

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON  
MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT  
RAPPORT

Our File/N/Réf.           **50 68-98-0001**

DATE                        20 August 1998

TO/DEST.                 Co-ordinator,  
Transportation Committee

FROM/EXP.                Environment and Transportation Commissioner

SUBJECT/OBJET          **FOREST RENEWAL PLAN**

### **DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Transportation Committee and Council receive this report:**

- 1.     Outlining the Region's strategy for the development of a Restoration Plan for Ottawa-Carleton's forest cover, and;**
- 2.     Authorizing the establishment of specific initiatives as detailed in Annex A.**

### **BACKGROUND**

The January 1998 Ice Storm had a significant affect on the forests in Ottawa-Carleton. Evaluations of the damage since the storm have shown that up to 80% of certain tree species have suffered some damage as a result of the ice loading which was estimated by the National Research Council at approximately 30 kg. per sq. m. of surface area. Findings also indicate that approximately 10% of the forest cover was either completely destroyed by the storm or require removal due to safety concerns.

The visible hazardous pruning work was completed by early February, i.e. removal of hanging branches, but this priority pruning to eliminate hazardous conditions did not permit the additional time to assess the tree for the appropriate arboricultural treatment. In every recognizable case the trees where made safe before the crew moved on with an assessment of each tree's potential as a future safety concern left until a later date.

### **DISCUSSION**

The long-term management of the trees that have survived the storm, but sustained damage, has centred initially around the evaluation for the removal of structural damage. The Phase 1 stage of the cleanup, which started immediately after the Ice Storm and which has continued to date, is targeted for completion by the end of 1998.

Following this is the ongoing need to monitor the Region's forest cover and the development of a systemic tree inventory and evaluation program which will address additional arboricultural treatments such as cabling or bracing and treatment of wounds for exposure to insect and disease infestation. Evaluations thus far have shown that trees maintained with the appropriate pruning cycles and plant health care systems, i.e. fertilization programs, fared considerably better in their ability to resist the ice loads.

The replanting of trees will also be a priority through existing programs or through the development of new partnerships such as the "Ottawa Carleton Rural Community Restoration Project". An expansion of the existing Greening Program, the Region will partner with community groups and interested parties in rural communities and provide technical assistance and facilitation to develop plans at the grass roots level that will allow the groups to implement their reforestation ideas.

Another major initiative will be the "UnderCover in Ottawa-Carleton" program. Modelled after the Region's existing Urban Tree Island (UTI) program which places trees on private property adjacent to a Regional road allowance, UnderCover in Ottawa-Carleton will provide all interested property owners with a tree who agree to meet the challenge of maintaining it over the long-term. The main goal of the Restoration Plan, to restore the forest cover lost due to the Ice Storm, will be achieved through the development of such new community partnership programs.

Included in the Renewal Plan will also be provisions for the Marlborough Forest, an Agreement Forest managed for the Region under the *Forestry Act* by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). Damage from the storm has been extensive in some areas of the forest and this will undoubtedly have an effect on the current Forest Resource Management Plan. The Region was instrumental in working with the OMNR and the Township of Rideau Fire Department to remove Phase 1 damage along access roads and trails and is prepared to work with the OMNR to ensure that proper forestry practises continue.

## CONSULTATION

As partnerships are developed and specific initiatives identified, all stakeholders will be informed and their input sought through the public consultation process.

## EXPENDITURE JUSTIFICATION

Tree pruning is required to repair the damage still left from the Ice Storm whose presence involves a potential health and safety hazard to either the general public, staff or property. Preservation and expansion of the Region's forest cover is identified as a priority in the Official Plan. All initiatives are being co-ordinated through the office of the Regional Forester.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Funding for tree programs was approved by Regional Council in the 1998 Capital Budget Program.

*Approved by  
M.J.E. Sheflin, P.Eng.*

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Attach. ( 1 )

ANNEX A**OTTAWA-CARLETON FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM - Phase 1****ARBORICULTURAL AND FORESTRY LIFE CYCLE MANAGEMENT (\$350,000)**

- Arboricultural contracts that will finalize the cleanup of tree related hazards along road allowances and at Regional facilities and for long-term plant health care.
- Contracts for forestry cleanup and management operations in the Agreement Forest and in urban woodlots.

**DEVELOPMENT OF A 20 YEAR COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN (\$100,000)**

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- Implementation of a systemic tree inventory and evaluation program to identify and assess risk management issues.
- To set long-term directions for management support policy and procedures and tree by-laws as identified in the Official Plan.

**DEVELOPMENT OF A TREE RESTORATION PROGRAM (\$550,000)****Rural Community Forest Restoration Project**

A self-directed program to assist community associations and interest groups in rural Ottawa-Carleton to restore their cultural landscapes lost due to the Ice Storm.

**“Urban Tree Island” (UTI) Program - Core Area**

Trees planted on private property adjacent to Regional road allowances, where the property owner agrees to maintain the tree. This program, where trees are placed in areas with greenspace of sufficient size to ensure their survival over the long-term, is identified in the Region’s Greening Guidelines for Regional Roads.

**“UnderCover in Ottawa-Carleton” Tree Program**

A homeowner program to restore the forest cover in Ottawa-Carleton by providing a 1 inch caliper tree that the property owner can plant on their property. Modelled after the existing Urban Tree Island Program, the Region provides the tree and the property owner commits to ensuring its establishment and maintenance.

Community Environmental Projects Grants Program (CEPGP)

Provision of funding and technical assistance to referrals from CEPGP

Centretown Community Association (referral from June 1998 CEPGP Allocations Panel) to plant trees on school properties.

Community Partnership Tree Planting Projects

Projects identified through the office of the Regional Forester where commitment to assist with in-kind resources is provided by adjacent communities and interest groups.

Tree Planting Along The Queensway	(Centretown Community Association)
Planting Nut Trees On Lemieux Island	(Friends of Lemieux Island)
Bronson Ave. Landscaping Project	(South Ottawa Community Association)
1999 Spring Tree Planting Program	(Scouts Canada)

Millennium Tree Island Restoration Project

A tree planting project currently identified, for potential as a Regional Millennium initiative, that mirrors the province of Ontario's *Crown Timber Act* of 1848 which provided incentives to land-owners who planted trees along public roadways. Many of the sugar maples planted from that time period have reached the end of their life span, with some lost as a direct result of the Ice Storm.

Tree Transplanting Projects

Forestry operation that will transplant trees in reforestation areas, i.e. Hunt Club Road, R.O. Pickard Environmental Centre, following forest management principles, to other Regional sites to the maximize the growth of the Green Asset inventory.

Region of Ottawa-Carleton Greening Program

Continuation of existing partnerships with area municipalities and other agencies, i.e. NCC.