

To: Community and Operations Services Committee

From: Kevin Alexander, Commissioner,  
Community and Operations Services Department

Report Number: CO-25-01

Date of Report: January 15, 2025

Date of Meeting: January 20, 2025

Subject: Commemorative Tree and Bench Installation and Maintenance  
Programs and Quality Standards

Ward: All Wards

File: 03-05

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## **1.0 Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval of: (1) the revised Commemorative Tree Installation and Maintenance Program and Quality Standards; and (2) the new Commemorative Bench Installation and Maintenance Program and Quality Standard.

Attachment 1 the revised Quality Standard for the Commemorative Tree Installation and Maintenance Program.

Attachment 2 is the new Quality Standard for the Commemorative Bench Installation and Maintenance Program.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

That the Community and Operations Services Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That based on Report CO-25-01 dated January 15, 2025, the Commemorative Tree and Bench Installation and Maintenance Programs and Quality Standards be approved as outlined in Attachments 1 and 2 to this Report; and,
2. That Fees and Charges By-law 109-2024 be amended to include the increased purchase price of a Commemorative Tree or Bench.

## **3.0 Input From Other Sources**

- Legislative Services
- Finance Services
- Legal Services

- Other Municipalities: Richmond Hill, Markham, Vaughan, Brampton, Oakville, Mississauga, Burlington, Hamilton, Whitby, Pickering, Ajax, Toronto, Guelph, Clarington

## **4.0 Analysis**

### **4.1 Background**

The City of Oshawa has a Commemorative Tree and Bench Donation program. Commemorative trees and benches are available for purchase by the public and are placed on City property, subject to various location criteria: For example, trees are not to be planted close to telephone poles, lights, manhole covers, or too close to other trees or sports fields; benches must be installed beside an accessible pathway. The Manager, Parks, Trails and Forestry has the final say on the location of these commemorative trees and benches.

Commemorative trees cannot be installed at the following locations due to space constraints: Lakeview Park, Bonnie Brae Point, Ed Broadbent Park, Memorial Park, Rotary Park, Rundle Park, Willowdale Park or the Oshawa Valley Botanical Gardens/Kinsmen Valleyview Park.

Commemorative benches cannot be installed at the following locations due to space constraints: Lakeview Park, Memorial Park, Rotary Park, Northway Court Park or the Oshawa Valley Botanical Gardens/Kinsmen Valleyview Park.

As part of the City of Oshawa's Commemorative Tree and Bench Programs, the City of Oshawa has received 696 requests for a commemorative tree or bench during the last fourteen (14) years. Currently there are a total of 426 commemorative items across the City: 305 trees and 121 benches.

### **4.2 Opportunities**

The current Commemorative Programs for trees and benches are not cost effective. Over time, multiple trees and benches have been identified as requiring maintenance or replacement due to various reasons; vandalism, death and damage impacting the health of the tree etc.

Current costs associated with a tree (\$609.29 excluding tax), or bench (\$2,627.62 excluding tax) only cover the original purchase, installation and plaque, and do not include maintenance or replacement. There have been 35 trees replaced since 2016 and some of these trees have been replaced multiple times. The tree plaques are mounted onto a cement sill and installed in the ground. Benches are frequently damaged beyond repair and require replacement. They are also targets for graffiti and other vandalism and maintenance is needed. Bench plaques are mounted directly to the bench. Many plaques, for both trees and benches are consistently being damaged, have been stolen and/or vandalized and need to be replaced.

### **4.3 Municipal Comparator Findings**

Municipalities that were contacted in support of this report have expressed a variation of the City's current Commemorative Programs and have identified similar issues with tree health and vandalism. City staff note that the ongoing support of the Commemorative Programs is costly as trees, benches and plaques are consistently being replaced.

### **4.4 Quality Standards**

The Quality Standards govern the implementation and execution of the program with regards to technicalities, fees, timing and processes.

### **4.5 Increased Purchase Fees**

To assist with recovering the costs associated with maintenance and replacement, staff recommend amending the Fees and Charges By-law 109-2024 to include an increased fee of 15% for the commemorative benches and trees.

**Table 1: Proposed Fee Increase**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Current Cost</b>	<b>Cost with Proposed Increase</b>
Commemorative Tree	\$690.29	\$793.83
Commemorative Bench	\$2,627.62	\$3,021.76

### **5.0 Financial Implications**

If approved, the proposed increase purchase fees could result in approximately \$5,000 additional cost recovery each year based on the annual averages of approximately 21 commemorative tree installations and approximately 8 commemorative bench installations.

## 6.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan

This report responds to the Oshawa Strategic Plan Priority Area “Lead: Governance and Service Excellence” with the goal to embrace innovation and advance continuous improvement initiatives and actions.



Mike Harrington, P.Eng., Director,  
Parks and Operations Services Department - Interim



Kevin Alexander, Commissioner,  
Community and Operations Services Department



## Quality Standards No: Q4-309-021

<b>Department:</b> Community and Operations Services	<b>Branch:</b> Parks and Roads Operations	<b>Division:</b> Parks, Forestry and Trails
<b>Program:</b> Forestry 309-046		
<b>Activity:</b> Commemorative Tree Installation and Maintenance		
<b>Approved By Council:</b> Dec 5, 2013	<b>Revised by Council:</b>	
<b>Description of Revision:</b> Update		

### Objective

To establish a criteria and process for installation and maintenance of commemorative trees donated to the City.

### Level of Service

#### Commemorative Tree Requests

- Tree planting requests will be received and forwarded to Parks, Forestry and Trails Operations.
- Proposed tree planting locations and species will be reviewed by Parks, Forestry and Trails Operations and if required an alternative location and species will be provided to the donor.
- Parks, Forestry and Trails Operations will be responsible for carrying out the installation of commemorative trees in the spring and fall when weather and ground conditions permit.
- The Manager of Parks, Forestry and Trails Operations or approved designate will decide the final tree locations.
- The original purchase price includes a tree, plaque and installation.
- There are no refunds.
- Commemorative trees cannot be installed at the following locations due to space constraints: Lakeview Park, Bonnie Brae Point, Ed Broadbent Park, Memorial Park, Rotary Park, Rundle Park, Willowdale Park or the Oshawa Valley Botanical Gardens/Kinsmen Valleyview Park.

#### Commemorative Tree Installation

To ensure the health and sustainability of commemorative trees the following maintenance practices will be implemented:

- Trees will be planted in the spring or fall as weather and ground conditions permit. Trees will be planted in accordance with City of Oshawa tree planting details and standards.

- Trees will be planted with a wood mulch ring at the base and a gator water bag for drip irrigation as required.
- Donors are not permitted to be on site at the time of planting.
- The addition of ashes, pictures, fences, plants, decorations or any type of ornaments on or around the tree is not permitted.
- The City reserves the right to move the tree if necessary.

### **Tree Selection**

- Commemorative trees shall be 45 - 60 mm caliper and be of a species with suitable hardiness and adaptability to soil conditions for Oshawa.
- The Manager, Parks, Forestry and Trails or approved designate shall be responsible for the final selection of tree species and location.

### **Commemorative Tree Plaque**

- The supply and installation of a plaque will be included in the cost of a tree donation.
- Plaques shall be mounted onto a concrete sill and inserted into the ground at the base of the tree.
- Unless otherwise approved by the Manager, Parks, Forestry and Trails or approved designate, all tree plaques are to be of the same design in order to maintain consistency throughout the City.

### **Tree Maintenance**

- The tree is the property of the City and, if it dies, it will be replaced at no cost to the resident.



The Corporation of the City of Oshawa  
Community and Operations Services

## Quality Standards No: Q4-309-027

<b>Department:</b> Community and Operations Services	<b>Branch:</b> Parks and Roads Operations	<b>Division:</b> Parks, Forestry and Trails
<b>Program:</b> Parks Facility Maintenance 309-044		
<b>Activity:</b> Commemorative Bench Installation and Maintenance		
<b>Approved By Council:</b>		<b>Revised by Council:</b>
<b>Description of Revision:</b> New Quality Standard.		

### Objective

To establish a criteria and process for installation and maintenance of commemorative benches donated to the City.

### Level of Service

#### Commemorative Bench Requests

- Commemorative bench requests will be received and forwarded to Parks Forestry and Trails Operations.
- Parks, Forestry and Trails Operations will approve or decline requests based on available space at the requested location and site suitability. Alternative locations will be provided if necessary.
- Parks, Forestry and Trails Operations will be responsible for carrying out the installation of commemorative benches in the spring and fall when weather and ground conditions permit.
- The Manager of Parks, Forestry and Trails Operations or approved designate will decide the final bench locations.
- The original purchase price includes a bench, plaque, concrete pad, and installation.
- There are no refunds
- Commemorative benches cannot be installed at the following locations due to space constraints: Lakeview Park, Memorial Park, Rotary Park, Northway Court Park or the Oshawa Valley Botanical Gardens/Kinsmen Valleyview Park.

#### Commemorative Bench Installation

To ensure consistency, safety, and accessibility of commemorative benches the following maintenance practices will be implemented:

- All benches must be installed beside an accessible recreational trail, walkway or park pathway.
- A concrete pad shall be poured and cured with dimension of 5' x 10' x 3 ½ ".

- All benches shall be installed in accordance with the Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- Benches shall be bolted to the concrete pad.
- Donors are not permitted to be on site at the time of installation.
- The addition of ashes, decorations, plants or ornaments on or near the bench is not permitted.
- The City reserves the right to move the bench if necessary.

#### **Commemorative Bench Plaque**

- The supply and installation of a plaque will be included in the cost of a bench donation.
- Plaques shall be mounted onto the commemorative bench.
- Unless otherwise approved by the Manager of Parks, Forestry and Trails Operations or approved designate, all bench plaques are to be of the same design in order to maintain consistency throughout the City.

#### **Bench Maintenance**

- The bench is the property of the City and, if it is damaged beyond repair, it will be replaced at no cost to the resident.