

Staff Report

Report To: City Council
Report From: Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services
Meeting Date: April 29, 2024
Report Code: CS-24-037
Subject: Appointment of a Weed Inspector

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-24-037 respecting the appointment of a Weed Inspector, City Council directs staff to bring forward a by-law to amend the Appointed Officers By-law to appoint Eckhard Pastrik, Manager of Parks and Open Space, as a Weed Inspector as required by the *Weed Control Act*.

Highlights:

- Ontario's *Weed Control Act* provides for the control of weeds on lands in proximity to lands used for agricultural or horticultural purposes.
- Every lower tier municipality must appoint a Weed Inspector under the Act and report the name of the Inspector to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- Council is requested to appoint the Manager of Parks and Open Space under the City's Appointed Officers By-law.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Green City.

Climate and Environmental Implications:

This supports the objectives of the City's Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan by strengthening the natural infrastructure, including the urban forest.

Previous Report/Authority:

None.

Background:

Noxious weeds are much more than an inconvenience; invasive and noxious weeds threaten Ontario's plants and animals and can be harmful to crops, livestock, humans, and our natural environment.

Ontario's [Weed Control Act](#) facilitates the control of noxious weeds on lands near lands used for agricultural or horticultural purposes. Under Ontario's *Weed Control Act*, farmers and landowners have a legal obligation to manage noxious weed species on their properties.

The Act requires single-tier, upper-tier, and lower-tier municipalities to appoint a weed inspector. If notified about noxious weeds on lands close to ones used for agricultural or horticultural purposes, the weed inspector can order the weeds destroyed. If weeds are not destroyed within a set time, the municipality can use its staff to destroy the weeds and add the cost to the property owner's tax bill.

The Act also provides for the designation of certain weeds as noxious weeds, which must be destroyed. The list of these noxious weeds is found in Regulation 1096 under the *Weed Control Act*. Twenty-three weed species are listed as noxious weeds. The Act also gives municipalities the power to declare local weeds as noxious and then subject to the provisions of the *Weed Control Act*.

Analysis:

Under the *Weed Control Act*, municipalities must:

- Appoint one or more persons as a weed inspector to enforce the Act within the City; and

- Report the name of the appointee to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAFRA).

The City has an Appointed Officers By-law. Previously the Manager of Parks and Open Space has been appointed in this role.

The Weed Inspector should be appointed under this By-law, and the name reported as required to OMAFRA.

Financial Implications:

There may be costs relating to weed inspection.

The Act does provide for a municipality to destroy weeds and add the costs to the property tax bill.

Communication Strategy:

The City will send the required information to OMAFRA.

Consultation:

None.

Attachments:

None.

Recommended by:

Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services, at pcoulter@owensound.ca or 519-376-4440 ext. 1252.