



## Township of The Archipelago

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April 9, 2021

21-073

**Moved by Councillor Barton  
Seconded by Councillor Manner**

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**RE: Road Management Action On Invasive Phragmites**

**WHEREAS** Phragmites australis (Phragmites) is an invasive perennial grass that continues to cause severe damage to wetlands and beaches in areas around the Great Lakes including Georgian Bay; and

**WHEREAS** Phragmites australis grows and spreads rapidly, allowing the plant to invade new areas and grow into large monoculture stands in a short amount of time, and is an allelopathic plant that secretes toxins from its roots into the soil which impede the growth of neighboring plant species; and

**WHEREAS** Phragmites australis results in loss of biodiversity and species richness, loss of habitat, changes in hydrology due to its high metabolic rate, changes in nutrient cycling as it is slow to decompose, an increased fire hazard due to the combustibility of its dead stalks, and can have an adverse impact on agriculture, particularly in drainage ditches; and

**WHEREAS** invasive Phragmites has been identified as Canada's worst invasive plant species by Agriculture and Agrifood Canada; and

**WHEREAS** the Ontario government has made it illegal to import, deposit, release, breed/grow, buy, sell, lease or trade invasive Phragmites under the Invasive Species Act; and

**WHEREAS** Phragmites occupy over 4,800 hectares of land around Lake St. Clair alone, while 212 hectares of Phragmites occupy land along the St. Lawrence River. The Georgian Bay Area is particularly affected by Phragmites australis, with more than 700 stands along the shorelines and multiple visible stands on the highways and roads that threaten valuable infrastructure and wetland areas; and

**WHEREAS** volunteers, non-governmental organizations, and various municipalities have invested tens of thousands of dollars in investments and labour annually for more than eight years in executing managements plans to control invasive Phragmites on roads, coasts, shorelines and in wetlands; and

**WHEREAS** roads and highways where Phragmites that are left untreated become spread vectors that continually risk new and treated wetlands and coastal shoreline areas; and

**WHEREAS** according to “Smart Practices for the Control of Invasive Phragmites along Ontario’s Roads” by the Ontario Phragmites Working Group, best road management practices for Phragmites australis include early detection, herbicide application, and cutting; and

**WHEREAS** these best management practices are most effective when used in a multi-pronged approach as opposed to when used as stand-alone control measures; and

**WHEREAS** mother nature does not recognize political boundaries. Therefore, it is imperative that Municipalities, Districts, the Province, and the Federal government work together in collaboration to eradicate Canada’s worst invasive plant species Phragmites australis;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that Council for the Corporation of the Township of The Archipelago directs its staff to implement best management practices to promote early detection of invasive Phragmites, and to implement best management practices for invasive Phragmites, and to join the Ontario Phragmites Working Group to collaborate on the eradication of Phragmites in Ontario.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Council for the Corporation of the Township of The Archipelago directs staff to insert clean equipment protocols into tenders and that there is oversight that the protocols are followed; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Council for the Corporation of the Township of The Archipelago requests the Ontario Ministry of Transportation to map and treat invasive Phragmites annually on all its highways; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) communicates the strategy on mapping (detecting sites) and controlling invasive Phragmites on provincial highways, the specific highway management plans and results by each MTO region and each highway in the region and work in coordination with the Township of The Archipelago; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Council for the Corporation of the Township of The Archipelago directs its staff to send this resolution to all municipalities that are part of the Georgian Bay watershed, to all municipalities in the Great Lakes watershed, to the Minister of Transportation, Christopher Balasa the Manager, Maintenance Management Office, and MPP Norman Miller.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that Council for the Corporation of the Township of The Archipelago requests all levels of government to consider funding support to aid the Township of The Archipelago in managing invasive phragmites; and directs staff to send a copy of this resolution to the Ontario Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

**Carried.**