

TORONTO

OFFICIAL PLAN



The New
TORONTO
RAVINE
By-Law

“The ravines are to Toronto what canals are to Venice, hills are to San Francisco and the Thames River is to London. They are the heart of the City’s emotional geography, and understanding Toronto requires an understanding of the ravines.”

Accidental City, Robert Fulford



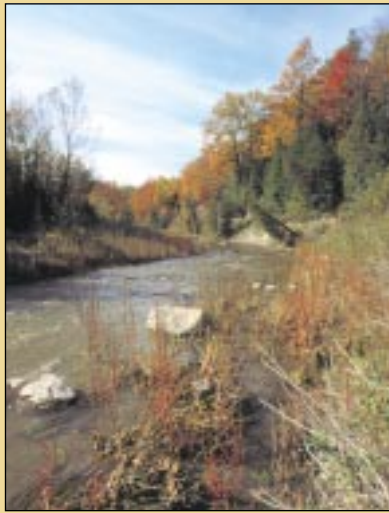
The many rivers, streams and creeks that form the network of ravines

throughout Toronto are woven into the City's landscape. They are the foundation of the city's natural heritage, a preserve where the majority of native plants and animals reside.

The new Ravine Protection By-law, passed by City Council on October 3, 2002, is a tool to protect features (trees and landform) and functions (ecology and hydrology) of the ravine system by encouraging environmentally responsible management. The new By-law replaces previous ravine by-laws and expands the area of protection to the entire city.

Ravines are defined firstly by all areas previously protected by a ravine by-law and all areas regulated for flooding purposes by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). The smaller ravines were then added where there was a discernible slope with a grade change of two metres or greater. In addition Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest, woodlands and public golf courses that are beside ravines were included. The ravine boundary line identifies the edge of the ravine feature, which is not necessarily the same line as the stable top of bank, which indicates (or defines) the limit of flooding or erosion hazard.

If your property is located within or partially within the ravine protection area you are required to apply to the City for a permit when undertaking any work that may injure or



destroy a tree, or involves placing or dumping fill or refuse, or altering the grade of land. Please note that the Ravine Protection By-law does not restrict development rights or alter the Official Plan designation or zoning permissions.

Ravines represent a significant part of the City's natural heritage features and incorporate important ecological, geological and hydrological functions. The Ravine Protection By-law is

emblematic of the City's interest in promoting good stewardship.

You do not require a permit from the City for the following activities. Please refer to the Ravine By-law for more detail.

- ▶ removal of a diseased or dead tree as certified by the City Forester; removal of a hazardous tree or emergency work as certified by the City Forester
- ▶ pruning or removal of ornamental trees; pruning a tree to encourage natural form of the tree species; to remove dead limbs; to maintain structural stability and balance; to remove limbs and branches interfering with structures
- ▶ pruning of tree branches that interfere with utility corridors as certified by the City Forester; cultivation or tilling of garden beds as long as the work does not alter grade or create slopes greater than 10%
- ▶ placing of soil involving an amount less than 5 cubic metres for the purposes of maintaining existing manicured areas; grade changes within areas that are fill regulated by the TRCA.

If your property is located in an area regulated by the TRCA, you may need to obtain a permit from the TRCA office for placement of fill, or changes to grade, or construction of structures within a flood plain, or to alter a watercourse. The fill regulation permit would be in addition to a permit from the City for the injury or destruction of trees.

Urban Forestry Services staff will work with applicants to help identify natural features to protect and, if appropriate, suggest alternative solutions. You may want to seek expert advice from a forester or landscape architect to improve the natural habitat on your property.

If you do not obtain a permit from the City before injuring or destroying a tree or



Some trees in Toronto's ravines are 150 years old.

placing fill or changing the grade you could be convicted of an offence and potentially fined \$10,000 to \$20,000.

CITY OF TORONTO RAVINES





Non-native trees and other vegetation can have serious impacts on ravine health. Manitoba maple becomes top heavy and may topple over, pulling away the soil on the slope. The dense canopy of Norway maple shades out native vegetation, leading to erosion problems on steep slopes. Consider alternate native species such as red or sugar maple and red oak.

Non-native trees and shrubs are sometimes introduced to ravines through the dumping of leaves and compost and the planting of non-native species adjacent to ravines. They can easily dominate and take over native plants. Dumping debris in ravines smothers vegetation which is important for stabilizing slopes.

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

The TRCA is located at
5 Shoreham Drive, Toronto, ON, M3N 1S4
telephone 416-661-6600
TRCA's web site is www.trca.on.ca

Maps identifying the areas protected by the Ravine By-law and the areas subject to the TRCA Fill Regulation Line can be viewed at Urban Development Services counters in Etobicoke, East York, York, North York, and Scarborough Civic Centre, Toronto City Hall and on the City's web site.

The Ravine By-law is officially called "City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 658, Ravine Protection". It is available from the City Clerk or on the City of Toronto's web site: www.toronto.ca/trees.
You may also contact the Urban Forestry Services at 416-392-1888.