

POLICY NO.	POL-2503	DEPARTMENT	Public Works
TITLE	Tree Management Policy		
DATE ADOPTED	September 2, 2025		
DATE AMENDED			

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent and legally defensible approach to the management and maintenance of trees located on municipal public lands in the Village of Lions Bay. This policy aims to promote public safety, protect municipal infrastructure, preserve the ecological and aesthetic value of the urban forest, and minimize legal liability through a strategic, risk-based framework.

2.0 Policy Statement

The Village of Lions Bay recognizes that trees on municipal lands contribute significantly to the character, health, and environment of the community. However, the Village also recognizes that trees may present risks to public safety and property if not appropriately managed. This policy sets out a risk management approach to tree maintenance that aligns with municipal insurance best practices and legal standards, including the principle of policy defense.

All tree management activities shall be conducted within the scope of this policy, subject to available financial and human resources. Where resources are limited, the Village will prioritize tree management actions based on assessed risk to public safety and municipal infrastructure.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to all trees located on municipal public lands, including but not limited to:

- i) Road rights-of-way;
- ii) Parks, trails, and recreational areas;
- iii) Municipal facilities and adjacent lands.

This policy does not apply to trees located on private property or lands not owned or under the legal jurisdiction the Village.

4.0 Definitions

- i) **Hazard Tree:** A tree assessed by a qualified individual as having a structural defect that makes it likely to fail and cause damage to property or injury to people or in proximity to high risk targets.
- ii) **Qualified Individual:** An arborist certified by the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), a forestry professional, or other appropriately trained and experienced person.

- iii) **Risk Management:** The identification, evaluation, and prioritization of risks followed by the application of resources to monitor, control, and mitigate adverse impacts.

5.0 Responsibilities

- i) **Council** shall approve this policy and ensure it is reviewed periodically.
- ii) **Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)** shall oversee implementation of the policy.
- iii) **Public Works Staff** shall carry out tree inspections, maintenance, and removal activities in accordance with this policy and under the direction of the CAO.

6.0 Tree Management Principles

6.1 Inspection and Risk Assessment

The Village will conduct inspections of municipal trees in the following circumstances:

- i) **Routine Inspections:** Targeted inspections of high-use areas (e.g., parks, roadsides, playgrounds) at a frequency determined by risk level and operational capacity.
- ii) **Reactive Inspections:** Prompt inspections in response to public complaints, reports of damage, or observable risk indicators (e.g., leaning trees, dead limbs).
- iii) **Post-Event Inspections:** Inspections following significant weather events (e.g., windstorms, heavy snow) to identify damage or hazard conditions.

Inspections will be documented and may result in one or more of the following actions:

- No action required;
- Pruning or other maintenance work;
- Monitoring over time;
- Removal of hazard trees.

6.2 Tree Maintenance

Maintenance activities may include:

- Pruning for health, safety, and infrastructure clearance;
- Removal of dead, dying, diseased, or hazardous trees;
- Stump removal, if necessary for safety or replanting;
- Planting of replacement trees where appropriate and feasible.

6.3 Risk Prioritization

Given finite resources, the Village will prioritize tree maintenance activities based on the following risk factors:

- i) Proximity to high-use public areas or infrastructure;
- ii) Known defects or species susceptibility to failure;
- iii) History of incidents or complaints;
- iv) Recommendations from qualified individuals.

6.4 Documentation and Record Keeping

All inspections, maintenance activities, and public complaints related to tree management will be documented and retained in accordance with the Village's records management policies.

Documentation shall include:

- i) Date and nature of inspection or report;
- ii) Findings and risk assessment outcomes;
- iii) Actions taken and dates of completion;
- iv) Names of personnel involved.

Certified a true copy of Policy No. POL-2503: Tree Management Policy, adopted by September 2, 2025.



Corporate Officer