



Municipality of North Grenville

To: **Council**

Meeting Date: April 16, 2025

Subject: Yard Maintenance By-Law

Report No: PD-2025-017

Prepared by: Jeff Baribeau, Manager of By-Law Services

Recommendation(s)

THAT Council enact By-Law No. 105-24, a by-law to require the owner or occupant of land to clean or clear the land, or to clear refuse from the land.

Executive Summary

Purpose

- To modernize yard maintenance regulations by updating property owner responsibilities and enforcement mechanisms.

Key Findings

- The current Yards By-Law, enacted in 2007, is outdated and does not adequately address modern yard maintenance concerns.
- The existing by-law lacks provisions necessary for inclusion in the Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS), which would streamline enforcement.

Financial Implications

- There are no direct financial implications with the enactment of this by-law.

Background/Analysis

On November 18, 2024, staff presented several new by-laws to Council as part of a broader modernization initiative, including the introduction of an AMPS by-law to transition enforcement away from the Provincial Offences Court. While Council approved most of the proposed by-laws at that time, the Yard Maintenance By-Law was deferred due to

concerns regarding the lack of a clear definition for the term "nuisance." Staff were directed to collaborate with the Environmental Action Advisory Committee (EAAC) to establish an appropriate definition.

Following this directive, staff attended an EAAC meeting on January 27, 2025, to present potential definitions. The EAAC supported the definition now included in the proposed by-law. Additionally, a committee co-chair provided recommendations regarding the list of prohibited plants in Schedule A of the by-law. Based on this feedback, staff reviewed and refined the list to ensure its practicality and effectiveness.

Prohibited Plants & Considerations

- The first 25 plants listed in Schedule A are classified as Noxious Weeds under the Weed Control Act and are already prohibited by the province.
- The remaining 9 species are designated Invasive Plants by the Ontario Invasive Plant Council, an organization supported by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and Environment and Climate Change Canada.
- While additional invasive species could have been included, enforcement practicality and financial impact on residents were considered. Given the prevalence of certain invasive species in North Grenville, a more extensive list could pose significant challenges for enforcement and high costs for property owners.

Ongoing Monitoring & Future Adjustments

Staff will monitor the implementation of the by-law and continuously assess the list of prohibited plants. Future amendments may be recommended to ensure the by-law remains effective and aligns with the municipality’s evolving needs.

Conclusion

The proposed Yard Maintenance By-Law updates outdated provisions, ensures alignment with modern enforcement practices, and balances environmental concerns with practical enforcement considerations. Staff recommend that Council enact By-Law No. 105-24 to support cleaner and well-maintained properties across North Grenville.

Relevance to Strategic Priorities

Strategic Pillar	4	Efficient Governance and Service Delivery
Goal	4.4	Commit to Continuous Improvement
Key Action	4.4.2	Implement a continuous review program for existing processes and policies at both the departmental and corporate level.

Options and Discussion

1. Approve the recommendation and enact By-Law No. 105-24
2. Do not approve the recommendation and provide further direction to staff. Delaying enactment will impact the municipality's ability to enforce yard maintenance effectively coming this spring and summer.

Financial Impact

This item has been identified in the current budget: Yes No **N/A**

This item is within the budgeted amount: Yes No **N/A**

Staffing implications, as they relate to implementing Council's decision on this matter, are limited to the existing staff complement and applicable administrative policies as approved by Council.

Internal/External Consultation

During the review and drafting of the proposed Yard Maintenance By-Law, staff conducted a thorough analysis of similar by-laws from other municipalities to ensure best practices were incorporated.

To develop appropriate provisions for inclusion in the Administrative Monetary Penalty System (AMPS), staff collaborated closely with a consultant and the Municipal Solicitor to ensure the by-law was legally sound and enforceable.

As previously mentioned, staff also engaged with the Environmental Action Advisory Committee (EAAC), attending a committee meeting to present the by-law and gather feedback. The EAAC provided input on the definition of "nuisance" and offered recommendations regarding the list of prohibited plants in Schedule A, some of which were incorporated into the final draft.

Communications

Once enacted, the new Yard Maintenance By-Law will be published on the municipal website, replacing the existing Yards By-Law.

Attachments

- Attachment 1 – By-Law No. 105-24