



Trees a 'huge part of city architecture'

BurlingtonGreen is pleased that residents and the *Burlington Post* have brought back the dialogue on private tree protection in Burlington.

It is apparent to many residents that decisions by former city councils to stop an effective tree bylaw have resulted in too many mature trees being lost. We must ensure city resources are in place to properly manage an effective private property tree bylaw. Trees are a huge part of Burlington's "architecture" and contribute greatly to our air quality in a time of increasing air pollution. It should be our common priority to invest in trees and to protect them.

We acknowledge private land is a sensitive subject, but we have to look at it in context. Burlington already has many bylaws in place that restrict actions on private property to ensure consistent neighbourhood appeal and to protect the greater community against environmental degradation and financial harm. We argue that if effective tree protection is enacted by council, it will be one of the most significant bylaws we have that offers protection for the environment and property values.

Any reasonable citizen acknowledges the environmental value of trees is extremely significant. We would add the economic benefit of creating this bylaw would also be substantial. Statistics show neighbourhoods with mature trees garner higher selling prices. One homeowner cutting down a large tree can have a direct adverse financial impact on six or more neighbouring homes, not to mention the overall appeal of the neighbourhood. Privacy is another feature that increases home values and large trees can provide 60 per cent more privacy compared to a fence alone.

We urge you to join the dialogue about preserving trees in our city. Please let your councillor know your concerns and/or respond to this letter.

Property owners are stewards of Burlington's mature trees. No one truly owns them, for they really belong to the community and our future generations.

Ken Woodruff, President BurlingtonGreen