

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 3540.



The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Works
Report: 2025-INFO-73
Date: September 19, 2025

Subject:

Municipal Right-of-Way Activities – Service Levels and Service Delivery Methods

Recommendation:

That this report be received for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 Further to recent discussions at Regional Municipality of Durham (Region) Works Committee meetings, this report provides a summary of service levels and delivery methods deployed by municipal agencies for maintaining municipal rights-of-way within the Region. The review specifically addresses weed control, litter control, boulevard grass cutting (the grassed area along the outer edge of the roadway), pothole repairs, graffiti removal, and curb cuts/repairs. Maintenance of sidewalks and multi-use paths is the sole responsibility of the lower-tier municipalities and is therefore not included in this review.

2. Background

2.1 The Maintenance Operations and Fleet Services division of the Works Department operates, inspects and maintains all Regional horizontal infrastructure. This includes Regional roads, water distribution, wastewater collection and stormwater collection. These functions are carried out from the Region's five maintenance depots: Ajax/Pickering, Oshawa/Whitby, Orono, Scugog, and Sunderland.

2.2 Municipal right-of-way activities encompass a range of tasks aimed at maintaining and managing road rights-of-way to ensure safety, accessibility, and efficiency for the public. Minimum requirements are governed by the provincial legislation Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 239/02: Minimum Maintenance Standards for Municipal Highways, while many activities go beyond this regulation and follow municipal best practices.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

3.1 There are no previous reports or decisions.

4. Municipal Right-of-Way Activity – Levels of Service Summary

4.1 Maintenance activities across the eight local area municipalities (LAMs) in the Region vary in operating standards and procedures, with work carried out by both LAMs' staff and contractors.

4.2 **City of Pickering:** Weed and litter control, boulevard grass cutting, graffiti removal, and pothole repairs are completed by City of Pickering staff. Curb cuts are primarily completed by contractors.

4.3 **Town of Ajax:** Weed and litter control, boulevard grass cutting, pothole repairs, and minor curb repairs are performed by Town of Ajax staff. Graffiti removal and curb cuts are completed by contractors.

4.4 **Town of Whitby:** Weed and litter control, most boulevard grass cutting, graffiti removal, and pothole repairs are performed by Town of Whitby staff. Some grass cutting and pothole repairs are contracted out. Curb cuts and curb repairs are completed by contractors.

4.5 **Municipality of Clarington:** Boulevard grass cutting, noxious weed control, large-scale graffiti removal, and curb repairs/cuts are contracted out. Litter control, pothole repairs, and minor graffiti removal are handled by Municipality of Clarington staff.

4.6 **Township of Scugog:** Weed and litter control, boulevard grass cutting, graffiti removal, and pothole repairs are completed by Township of Scugog staff. Curb cuts are contracted out.

4.7 **Township of Uxbridge:** Weed and litter control, boulevard grass cutting, and pothole repairs are completed by Township of Uxbridge staff. Graffiti removal is contracted out.

- 4.8 **Township of Brock:** Noxious weed control and curb cuts are contracted out. Weed and litter control, pothole repairs, and graffiti removal are performed by Township of Brock staff.
- 4.9 **City of Oshawa:** Noxious weed control and curb cuts are contracted out. Weed and litter control, pothole repairs, and graffiti removal are completed by City of Oshawa staff.
- 4.10 **Region of Durham:** Pothole repairs, rural mowing, and weed and litter control are completed by Regional staff. Urban boulevard grass cutting is completed by LAMs' staff/contractors, with one contract in the City of Pickering managed directly by the Region. Graffiti removal is managed by a contractor for all LAMs except the City of Oshawa, which completes this work internally. Curb cuts are contracted out, while curb repairs are completed by either internal or contracted forces depending on scope and workload.
- 4.11 A summary of the level of service provided by each local area municipality is included in Appendix A (Attachment #1).
- 4.12 All LAMs meet legislated requirements, with some exceeding these requirements. Most LAMs rely on internal resources for routine tasks such as weed and litter control, while contracting out more specialized activities such as curb cuts and graffiti removal. These differences reflect each LAMs' approach to balancing internal resources and external contractors to maintain service levels effectively. The most notable distinction is that the Region does not employ staff directly for urban grass cutting.

5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

- 5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following Strategic Direction(s) and Pathway(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:
- a. Connected and Vibrant Communities
- C1. Align Regional infrastructure and asset management with projected growth, climate impacts, and community needs.
 - C4. Improve road safety, including the expansion and connection of active transportation networks to enhance the range of safe mobility options.
 - C7. Create accessible, lively, and culturally welcoming public spaces, including opportunities to access nature.

b. Environmental Sustainability and Climate Action

- E3. Prepare for and respond to severe weather impacts.
- E5. Respect the natural environment, including greenspaces, waterways, and agricultural lands.

c. Strong Relationships

- S3. Collaborate across local area municipalities, with agencies, non-profits, and community partners to deliver co-ordinated and efficient services.
- S5. Ensure accountable and transparent decision-making to serve community needs, while responsibly managing available resources.

5.2 This report aligns with/addresses the following Foundation(s) in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- a. People: Making the Region of Durham a great place to work, attracting, and retaining talent.
- b. Processes: Continuously improving processes to ensure we are responsive to community needs.
- c. Technology: Keeping pace with technological change to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 While there are minor variations in how each local area municipality manages and delivers right-of-way maintenance, all local area municipalities meet or exceed legislated requirements. These variations reflect different approaches to balancing internal staff resources with contracted services to maintain effective service delivery.
- 6.2 Overall, the comparison demonstrates that local area municipalities across the Region of Durham are aligned in their commitment to ensuring safe, accessible, and well-maintained rights-of-way. By recognizing local differences while identifying common practices, the Regional Municipality of Durham is well-positioned to continue fostering collaboration, share best practices, and pursue opportunities for efficiencies.

- 6.3 This review provides a clear baseline understanding of existing service levels and will support future discussions on harmonization, resource optimization, and long-term planning to maintain and enhance service delivery for residents across the Region of Durham. The Region remains open to and welcomes further collaboration opportunities with local area municipalities that could improve overall customer service and service delivery.
- 6.4 For additional information, contact: David Dunn, Director, Transportation and Field Services, at 905-668-4113 extension 3422, or Eric Lamain, Manager, Maintenance Operations and Fleet Services, at 905-668-4113 extension 3434.

7. **Attachments**

Appendix A: Municipal Right-of-Way Activities – Levels of Service

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by:

Ramesh Jagannathan, MBA, M.Eng., P.Eng., PTOE
Commissioner of Works

Appendix A

Municipal Right-of-Way Activities - Levels of Service - Operations Standards and Procedures						
LAM	Weed and Litter Control	Boulevard Grass Cutting	Graffiti	Potholes Repair	Curb Cuts and Repairs	Existing Durham-Municipality Collaboration
City of Pickering	Completed by City staff, addressed on complaint basis.	Urban - Completed by City staff on 14-16 day cut cycle.	Completed by City staff. Offensive graffiti addressed immediately; non-offensive graffiti is addressed within 2-4 weeks.	As per O. Reg. 239/02, identified through patrols and complaints. Completed by City Staff.	Complaint based. Curb cuts and repairs are contracted out with very few exceptions.	
Town of Ajax	Inspected by foreperson and addressed as routine grounds maintenance.	Urban - Completed by Town Staff on 14-day cut cycle. Rural - Complete by staff, typically cut twice during the season, depending on weather and growth to ensure safety/visibility. Includes litter pick-up and trimming.	Complaint based and Town staff inspections. Completed by contractors.	As per O. Reg. 239/02, identified through patrols and complaints. Completed by Town Staff.	Contracted out by Operations Department. Minor repairs completed by Town staff. Identified through patrols and complaints.	Grass cutting of urban Regional ROWs is completed bi-weekly or weekly depending on need. Litter collection on Regional right-of-ways done year round, May-Nov litter collection is done once every 14 days.

Appendix A

LAM	Weed and Litter Control	Boulevard Grass Cutting	Graffiti	Potholes Repair	Curb Cuts and Repairs	Existing Durham-Municipality Collaboration
Town of Whitby	Annual inspections and clean up of centre medians including weed trimming, located on Town roadways completed by Town staff. Issues identified through road patrols and complaints.	Urban - Completed by Town staff and contractor. Frequency is 1 cut every 16 days. Rural - Completed by Town staff. Frequency is 3 cuts per year. Locations impacted by sightlines may receive additional cuts based on road patrol and complaints.	Annual spring blitz completed by Town staff. All bridges, signs, parking meters, guiderails etc. are inspected for graffiti and documented. Work commences to remove graffiti Town wide throughout the summer and fall by Town staff.	As per O. Reg. 239/02, roadway deficiencies located on Town roadways are identified through patrols and complaints. Repairs are completed by Town staff and contractors.	Curb cut requests are received, permitted and inspected by Town staff. Curb cuts and repairs are completed by contractors.	Grass cutting on urban Regional boulevards is completed in alignment with Town boulevards with 1 cut every 16 days. Collaboration also occurs when permitted or construction activities involve both Regional and Town ROW's.
Municipality of Clarington	Issues identified through inspections and complaints. Litter removal is completed by staff and the control of noxious weeds is contracted out.	Urban - Boulevard cutting is contracted out and cut once per week. Rural - Receive 2 cuts per growing season. Some areas may receive a third cut if necessary.	Minor offensive tags addressed in-house. Larger graffiti removal is contracted out. Based on complaints and inspections.	As per O. Reg. 239/02, identified through patrols and complaints. Completed by Municipal Staff.	Issues identified by road patrol, complaints and inspections. All curb related work is contracted out.	Grass cutting of urban Regional ROWs is contracted out and cut once per week.

	Weed and Litter Control	Boulevard Grass Cutting	Graffiti	Potholes Repair	Curb Cuts and Repairs	Existing Durham-Municipality Collaboration
Township of Scugog	Completed by Township staff. Addressed on a complaint basis.	Urban and Rural - Completed by Township staff on a 7-day cycle.	Complaint based and monitored by staff. Completed in-house.	As per O. Reg 239/02, issues identified by road patrols and complaints. Patcher dispatched weekly; increased to three times weekly in spring and winter.	Issues identified by road patrol and complaints. All curb related work is contracted out.	Grass cutting on urban Regional ROWs is completed bi-weekly or weekly depending on need.
Township of Uxbridge	Completed by Township staff. Includes spraying and cutting.	Urban - Boulevards cut weekly by staff. Rural - Areas cut once or twice per year on a complaint basis.	Complaint-based. Previous year, only one complaint; removal was contracted out.	As per O. Reg 239/02, identified through road patrols Completed by staff 5 days out of 10 workdays.	Requested through entrance permits. Resident responsible to hire contractor.	Grass cutting on urban Regional ROWs is completed bi-weekly or weekly depending on need.
Township of Brock	Weed removal completed in-house on a complaint basis. Noxious weeds control is contracted out. Litter removal is based on patrols and complaints.	Urban - Completed by staff on regular grass cutting cycles. Rural - Cut 2 times per season.	Completed by Township staff on a complaint based. Typically 3-4 calls per year.	As per O. Reg. 239/02, identified through patrols and complaints. Work completed by Township staff	Curb cuts are contracted out. Repairs and replacements performed in-house. Complaint-based.	Grass cutting on urban Regional ROWs is completed bi-weekly or weekly depending on need.

	Weed and Litter Control	Boulevard Grass Cutting	Graffiti	Potholes Repair	Curb Cuts and Repairs	Existing Durham-Municipality Collaboration
City of Oshawa	Due to the Pesticide Ban, weed control is limited. Within the downtown area staff use foam steamers for weed control. Noxious weed control is contracted out. Litter is picked up prior to mowing, and additional efforts are carried out based on complaints.	Urban - Grass cut 13 times per year based on Council approval and weather dependent. Most cutting is done by contractors; parks that have sports fields are cut in-house. Rural - Cut 3 times per season June to September.	Both inspection and complaint based. Fewer than 50 incidents annually completed in-house.	As per O. Reg. 239/02, identified through patrols and complaints. Work completed by City staff	Curb cuts are contracted out. Repairs and replacements completed in-house. Identified by patrols and complaints.	Graffiti, litter pick-up, and street sweeping in downtown Oshawa are handled by Oshawa staff. Grass cutting on Regional ROWs is completed bi-weekly or weekly depending on need.
Durham Region	Trimming of weeds and tall vegetation causing sightline issues completed by staff. Issues identified by Road Patrol and complaints. Noxious weeds control is contracted out.	Urban - Boulevards in all LAMs (except Pickering) addressed by respective LAM's contractor or staff. Rural - Receive 2 cuts per growing season. Some areas may receive a third cut if necessary.	Complaint-based and monitored by staff. Removal is contracted out.	As per O. Reg 239/02 identified by road patrol, ROVER and complaints. Work completed by Region staff.	Curb cuts and entrance permits are reviewed by staff. Curb cuts are contracted out.	