

Town continuing to clean up after ice storm

The Town of Caledon is requesting further help from the Ontario Ice Storm Assistance Program in order to complete its recovery from the December storm.

Caledon council recently approved the request on the recommendation of Town staff, to seek \$150,000 from the program. In the interim, council approved taking \$150,000 from operating funds to do the work, while reimbursement is sought from the Province. The ice storm created significant safety risks along Caledon's roads, bridges, parks and trails, as well as a considerable amount of debris within residents' private property.

Since early spring, members of the Town's Public Works and Parks and Recreation departments have been collecting trees and other debris with the help of residents and contractors; a program has been introduced that provides rebates for seniors who seek assistance with tree removal; and roads that were damaged from the freeze/thaw cycles over this past long winter have seen repairs. There is still work to be done in Caledon, and the Ontario Ice Storm Assistance Program, which provided municipalities affected by the December event with financial reimbursement, was to end its support June 22. However, staff reported the Province was willing to compensate for costs after the six-month period following the storm on a case-by-case basis.

The remaining tasks Town staff has outlined include a final sweep down all rural roads across town to check for trees, advertised so residents can bring any remaining tree debris to the edge of the roads. Also, the Town will need to hire local contractors to trim the remaining trees with hanging branches and remove stumps left over from the post-ice storm clean-up since they create potential safety risks. Finally, the Town will need to launch a media program that reminds private property owners of the Regional Yard Waste Program, informs rural residents of the final tree sweep and educates seniors about the Ice Storm Rebate Program.