

SER-001-008

Strathcona County
Municipal Policy Handbook

Rural Roadside Backsloping & Shelterbelt

Date Approved by Council: 06/25/91; 12/12/2006

Resolution No: 565/91; 826/2006

Lead Role: Chief Commissioner

Replaces: n/a

Last Review Date: December 12, 2006

Next Review Date: 12/2009

Administrative Responsibility: Transportation and Agriculture Services

Policy Statement

Strathcona County shall promote soil conservation practices through a backsloping procedure which includes the planting of field shelterbelts.

Procedures

OBJECTIVES:

Strathcona County shall have in place a formal procedure to encourage soil conservation practices in the municipality through the planting of field shelterbelts in conjunction with any road construction or rural roadside backsloping program, upon support and written permission of the landowner.

1.0 GENERAL

The Agricultural Service Board through the Transportation and Agriculture Services department is encouraging soil conservation practices throughout the municipality. One of the methods of soil conservation is the planting of field shelterbelts to reduce wind erosion.

Trees growing adjacent to roads can lead to snow drifting and increased problems with wildlife and vehicular traffic. By planting field shelterbelts at least 30 metres from property lines these problems are reduced and the positive effects of field shelterbelts can be realized.

Given the benefits of backsloping to the landowner, and the benefits of a properly managed field shelterbelt, it would be encouraged to incorporate a field shelterbelt into the rural road construction and roadside backsloping programs; subject to funding availability.

2.0 DEFINITIONS:

2.1 "landowner" a person who is registered under the Land Titles Act.

2.2 "field shelterbelt" a planting of trees on agricultural land for soil conservation, as opposed to those plantings around homesteads for beautification or wind protection.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES:

3.1 TRANSPORTATION AND AGRICULTURE SERVICES:

- 3.1.1** Provide resources for development of the backsloping component of the project including but not restricted to:
 - a) brush removal and piling of brush;
 - b) stripping and spreading of topsoil and grading of backslope;
 - c) utility locates and relocation, if necessary.
- 3.1.2** Prioritize locations upon receipt of application from a landowner or identification of potential locations by County staff.
- 3.1.3** Design, species recommendation and planting of shelterbelt.
- 3.1.4** Work with the landowner to order the required number and variety of trees prior to November for planting in May of the following year.
- 3.1.5** Provide a tree planter and one man.
- 3.1.6** Maintenance of shelterbelt, including replacement of dead trees and weed control for first three years.
- 3.1.7** Water the trees as required during the year of planting.

3.2 LANDOWNER:

- 3.2.1** Removal of fence, and replacement of fence if desired at landowners sole cost.
- 3.2.2** Removal of brush piles, if applicable.
- 3.2.3** Removal of roots, rocks, etc. prior to reclamation of backslope.
- 3.2.4** Order trees through Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration shelterbelt program.
- 3.2.5** Supply a tractor and two men for the actual planting of the shelterbelt.
- 3.2.6** Protection of shelterbelt from livestock.
- 3.2.7** Prepare seedbed for shelterbelt.
- 3.2.8** Watering as required after the first year of planting.
- 3.2.9** Maintain shelterbelt after three year establishment period.

4.0 PRIORITY RANKING:

Rural backsloping/shelterbelt planting projects will be prioritized using the following criteria:

- 4.1** Agriculture land which is subject to wind erosion.
- 4.2** Agriculture land which is typically planted to annual crops.
- 4.3** Land parcels over 80 acres in area