



MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

To / Destinataire	Mayor and Members of Council	File/N° de fichier:
From / Expéditeur	Anthony Di Monte, General Manager Emergency and Protective Services Kevin Wylie, General Manager	
Subject / Objet	Public Works & Environmental Services Post-tornado funding response to direction and response to Inquiry OCC 15-18 – Financial Assistance for Stump Grinding	Date: February 5, 2019

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this memo is to provide Council with a response to the direction with respect to additional tornado funding and respond to Inquiry OCC 15-18 – Financial Assistance for Stump Grinding.

BACKGROUND:

At the October 10, 2018 Council meeting, Mayor Watson and Councillor Egli posed the following inquiry to staff:

Due to the significant tree damage resulting from the recent windstorm and tornado events, it is anticipated that there will be a need for stump grinding, including on private property, and associated costs for that grinding.

Whereas the Province has a Disaster Recovery Assistance for Ontarians (DRAO) Program that provides financial assistance following natural disasters and has indicated its willingness to provide additional resources to assist in recovery. Staff are aware that not all expenses from the windstorm and tornado damage are covered by the DRAO Program, by private insurance or under the purview of the City. The City has sought additional funding from the Province to help support tree removal on private and commercial properties in scenarios such as these.

What options are available to assist residential and commercial property owners to grind stumps in areas impacted by the recent tornado?

At the December 12, 2018 Council meeting, Councillor Egli gave the following direction to staff:

That senior staff report back to Council prior to budget deliberations at Committee and Council whether or not additional post tornado funding is coming from the other levels of government.

Further, if such funding is not going to be available then senior staff is to provide options to Council as to how needs such as tree planting, stump removal, woodlot cleanup etc. will be funded through the 2019 budget.

DISCUSSION:

On September 27, 2018, the City sent a letter to the Province requesting \$1.568M in funding to support continued recovery efforts. The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services provided the \$1.568M and directed that the funding is to:

- be distributed to not-for-profit organizations involved in removing debris from private residences (up to \$290,000)
- supplement capacity to remove debris from affected areas (tree-removal claw trucks) (up to \$253,000)
- add forestry crews to restore parks and public areas (up to \$275,000)
- add forestry crews for the removal and grinding of logs and brush on city streets and public areas (up to \$250,000)
- fund the removal of downed trees for private residences (up to \$500,000)

The City's top priority in the storm clean-up was to ensure public safety and assist residents' efforts to get back into their homes. The first goal during recovery efforts was to remove debris.

Through its partnership with the NGO Alliance, the City provided support for private property tree and brush debris management to residents. It is important to differentiate between homeowner and City responsibility as highlighted in the scenarios below:

- If a City-owned tree fell during the weather event, the City would remove the tree
- If a tree fell onto a house, the homeowner's insurance company is responsible
- If the private tree fell exclusively within a homeowner's property and did not strike/rest on the house, then the homeowner was solely responsible for removal

During the recovery phase, the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) provided assistance to remove debris from residents' private property. If the residents' needs were not covered by insurance, the NGO Alliance's skilled volunteers took work orders, assessed the work, and performed debris removal for tree and brush from the resident's property.

The City supported the NGO Alliance by providing equipment and contracted services for works on private property. Out of scope for NGO assistance included: commercial properties, undeveloped land and woodlots, removing or grinding stumps in the ground (due to the requirement for utility locates and the risk to volunteers/the public) and construction debris (fences, furniture, etc.).

Tree stumps on private property were not ground down or removed during the initial clean up phase because they did not pose an immediate hazard to the public. City-owned trees on public

property were ground but not removed. This work is ongoing and will continue through summer 2019.

Staff will also be replanting on public property, such as parks and the right of way, starting in the spring of 2019. Funding for this work is supported by the provincial funding that has already been received.

Tree Canada has been working in coordination with the City's Forestry Staff on a funding campaign for re-planting trees on private property for those who were affected by the windstorm and tornado event. Please refer to the following link for additional information:
<https://treecanada.ca/operationreleaf/ottawa-gatineau/>

Given that the DRAO program was activated, and \$1.568M was previously provided, additional requests for funding from other levels of government were not supported. However, Public Works and Environmental Services staff will continue to investigate funding opportunities.

Staff are currently in discussions with NGO Alliance members to provide additional support for stump grinding, wood debris and brush removal on private properties. This work would begin in the spring of 2019. If a resident is unsure whether a tree is private or public, they can contact 3-1-1 to determine ownership.

cc: Senior Leadership Team
Pierre Poirier, Manager, Security and Emergency Management
Laila Gibbons, Director, Parks, Forestry and Stormwater Services