Chapter 658

RAVINE AND NATURAL FEATURE PROTECTION\(^1\)

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[HISTORY: Adopted by the Council of the City of Toronto 2002-10-03 by By-law No. 838-2002.\(^2\) Amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES
Heritage - See Ch. 103.
Fences - See Ch. 447.
Trees - See Ch. 813

\(^1\) Editor's Note: The title of this chapter was revised from "Ravine Protection" to "Ravine and Natural Feature Protection" May 27, 2008 by By-law No. 513-2008.

\(^2\) Editor's Note: This by-law was passed under the authority of sections 223.1 and 223.2 of the Municipal Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.45. This by-law repealed Chapter 455, Filling and Grading, of the City of Toronto Municipal Code; Chapter 276, Ravines, of the Municipal Code of the former City of Toronto; former Borough of East York By-law No. 117-97, "A by-law respecting the protection of trees and other vegetation in ravine," as amended; and former City of Scarborough By-law No. 23626, "A by-law respecting the protection of ravines," as amended.
§ 658-1. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated, and any abbreviation of a term as noted in brackets shall have a corresponding meaning:

APPLICANT - The registered owner of the property that is the subject of an application under this chapter or the registered owner's authorized agent. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

APPLICATION - A completed permit application form with supporting documentation as identified in the application package or requested by Urban Forestry for permission to injure or destroy trees, to place or dump fill or refuse, or to alter the grade of land within a protected area. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

ARBORIST - An expert in the care and maintenance of trees and includes an arborist qualified by the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board Apprenticeship and Client Services Branch, a certified arborist qualified by the International Society of Arboriculture, a consulting arborist registered with the American Society of Consulting Arborists, a registered professional forester or a person with other similar qualifications as approved by the General Manager.³ [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008; 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

DESTROY - To remove, cut down or in any other way injure a tree to such an extent that it is deemed by the General Manager to be an imminently hazardous tree or is no longer viable and it becomes necessary to remove the tree. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008; 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

EMERGENCY WORK – Work of an urgent nature, including but not limited to work associated with drain repairs, utility repairs or structural repairs to a building, and work required to prevent soil erosion, slipping of soil or damage to trees. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008; 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

FILL - Earth, sand, gravel, rubble, rubbish, garbage, or any other material whether similar to or different from any of these materials, whether originating on the site or elsewhere, used or capable of being used to raise, lower, or in any way effect the contours of the ground.

GENERAL MANAGER - The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation. [Added 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

GRADE - A defined elevation of land that has been established as a result of geologic, hydrologic, or other natural processes or by human alteration; that defines ravines, depressions, hills, stream channels, eskers or steepness of terrain. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

HERITAGE TREE - A tree that has been designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act⁴ or trees recognized as heritage trees by the Ontario Heritage Tree Program of Trees Ontario. [Amended 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

³ Editor's Note: The former definition of "Commissioner," which immediately followed this definition, was repealed May 27, 2008 by By-law No. 513-2008.

⁴ Editor's Note: See R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18.
IMMINENTLY HAZARDOUS TREE - A destabilized or structurally compromised tree that is in imminent danger of causing damage or injury to life or property. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008; 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

INJURE: [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

A. Not protecting trees in accordance with the City's "Tree Protection Policy and Specifications for Construction Near Trees" or other standards set by the General Manager.

B. Any act or omission that will harm a tree's health in any manner.

OFFICER - A City employee whose duties include the enforcement of this chapter, including but not limited to those persons holding the positions of: General Manager, City Forester, Urban Forestry Supervisor, Urban Forestry Co-ordinator, Urban Forestry Planner, Urban Forestry Planning Assistant, Urban Forestry Manager, Arborist Inspector and Arborist Foreperson. [Amended 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

OWNER:

A. The registered owner of the property that is the subject of an application under this chapter.

B. For purposes of making an application involving trees, "owner" shall include the owner of either property where the base of a tree straddles a property line or whose property is physically impacted by the roots or crown of a tree on adjacent property.

PERMIT - A permit to: [Amended 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

A. Injure, destroy or remove trees;

B. Place or dump fill or refuse; and

C. Alter the grade of land.

PROTECTED AREA - A shaded area on any Data Map in Schedule A-2 at the end of this chapter. [Amended 2004-07-22 by By-law No. 729-2004]

PROTECTED FEATURE - Any tree, woodland vegetation or slope in a protected area including: [Added 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

A. Ravines.

B. Tableland forests.

C. Treed portions of the Lake Iroquois shoreline.

D. Rouge Park.

E. Publicly owned parks and golf courses located in valleys.

5 Editor's Note: The former definition of "ornamental trees," which immediately followed this definition, was repealed 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008.
RAVINE: [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

A. A discernable land form with a minimum two-metre change in grade between the highest and lowest points of elevation that may have vegetation cover and that has or once had water flowing through, adjacent to, or standing on, for some period of the year;

B. Contiguous buffer areas, areas of tree canopy and environmentally significant areas that contribute to the ecological function of a ravine.

REFUSE - Includes leaves, branches and logs that have not fallen naturally, roots, construction material, debris and household garbage. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

ROOFTOP GARDEN - Does not include the rooftops of parking garages or other structures at grade.

ROUGE PARK - The urban wilderness park as defined in the Rouge Park Management Plan, 1994, as amended from time to time.

STANDARDS - Minimum requirements or guidelines established by the General Manager pertaining to the protection and preservation of trees and ravines or slopes. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

TABLELAND FOREST - Woodland areas that are not contiguous with ravines, including small non-wooded openings that contribute to the ecological function of the tableland forest. [Added 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

TERMINALLY DISEASED - Advanced and irreversible decline in tree health, that has resulted in the majority of crown die back or failure, due to a severe insect infestation or infection by a pathogen. [Added 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

TREE - A tree of any species and any size. [Added 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

TREE PROTECTION POLICY AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR CONSTRUCTION NEAR TREES - The most recent version of the City's "Tree Protection Policy and Specifications for Construction Near City Trees." [Amended 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

TREED PORTIONS OF THE LAKE IROQUOIS SHORELINE — Woodland portions of the shoreline of glacial Lake Iroquois and contiguous slopes with a minimum two-metre change in grade between the highest and lowest points of elevation, and contiguous buffer areas. [Added 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

WOODLAND - A treed area that provides environmental benefits, including erosion prevention, water retention, provision of habitat or recreation. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

§ 658-2. Permit required for prohibited activities.

A. No person shall injure, destroy, remove or permit the injury, destruction or removal of any tree on any land in a protected area, unless authorized by permit to do so. [Amended 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]
B. No person shall place or dump fill or refuse or alter the grade of land or permit the placing or dumping of fill or refuse or alteration of grade on any land in a protected area unless authorized by permit to do so. [Amended 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

§ 658-3. Interpretation.  

A. The City Surveyor may plot the boundary line defining a protected area on a plan or map drawn to a suitable scale, upon request, at the expense of the requestor.

§ 658-4. Exceptions.  

A. Despite § 658-2A, a permit is not required in the following circumstances:

(1) Removal of a terminally diseased, dead or imminently hazardous tree, certified as such by the General Manager.

(2) Pruning of a tree in accordance with good arboricultural practice to maintain the health of the tree.

(3) Pruning of tree branches that interfere with utility conductors as certified by the General Manager.

(4) Pruning or removal of fruit trees maintained for fruit production.

(5) Injury or destruction of trees having a soil depth of less than 1.5 metres above a built substructure on rooftop gardens or in interior courtyards, solariums, raised podiums or planters.

(6) Emergency work as certified by the General Manager.

(7) Normal maintenance and play enhancement activities within manicured areas of turf of an existing golf course as certified by the General Manager.

(8) Farming, maintenance and management activities associated with Agricultural Heritage Reserve Zones located within the Rouge Park.

(9) Maintenance or management activities or improvement of recreational opportunities or infrastructure associated with Special Management Zones within the Rouge Park.

(10) The erection of any fence if the fence is erected in accordance with the applicable provisions of any zoning by-law or fence by-law, provided that the fence is maintained such that the uphill side of the fence is kept clear of refuse and fill.

B. Despite § 658-2B, a permit is not required in the following circumstances:

(1) Cultivation or tilling of garden beds as long as such work does not alter or create slopes at greater than 10 percent.
(2) Placing of soil involving an amount of less than five cubic metres for the purposes of maintaining existing manicured areas.

(3) Placing or dumping of fill or refuse or alteration of the grade of land on rooftop gardens or in interior courtyards, solariums, raised podiums or planters. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

(4) Emergency work as certified by the General Manager. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

(5) Grade changes within areas that are regulated by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

(6) Normal maintenance and play enhancement activities within manicured areas of turf of an existing golf course as certified by the General Manager. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

(7) Farming, maintenance and management activities associated with Agricultural Heritage Reserve Zones located within the Rouge Park.

(8) Maintenance or management activities or improvement of recreation opportunities or infrastructure associated with Special Management Zones within the Rouge Park. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

(9) The erection of any fence if the fence is erected in accordance with the applicable provisions of any zoning by-law or fence by-law, provided that the fence is maintained such that the uphill side of the fence is kept clear of refuse and fill. [Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

§ 658-5. Filing of applications; form and content.

[Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

A. An owner who wishes to do any of the following within a protected area shall submit a completed application to the General Manager:

(1) Injure or destroy a tree.
(2) Place or dump fill or refuse.
(3) Alter the grade of land.

B. A completed application shall consist of the following:

(1) The applicant's name, address and telephone number.
(2) The purpose for which the permit is required.
(3) In the case of an application to injure or destroy a tree:

(a) An inventory of trees and other vegetation.
(b) A tree protection plan.
(c) A tree removal plan.
(d) A tree replacement, woodland management, stewardship, or rehabilitation plan.

(4) In the case of an application to dump fill or refuse or to alter the grade of land:
(a) A grading plan showing existing and proposed conditions.
(b) A drainage plan.
(c) A geotechnical report.

§ 658-6. Issuance of permits; conditions.

[Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008; 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

A. Issuance of permits.

The General Manager is authorized to issue permits:

(1) When trees cause or are likely to cause structural damage to load-bearing structures.

(2) Where site plan approval, subdivision approval, consent or Committee of Adjustment approval under the Planning Act⁶ has been obtained, and:

(a) Tree injury or destruction is required based on plans approved by the Ontario Municipal Board, City Council, or a final and binding decision of the Committee of Adjustment.

(b) The placing or dumping of fill or the alteration of the grade of land is required based on plans approved by the Ontario Municipal Board, City Council, or a final and binding decision of the Committee of Adjustment.

(3) Where a building permit, front yard or boulevard parking permit or permission for driveway widening has been obtained, and:

(a) Tree injury or destruction is required to facilitate construction in accordance with an approved permit or permission.

(b) The placing or dumping of fill or the alteration of the grade of land is required in order to facilitate construction in accordance with an approved permit or permission.

(4) For the pruning of tree roots in accordance with good arboricultural practice causing minimal damage to the trees, provided that the pruning takes place under the direction of an arborist approved by the General Manager.

(5) Where a plan has been prepared for ravine restoration or forest stewardship, management or enhancement and the plan has been approved by the General Manager.

(6) Where tree injury, destruction or removal is in accordance with plans approved by the General Manager.

(7) Where the placing or dumping of fill or the alteration of grade is outside of the Toronto Region Conservation Authority's regulated area and is in accordance with plans approved by the General Manager.

(8) Where the injury, destruction or removal of trees has been ordered or approved by the General Manager for arboricultural management, pest management, or otherwise for purposes of dealing with trees affected by disease or infestations.

(9) In protected areas that have undergone a Schedule B or C Municipal Class Environmental Assessment process.

(10) Where injury or destruction of trees is required to remediate contaminated soil.

(11) Where placement of fill or alteration of grade is required to remediate contaminated soil.

(12) For lands owned by the City, its agencies boards or commissions provided that:

   (a) Council has approved the work that will impact trees or alter the grade of land; and

   (b) The General Manager is satisfied that there is no reasonable alternative to tree injury, destruction or removal or the alteration of grade in order to complete the work; and

   (c) The General Manager is satisfied that the applicant has undertaken to implement satisfactory replanting and site restoration, as applicable.

(13) Where City work is required within a right-of-way in a protected area provided that:

   (a) Council has approved the work that will impact trees or alter the grade of land; and
(b) The General Manager is satisfied that there is no reasonable alternative to tree injury, destruction or removal or alteration of grade in order to complete the work; and

(c) The General Manager is satisfied that the applicant has undertaken to implement satisfactory replanting and site restoration, as applicable.

(14) Where a utility easement is located within a protected area and repair or replacement of the utility is required for the provision of such utilities; provided that:

(a) The General Manager is satisfied that there is no reasonable alternative to tree injury, destruction or removal or alteration of grade in order to complete the work; and

(b) The General Manager is satisfied that the applicant has undertaken to implement satisfactory replanting and site restoration, as applicable.

B. Conditions; replacement trees and site restoration.

(1) Where a tree is to be injured or destroyed, the issuance of a permit shall be subject to conditions ensuring that replacement trees are planted to the satisfaction of the General Manager in accordance with the approved tree removal or replacement plan or woodland management or rehabilitation plan submitted by the applicant.

(2) Where replacement planting is not physically possible on site, the General Manager may:

(a) Require replacement planting at another suitable location; or

(b) Accept a cash in lieu payment in an amount equal to 120 percent of the City's cost of replanting and maintaining the required trees for a period of two years.

(3) The General Manager shall obtain a guarantee from the applicant to ensure that the tree removal or replacement plan or woodland management or rehabilitation plan is carried out, and where substantial replanting or site restoration is required or where the applicant has previously violated conditions to a permit, the General Manager may require an applicant to post security acceptable to the General Manager in an amount equal to 120 percent of the total cost of replanting and maintaining the trees for a period of two years or restoring the lands, or both.

(4) Where a tree is to be injured, the issuance of a permit shall be subject to conditions that ensure that the tree is protected in accordance with good arboricultural practices.
C. Expiry of permits.

The General Manager is authorized to establish expiry dates for permits.

D. Transfer of permits.

The General Manager is authorized to approve or refuse the transfer of an application or permit.

E. Permit replacement.

(1) The General Manager is authorized to require the submission of a new application where:

(a) A permit has expired;
(b) A request to transfer a permit or application has been refused;
(c) Additional trees are required to be injured, destroyed or removed.

(2) The General Manager may refuse to issue a replacement permit or may issue a replacement permit subject to additional or alternative conditions as provided for in this article.

§ 658-7. Council approval required.

[Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008; 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

The injury or destruction of trees, the placing or dumping of fill or refuse or the alteration of the grade of land must be authorized by City Council in the following circumstances:

A. The tree is a heritage tree.

B. The tree is healthy and the management of the tree or forest cover has not been addressed through submission of plans to the satisfaction of the General Manager.


[Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

A. Where the General Manager refuses to issue a permit, an applicant may within 30 days of the date of refusal appeal to City Council through the community council having jurisdiction over the area in which the subject property is located, by written notice delivered to the General Manager setting out the reasons why the applicant believes a permit should be issued and requesting to be heard by the community council.
B. Where an applicant has filed an appeal, the General Manager shall prepare and forward a report on the application to the next community council meeting, setting out the grounds for refusal of the application.

C. Upon reviewing the recommendation on appeal of the community council, City Council may uphold the decision of the General Manager or may direct the General Manager to issue a permit subject to any conditions Council may deem appropriate.

§ 658-9. Enforcement; power of entry; inspection powers. 

[Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

A. An employee or officer of the City may enter upon any lands at any reasonable time for the purpose of carrying out an inspection to determine whether:

(1) This chapter is being complied with.

(2) The conditions of any permit issued under this chapter are being complied with.

B. A person carrying out an inspection under § 658-9A may:

(1) Require the production of documents relevant to the inspection.

(2) Inspect and remove documents or things relevant to the inspection for the purpose of making copies.

(3) Require information from any person concerning a matter related to the inspection.

(4) Alone or in conjunction with a person possessing special or expert knowledge, make examinations and take tests, samples and photographs necessary for the purposes of the inspection.

§ 658-10. Orders to comply.

[Added 2013-02-21 by By-law No. 248-2013]

A. An officer who finds a contravention of this chapter may make one or more orders requiring:

(1) The contravening activity to be discontinued (under section 384 of the City of Toronto Act, 2006); or

Editor's Note: The title of this section was revised from "Power of entry; inspection powers" February 21, 2013 by By-law No. 248-2013.

Editor's Note: By-law No. 248-2013 added a new Section 658-10 "Orders to comply", renumbered previous §§ 658-10, 658-11, 658-12 and 658-13 to 658-11, 658-12, 658-13 and 658-14 respectively and deleted § 658-10.1 "Removal of dangerous trees".
(2) Work to be done to correct the contravention (under section 385 of the City of Toronto Act, 2006\textsuperscript{10}).

B. The order may be served personally on the person to who it is directed or by registered mail to the last known address of that person and, where the order is served by mail, the service shall be deemed to have been made on the third day after the day of mailing.

C. If there is evidence that the occupant of the property is the registered property owner, the notice shall be served on both the registered property owner and the occupant of the property.

D. If the address of the owner is unknown or the City is unable to effect service on the owner or occupant under Subsection B, a placard stating the terms of the order and placed in a conspicuous place upon the land on or near the property shall be deemed to be sufficient service on the owner.

E. No person shall deface, cover up or remove a placard placed under §658-10D.

F. If the delay necessary to serve an order under the preceding subsections would result in an immediate danger to the health or safety of any person, the order may be served personally on the person to whom it is directed or by a placard stating the terms of the order and placed in a conspicuous place upon land on or near the property.

§658-10.1. Reserved.


[Amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

A person who injures or destroys a tree or places or dumps fill or refuse, or alters the grade of land in a protected area without a permit or in contravention of a condition of a permit, shall replace the tree and remove the fill, or refuse, regrade the area and take any other steps required to restore the site to its original condition to the satisfaction of the General Manager.

§658-12. Offences; additional remedies.

A. A person who contravene any provision of this chapter is guilty of an offence.

B. A director or officer of a corporation who knowingly concurs in the contravention of this chapter is guilty of an offence. [Amended 2004-07-22 by By-law No. 729-2004; 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

C. A person convicted of an offence under this chapter is liable: [Added 2004-07-22 by By-law No. 729-2004; amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]
(1) To a minimum fine of $500 per tree and a maximum fine of $100,000 for the injury or
destruction of any tree in a protected area.

(2) To a minimum fine of $500 and maximum fine of $100,000 for any other offence
under this chapter.

(3) To a special fine of $100,000.

D. Despite § 658-12C, an offence under § 658-2B of this chapter is a continuing offence and
subject to a minimum fine of $500 and a maximum fine of $10,000 for each day or part of
a day that the offence continues. [Added 2004-07-22 by By-law No. 729-2004; amended
2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

E. Despite § 658-12C, failure to comply with permit conditions in accordance with § 658-6B
is a continuing offence and subject to a minimum fine of $500 and a maximum fine of
$10,000 for each day or part of a day that the offence continues. [Added 2004-07-22 by
By-law No. 729-2004; amended 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]


[Amended 2002-11-28 by By-law No. 1081-2002; 2008-05-27 by By-law No. 513-2008]

Wherever this chapter directs or requires any matter or thing to be done by a person, in default of
its being done by the person directed or required to do it, the matter or thing may be done under
the direction of the General Manager, and the City may recover the costs incurred, from the
person directed or required to do it by action or by adding the costs to the tax roll and collecting
them in the same manner as property taxes.


To the extent of any conflict between the provisions of this chapter and any by-laws of the
former municipalities respecting ravines, fill and grading and injury or destruction of trees, the
provisions of this chapter shall prevail.
SCHEDULE A-1, INDEX MAPS, 1-4


Editor's Note: The maps that comprise Schedule A-1 are available for purchase through Survey and Mapping Services (416) 392-7665 or by e-mail to mapsales@toronto.ca.
SCHEDULE A-258, DATA MAPS


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Editor's Note: The maps that comprise Schedule A-2 are available for purchase through Survey and Mapping Services (416) 392-7665 or by e-mail to mapsales@toronto.ca.