

Development application guidelines

Tree vegetation study and tree protection plan

What is the purpose of this?

A *tree vegetation study (Arborist Report)* and *tree protection plan* are technical reports and plans that present detailed information on tree vegetation that is relevant to the development proposal.

Who should prepare this?

The studies must be completed by a Qualified Tree Consultant who is either:

- a full member of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA)
- a full member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA)
- a full member of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)

When is this required?

A *tree vegetation study and tree protection plan* may be required as part of the following applications:

- Official Plan Amendment
- Zoning By-law Amendment
- Draft Plan of Subdivision or Condominium
- Site Plan Control
- Site Alteration Permit
- Consent Applications

Why do we need this?

A *tree vegetation study and tree protection plan* are required to:

- Demonstrate conformity to any applicable by-laws or Official Plan policies
- Provide staff with a basis on which to assess the proposed application with regard to 1) tree preservation/protection issues and 2) the overall contribution to the urban forest canopy cover

How should this be prepared?

A *tree vegetation study* should contain:

- a brief overview of the study area and proposed development
- the purpose of the study
- site location, project name, address, applicant and owner's contact information, consultants contact information and signature with appropriate stamp, and application number (ex. site plan no.), and reference to the Tree Protection Plan:
- the assignment of the professional and his/her obligation throughout the entire project period
- a description of the site vegetation and their condition at the time of inspection
- a photo log of the site showing site conditions
- a tree inventory (and other vegetation species as required on a case-by-case basis) identifying all existing trees, their species, size and condition, tree ownership, and those trees proposed to be removed or retained
- a discussion of the rationale for proposed tree removal and retention
- information to address tree protection measures for all retained tree(s)
- a detailed tree protection methodology section to address those particular conditions where the proposed development will impact on the health and structural integrity of the tree(s)

- recommendations and methods for the containment and removal of any invasive species found
- identification of any potential and imminent hazard tree(s)
- tree appraisals for municipal trees

A **tree protection plan** should contain:

- a large format plan to an engineering scale visually displaying the information presented in the tree study and other relevant information within the report including tree numbers, tree protection zone (TPZ) limits, diagram of tree protection barrier type, Qualified Tree Consultant’s contact information, location of topsoil stockpiles, and the construction storage and staging areas including the construction access route. Information on the plan shall also include the limits of vegetated communities as staked by the planning authority.
- The Site Servicing and Grading Plan that may accompany some applications must include all inventoried trees as well as the TPZ limits for the retained trees. The Servicing Plan must indicate all works to be completed beyond the minimum TPZ limit while the Grading Plan is to show all proposed grades to be outside the TPZ of these trees.

What else should we know?

Applicants should be aware of the regional and local tree bylaws, policies, procedures, and guidelines listed in this document, which are invaluable to understanding content requirements in any *tree vegetation study report and tree protection plan*.

What other resources are available?

Town of Oakville – Private Tree Protection By-law 2017-038 amended as per By-law 2022-031:

<https://www.oakville.ca/town-hall/by-laws-enforcement/popular-by-laws/private-tree-protection/>

Town of Oakville – General policies and by-laws:

<https://www.oakville.ca/home-environment/trees-woodlands/tree-protection-removal/>

Town of Oakville -Urban Forest Studies and Management:

<https://www.oakville.ca/home-environment/trees-woodlands/urban-forest-studies-management/>

Town of Oakville- North Oakville Urban Forest Strategic Management Plan:

<https://www.oakville.ca/getmedia/b04f06de-871b-4d56-82ae-419de57317a7/forestry-north-oakville-urban-forest-strategic-management.pdf>

Halton Region - Tree By-law 121-05:

<https://www.halton.ca/The-Region/Explore-and-Enjoy-Halton/Regional-Forests/Tree-By-Law>

Last Updated November 2023