



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG
OFFICE OF ENGINEERING & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Mission Statement: As stewards of the Town of Amherstburg, we strive to improve the quality of life of all residents through the delivery of effective, efficient, and affordable services.

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To: Mayor and Members of Town Council

Subject: Phragmites Control Program

1. **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that:

1. The report from the Manager of Roads and Fleet regarding the Phragmites Control Program **BE RECEIVED for information.**

2. **BACKGROUND:**

At the May 13, 2024 Council Meeting, Council directed administration to bring a report regarding the Town's Phragmites Program.

3. **DISCUSSION:**

The following are milestones for the Town's Phragmites Control Program:

- 2017 – Infrastructure Service completed a survey of the phragmites on all road sides and in municipal drains on private properties. With this map, staff met with a vegetation control company to obtain a cost of completing a Phragmites Control Program.
- 2018 – Infrastructure Service submitted an issue paper entitled 2017-Phragmites Control. Council approved \$10,000 to commence a Phragmites Control Program.
- Since the approval of the Phragmites Control Program, Infrastructure Service has:
 - Mapped the progress of the Phragmites Control Program along the roadside including County Roads.

- Herbicide treatment of phragmites stands along the roads.
- Cutting and removal through maintenance operations using tractor with boom mower.
- 2021 – Council approved an additional budget of \$10,000 to positive progress of the Phragmites Control Program. The funding was to treat phragmites in municipal drains and marshes near roads.
- 2022 – Staff obtained a special permit from MECP to use HABITAT Aqua in the marsh along Lowes Sideroad near the South Gateway Pond. Staff also obtain written approval from the neighbouring landowners to gain access to the phragmites adjacent to the road.
- 2023 – Staff applied to the Green Shovel Initiative for grant funding for the Town’s Phragmites Control Program. Staff submission was not successful for obtaining grants.
- 2023 – Essex Region Conservation Authority released the larvae of two types of moths in the Collavino Conservation Area off of North Sideroad. These moths eat into the stems of the phragmites and kill the plants.
- 2024 – Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) representatives is in the process of preparing a proposed regional plan for treatment and management of Phragmites across Essex County. Nature Conservancy of Canada has held meetings to discuss a regional approach with the following groups:
 - All local and County municipalities
 - City of Windsor
 - Caldwell First Nation
 - Essex Region Conservation Authority
 - Point Pelee National Park
 - Field Naturalist Group
 - Ojibway Nature Centre

Nature Conservancy of Canada’s plan for an Essex County Phragmites Working Group

Since April 2024, the Essex County Phragmites Working Group has met several times to discuss phragmites management across the county and identify opportunities for collaboration. The Town’s Manager of Roads and Fleet is a member of this Working Group.

Some of the opportunities:

- Standardizing the mapping approach across the county to effectively monitor for Phragmites to be able to prioritize locations for management. This can also be used to illustrate the collective efforts on the landscape.
- Development of the working group to facilitate open communication across municipal, non-government organizations (NGO), First Nations and Provincial and Federal government partners.
- Identify opportunities for collaborative management to effectively leverage each partner’s available resources to increase return on investment. (i.e. planning and coordinating contractors used across multiple municipalities).
- Identifying strategic goals and multi-year planning to effectively manage phragmites at a landscape scale in the county.

Next steps:

- The Invasive Phragmites Control Fund and other phragmites funding/management opportunities are anticipated to continue forward in 2026 and onward. Opportunity in 2025 to identify and set goals for Phragmites management in the county.

Key points (from Nature Conservancy of Canada perspective)

- The Town of Amherstburg has done an exceptional job managing Phragmites within its mandated areas of management (i.e. roads/drains), one of the largest obstacles to landscape control is managing Phragmites on private lands. Often funding can be difficult to obtain, and a concerted effort from the municipal partner to engage (since it's above and beyond mandated stewardship of the municipality).
- Within key watersheds such as River Canard and Big Creek, Phragmites is a leading threat to species at risk and biodiversity loss.
- Managing these types of lands are dependent on a multi-partner approach to effectively engage with landowners and manage Phragmites, and can take time to develop. Discussions with partners such as NCC are underway to scope the potential for this next step in eliminating Phragmites on the landscape.

Results from Current Roadside Phragmites Control Program

In the 6 years of managing the Phragmites Control Program, staff has witnessed the reduction of the phragmites along the roadside. The old seed bed of cattails has been able to re-establish in the bottom of drains and ditches along the road. The regrowth of cattails has prevented the regrowth of phragmites. The only concern witnessed by staff is the resurgent of the purple loosestrife along the drains and watercourses. Further discussions with the Essex County Phragmites Working Group would be to consider a future purple loosestrife control program and out reach.

4. RISK ANALYSIS:

The control of Phragmites uses non-selective herbicides that will impact all vegetation and could impact residential lawns. The contractor has been responsive to damage and returned to reseed damaged areas. The minor damage far out-weights the benefit of controlling the phragmites and improving the environment and habitat for wildlife.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

There are no financial impacts with this report.

6. CONSULTATIONS:

- Kyle Borrowman, Manager Habitat Restoration Nature Conservancy of Canada

7. CORPORATE STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

Vision: Preserving our past while forging our future.

<i>Amherstburg Community Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026</i>	
<p style="text-align: center;">PILLAR 1 Deliver Trusted & Accountable Local Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Improve trust between council and staff, and residents, by strengthening governance and internal accountability structures. <input type="checkbox"/> Deliver transparent and efficient financial management. ✓ Increase effective communication and engagement with residents. <input type="checkbox"/> Develop our staff team, resources, and workplace culture. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to deliver strong core municipal services. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Amherstburg is an inclusive accessible and welcoming community committed to reconciliation. 	<p style="text-align: center;">PILLAR 3 Encourage Local Economic Prosperity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage development of commercial and industrial lands. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to promote local tourism industry, especially overnight accommodation. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to facilitate downtown development for residents and visitors. ✓ Continue to leverage partnership opportunities with other provincial, federal, and local governments, agencies, and organizations.
<p style="text-align: center;">PILLAR 2 Invest in Community Amenities and Infrastructure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain safe, reliable and accessible municipal infrastructure and facilities. <input type="checkbox"/> Increase access to recreation opportunities for all ages. <input type="checkbox"/> Finalize and execute plans for town-owned lands (e.g. Duffy’s site, Belle Vue) ✓ Create public access to water and waterfront <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritize opportunities to reduce environmental impacts of Town operations and increase Town resilience to climate change. 	<p style="text-align: center;">PILLAR 4 Shape Growth Aligned with Local Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Define and communicate a vision for the Town’s future and identity. <input type="checkbox"/> Promote and plan for green and “climate change ready” development. <input type="checkbox"/> Review and implement policies that promote greater access to diverse housing. <input type="checkbox"/> Protect the Town’s historic sites and heritage. ✓ Preserve the Town’s greenspaces, agricultural lands, and natural environment.

8. CONCLUSION:

The Town has a Phragmites Control Program for the past 6 years that has been treating and controlling phragmites along the roads in the Town. Recently, and with the assistance of the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Essex County Phragmites Working Group has been working towards a regional Phragmites Control Program Plan.



Eric Chamberlain

Manager of Roads and Fleet

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Town's Phragmites Program.docx
Attachments:	- PhragmitesMapCouncil.pdf - Phragmites2023.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Jun 13, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



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