

Conservation of Biological Diversity Policy and Policy Rescission**Report Purpose**

To seek Council approval for policy SER-009-041 Conservation of Biological Diversity in lieu of six policies to be rescinded.

Recommendations

1. THAT Policy SER-009-041 Conservation of Biological Diversity, as set out in Enclosure 1 of the March 3, 2020 Planning and Development report, be approved.
2. THAT the following policies be rescinded:
 - SER-009-031 Dedication of Conservation Easements,
 - SER-009-032 Biophysical Assessment,
 - SER-009-034 Tree Conservation During Development,
 - SER-009-035 Tree Management,
 - SER-009-036 Wetland Conservation, and
 - SER-012-010 Legacy Lands

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Goal 4 - Ensure effective stewardship of water, land, air and energy resources

Report

As per revised policy GOV-002-021 Mandatory Review of Bylaws and Policies and revised policy GOV-002-031 Municipal Policy Handbook Program, Legislative and Legal Services has been working with all Strathcona County departments to conduct a thorough policy review. The goals of the review include updating policies that are no longer current, identifying potential policy gaps, and eliminating or rescinding policies that are no longer required.

After a thorough review of the existing policies and procedures developed and implemented by Environmental Planning, it was determined that the processes directed by the existing policies are captured within the Municipal Development Plan and can therefore best be addressed through directives and accompanying procedures. It was recommended by Legislative and Legal Services that an overarching policy be developed that ties the previous policies (proposed directives) together into a more holistic conservation outcome. The proposed policy and proposed directives support the Environmental Sustainability Framework and Strategic Plan.

A new policy that encompasses the range of directives has been developed. The purpose of the new policy SER-009-041 Conservation of Biological Diversity is to guide conservation decision-making and act as a foundation for municipal actions to protect the air, water, land and biodiversity within Strathcona County.

The intent is to rescind six policies and approve as five directives with administrative updates. There were no changes to, or loss of, intent or process.

- Policy SER-009-031 Dedication of Conservation Easements was reviewed and amended to include Environmental Reserve Easements and translated into a directive (SER-009-031D Conservation and Environmental Reserve Easements).

- The two tree policies (SER-009-034 Tree Conservation During Development and SER-009-035 Tree Management) were compiled and translated into one directive (SER-009-042D Tree Conservation) with associated procedures.
- The remaining three policies (SER-009-032 Biophysical Assessment, SER-009-036 Wetland Conservation, and SER-012-010 Legacy Lands) were simply translated into directives (SER-009-032D Biophysical Assessment, SER-009-036D Wetland Conservation, and SER-012-010D Legacy Lands) with associated procedures.

Council and Committee History

January 28, 2020	Priorities Committee received a presentation on the Conservation Policy and Directive Updates
January 29, 2019	Priorities Committee received a presentation on the Conservation Policy and Directive Updates
April 28, 2015	Revised policy GOV-002-021 Mandatory Review of Bylaws and Policies Revised policy GOV-002-031 Municipal Policy Handbook Program

Other Impacts

Policy: GOV-002-021 Mandatory Review of Bylaws and Policies require that policies are reviewed on a three-year cycle.

Legislative/Legal: The *Municipal Government Act* s.5 sets out that a municipality has the duties that are imposed on it by enactments and those that the municipality imposes on itself as a matter of policy.

Interdepartmental: The policy review initiative involves all County departments.

Master Plan/Framework: n/a

Communication Plan

Legislative and Legal Services documents all rescinded policies and works with the various departments to ensure that the Municipal Policy Handbook is updated and that any webpage or external reference to the policy are updated appropriately.

Enclosure

1 SER-009-041 Conservation of Biological Diversity