TO: Chair and Members  
Public Works Committee

WARD(S) AFFECTED: WARD 1

COMMITTEE DATE: June 14, 2010

SUBJECT/REPORT NO:  
Tree Removal Request - Hillcrest Reservoir Condition Upgrades  
(PW10064) - (Ward 1)

SUBMITTED BY:  
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PREPARED BY:  
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RECOMMENDATION:

That the necessary existing trees be approved for removal (as identified in Appendix “A” to Report PW10064) in order to facilitate the implementation of a capital project that includes the site preparation work for the construction of condition upgrades for the existing Hillcrest Reservoir, which is located above Highland Gardens Park and below Beckett Drive, Hamilton.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NOTE: This is an Infrastructure Stimulus Funded project.

The removal of trees is needed to facilitate the implementation of a capital project (which has been identified to receive Infrastructure Stimulus Funding) that includes the site preparation work for the construction of condition upgrades for the existing Hillcrest Reservoir, which is located above Highland Gardens Park and below Beckett Drive in Hamilton. These trees are in a varied state of health. An inventory of all the trees within the working area for the site preparation work was undertaken and the impacted trees are identified and shown in Appendix “A” (Tree Removal Plan). Where possible, Forestry staff have provided their review and comments on the condition of the existing trees to be removed, and have determined that 78 trees of 60mm tree calliper will require replacement according to the existing tree replacement policy. Trees designated to remain are identified. Removal costs and applicable compensation value
are to be borne by the corresponding Capital Budget account for the project. Due to the
collection work, a total of three hundred and eighteen (318) trees, which are in poor
to good condition, will be affected and will have to be removed. The total removal costs
and replacement compensation have been determined by Forestry staff. Council
approval is being sought at this time to remove the trees in order to facilitate the
proposed construction in accordance with Hamilton Tree By-law 06-151 and the City of
Hamilton’s Tree Removal Policy.

In addition, a total of seven (7) Butternut trees, which are protected under the Provincial
Endangered Species Act, must be removed as part of the site preparation work; separate approvals are being obtained from the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources
for these specifically protected trees.

Alternatives for Consideration - See Page 4

**FINANCIAL / STAFFING / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

**Financial:** The removal and replacement of trees will be funded from the Capital
Budget appropriation allocated to the project. There is sufficient budget in the project
Capital Budget account (which has been identified to receive Infrastructure Stimulus
Funding). Appendix “A” outlines where the trees will be removed. Locations for
replacement trees will be chosen in consultation with Forestry staff.

**Staffing:** N/A

**Legal:** N/A

**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The information/recommendations contained within this Report primarily affect Ward 1.

The existing Hillcrest Reservoir is currently the oldest active reservoir in the City, having
been commissioned in 1930, and has served continuously since that time providing
potable drinking water and fire protection supply to approximately half of the City’s
urban population, as well as McMaster University Medical Centre and McMaster
University. A detailed condition assessment and facility investigation report (June 2007)
recommended upgrades to the reservoir which would address a number of deficiencies
and extend its useful life for future generations. Subsequently, the construction of the
reservoir condition upgrades was identified to receive Infrastructure Stimulus Funding in
the amount of $8.6 million, subject to the work being substantially performed by
March 31, 2011.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Council approval is being sought in accordance with the provisions of City of Hamilton
Tree By-law 06-151 and the City of Hamilton’s Tree Removal Policy.
The tree replacement is in accordance with the ‘Innovate Now’ priority of greening and stewardship, and the coordination among Divisions supports the priority of defining and aligning business plans.

**The Public Works Strategy Plan, Innovate Now** –

The recommendations from this Report will assist in meeting Public Works’ key goal, *to be recognized as the centre of environmental and innovative excellence in Canada*. In addition, implementing the recommendations will also assist Public Works in building on our Strategic Vision Drivers as follows:

- **Communities (Services our communities connect with and trust)** –
  Implementing the reservoir condition upgrades will improve our local environment. Efficient and reliable operation of the upgraded reservoir will ensure excellent service to all respective communities well into the future. The transparent and consultative nature of the public outreach component process builds trust within the community and Review Agencies, demonstrating Hamilton’s and Public Works’ commitment to Service Excellence. Replacing the removed trees in the same vicinity will mitigate negative impacts to the local community while maintaining a high environmental standard for that area of the City.

- **People (Skilled teams ready for any situation)** –
  This program demonstrates the ability of City staff to respond to an important and complex opportunity that affects our community. Implementing proposed water improvements requires the knowledge and skill of many staff that work with the system on a daily basis. Through an extensive consultation process, stakeholders, including many employees, were invited to provide their input and contribute throughout the process of decision making. The proposed solution represents forward thinking and contemporary practice. Projects such as this have the ability to contribute to the positive image that Hamilton seeks to maintain and will promote a sense of pride in staff.

- **Process (Smart processes to match our needs)** –
  Throughout the development process, plans have been formulated to ensure that all aspects of the Triple Bottom Line approach to problem solving are considered. Social, Environmental, and Economic impacts were all assessed to provide a balanced approach to the preferred alternative. A detailed evaluation process was employed in order to effectively arrive at the optimal solution, which meets Hamilton-specific goals and objectives. The result is a sustainable long-term approach that addresses pressures from City growth, legislated requirements, and environmental protection.

- **Finances (Sound finance management for the long haul)** –
  Government policy and legislation have been considered in the development of the preferred solution. The economic impact to the City was a significant factor in the decision-making process.

Other policies affecting or impacting this Report include:
- Ontario Safe Drinking Water Act
- Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act

**RELEVANT CONSULTATION**

The following were consulted in the preparation of this report:

Public Works Department, Operations and Waste Management Division, Environmental Services Group, Forestry and Horticulture Section.

The Ward Councillor has been consulted and is in agreement with the recommendations.

**ANALYSIS / RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION**

A detailed condition assessment and facility investigation report (June 2007) recommended upgrades to the reservoir which would address a number of deficiencies and extend its useful life for future generations. In order to undertake these critical upgrades, trees are required to be removed as part of the construction process as well as to clear trees that have grown on top of the reservoir. As a result and as per Hamilton Tree By-law 06-151 and the City of Hamilton’s Tree Removal Policy the trees as outlined in Appendix “A” are being recommended for removal.

**ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION:**

In order to avoid the removal of the three hundred and eighteen (318) trees, the City would have to eliminate the construction activities related to this project, which are intended to modernize the existing reservoir that was built in 1930 and rectify a number of deficiencies that if not addressed in a timely manner could result in compromising the integrity of the drinking water supply. The only alternative would be not to allow the trees to be removed resulting in an inability to address the upgrade requirements for this reservoir.

**Financial Implications:** Not proceeding with this work would jeopardize the City’s ability to comply and recover funding from the Infrastructure Stimulus Funding program which amounts to 2/3 of the $8.6 Million or approximately $5.7 Million.

**Staffing Implications:** N/A

**Legal Implications:** Not proceeding with the proposed upgrades may result in further deterioration of the reservoir and result in impacts to the quality of drinking water and ultimately violations under various associated drinking water regulations exposing the City to potential legal issues.
CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN


Skilled, Innovative & Respectful Organization
• A culture of excellence
• More innovation, greater teamwork, better client focus

Financial Sustainability
• Delivery of municipal services and management capital assets/liabilities in a sustainable, innovative and cost effective manner
• Address infrastructure deficiencies and unfunded liabilities
• Sustainable Tri-part Government Agreement

Intergovernmental Relationships
• Acquire greater share of Provincial and Federal grants (including those that meet specific needs)

Growing Our Economy
• Newly created or revitalized employment sites

Social Development
• N/A

Environmental Stewardship
• Natural resources are protected and enhanced
• Reduced impact of City activities on the environment
• Aspiring to the highest environmental standards

Healthy Community
• Adequate access to food, water, shelter and income, safety, work, recreation and support for all (Human Services)

APPENDICES / SCHEDULES

Appendix “A” - Tree Removal Plan (Drawing No. 8321-HR1-C102)