

## **CYPRESS COUNTY POLICY**

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Road Allowance Tree And Brush Control</b>	<b>POLICY NO.:</b>	<b>R 22</b>
<b>AUTHORITY:</b>	<b>Resolution No.: 2016/329</b>	<b>DATE:</b>	<b>June 21, 2016</b>
<b>REVISED:</b>	<b>Resolution No.: 2017/33 Resolution No.: 2018/460</b>	<b>DATE:</b>	<b>February 7, 2017 August 21, 2018</b>

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### **PURPOSE**

The County is responsible for the direction, control and management of all municipal roadways within its boundaries and recognizes that the control of trees and brush within road rights-of-way of developed roads is important for public safety. Snow and ice control, minimizing drifting of snow, providing optimum melting and drying of road surfaces, drainage, ditch maintenance, wildlife/vehicle impact, protecting the integrity of County road structures and potential damage to County road maintenance equipment are important aspects.

Note: Cypress County will make efforts to preserve trees where they do not present a hazard, obstruct sight-lines for the travelling public, where no complaints have been received, and where trees have no direct adverse impact on road conditions and County road maintenance operations.

### **DEFINITION**

Developed Road: A road that has been constructed for public travel and is regularly maintained (hard surface and gravel) by the County. Streets and Alleys in hamlets are included, bladed trails or summer roads are not included.

### **GUIDELINES**

1. The removal of trees and brush along developed roads will be carried out to the entire width of the road right-of-way:
  - a. All trees and brush on the road side slope from the road edge to the centre of the ditch bottom will be removed regardless of size.
  - b. Consideration will be given to leaving healthy historical (large) trees that stand alone between the centre of the ditch and property line or backslope as they may provide shelter and resting spots for birds of prey.
  - c. The removal of trees and brush within an existing County Right-of-way, will be considered following a discussion with landowners in proximity of the immediate areas.

- d. In Hamlets trees and brush “between the centre of the ditch and property line” that require maintenance will be thinned, pruned or removed; those of impressive size or shape, provide shelter and privacy to a residential yard, are of historical significance, or rare species, may be considered for preservation if possible.
2. At intersections, trees may be removed to meet designated sight distance requirements as stated in current County design guidelines and construction standards. Any removal on private property will only be done once authorization has been obtained from the landowner and a written agreement signed.
3. On sections of roadway with significant horizontal curvature, additional removal on private land may be required on the inside of the curve to establish proper sight distance.
4. Trees, brush and stumps will be removed by mowing, cutting, chipping or other mechanical equipment.
5. Trees taller than 2.5 metres (approximately) will be mechanically removed and debris will be chipped and/or removed from the site.
6. Stumps will be ground to ground level.
7. Trees and brush that are about 2.5 metres or less in height may be sprayed and left standing in the road allowance. Removal will be dependent on location and density.
8. Any required spraying operations will be carried out under the direction of the Agricultural Supervisor, who will maintain a liaison with the Director of Public Works or his designate regarding locations of trees and brush and necessary actions for spray treatments.
9. Spray treatment of trees and brush within an existing County right-of-way, will be considered following a discussion with landowners in proximity of the immediate areas.
10. Sites where trees and brush have been cut shall be inspected for regrowth, in the spring immediately following their removal, and at least once each spring for the following two years.
11. Where spraying is not feasible, control of regrowth will be carried out by repeat mechanical methods as necessary.
12. All developed road rights-of-way will be inspected, and control implemented on a five year rotation. To maximize operational efficiency, trees and brush requiring removal will be prioritized at the township level. Administration will utilize a method of evaluating and scoring trees and brush based on criteria that include:
  - a. The type of tree (large tree, bush, shrub, large bush patch etc)
  - b. Which side of a road the trees are on (north, south, east, west)

- c. The classification of the road (arterial, collector, local)
- d. Townships with the most high scoring trees and brush will be the first priority for removal.

13. Irrigation area developed roads will be inspected and basal bark spraying implemented on a two year rotation.

#### **GUIDELINES - OVERHANGING OR ENCROACHING TREES**

1. A soft enforcement approach will begin under the Highways Development and Protection Act. A deadline of compliance for the voluntary removal of trees overhanging the right-of-way will be issued to the property owner. A follow up inspection will be conducted after the compliance date has passed.
2. Failure to comply with the compliance notice will result in the issuance of an “Order to Remedy a Danger to Public Safety” under the Municipal Government Act (MGA) to the property owner. A deadline to comply with the Order and removal of trees overhanging right-of-ways will be issued. A follow up inspection will be conducted after the compliance Order date has passed.
3. Failure to comply with the Order by the property owner will result in the County taking necessary action to eliminate the danger to public safety. The full costs of such action are an amount owing to the County by the owner. Any unpaid expenses and costs in this regard will be added to the tax roll according to the MGA.
4. Priority of developed roads will be on a five year rotation as follows:
  - a. Hamlet roads
  - b. Subdivision roads
  - c. Arterial, Resource, Collector roads
  - d. Hamlet alleys
  - e. Local roads