

(August 2017)

Municipality of Whitehouse Checklist for Minimizing Construction Damage to Public Trees

BEFORE CONSTRUCTION

- ☐ **Identification:** Identify trees that need protection from construction damage or removal.

Guidelines for identifying trees that need protection:

- Favor trees in groups
- Favor species that will survive
- Favor trees in healthy and safe condition

- ☐ **Protection Zones:** Designate and construct the following zones around trees and tree groups.

Refer to *Public Tree Protection During Construction Policy* for details

- Tree Protection Zone using "Distance from Trees" based on tree diameters
- "Soil Compaction Prevention Zone" based on tree drip line (outermost circumference of a tree canopy where water drips from and onto the ground)

- ☐ **Tree Care:** Ensure health of protected trees with pruning and soil maintenance.

Pruning guidelines:

- Hire an insured arborist or tree trimmer; sample contracts available through State Urban Forester
- Prune during *dormant* season (e.g., limbing up)
- Follow American National Standard Institute pruning standards (ANSI A300)

Soil guidelines:

- Aerate soil in heavily compacted soils
- Keep soil at existing grade as much as possible

- ☐ **Pre-Construction Planning:** Ensure all materials and locations are prepared *before* work begins.

Preparation:

- Find a source for mulch, gravel, wood chips, snow fencing, planking to protect trees
- Have pruning tools available (e.g., pruning saws, loppers, soil saws)

Construction areas:

- Plan travel route for all construction vehicles that will cause least amount of soil compaction
- Designate storage area for heavy equipment and materials outside of tree drip line

Sidewalks: Avoid damaging tree roots

- Determine where newly installed sidewalks must be diverted
- Determine where sidewalks must be elevated/ramped over shallow roots

DURING CONSTRUCTION

DO: Stay outside Tree Protection Zones in order to reduce trunk and root damage, and soil compaction.

DO: Stay on travel routes to minimize soil compaction and crushing vital roots.

DO: Put mulch, gravel, wood chips, snow fencing, or planking on travel routes to distribute equipment weight.

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DON'T: Pile soil, materials, or equipment within Tree Protection Zone.

DON'T: Park cars, trucks, or equipment within Tree Protection Zone.

DON'T: Grade soil away from tree roots.

Root Severing: Sever as few tree roots as possible. If necessary, follow these guidelines:

- Use a soil saw instead of a backhoe to sever roots; backhoes damage roots by ripping and tearing them under the soil.
- Prune roots at the edge of a trench or hole thus allowing the tree to produce new feeder roots to compensate for root loss.
- Do not allow roots to dry out after they are cut; place damp burlap over exposed root ends.

AFTER CONSTRUCTION

- ☐ Remove compacted mulch, gravel, fencing, planking, and other protective material after project completion.
- ☐ Evaluate health of trees; pruning and soil aeration may be necessary.
 - Prune branches that may have been damaged during construction.
 - Aerate soil that may have been compacted during construction.
- ☐ Place fresh mulch around trees.
 - Best depth for mulch is 2-3 inches
 - Avoid planting grass directly under trees