



## City of Swift Current Statement of Policy

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<b>Policy Title:</b>	Boulevard Tree Removal	<b>Policy No. O – 011.0</b>
<b>Date of Adoption:</b>	March 2, 2026	<b>Resolution No. 56 - 2026</b>
<b>Date of Amendment:</b>		<b>Resolution No.</b>
<b>Supporting Department:</b>	Community Services	<b>Review Date:</b> March 2, 2031
<b>Issued by:</b>	Nicole Spenst, General Manager of Community Services	
<b>Approved by:</b>	City Council/ Chief Administrative Officer	

### 1. POLICY

1.1. This Policy outlines the purpose of the City of Swift Current’s Urban Forest and the policy and procedures for planting and removal of boulevard trees within the Urban Forest.

### 2. PURPOSE

2.1. The purpose of this Policy is to protect and enhance the Urban Forest in the City of Swift Current by recognizing the significant benefits such as:

#### Environmental Benefits

- **Improved Air Quality:** Trees filter pollutants and produce oxygen, reducing smog and improving overall air quality.
- **Climate Regulation:** Urban forests mitigate the urban heat island effect by providing shade and cooling the air.
- **Carbon Sequestration:** Trees absorb carbon dioxide, helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Stormwater Management:** Tree canopies and root systems reduce runoff, decreasing the risk of flooding and erosion.

#### Social & Health Benefits

- **Enhanced Well-being:** Green spaces support mental health, reduce stress, and encourage physical activity.
- **Community Building:** Urban forests create inviting public spaces that foster social interaction and community pride.
- **Noise Reduction:** Tree cover helps buffer urban noise, creating more peaceful neighborhoods.

### Economic Benefits

- Energy Savings: Strategically placed trees lower energy costs by shading buildings and reducing air conditioning use.
- Increased Property Values: Properties near well-maintained green spaces typically see higher market values.
- Attracting Investment: Green infrastructure can attract businesses and residents, contributing to economic growth.

### Biodiversity & Habitat

- Wildlife Support: Urban forests provide essential habitats for birds, pollinators, and other wildlife.
- Ecological Resilience: Diverse urban plantings strengthen ecosystem health and adaptability.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

3.1. **Boulevard** means the strip of City owned property between the property line and the street curb.

3.2. **Boulevard Tree(s)** means trees planted within the public right-of-way, typically between the sidewalk and the street, known as the boulevard or verge. These are maintained by municipalities or in partnership with Property Owners.

3.3. **Bylaw** means any bylaw on record established and passed by City Council.

3.4. **City** means the municipal corporation of the City of Swift Current.

3.5. **Chief Administrative Officer/CAO** means the person appointed as the administrative head of the City of Swift Current pursuant to section 84 of *The Cities Act* and includes the duly authorized representative or designate of such person.

3.6. **City Clerk** means the person appointed as City Clerk pursuant to section 85 of *The Cities Act* and includes the duly authorized representative or designate of such person.

3.7. **Council** means Council for the City of Swift Current, elected pursuant to the provisions of *The Local Government Elections Act, 2015*, as the governing body of the municipality.

3.8. **D.B.C.** means Downtown Business Core.

3.9. **Policy** means any policy on record established by City Council or Administration.

3.10. **Property Owner(s)** means the individual(s) or entity that holds legal title to the property.

3.11. **Tree(s)** means a perennial plant with an elongated stem or trunk, supporting branches and leaves. Most trees have a single woody stem and a defined canopy.

3.12. **Urban Forest** means a network of trees, vegetation, and green spaces within and around urban areas. It includes trees along streets, in parks, yards, natural areas, and green infrastructure on both public and private land.

#### **4. SCOPE**

4.1. This Policy resides within the Community Services Department and shall be led by the Community Services Department.

4.2. This Policy will be in effect for all City Property and Urban Forest areas and will apply to all Property Owners.

#### **5. RESPONSIBILITY**

5.1. The CAO and/or the City Clerk shall be responsible for the approval of the Boulevard Tree Removal Policy and any proposed amendments.

5.2. The General Manager of Community Services, or their designate(s) shall be responsible for:

- a) establishment, amendment and administration of the Policy;
- b) maintaining a record of all City owned trees;
- c) review and approval of Boulevard Tree Removal Requests; and
- d) advising the CAO of breaches of the policy.

#### **6. POLICY**

6.1. This policy does not apply to Trees planted in sidewalks in the D.B.C.

6.2. This policy does apply to Trees on City-owned property, which is deemed to be a boulevard, by the Community Services Department.

6.3. No one other than the City shall plant a Tree on City property including boulevards.

6.4. A Boulevard Tree will be removed at the City's expense:

- a) if is dead, diseased or deemed to be a hazard based on an assessment by the Community Services Department (unless it is suspected that the Tree was tampered with by the Property Owner);
- b) if it is damaged, by a vehicle or natural causes, and is not expected to recover; and/or
- c) if it is causing chronic sewer blockage and the Public Works Department, in consultation with the Community Services Department, establish that no other alternative exists (refer to "Roots in Sewer Service Policy").

6.5. A Boulevard Tree will not be removed:

- a) if it is part of a block planting of Trees of similar size and species that were planted by the City, with the following exception:

If a new house, or garage, construction requires the removal of such Tree and there are no alternatives, the Tree may be removed at the Property Owner's expense. In this case a fee of \$300 will be charged for the planting, by the City, of a new tree, on the boulevard or in a City Park.

- b) if it seems to be causing occasional sewer blockage (refer to "Roots in Sewer Service Policy").

6.6. A Boulevard Tree or Tree, not originally planted by the City, may be removed at the Property Owner's expense:

- a) for opening up views, pest infestations, suckers or surface roots. Remedial action may improve these conditions and may be undertaken by the City at the City's expense;
- b) because of leaf or seed production;
- c) if new construction requires removal (after all alternatives have been considered); and/or
- d) if a number of conditions prevail which indicate that the tree is a problem, and the Community Services Department authorizes removal.

6.7. A poplar tree which produces "cotton" and is considered to be a nuisance may be removed at the request of the Property Owner, for a fee of \$1,500.

6.8. The City will replace a Boulevard Tree if the original Tree was planted by the City and said Tree was removed due to disease and/or was a hazard to the public or Property Owner. In the event of replacement of a Tree:

- a) the Tree genus and species will be selected from an approved list provided by the City after consultation with City Staff;
- b) the City will guarantee the Tree for one (1) full year after planting; and
- c) the planting location must not impede any utilities and therefore can be moved from where the original Tree was planted.

6.9. The City will not replace Trees that have been damaged intentionally or were removed at the request of the Property Owner or a past Property Owner.

6.10. All fees and charges outlined in this Policy, including the planting fee (6.5(a)), poplar removal fee (6.7), and the cost-shared removal fee (7.2(c)), shall be subject to review on or before the designated Review Date of this Policy. If the Policy is not formally reviewed, amended or re-approved by City Council by the Review Date, all current rates and fees will increase by a fixed percentage, namely 10%, effective January 1<sup>st</sup> every five (5) years.

**7. PROCEDURE**

7.1. For the removal of a Boulevard Tree at the Property Owner’s expense:

- a) a Boulevard Tree Removal Request form must be completed by the Property Owner requesting the removal and submitted to the Community Services Department for approval. When approved, the request becomes a permit;
- b) the Property Owner is responsible for having the Tree removed within 30 days of the date approval; and
- c) if a Tree is removed without a Boulevard Tree Removal Permit, the Property Owner will be issued a Bylaw Violation Notice, pursuant to The Recreational Facilities and Parks Bylaw No. 19 – 1997.

7.2. For the removal of a Boulevard Tree on a cost shared basis:

- a) a Boulevard Tree Removal Request form must be completed by the Property Owner requesting the removal and submitted to the Community Services Department for approval;
- b) the City will arrange to have the Tree removed after the leaves have dropped in the fall. The Property Owner will be notified when the Tree will be removed;
- c) the Property Owner must pay the fee of \$500 before the Tree is removed; and
- d) the City will arrange for the removal of the stump, after the stump has been treated, to minimize the growth of shoots from the Tree root system.

**8. COMPLIANCE, PERMIT REVOCATION, AND OFFENSES AND PENALTIES**

8.1. If a Property Owner is found to be operating in violation of this Policy or any City Bylaw(s), the City may take whatever action or measures deemed necessary to remedy the contravention including, but not limited to, serving any applicable Violation Notice as stated therein.

**9. PREVIOUS POLICIES**

9.1. This Policy shall supersede and replace all previous policies of the same name or nature.

<b>Approval:</b>  <i>“Kyle Attanasio”</i>  _____	  <i>March 3, 2026</i>  _____
<b>Chief Administration Officer (CAO)</b>	<b>Date</b>