1. POLICY

The Corporation of the City of North Bay is committed to maintain and enhance the level and quality of tree and vegetation cover within the City, recognizing the ecological, social and economic benefits of trees and natural vegetation.

This Policy was developed with the consultation and input of several community groups and stakeholders, including consideration of the current Tree Canopy Inventory.

Section 270(1)(7) of the *Municipal Act, 2001, SO 2001, c.25* requires the City of North Bay to adopt and maintain a policy setting out the manner in which the City will protect and enhance the tree canopy and natural vegetation within the Municipality

This Policy is written in the spirit of learning together with Indigenous and Non-Indigenous alike, to build a healthier environment for all beings who share this land. We acknowledge that we are in Anishinaabe territory, where the trees, waters, plants, and animals have been in relationship with the people since time immemorial.

Anishinaabe teachings remind us that these living systems are more than resources, they are relatives that support balance and life and have spirit. As we care for the City's tree canopy and natural spaces, we are each called to take part in that relationship of learning, respect and reciprocity.

When we plant, protect, and plan with the land in mind, we strengthen the circle of connection between people and the natural world. Together, we can honour the wisdom of this territory and ensure that the canopy, the plant life within the City of North Bay and all who depend on it, human or not, continue to thrive for generations to come.

2. PURPOSE

This Policy recognizes the importance of the tree canopy and the many environmental, economic and social benefits of urban forests to communities as listed below.

Environmental Benefits

- Improves air quality by removing particulates and other air pollution
- Carbon storage
- Moderation of storm water events by increasing soil permeability and intercepting rainfall in the canopy
- Provides habitat and migratory corridors for animals
- Increases biodiversity

- Improvement to public health
- Temperature moderation & climate change resiliency
- Reduces energy expenditure and cost
- Improves riparian zones; preventing erosion

Economic Benefits

- Improves interest in retail businesses
- Improves marketability of the City
- Reduces infrastructure costs by reducing the strain on sewers and roadways
- Reduces liability and prevents damage through maintenance
- Reduces energy costs
- Reduces health care costs

Social Benefits

- Improves social connection within communities
- Improves walkability of communities
- Provides comfortable park and recreation spaces
- Provides a sound barrier
- Promotes public education and engagement
- Adds natural character to streetscape and forested aesthetic to the community

This Policy provides guidelines regarding the injury or destruction of trees within the City and enables the establishment of procedures to preserve tree canopy by minimizing tree removal, preventing damage or destruction of trees, and optimize planting provisions and tree health within the City.

3. DEFINITIONS

“Boulevard Tree” shall mean a tree located within a road allowance owned and maintained by the City.

“Dead, Dying, or Diseased” in reference to a tree, means a tree with no living tissue, a tree where seventy (70) percent or more of its crown is dead, or a tree infected by a lethal pathogen as certified by a qualified tree expert.

“Hazard/Danger Tree” includes dead or dying trees, dead parts of live trees, or unstable live trees (due to structural defects or other factors) that are within striking distance of people or property (a target).

“Invasive Species” shall mean non-native plants that are introduced to the local area that disrupts the natural balance of an ecosystem, often spreading over a specific area.

“Native Species” shall mean an uncultivated vegetation indigenous to geographic regions, which have adapted over time to various environmental influences, which grow naturally in the local area. For the purposes of this section, “cultivated” means a native species that has been altered to an unnatural variation not found in the wild.

“Natural Vegetation” shall mean plant life that grows naturally in the area (a non-invasive species) and does not include a manicured lawn or garden.

“Park Tree” shall mean a tree located in a City-owned Park or actively managed open space.

“Public Tree” shall mean a boulevard tree, park tree or a tree located on other lands owned by the City.

“Specimen Tree” means a tree that stands out in the adjacent landscape, as determined by the City, because of its uniqueness, size, beauty, and/or rarity.

“Tree Protection Zone” is the area that occupies one meter beyond the drip line of a tree.

4. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Application:

- (i) This Policy applies primarily to public lands within the municipality and to trees achieved through the subdivision approval process. The City encourages private property owners through planned education and outreach initiatives to adopt the principles of this Policy as it relates to trees on private property.
- (ii) The City, through its operations will foster a “tree-friendly culture” through interdepartmental coordination on tree issues and sharing of ideas and best practices for tree protection, maintenance and planting. Its actions can also serve as a model for actions taken by citizens on their own property.
- (iii) This Policy supports a multi-disciplinary, multi-departmental review of plans and proposals that have the potential to impact trees. The following broad service areas in the City play an important role in advancing the objectives of this Policy:
 - Land Use Planning (policy and development approvals)
 - Public Works (right-of-way maintenance)
 - Parks & Recreation (City-owned parks and recreational facilities within our jurisdiction)

City staff are encouraged to cooperate in the following ways:

- Interdepartmental review of private development proposals and municipal works to ensure all opportunities for maintaining and planting are included.
- Coordination of by-laws, policies and procedures to ensure that urban trees and vegetated areas are consistently referenced, planned, enhanced and maintained.
- Coordination of existing and future initiatives that have tree-related components (e.g., Parks Master Plan, Asset Management Plan, Official Plan, site-specific park development and rehabilitation plans).

4.2 Best Practices:

- (i) The best practices outlined in this section are intended as a guide to City staff, residents and businesses to support landscaping decisions that result in a growing and sustainable tree canopy that functions harmoniously with the surrounding environment.

The City encourages the planting of trees and vegetation that are native to Ontario. Native Species that are best adapted to the local environment typically have higher survival rates and require less maintenance than introduced species which often contribute little to the local ecosystem and may become invasive. Wherever possible, planting plans should consist of native species, especially in proximity to natural areas. In some cases, a hardy, non-invasive, non-native tree is

appropriate if it is better adapted to a particular site and has a better chance of survival over the long term.

Preferred native species include a mix of:

- red maple (*Acer rubrum*)
- sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*)
- silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*)
- red oak (*Quercus rubra*)
- white oak (*Quercus alba*)
- bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
- american basswood (*Tilia americana*)
- northern hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*)
- white spruce (*Picea glauca*)
- eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*)
- red pine (*Pinus resinosa*)
- eastern white cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*)
- american hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*)
- american mountainash (*Sorbus americana*)
- tamarack (*Larix laricina*)

Small Native Trees / Large Shrubs:

- serviceberry (*Amelanchier alnifolia*)
- staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*)
- pagoda dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)
- highbush cranberry (*Viburnum trilobum*)
- nannyberry (*Viburnum lentago*)

Ash and Elm are not recommended for planting due to high susceptibility to disease and invasive pests. Additionally, some species of poplar, aspen, willow and manitoba maple are not recommended for planting given they are highly susceptible to wind damage.

Recommended non-native species include:

- honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*)
- little leaf linden (*Tilia cordata*)
- norway spruce (*Picea abies*)
- maidenhair (*Ginkgo biloba*)
- scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*)

4.3 Setting Trees up for Success

(i) Tree and vegetation enhancement is a long-term investment that pays dividends to the community. It is very important to consider the constraints of a location to ensure the right tree is chosen for the right place. Constraints to consider when choosing a species to plant include:

- Utilities such as power lines, buried water/sewer laterals and other hard infrastructure (i.e. North Bay Hydro Vegetation Management practices, snow storage best management practices)
- Urban conditions such as road salt and compaction
- Rooting space
- Environmental conditions such as full-sun, full-shade and pooling water
- Property lines
- Compatibility with existing trees with respect to size and rate of growth.

- (ii) The right species will be able to endure against the challenges of the chosen location and avoid interfering with overhead or underground services. The City will use professional landscape architects, arborists, and/or horticulturalists to assist in choosing the right location and species for planting initiatives on as needed and/or required basis.

4.4 Diverse Greenspaces

A good planting plan makes use of a variety of trees, shrubs and herbaceous vegetation to enhance biodiversity, create habitat for pollinators and other useful wildlife, and improves the desirability of public and private green spaces.

Neighbourhoods are encouraged to have a diverse variety of tree species. This helps limit invasive insects and tree specific diseases which can affect the overall health of the City's tree canopy.

4.5 Managing Invasive Species

The easiest way to control the spread of invasive species is to avoid planting them and prioritize native species or imported plants that are known not to spread on their own. The City will manage City-owned lands for invasive species where there is a risk to public health and safety. These efforts are relative to available City resources.

Different species will require different control mechanisms to remove. Methods of removal include pulling, cutting, burning, smothering or chemical control as a last resort where regulation permits.

4.6 Tree Maintenance

Protecting a tree through proper pruning and maintenance shall be the first consideration versus tree removal. Tree maintenance shall be conducted in accordance with standards normally accepted in the nursery, landscape, and arborist trades. These efforts are relative to available City resources.

4.7 Tree Removal

(i) Requirements

No person shall harm or remove a public tree. Tree removal on City-owned land will only occur when:

- the tree is dead, dying or diseased, or;
- it is a hazard / danger tree (as determined by City staff), or;
- it is required as a result of emergency work, or;
- The tree requires removal, pruning or maintenance where the branches or limbs interfere with existing utility conductors, roads, sightlines, buildings or structures, public safety or development projects being undertaken by the City, and it is determined that removal is necessary.

In the event that a public tree is removed in contravention of this Policy, the person responsible for removal will be required to reimburse or replace the tree.

(ii) Alternatives

When considering tree removal, in all instances, alternatives to tree removal will be considered.

(iii) Replacements

For all tree removals on City property or related to City projects, the City or contractor shall be required to plant one

(1) tree for each tree removed, in a suitable location on municipal property within one (1) year of the tree removal. Tree replacement should be planted in locations that will support the long-term survival of the tree and in a location that is similar to the tree that was removed (e.g., a removed street tree should be replaced with a new street tree in the same neighbourhood).

(iv) **Tree Disposal**

The disposal of wood material resulting from the removal of a tree shall be completed in a way that reduces the potential for the spread of invasive species and in accordance with the *Federal Plant Protection Act*. Appropriate disposal methods can vary depending on the tree species, however, grinding the material and leaving at the site, or hauling wood material to the City Landfill site are considered the best methods.

(v) **Tree Management during Development**

The City will prepare a mitigation plan where a project is proposed on City land to protect identified specimen trees. These efforts are relative to available City resources.

(vi) **Planning, Development and Construction Considerations**

When private development through new subdivisions or condominiums is proposed, the City will encourage the developer to maintain existing mature tree canopy and / or replant to minimize the loss of previous tree canopy.

The City Departments overseeing development and construction will make every effort to ensure development proposals coincide with this Policy.

4.8 Community Education and Engagement

Public education that communicates the value of a healthy, growing tree canopy and provides information to residents on proper tree care are key components to increasing our tree canopy. Through community engagement and education, the City will celebrate program successes and build upon them. As part of this outreach, the City will communicate the details of this Policy and how its implementation will impact various stakeholders.

5. Implementation

All City departments will review and consider this Policy when planning and implementing projects and operations.

This Policy will be reviewed every five (5) years, or as needed.