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Indian Head Urban Tree Policy

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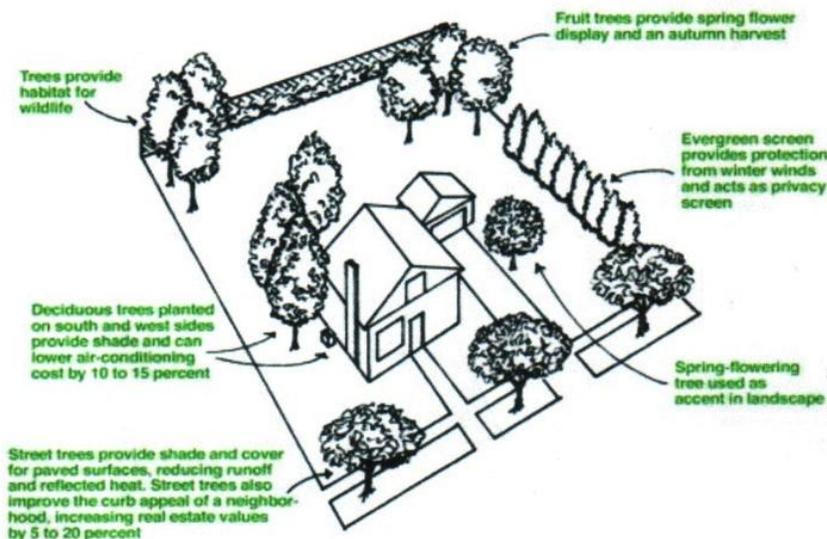
1.0 PURPOSE

The Town of Indian Head Urban Tree Policy exists so that Citizens of Indian Head enjoy a safe, attractive, vibrant and sustainable community for a reasonable investment. The Town of Indian Head believes that trees are an asset, and enhance the quality of life in our community. To ensure the Urban Forest is properly maintained as an asset, an effective and efficient Urban Forestry Management Program will be implemented.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Urban Forestry is the generally accepted reference being used when dealing with the maintenance and care of the trees and shrubs that line our streets and beautify our parks.

A community's trees or its "urban forest" constitute a valuable but vulnerable component of the civic infrastructure. Not only do trees and shrubs provide shade, shelter, beauty, wildlife habitat and civic landmarks, they are also a statement of community pride and civic image. Trees are the "lungs of the earth" and help improve our air quality. Throughout North America, the health of urban forests is in decline. Very few communities plant more trees than they remove and the threats of disease, vandalism, microclimate and neglect continue to diminish the vitality of the urban forest. Renewed attention is needed to conserve this very important community asset. Preserving our urban forest will leave a legacy for future generations to benefit from in many ways. These are the same benefits residents of, and visitors to Indian Head receive today.



Most trees and shrubs in communities are planted to provide beauty or shade. These are two excellent reasons for their use. Plants also serve many other purposes, and it is often helpful to consider these other functions when selecting a tree or shrub for the landscape.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Improved Air Quality

Air quality can be improved through the use of trees, shrubs and turf. Leaves filter the air we breathe by removing dust and other pollutants such as ozone, nitrogen oxides, ammonia and sulfur dioxide particles. Rain then washes the pollutants to the ground. Leaves absorb carbon dioxide from the air to form carbohydrates that are used in the plant's structure and function.

Improved Water Quality and Erosion Impacts

As development increases, hard non-evaporative surfaces increase, which decreases the soil infiltration by ground water. The result is increased water volume, velocity and pollutant load from runoff. Tree canopies and root systems intercept, slow and reduce storm water runoff through normal tree functions, thus reducing the effects of flooding and erosion. This increases the amount of rainwater runoff that percolates into the soil, which in turn helps purify the water by removing nutrients and sediments and recharging aquifers.

Reduced Temperature and Energy Use

Trees reduce temperatures in summer by shading surfaces, dissipating heat through evaporation and blocking wind, which transfers heat from the ground. Trees can also block winter winds and reduce the wind chill factor, which reduces energy loss due to heat dissipation.

Noise Reduction and Visual Screening

Trees provide a calming environment by absorbing noise and improving aesthetics. They soften sound waves that attempt to pass through them and further dampen these sounds by adding sounds of their own. The "white noise" of leaves and branches in the wind and associated natural sounds, mask other man-made sounds. Trees can be used for screening undesirable and disturbing sight lines. They also reduce glare and filter out harmful UV rays.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

Planting

Plantings refer to any tree, shrub, bush or other plant material

Public Trees (Town owned)

All trees within the Urban Forest on property held by the Town of Indian Head are classed as public trees. Responsibilities will include reforestation, pruning, basal spraying and total inventory. All costs associated with these are the responsibility of the Town of Indian Head.

Private Trees (Residential or Commercial owned)

A tree/shrub that is located on the premises of a taxpayer's property is classified as a private tree. The Town does not have any trees planted in back lane area. Therefore, any trees overhanging the back lanes are privately owned. The property owner is responsible for any tree overhanging or interfering with the use of any street, lane, sidewalk or public property.

5.0 INDIAN HEAD URBAN FOREST INVENTORY

An inventory of public trees shall be created and maintained for the purposes of continuing up-to-date information on removals, new plantings, sewer root problems and a total inventory by species.

5.1 General

All trees planted in the Town of Indian Head should be of a species that are suited to this climatic zone. Wherever possible, species diversity should be considered in reforestation. *See Appendix A: Recommended Species for Planting*

5.2 Boulevards

Trees planted on the boulevard shall be of a species within the hardiness zone and suitable to the site. Fruit bearing trees are not allowed as boulevard trees to minimize “potential issues” with fruit on sidewalks. Other species that reduce visual sight lines need to be avoided. Careful consideration is needed in the selection process.

Residents are encouraged to maintain the boulevards in regards to cutting the grass watering any trees present. The town of Indian Head will be responsible for any pruning, removing and planting costs associated with public owned boulevards.

See Appendix A: Recommended Species for Planting

5.3 Park Areas

Where possible, trees will be planted in parks to allow for the urban forest to grow. The trees/shrubs should be planted in groupings to compliment each other and other species. Consideration of respective growth habits must be considered when choosing the trees to be planted at any particular site and preparation of landscape designs must be made prior to commencement of work. The Town of Indian Head has full control over all species planted in park areas.

6.0 TREE PLANTING (Example: Boulevards)

Citizens are encouraged to plant trees on the frontages of Town property in residential areas to help enhance their neighborhood. Often the purpose is to offer additional protection from prevailing winds and privacy to their own yards. However, application for approval must be made to the Town Administrator with written approval required prior to commencement of planting.

Steps to be taken for approval to plant on town-owned land:

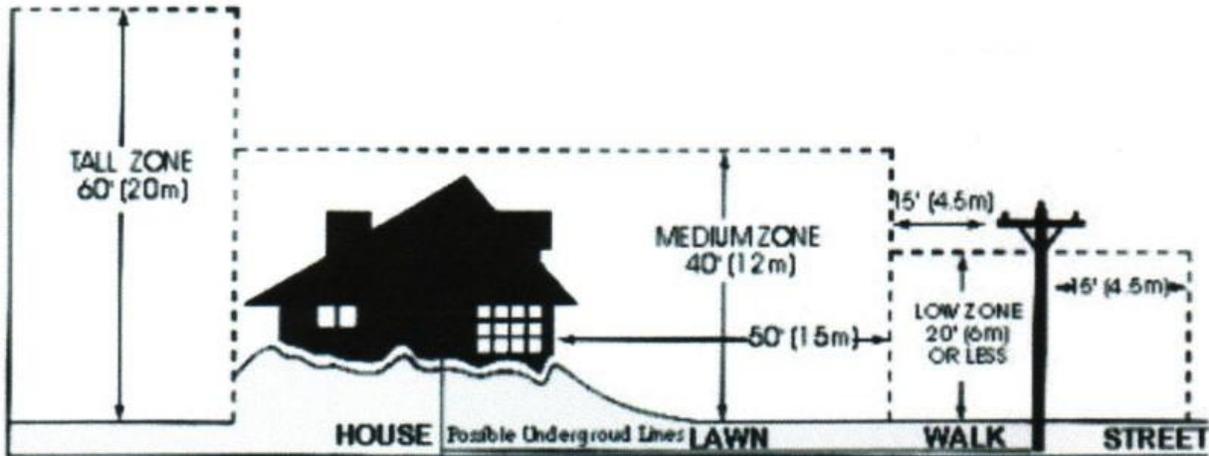
1. Application must be made in writing to the Town Administrator.
2. All trees planted must conform to the criteria placed on the planting of trees as determined by this policy.
3. Final placement of the trees will be at the discretion of the Town with staking done to assist the homeowner in best location of new trees.
4. Failure to comply could result in some or all of the trees planted being removed from the property on which they are located with the cost being the sole responsibility of the property owner.

See Appendix A: Recommended Species for Planting

6.1 Appropriate Planting Site

When planning what type of tree to plant, remember to look up and look down to determine where the tree will be located in relation to overhead and underground utility lines.

This illustration indicates approximately where trees should be planted in relation to utility lines.



Tall Zone

Trees that grow up to 60 feet (20 meters) can be used in the area marked as tall zone. Consider you neighbor's view or their existing flowerbeds and trees when selecting trees in this area. Plant trees at least 35 feet (11 meters) away from the house for proper root development and to minimize damage to the building. These large-growing trees are also recommended for streets without overhead restrictions. Street planting sites must also have wide planting area or medians [great than 8 feet (3 meters)] that allow for a large root system, trunk diameter, and root flare. Large trees are recommended for parks, meadows, or other open areas where their large size will not be restricted, cause damage or become a liability.

Medium Zone

Trees that grow up to 40 feet (12 meters) can be used in the medium zone. Appropriate soil spaces are wide areas [4 to 8 feet (1 to 3 meters) wide], large planting squares [8 feet (3 meters) square], and other open areas of similar size or larger.

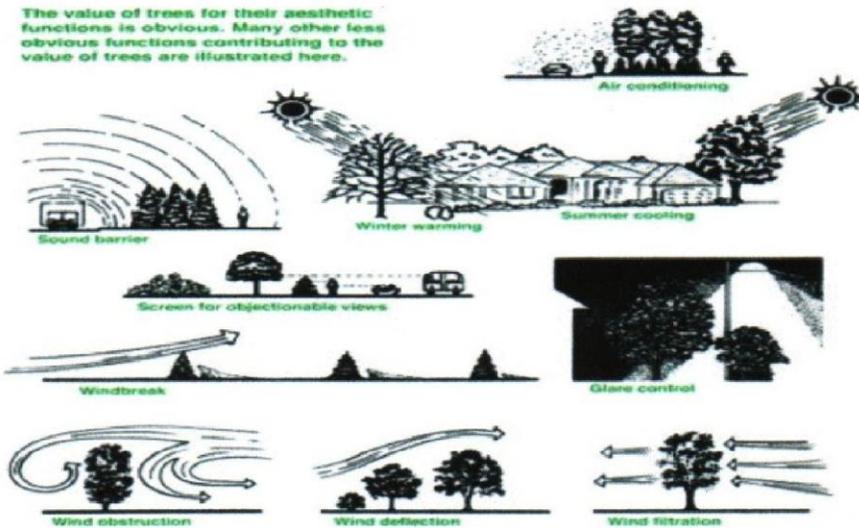
Low Zone

This zone extends 15 feet (4.5 meters) on both sides of the wires. Trees with a mature height of less than 20 feet (6 meters) may be planted anywhere within this zone. Such trees are also recommended when the growing space is limited. These trees are appropriate as well for narrow planting areas [less than 4 feet (1 meter) wide]; planting square or circles surrounded by concrete; large, raised planting containers; or other locations where underground space for roots will not support tall- or medium-zone trees.

Right Tree – Right Place!

Planning before planting can help ensure that the right tree is planted in the right place. Proper tree selection and placement enhance your property value and prevent costly maintenance trimming and damage to your home.

The value of trees for their aesthetic functions is obvious. Many other less obvious functions contributing to the value of trees are illustrated here.



Trees and other living plants are valuable.

Trees beautify our surroundings and purify our air. However, many people don't realize that plants have a dollar value of their own that can be measured by competent plant appraisers.

7.0 TREE PRUNING

7.1 Boulevard Tree Pruning

Pruning will be undertaken by the Town of Indian Head in order to keep the Urban Forest in the best possible condition as established by good arboriculture standards. All costs associated with pruning on Town property will be covered by the Town of Indian Head. Pruning on private properties is the responsibility of the homeowner, which includes all associated costs.

Pruning Heights:

Boulevard trees adjacent to sidewalks will be pruned to the below minimum height from the ground to allow for ease of pedestrian access and access for maintenance equipment.

Street side: 13 feet

Sidewalk side: 8 feet

7.2 Tree Pruning in Parks

This service will be completed by the Town of Indian Head to maintain trees located in the parks to good arboriculture standards.

7.3 Back Alley Pruning

The purpose of back alleys and lanes is that they act as a right of way for public utilities and back yard access. All trees overhanging in the back lane area are classed as private trees. Therefore, all overhanging back alley trees are the responsibility of the homeowner.

8.0 REQUESTS FOR TREE REMOVAL ON TOWN LAND

Applications for removal shall be made in writing to the Town of Indian Head Administrator. Property owners wishing tree removal shall be required to contact the Town. This policy also applies to any and all construction, curb and/or repair work that would require the removal of any tree on Town property.

1. Property owner applies in writing for proposed tree removal to the Town
2. The Town will establish whether the tree is located on public or private property.
3. If the tree is situated on private property:
 - a.) The tree is considered the sole responsibility of the property owner. Any labor or costs associated with the removal will be the sole responsibility of the property owner. *Please note: if the tree is an elm refer to section 14.0*
4. If the tree is situated on Town land:
 - a.) If the tree is healthy, all viable options to save the tree will be discussed with the property owner and will be done on a case-by-case basis.

9.0 SEWER ROOTS

Tree roots are attracted to moisture and in the past sewer lines were made with materials that tree roots could penetrate. Tree roots of some species can travel a significant distance to find moisture and therefore it is very difficult to find the tree that is the cause of the sewer issue. It may not be the most obvious tree and thus it is difficult to pinpoint if there are a number of trees in the area. Removing one tree will not prevent this from occurring again in the future as other tree roots will also enter the system. The Town currently uses piping materials that are impervious and therefore root problems in these lines rarely occur.

Removing trees does not solve this problem and diminishes the Urban Forest; therefore the Town of Indian Head will always consider removals as the last option in all cases.

10.0 REFORESTATION

The purpose of reforestation is to replace trees and supplement the existing forest population with additional trees where the population is low. Where possible, the Town of Indian Head will endeavor to maintain a positive tree planting to removal ratio.

11.0 WATER PROGRAM

Proper watering is the most important factor for successful planting of trees and shrubs. To ensure adequate watering, newly planted trees will be watered a minimum of 7 times per year in the first year. In the second year, trees will be watered a minimum of 5 times a year. The minimum watering amounts depend on precipitation and mulching. Additional watering may or may not be required.

11.1 Street Trees

Where street trees are added or replaced on boulevards, efforts will be made to involve the homeowner as a partner in the tree planting. When planting new trees, Town crews will water trees at time of planting and encourage the homeowners to water these trees on a regular schedule after the planting.

11.2 Park Trees

Newly planted park trees will have a scheduled water maintenance program to ensure the success of the tree. The minimum seven times in the first year and five times in the second year program would apply.

12.0 DESTRUCTION AND USE OF CHEMICALS

No person shall apply or administer in any form any chemical that would cause death to any tree held by the Town of Indian Head.

No person shall cut, prune or alter the appearance of any publicly owned tree, which would cause death or put the tree at risk.

If a person is found to have improperly pruned, cut or alter a public tree, that person will be held responsible for the cost of repair, replacement or maintenance of the tree and will include a reforestation penalty.

13.0 COMPENSATION FOR DAMAGED TREES

The Town will endeavor to achieve compensation to the full value of any public tree(s) that are willfully damaged or become damaged as a result of an accident.

14.0 SASKATCHEWAN DUTCH ELM DISEASE REGULATIONS

Dutch elm disease (DED) is a deadly fungus that can kill an elm in as little as three weeks by clogging its water-conducting vessels. Once a tree is infected by DED it needs to be removed and disposed of properly by either burying it or burning it.

The Town of Indian Head is dedicated to keeping DED out of our community. Every year the Saskatchewan Dutch Elm Disease Association (SDEDA) implements a **pruning ban from April 1 – August 31**. The Municipal Inspector(s) will strongly enforce no pruning or removing of elms during this period.



“elm tree” means any tree or part of a tree, living or dead, of the *Ulmus* genus and its cultivars, including the American, Siberian and Japanese elm trees, and includes any elm tree in the form of fuel wood, nursery stock, lumber, woodchips, logs, branches or bark

Observe the annual pruning ban. Do not prune your elms between April 1st and August 31st. The Elm Bark Beetle that spreads the DED fungus is attracted to freshly cut elm and is most active during this period.

Don't use, store, or transport elm wood. It's illegal! One piece of elm firewood can carry over 1800 infested elm bark beetles. The DED regulations apply to all elms including Siberian & Manchurian elms.

Requests During Pruning Ban (April 1 – August 31):

Any requests for pruning and/or removing any elm trees during the pruning ban must provide written request to the Town of Indian Head Administrator. The request will then be forwarded to the Municipal Inspector(s) for authorization.

Pruning Fee: \$500.00

Pruning Without Authorization:

If pruning and or removing an elm tree occurs without written authorization from the Municipal Inspector(s) a penalty will occur. This is punishable under Saskatchewan Dutch Elm Disease Regulations and will be strictly enforced.

Fine: \$1,500.00

15.0 AUTHORITY

15.1 Administrative Authority

The Town of Indian Head Administrator will execute the authority over the Urban Forest and the administration of the Urban Forestry Management Program

Appeal Process

Appeals regarding decisions made through this policy must be made in writing to the Town of Indian Head Administrator

- Failing satisfactory response from the Administrator, an appeal may be made to the Town Council.

15.2 Enforcement:

1.) Enforcement Officer

The Enforcement Officer (designated by Town) shall enforce the requirements of the municipality as related to the Town of Indian Head Urban Tree Policy.

Given the value of the Urban Forest to our Community, removals will always be considered the last option in all cases.

16.0 TREE VARIETIES NOT RECOMMENDED OR ALLOWED IN ANY SPACE

This applies to both private and Town owned land unless otherwise specified.

Elm Tree

All elms, which include all varieties (Examples: Manchurian, American, Japanese or Siberian) The American Elm is probably the best available species for boulevard planting, however, given the current approach and threat of Dutch Elm Disease, it is not recommended.

Private Yards: No general public may plant this tree privately.

Public Land: The Town may plant this variety if the Dutch Elm Disease monitoring continues in Indian Head on all Town owned trees.

Cotton Wood

Cotton Wood trees have been a nuisance to residents and cause problems with allergies and asthma due to the cotton-like substance they lose. No planting of cotton producing varieties is permitted in both residential (private) and Town owned areas.

Black Poplar (Russian)

These trees are not recommended due to the sap and sharp-pointed buds they give off. No planting in both residential (private) and Town owned areas.

APPENDIX A –

Recommended Species for Planting – Please note that the recommended species for private yards are a small list of suggestions only and many other varieties are suitable and allowed.

BOULEVARDS – (Town Owned Property)

Tree Species	Scientific Name	Height	Description
Amur Maple	Acer ginnala	15-20 feet	Smallish, „oriental’ – looking tree having dense foliage and spreading habit. Very tough. Vivid scarlet autumn color makes this an excellent ornamental planting
Black Ash	Fraxinus nigra	30-60 feet	Has a tall trunk with soft ash-gray bark and favors wet soil.
Green Ash	Fraxinus pennsylvanica	50-60 feet	Glossy, green, summer foliage turns yellow in fall, but drop too quickly to provide effective color. Green Ash develops a broad crown with age.
Ivory Silk Tree Lilac	Syringa reticulata	20 feet	A heavily flowering tree, covered by large plumes of small white flowers and ark green leaves.
Manchurian Ash	Fraxinus manshurica	30-50 feet	Produces a very dense, oval to rounded, shapely crown. One-year twigs are golden colored. Lacy-textured foliage.
Silver Maple	Acer saccharinum	50 feet	Summer foliage is green on top and silvery underneath. Suggested uses for this plant include shade tree.
Swedish Aspen	Populus Tremula „Erecta’ Narrow	30-36 feet	Has narrow columnar growth habits, orange-yellow fall color, a non-invasive root system and is cottonless. Suited for small yards.
Basswood	Tilia americana	40 feet	Larger tree with big leaves, needs moisture.

*** No fruit Trees/ Evergreens to be planted on boulevards.**

PRIVATE YARDS/ OPEN SPACES/ PARKS

Tree Species	Scientific Name	Height	Description
Acute Willow	Salix acutifolia Wild	30 feet	Shiny dark green leaves with a wide-spreading crown and trunk tends to have multiple stems.
Amur Cherry (Goldrush)	Prunus Maaackii	30 feet	Has bronze, papery, peeling bark. It can be single or multi-stemmed. The White flowers are attractive, formal in drooping dense clusters, and followed by dark chokecherry-like fruit.
Amur Cork tree	Phellodendron amurense	40 feet	The Amur Cork tree has corky, ridged bark with orange-yellow branchlets. Leaves are dark green and glossy and somewhat aromatic.
Assiniboine Poplar	Populus x „Assiniboine’	60 feet	A fast growing and prairie hardy poplar with no cotton or fuzz.
Bur Oak	Quercus macroarpa Michx	50-65 feet	Drought tolerant; moderately shade tolerant. It is a small tree with rounded crown supported by crooked and gnarled branches.
Littleleaf Linden	Tilia cordata	35 feet	Medium sized tree native to Europe, with a strikingly dense pyramidal to rounded crown. Desirable specimen tree in the landscape. The flowers are highly fragrant and attractive to bees.
Hawthorn	Crataegus	10-12 feet	The glossy foliage turns a brilliant orange-scarlet in fall and the small crabapple-like fruit persists into winter.
Japanese Tree Lilac	Syringa amurensis japonica	20 feet	The Japanese Tree Lilac is the largest of the lilacs having large creamy white flower clusters. The leaves are dark green and have grayish undersides and yellow fall colour.

Tree Species	Scientific Name	Height	Description
Laurel Leaf Willow	Salix pentandra	26-50 feet	A large, rounded tree with glossy green leaves and furrowed bark.
Northern Blaze white Ash	Fraxinus americana ,,Jeffnor'	40-50 feet	Dark green foliage turns purple in fall. The growth habit is an upright oval shape during the juvenile stage, developing into an open, round-topped crown at maturity. New twig growth is dark purple. Fall color in shades of maroon.
Prairie Horizon Manchurian Alder	Alnus hisuta ,Harbin'	30 feet	It is a rapid-growing, medium-sized tree with dark green leaves. The amazing bark is gray and almost beech-like.
Sabre Aspen	Populus grandidentata ,,Durman'	40 feet	Attractive coarsely toothed green leaves that emerge as a velvety purple/red color, clear, smooth bark and an upright crown form.
Thunderchild Flowering Crabapple	Malus	15-40 feet	,,Thunderchild' produces single, pale pink buds, opening to white flowers followed by dark red to purple fruit on a compact, upright, spreading, broad to oval rounded tree.
Swiss Stone Pine	Pinus cembra	25-35 feet	This attractive, slow growing, full-to-the-base pine maintains a perfect "Christmas tree shape" if grown in full sunlight.