

Appendix A: Status on Urban Forest Strategy Actions

Guiding Principle: Plant More

Results:

Achieved:	14	52%
Partially achieved:	1	4%
In progress:	4	15%
Delayed:	6	22%
Not achieved:	2	7%
Total Actions:	27	100%

1. Achieve appropriate canopy cover across the community

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
1.1 Establish canopy cover targets by place type and implement them through a framework of planting strategy, Planning District, Site Plan Control Area By-law and other policies, guidelines, or regulations to be developed, and with community engagement.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	In progress – The 2017-2021 Tree Planting Strategy did not identify canopy cover targets and associated actions as the applicable The London Plan policies that were under appeal at the time. Canopy cover targets and associated tree planting actions will be included with the 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy, which will be brought to Council for its consideration in early 2025.
1.2 Increase the requirement for parking lot shade trees in industrial and commercial areas (using canopy cover targets as a percentage of parking surface, or target tree densities).	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Partially achieved – Policy #277 – The 30% canopy cover within 20 years after planting originally included in The London Plan was appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal and was ultimately not retained. The London Plan does not require a specific target for parking lot shade trees sustainable tree canopy to be provided and that requirement is addressed with Planning & Economic Development through the site plan process.
1.3 Following the adoption of the new Official Plan, prepare a planting strategy for the City.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Achieved – The City’s first Tree Planting Strategy was adopted in 2017 (covering 2017-2021). Full implementation was challenged due to the Covid-19 pandemic. A new Planting Strategy for 2025-2029 is being finalized and, subject to some additional consultation, will be brought to Council for its consideration in early 2025.
1.4 Implement a policy of no net loss of tree canopy cover as a fundamental principle or baseline from which to determine and project tree canopy cover targets.	Medium Short-term (1-2 years)	Achieved – The policy for no net loss of tree canopy cover is identified in The London Plan Policy 389_2. Additional implementing policies are outlined in Policy 391_ to Policy 401_

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>1.5 Revise existing policies so there are incentives for developments to protect treed areas (including tree plantings, enhanced landscaping, or other “green infrastructure” features).</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Not achieved – Provincial legislative changes through Bill 23 removed the ability for municipalities to enter into bonusing arrangements with qualifying development. The London Plan policies strive to encourage the retention of trees, but the ability to provide incentives remains challenging to achieve.</p>
<p>1.6 Develop creative design solutions to better accommodate trees with cooperation of planners, developers, and engineers. Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In new subdivisions, place services under double driveways to leave more plantable space for boulevard trees. • Consider designs for some situations with sidewalks on one side of the street only. • Establish prototypical right-of-way specifications that accommodate trees, utilities, and road widths (considering both above and below ground). 	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – The London Plan contains many policies supportive of increased tree planting and tree retention (see Chapter 5 – City Building Policies and Chapter 6 – Place Type Policies). Boulevard trees were also a significant component of the Complete Streets Design Manual, which was approved in 2019.</p> <p>Design Standards have also been updated to implement increased tree planting opportunities, tree protection and tree retention.</p>
<p>1.7 Consider the creation of policies that support a system where it would provide greater flexibility for creativity in site planning to meet urban forest and other city objectives including stormwater management. Develop a range of specifications for different types of site plans and different planning districts that would diversify the currently uniform outcomes seen due to specifications such as “zero set-back” and “3-meter planting strip”.</p>	<p>Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Delayed – This action item will be advanced with the ReThink Zoning review and future updates to the Site Plan Control By-law. Options will be bounded by Provincial direction through the Planning Act and the Provincial Planning Statement.</p>
<p>1.8 Consider using zoning bonuses as incentives for developments to protect treed areas (including tree plantings, enhanced landscaping, or other “green infrastructure” features).</p>	<p>Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Not achieved – Provincial legislative changes through Bill 23 removed the ability for municipalities to enter into bonusing arrangements with qualifying development. The London Plan policies strive to encourage the retention of trees, but the ability to provide incentives remains challenging to achieve.</p>
<p>1.9 Conduct research, and measure woodland canopy, with the aim of developing a woodland canopy target for the City which integrates with the regional Natural Heritage System.</p>	<p>Medium Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>In progress – Woodland canopy levels are being reviewed as part of technical analysis and studies. Specific canopy cover targets will be established and will be integrated into woodland management planning.</p>

2. Develop a tree establishment program driven by canopy cover targets, maintenance capacity, and “right tree, right place” principles.

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>2.1 Identify plantable space opportunities that are currently underutilized such as the edges of sports facilities, passive use of turf grass (including City parks), public walkways, transportation corridors, vacant City lands, pumphouses, City owned farmland outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), cul-de-sac bulbs and make these areas available for volunteer planting projects.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>In progress – Opportunities for additional tree planting are assessed at the time of park service improvement or lifecycle renewal projects. The City has also partnered with ReForest London to provide locations for community-based planting. A comprehensive review of tree planting opportunities is underway and will support the implementation of the upcoming 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy.</p>
<p>2.2 Develop standards and include species-appropriate minimum soil volumes, planting medium (mixture), and watering in all tree planting specifications.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>In progress – Design Standards were updated in 2020, including increased requirements for soil conditions and after-care needs. Full implementation has been delayed due to ongoing engagement with development industry representatives. A working group is examining whether proposed design alternatives are feasible.</p>
<p>2.3 Apply “right tree, right place” best practices to select trees most suitable for the site, emphasizing large stature trees and native species where possible. The goal is to grow high quality, healthy trees.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – The City’s Design Standards and review of individual planting locations are based on these actions. Tree selection is aimed to ensure that planted trees not only survive, but also thrive over the long-term.</p>
<p>2.4 Prepare a 5-year planting plan that identifies areas and objectives for community planting projects on City-owned property.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Council adopted its first focused Tree Planting Strategy in 2017. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the planting timeframe of 2017-2021 was extended. A new Tree Planting Strategy for 2025-2029 is being finalized for early 2025.</p>
<p>2.5 Identify and create improved plantable space through City infrastructure projects.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – The London Plan contains many policies supportive of increased tree planting and tree retention (see Chapter 5 – City Building Policies and Chapter 6 – Place Type Policies). Boulevard trees were also a significant component of the Complete Streets Design Manual, which was approved in 2019. Design Standards have also been updated to implement increased tree planting opportunities, tree protection and tree retention. Process improvements have also been made by construction project managers to identify and enhance tree protection opportunities.</p>
<p>2.6 Prioritize the enhancement of plantable space in areas that are “hot spots” where tree planting could mitigate the urban heat island effect.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Delayed – Targeted tree planting locations will be an action included with the 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy. The framework and technical solutions will be informed by requirements for other infrastructure in addition to trees to meet all service delivery needs.</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
2.7 Increase tree planting to meet canopy cover targets.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Achieved – Tree planting budgets were increased with the 2019-2023 Multi-Year Budget. City planting increased from around 1,900 trees per year to more than 5,000 per year, with 36,000 trees planted when 27,000 were targeted (2017-2021). Tree planting on private lands has proven to be more challenging, resulting in an estimated 30,000 trees planted when 44,000 were targeted (2017-2021). Barriers to increased private lands planting include tree cost (larger caliper trees are generally preferred), tree planting logistics, increased impervious surfaces in residential backyards, information on tree care requirements, and concerns about tree planting restricting the future use of lands being held for development.
2.8 Apply existing guidelines to plant new subdivisions in phases prior to assumption so that tree planting can occur in a timelier manner before the last phase of development is finished.	Medium Ongoing	Delayed – Through its contractor, the City installs street trees in new subdivisions proximate to assumption (noting that the assumption of new subdivisions occurs as each phase reaches 75% build-out). Planting trees prior to assumption requires more substantial review of feasibility, efficacy, and cost implications (multiple planting windows, staff time for monitoring, compliance requirements, etc.).

3. Establish a diverse tree population city-wide as well as at the neighbourhood level

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
3.1 Improve control over planting stock through a multi-year tree growing contract with specifications for shape, size, and provenance. This will lower costs and improve quality.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Achieved – The City entered into a long-term contract with a tree supplier for the first time in 2021. The contract provides for annual renewal based on performance but incents quality and supply. This is especially important to the business needs of large-scale tree suppliers, given the length of time needed for trees to reach a plantable size (at least 5 years). A feasibility study for a City-owned tree nursery will be completed in 2025, in accordance with Council’s Strategic Plan.
3.2 Take an adaptive management approach to species selection to help diversify the species profile.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Achieved – The Forestry Design Standards were updated in 2021, which included a review of plantable species. Permitted species for street trees provides a broad range of native and some non-native options. Consistent with the “right tree, right place,” opportunities to expand the number of species for City-owned greenspaces will be examined with the 2025 Design Standards update.

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>3.3 Develop a native tree seed project to promote use of locally adapted seed of native species for new tree plantings.</p>	<p>Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Delayed – City tree seed collection opportunities have been challenged by the availability of appropriately trained staff or a third-party provider. There are a number of health and safety considerations that require further review. Staff will be reviewing seed collection as part of the upcoming Seed to Street initiative. Additionally, seed collection performed by the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority in Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA) may be possible through recent revisions to the ESA contract.</p>
<p>3.4 Encourage community gardens to consider the use of food producing tree species (e.g., fruit and nut bearing trees) and provide education on the required maintenance and management of food producing tree species.</p>	<p>Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – “Food forests” have been examined and included as part of some community gardens. Additionally, the Urban Agriculture Strategy (2019) recognized the benefits of food-producing trees. The upcoming review of plantable spaces on City-owned lands will include the consideration of planting more food-producing trees at locations which do not present operational challenges and can be safely accessed by residents.</p>
<p>3.5 Manage woodlands to improve opportunities for species diversity (thinning and enrichment planting).</p>	<p>Medium Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>Delayed – The establishment and implementation of woodland management plans has been limited by ongoing staffing vacancies and the prioritization of work plans (e.g., tree by-law implementation, design standards updates, tree preservation reviews with record construction and development years, public education, etc.). Woodland management will be receiving renewed focus and attention in the upcoming years as a consultant will be retained to provide a prioritization matrix and interim management activities. Additional funding for woodland management may be requested through a business case in the next Multi-Year Budget.</p>
<p>3.6 Encourage the planting of more tree species that rank low on the OPALS scale (Ogren Plant Allergy Scale) and reducing reliance on species that have a high OPALS rating.</p>	<p>Medium Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>Achieved – The Forestry Design Standards were updated in 2021, which included a review of plantable species. The approved species list was updated using the OPALS scale. This tool will continue to be used with future updates of tree planting standards.</p>
<p>3.7 Support phased tree planting/replacement initiatives to develop a more balanced age distribution in the long-term. Once the baseline urban forest population has been established and the canopy cover goals are on track, more emphasis can then be placed on phased timing for new plantings to help diversify the overall age class distribution in the long-term.</p>	<p>Medium Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>Delayed – Staggered and phased tree planting will be a matter examined with the upcoming 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy. Options and opportunities will be informed by logistical considerations (planting contract), potential resident impacts (timing of tree planting) and cost implications (multiple planting windows, staff time for monitoring, after care requirements, etc.).</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>3.8 Analyze the tree inventory to identify those species that have required a high level of maintenance over their life cycle to determine whether those trees should be removed from the species list. Identify tree species that have not required a high level of maintenance and consider whether they could be more widely used.</p>	<p>High Ongoing</p>	<p>Achieved – The Forestry Design Standards were updated in 2017 and 2021, which included a review of plantable species. Permitted species for street trees provides a broad range of native and some non-native options. Consistent with the “right tree, right place,” opportunities to expand the number of species for City-owned greenspaces will be examined with the 2025 Design Standards update.</p>
<p>3.9 Ensure that a range of species that are capable of withstanding harsh environmental conditions (wind, asphalt, snow dumping and salt) are available for selection for planting in tree-unfriendly locations such as downtown, industrial areas and busy transportation routes. In some circumstances non-native plantings may be required to address harsh environmental conditions (e.g. Veterans Memorial Parkway only two native species are suitable).</p>	<p>Medium Ongoing</p>	<p>Achieved – Design Standards were updated in 2017 with an approved tree species list, which included feedback from the Trees and Forests Advisory Committee. The species list was again updated in 2021 and will be re-examined in 2025.</p>
<p>3.10 Focus on species selection for long-lived, climatically adapted, and low maintenance species in manicured parks and boulevards to reduce the cumulative maintenance burden from new plantings over time.</p>	<p>Medium Ongoing</p>	<p>Achieved – Design Standards updated in 2017 with an approved tree species list, which included feedback from the Trees and Forests Advisory Committee. The species list was again updated in 2021 and will be re-examined in 2025.</p>

Guiding Principle: Protect More

Results:

Achieved:	10	53%
Partially achieved:	7	36%
In progress:	0	0%
Delayed:	2	11%
Not achieved:	0	0%
Total:	19	100%

4. Preserve and enhance local natural biodiversity

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
4.1 Investigate the potential to expand the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) management contract to include City owned woodlands as well as ESAs. Alternatively, establish a Natural Areas Crew that manages naturalization and ecosystem restoration in woodlands and has by-law enforcement powers.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Achieved – The focus for the UTRCA contract has been the management of the City’s Environmentally Significant Areas, which was recently reviewed in order to address baseline funding levels. Parks and Forestry staff provide operational tasks for woodland management and at this time adjustments to service delivery models are not deemed to be needed.
4.2 Manage natural areas to enhance biodiversity (i.e., enrichment planting, retention of wildlife trees and coarse woody debris, uneven distribution of plantings, proactive management of invasive species to enhance native species, etc.)	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Delayed – The establishment and implementation of woodland management plans has been limited by ongoing staffing vacancies and the prioritization of work plans (e.g., tree by-law implementation, design standards updates, tree preservation reviews with record construction and development years, public education, etc.). Woodland management will be receiving renewed focus and attention in the upcoming years as a consultant will be retained to provide a prioritization matrix and interim management activities. Additional funding for woodland management may be requested through a business case in the next Multi-Year Budget. Invasive species are being managed as part of the City’s Invasive Plant Management Strategy.
4.3 Collate and synthesize data from existing reports and studies on natural areas and link it to a standardized spatial database.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Achieved – Forestry data has been included in the City’s Geographic Information Systems (GIS) catalogue and made publicly accessible through CityMap. Additional Forestry data has been collected through Corporate Asset Management initiatives to improve spatial analysis and decision-making.

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>4.4 Develop a city owned woodland restoration and expansion master plan that prioritizes restoration activities across woodlands and includes required budgets and measurable targets for implementation.</p>	<p>High Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>Delayed – The establishment and implementation of woodland management plans has been limited by ongoing staffing vacancies and the prioritization of work plans (e.g., tree by-law implementation, design standards updates, tree preservation reviews with record construction and development years, public education, etc.). Woodland management will be receiving renewed focus and attention in the upcoming years as a consultant will be retained to provide a prioritization matrix and interim management activities. Additional funding for woodland management may be requested through a business case in the next Multi-Year Budget.</p>
<p>4.5 Require a water balance study to be completed where warranted when developments are planned adjacent to vulnerable Natural Heritage System features to identify potential impacts from altered hydrology and identify mitigation requirements. The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority has recently drafted stormwater management criteria for protection of natural features that could serve as a model.</p>	<p>High Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>Partially achieved – The policy included in The London Plan requiring water balance studies adjacent to treed locations was not successful on appeal. However, water balance studies may be required through an Environmental Impact Study (EIS), based on the required scope for the EIS.</p>
<p>4.6 Reintroduce, where appropriate, “lost” or rare native species in natural areas.</p>	<p>Medium Long-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Partially achieved – The Sovereign Woods reforestation demonstration project included a number of rare species (e.g., eastern flowering dogwood; butternut from Ministry of Natural Resources-approved sources) and several park projects have included plantings of specimen trees. Planting of Species at Risk (SAR) has proven challenging due to the involved permitting process to plant SARs and the ongoing permitting required for tree maintenance. This action requires further review with the upcoming 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy.</p>
<p>4.7 Review the buffer required between developments and retained woodlands to assess whether current buffers are adequate.</p>	<p>High Ongoing</p>	<p>Achieved – Woodland buffers received considerable review with the Environmental Management Guideline Update in 2021. The adequacy of woodland buffers will be an ongoing monitoring exercise and successive updates of the EMG will include an assessment of buffers from significant natural heritage features. It is important to ensure that buffers are managed to avoid overgrowth of invasive plants, such as buckthorn.</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>4.8 Educate the public about the benefits of controlled access and require controlled access be established at the time of woodland acquisitions.</p>	<p>Medium Ongoing</p>	<p>Partially achieved – Controlled access for woodlands is addressed through conditions identified in subdivision agreements and as task completed by the City for woodlands acquired outside of development applications. Additional work is required to advance public education about access points, which will be included in future communications initiatives and woodland management plans.</p>

5. Enhance and enforce municipal policies

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>5.1 Enforce the penalties for cutting trees in woodlands without a permit as required by the Tree Conservation By-law.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – By-law enforcement for non-permitted tree removals ongoing. The Tree Protection By-law was updated in 2019 to enhance the compliance framework.</p>
<p>5.2 Strengthen the Parks By-law by linking encroachment to the Ontario Trespassing Act and enabling the City to charge for the restoration of encroachment, including planting.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Partially achieved – A review of private encroachments on park lands was completed in 2021. Observed encroachments were removed and lands were restored. Encroachment standards contained in the Parks and Recreation Area By-law will be reviewed with the next by-law update.</p>
<p>5.3 Increase staff and resources for enforcement of tree protection related by-laws and site plan implementation to protect City assets.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Two additional staff with a primary focus on by-law enforcement (Tree Protection By-law, Boulevard Tree By-law, and Property Standards By-law) have been added since 2014.</p>
<p>5.4 Inspect development sites throughout all phases to ensure objectives and standards are met in the protection of urban forest assets.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Subdivision and site plan application review includes the inventorying and assessment of trees for protection and preservation. Compliance staff perform periodic reviews for tree protection measures, and soils are assessed prior to boulevard tree planting. With the adoption of Bill 23, the scope of site plan control has been reduced to only developments with 10+ units, which hinders tree review and inspection outside of the previous application of the Tree Protection By-law.</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
5.5 Consider new policies and review/enhance existing policies around tree retention for subdivision developments, including the retention of shelterbelts and hedgerows as desirable features between developments.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Partially achieved – The London Plan contains Policy 399_, which is intended to support the retention of trees and to recognize the financial value of tree infrastructure through fees required for necessary tree removals. Specific policies related to shelterbelts and hedgerows have not been achievable.
5.6 Develop and enforce a Heritage Tree By-law that protects trees identified as heritage trees due to their size, age, rarity, cultural value, or other significant feature.	Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)	Achieved – The Tree Protection By-law was updated in 2019 to include specific provisions for designated Heritage Trees based on the Ontario Heritage Act. Generally, heritage trees are sized such that they are classified as a Distinctive Tree and would be retained if a permit for removal were to be received. Further study is required to assess the potential number and health of heritage trees located within the City of London.
5.7 Review and revise the current Boulevard Tree Protection By-law to set fines consistent with other by-laws, and to strengthen tree protection.	High Ongoing	Achieved – Revised Boulevard Tree Protection By-law approved in 2019, which enhanced the compliance framework.

6. Improve urban forest health

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
6.1 Revise policies to support opportunities to either retain native topsoil or redistribute more topsoil on-site post development to improve the quality of tree planting sites.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Partially achieved – City design standards for tree planting updated in 2021, but full implementation has been delayed due to development industry concerns. A working group is evaluating proposed alternatives for confirmation of standards in 2025.
6.2 Hire dedicated forest health staff to monitor and manage insect and disease outbreaks and support the Forestry program and urban forest education.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Achieved – Forestry staff complement has been increased to provide greater focus on forest pests and pathogens. Spongy moth outbreaks investigated 2019-2020, treated in some heavily impacted park woodlands in spring 2021 and 2022. Annual monitoring and ongoing work by Canada Food Inspection Agency and Middlesex County to understand spongy moth population dynamics and whether Asian version of the moth is present (this has been discovered in BC). A temporary staff person has been added to assist with the response to Beech Leaf Disease and the potential for Oak Wilt.

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
6.3 To improve tree health along transportation corridors, consider implementing road, median and boulevard designs that will protect trees and their root zones from salt inputs and snow dumping.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Achieved – The London Plan contains many policies supportive of increased tree planting and tree retention (see Chapter 5 – City Building Policies and Chapter 6 – Place Type Policies). Boulevard trees were also a significant component of the Complete Streets Design Manual, which was approved in 2019. Design Standards have also been updated to implement increased tree planting opportunities, tree protection and tree retention.
6.4 Develop and implement an integrated pest management plan encompassing insects, disease, and invasive species. The plan should address prevention, control, and restoration within City-owned natural areas, and identify budgets and measurable targets for implementation. The plan should address pests on private property and provide the authority and empower the City to control pests on private property as required to ensure the overall health of the urban forest.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Partially achieved – The City adopted an Invasive Plant Management Strategy in 2017. It includes a number of strategies and responses to addressing invasive plants, including invasive trees. Additional work is required to address non-native trees that can aggressively out compete native species. The scope of invasive plant management for trees has not extended beyond City-owned lands and further review is required to determine targeted needs, regulatory authority, service delivery models and funding.

Guiding Principle: Maintain Better

Results:

Achieved:	15	50%
Partially achieved:	11	37%
In progress:	1	3%
Delayed:	3	10%
Not achieved:	0	0%
Total:	30	100%

7. Ensure City departments operate with common goals, objectives, and adequate staffing.

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
7.1 Undertake inter-departmental staff workshops to promote trees and tree-friendly design concepts, solve tree issues, and demonstrate new technology and techniques.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Achieved – Numerous staff workshops have occurred since 2014, resulting in enhanced policies, standards, and guidelines. Regular engagement with the Utilities Coordinating Committee on forestry matters takes place and “lunch and learn” education opportunities on specific forestry topics have been well-attended. Dialogue on tree matters and pilot demonstration projects will continue.

<p>7.2 Establish an inter-divisional implementation team for the Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) that includes individuals from across departments.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – An interdivisional implementation team for the UFS was established in 2015. A formal coordinating group was instrumental in achieving early successes with UFS implementation. In recent years, the need to formally convene has not been warranted; instead, an informal staff network is in place and subject matter experts are individually engaged to move implementation actions forward where additional support or technical knowledge is needed.</p>
<p>7.3 Establish a city-wide, consistent, inter-departmental policy approach that encourages landowners to retain trees or include enhanced tree planting in landscape plans at the site planning stage.</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Partially achieved – Tree retention is advanced through the development application process by staff, recognizing their infrastructure and amenity values. Changes to the Planning Act through Bill 23 have challenged full implementation through limitations on matters that can be fully achieved through the Site Plan Process and residential proposals that are less than 10 units are exempt from Site Plan Control.</p>
<p>7.4 Increase the City’s emphasis on using trees for placemaking such as creating neighbourhood “themes,” using seasonal colours, canopy shapes, etc.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Partially achieved – The London Plan Place Type policies and several Heritage Conservation District plans encourage tree selection to support placemaking. Staff reviewing tree selection proposals look for opportunities to support these policies. However, theming of tree species and tree shape concentration needs to be balanced with forestry management responsibilities, including the diversification of the urban forest, mitigation of tree damage and loss from pests and pathogens, and ongoing maintenance considerations.</p>
<p>7.5 Fund a second urban forest technician/forest health coordinator position to help with specific implementation projects, management of insect and diseases, and enforcement of site plans.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – An additional Forestry Technician was added in 2016 and another in 2024. These additional resources support the implementation of the UFS, Climate Change initiatives, and the City’s growing asset base.</p>
<p>7.6 Deliver a state of the forest report to Council on a 4-year cycle and an annual departmental performance review on the urban forest program.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Delayed – Council has not received direct and comprehensive updates of the UFS and its implementation. Staff will now prepare an annual monitoring report to highlight successes and challenges associated with the UFS, with a fulsome review of actions and results on a 4-year cycle. The first annual report will be presented to Council in early 2026 to reflect the 2025 accomplishments and challenges.</p>

<p>7.7 Establish a corporate philosophy whereby trees are managed as infrastructure assets using consistent concepts of “green infrastructure” and related terminology.</p>	<p>High Ongoing</p>	<p>Achieved – The City of London was the first municipality to include trees and woodlands in its 2019 Corporate Asset Management Plan. Trees and woodlands are identified as municipal infrastructure and overall asset condition, the associated risk profile and funding needs are evaluated with each CAM Plan update. City staff were invited speakers for the 2020 Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and 2021 Association of Municipalities of Ontario conferences, and the City was recognized as a best practice example.</p>
--	-------------------------	--

8. Maintain publicly owned trees to maximize current and future benefits provided to the site.

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>8.1 Establish quality specifications for London Hydro tree maintenance crews to use.</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Discussions with London Hydro resulted in the use of Electrical Standards Authority guidelines for work performed on City-owned trees.</p>
<p>8.2 Establish a scheduled life cycle and area-based tree maintenance cycle that includes rural areas.</p>	<p>High Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>Partially achieved – Through additional budget investments and increased use of the City’s forestry contractor, trim cycles for City-owned street trees have been reduced from 10 years down to 7 years. A further reduction to a 5-year trim cycle is presently targeted. Limited proactive maintenance of rural trees is performed by staff and further analysis is required to determine needs and cost implications.</p>
<p>8.3 Identify pruning dependent and high failure potential species within the street tree population and consider for phased replacement with more reliable species.</p>	<p>High Ongoing</p>	<p>Achieved – City and contracted trim crews actively identify trees that are in declining health, with identified structural issues, or are reaching end of life and should be considered for near-term removal and replacement. This feedback loop is built into the day-to-day work of City and contracted arborists.</p>

9. Increase funding to support and sustain urban forest management

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>9.1 Raise public awareness of the SPARKS Neighbourhood Matching Fund for neighbourhood-initiated projects and community project funds.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Funding for tree planting opportunities through various City programs is regularly promoted as part of information campaigns.</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>9.2 Develop a business case analysis to support a “tree infrastructure budget” for designing and building trees into selected capital projects. For example, the addition of trees and medians to the Horton Street project involved approximately 10% of the total project budget.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – While specific “tree infrastructure budgets” are not employed, capital projects include funding for tree planting and tree replacement. The degree of tree planting is informed by The London Plan policies, design standards and community consultation. Opportunities for additional tree planting are being explored, particularly to address projects where space for planting/replanting is limited due to available lands or technical limitations for other required infrastructure.</p>
<p>9.3 Provide annual funding to support Community/not-for-profit planting initiatives. These organizations are currently able to leverage additional funding at approximately 5:1.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Funding opportunities for community and not-for-profit organizations to support tree planting has been provided through the Tree Bank and the TreeMe program. In particular, ReForest London has been a strong community partner for the City, providing extensive outreach and plantings by individuals, groups, and companies. While funding for tree planting remains available, an update of the grant review framework is required.</p>
<p>9.4 Reduce the area of turf grass in the City through tree planting, with more selective mowing, to reduce costs. Areas with modified mowing require monitoring for invasive plants.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Partially achieved – Areas of naturalization and selective mowing have been implemented throughout the parks system. Many of these locations have served as opportunities for increased tree planting. Monitoring and public feedback has recognized that naturalization and reduced mowing requires additional management and maintenance to improve conditions in existing locations, to expand the program and to gain greater resident buy-in.</p>
<p>9.5 Increase the annual maintenance budget proportionally to new boulevard tree plantings. The selection of site appropriate tree species, improved soil quality and control of nursery stock should mean that new trees have a lower maintenance requirement than the current street tree population over the long-term. Allocate a portion of the new planting budget toward future maintenance.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Forestry budgets were increased with the 2019-2023 Multi-Year Budget to support improved tree maintenance. Assessment growth business cases are submitted each year to provide ongoing operating funding for care and maintenance of newly planted trees.</p>
<p>9.6 The City should develop a mechanism to build a contingency disaster fund for responding to significant damaging events to the urban forest.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – While a specific contingency reserve fund has not been deemed necessary, damage associated with storm events is addressed through budget monitoring and year-end surplus/deficit assessments. Cost impacts and frequency of storm events is being monitored to inform the need for dedicated funding in the future.</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
9.7 Investigate options for funding restoration and maintenance of new woodlands.	High Long-term (5+ years)	Partially achieved – Forestry budgets were increased with the 2019-2023 Multi-Year Budget to support improved tree and woodland maintenance. Assessment growth business cases are submitted each year to provide ongoing operating funding for care and maintenance of newly planted trees and newly acquired woodlands. Additional funding may be requested for woodland management with the next Multi-Year Budget.

10. Complete a comprehensive urban forest inventory and apply to management decision-making

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
10.1 Prioritize the new Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS) and complete the tree inventory as currently planned.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Partially achieved – The street tree inventory was fully updated in 2020 and has been consistently maintained in subsequent years. CMMS implementation is being phased-in in the coming years, beginning with work order management.
10.2 Develop procedures/approach to include London Hydro maintenance activities in the CMMS to minimize redundancies.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Partially achieved – London Hydro maintenance activities are provided to the City and are reviewed to assess potential duplications of service. Future phases of CMMS will examine the potential for incorporating the London Hydro data.
10.3 Monitor the performance of newly planted species and assess their performance. Adaptively manage future species selection based on monitoring outcomes.	Medium Short-term (1-2 years)	Achieved – The tree planting after-care program includes a monitoring and feedback component for tree performance based on species and location planted.
10.4 Identify the age distribution and projected life expectancy of trees within the current inventory.	Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)	Partially achieved – In 2022, estimated life expectancies for City-owned trees were established to inform asset management and lifecycle renewal requirements. Age distribution will be a component of the next major technical study of the urban forest (2025-2026).
10.5 Estimate mortality rates within the current tree population and model the projected effects of natural mortality and losses due to pests and disease.	Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)	Partially achieved – The 2017-2021 Tree Planting Strategy included mortality estimates, which have been refined by further study of operational work orders, warranty period replacements, and data gathered from the Million Tree Challenge. Further analysis is required to model the projected effects of natural mortality, climate change and losses from pests and pathogens.

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>10.6 Monitor budgets over time to refine the cost per tree establishment estimates and actual costs associated with the strategy in order to improve the accuracy of estimates to achieve the canopy cover targets.</p>	<p>Medium Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Tree planting costs are monitored and updated through the City’s tree planting contract. Additionally, cost per tree analysis has been undertaken for updates to the Boulevard Tree Protection By-law and will be reviewed and updated again as part of the compensation requirements for trees removed during the development process.</p>

11. Monitor existing and potential canopy cover

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>11.1 Conduct an analysis of plantable space across different land use types within London in order to estimate canopy potential.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>In progress – The 2017-2021 Tree Planting Strategy did not identify canopy cover targets and associated actions as the applicable The London Plan policies that were under appeal at the time. Canopy cover targets and associated tree planting actions will be included with the 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy. Additional analyses of plantable space will be completed in 2025.</p>
<p>11.2 Monitor canopy cover change over time by land use types to measure strategy performance. An inexpensive, accurate and repeatable method such as the USFS (United States Forest Service) iTree Canopy program is recommended. This should be based on up-to-date summer aerial photography, and repeated at 5-year intervals, prior to or in conjunction with Official Plan reviews.</p>	<p>High Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Canopy cover assessments were completed in 2015 (aerial photography), and 2018-2019 (Light Detection and Ranging [LiDAR]). With improving technology, the costs of aerial photography have dramatically decreased, and a canopy cover flyover will be completed at least once every 4 years. Google satellite analytics are also being investigated for tree canopy cover estimates in between comprehensive London-specific technical analyses completed on an 8–10-year cycle.</p>
<p>11.3 Monitor urban forest structure, function, and values over time using the USFS iTree Eco program. This should be repeated at 10-year intervals. The 2012 UFORE (The Urban Forest Effect) study can be used as a baseline and results updated with new iTree Eco local inputs. The iTree Eco re-analysis is to be completed and reported no later than 2018. iTree Eco is a new adaptation of the UFORE model.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Delayed – Comprehensive technical studies for forest structure, function, and values (i.e., and updated UFORE study) will be completed between 2025 and 2027.</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
11.4 Model the projected canopy gain from the current and planned urban forest in order to refine estimates for the number of new plantings required and time to reach canopy cover targets.	Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)	Delayed – Dynamic modelling of projected canopy gains has not been undertaken due to staffing vacancies and the prioritization of work loads. Additional enhancements to baseline data are required prior to being able to complete predictive monitoring. Support and expertise from the Corporate Asset Management team will enable this action to progress as part of the 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy.
11.5 Establish long term monitoring plots in forest woodlands.	Medium Long-term (5+ years)	Partially achieved -- Installation of long-term monitoring plots in all city woodlands (1 plot per woodland) initiated in 2024, with a target to have all woodlands covered by 2026. Data collected will inform woodland management planning and the targeted allocation of budgeted funding.

12. Undertake research to improve urban forest performance and encourage adaptive management

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
12.1 Expand the testing and use of innovative methods of accommodating trees in locations with limited rooting capacity that will allow air and water to reach the roots and prevent soil compaction (i.e., Silva cells, structural soil, etc.).	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Achieved – Several recent infrastructure projects have included supports to promote tree growth in constrained soils (e.g., silva cells, strata cells and expanded pits). Tree growth is being monitored in comparison to trees planted in similar circumstances that did not receive the enhanced treatment. At this time, the planted trees are too young to fully assess outcomes. Further monitoring will occur and other opportunities or methods for tree planting in constrained circumstances will be explored with the 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy.
12.2 Form research partnerships with local institutions to study different aspects of the urban forest such as forest health, the urban heat island effect and rainwater interception as the canopy changes over time.	High Long-term (5+ years)	Partially achieved – In 2022, the City joined a consortium of municipalities to partner with Brock University and the Vineland Research Station for research on urban forestry matters. Researchers at the University of Western Ontario have completed preliminary findings about London’s heat island effects and this data will be incorporated into the upcoming forestry technical studies. Further partnership opportunities with Western and Fanshawe are being explored.

Guiding Principle: Engage the Community

Results:

Achieved:	8	42%
Partially achieved:	2	11%
In progress:	0	0%
Delayed:	9	47%
Not achieved:	0	0%
Total:	19	100%

13. Consult and cooperate with large private landholders to embrace citywide urban forest goals and objectives

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
13.1 Initiate discussion forums with stakeholders to promote the benefits of mature tree retention, provision of suitable plantable space and build recognition that trees will make a project better.	High Short-term (1-2 years)	Achieved – Outreach activities with external partners and internal construction staff have occurred regularly since the UFS was adopted. Sessions have included educational materials, specific examples of desired outcomes and field visits to construction and development sites. Internal and external engagement will continue as an integral part of implementing the UFS. Feedback received will help inform adjustments to design standards, educational materials, and staff training.
13.2 Initiate discussion forums with large landowners or managers to encourage stewardship and to ensure understanding and buy-in to strategic objectives. Consider partnering with other agencies to coordinate this initiative.	High Long-term (5+ years)	Delayed – Ad hoc discussions have taken place with large landowners to discuss opportunities, but targeted locations will be prioritized with the 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy (e.g., the potential for temporary forests on lands being held for future development). Future initiatives to encourage enhanced stewardship of privately-owned woodlands will be factored into staff work plans based on available capacity.
13.3 Provide education and support for stewardship management planning in rural areas and publicly acknowledge rural stewardship efforts. Consider partnering with other agencies to coordinate this initiative.	High Long-term (5+ years)	Delayed – Rural stewardship initiatives have not advanced due to staff vacancies and the prioritization of work loads. Opportunities to partner with the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority with similar initiatives are being explored.

14. Consult and cooperate with local nurseries, arborists, landscapers, etc. (urban forestry services) to embrace citywide urban forest goals and objectives

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>14.1 Establish a nursery growing contract to supply trees for city plantings and trees used in public planting initiatives. Investigate the potential for a partnership or knowledge sharing with other agencies that already have growing contracts with two nurseries in the region.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Delayed – A feasibility study for a City tree nursery and a Seed-to-Street program will be undertaken in 2025.</p>
<p>14.2 Facilitate training and education workshops to communicate and obtain feedback on regulatory changes, professional report standards, canopy cover goals, tree retention techniques, best management practices and City expectations for supervision and tree management plans on development sites.</p>	<p>High Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Outreach activities with external partners and internal construction staff have occurred regularly since the UFS was adopted. Sessions have included educational materials, specific examples of desired outcomes and field visits to construction and development sites. Internal and external engagement will continue as an integral part of implementing the UFS. Feedback received will help inform adjustments to design standards, educational materials, and staff training.</p>

15. Consult and cooperate with citizens at the neighbourhood level to embrace citywide urban forest goals and objectives

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>15.1 Develop incentive programs such as an annual tree voucher or tree giveaway program, to promote tree planting on private property.</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Incentive programs to fund tree planting (TreeMe) and the retention of distinctive trees (Tree Canopy Conservation Program) have been established and funded. Implementation frameworks are being reviewed and opportunities to fund additional private tree planting are being explored with the 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy. Approximately 2000 trees are provided to the community during the annual National Tree Day giveaway and additional pop-up tree giveaways are occurring throughout the year.</p>
<p>15.2 Prepare tree care or tree information cards for specific practices like tree watering and species and identify their locations using the tree inventory. Send cards out at seasonally appropriate times to residents who have those trees on the boulevard in front of their house.</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Delayed – Tree planting education package to be prepared as part of the 2025-2029 Tree Planting Strategy.</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
15.3 Work with neighbourhoods to develop neighbourhood tree plans that will guide implementation of this strategy; neighbourhood plans should define prototypical street tree applications and canopy cover targets for different land use types within that neighbourhood. Plans should also build a sense of shared responsibility for achieving canopy cover targets.	Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)	Delayed – Neighbourhood tree plans will be explored further once Planning District tree planting targets have been established. The number of neighbourhood tree plans and the level of public engagement will be contingent on staff capacity and available funding.
15.4 Continue/expand the adopt-a-park program and partner with UTRCA and/or Community and neighbourhood organizations to facilitate neighbourhood workshops to encourage stewardship activities in these parks.	Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)	Delayed – Community outreach and neighbourhood stewardship initiatives have not substantively progressed due to staffing capacity and prioritization of work loads. Funding to support enhanced community engagement may be included with a business case for the next Multi-Year Budget.

16. Consult and cooperate with the business community to embrace citywide urban forest goals and objectives

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
16.1 Facilitate stakeholder workshops with the local business community, coordinated with the London Chamber of Commerce and the London Development Institute, to discuss with business representatives the implementation of practices that will alter the canopy cover around commercial developments (i.e., malls, sidewalk cafes, car parks). Presentations to the Chamber of Commerce about the value of trees and opportunities for businesses to participate in new plantings through sponsorship or volunteerism will build a greater understanding of the value of the urban forest and reduce potential conflicts now and in the future.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Partially achieved – Forestry-related consultations have taken place with several Business Improvement Areas, development representatives and the London and St. Thomas Association of Realtors. Joint initiatives with ReForest London and the London Environmental Network are being explored in order to further engage the local business community about forestry-related matters.
16.2 Build on partnerships with business owners to increase tree cover and improve tree health and tree care in commercial and industrial zones.	High Medium-term (3-5 years)	Partially achieved – Forestry-related consultations have taken place with several Business Improvement Areas, development representatives and the London and St. Thomas Association of Realtors. Joint initiatives with ReForest London and the London Environmental Network are being explored in order to further engage the local business community about forestry-related matters.
16.3 Provide an avenue for public recognition of outstanding contributions by businesses or institutions to urban forestry in London. The Veterans Memorial Parkway project is a successful model that could be duplicated in other areas of the city.	Medium Long-term (5+ years)	Delayed – Public recognition initiatives have not substantively progressed due to staffing capacity and prioritization of work loads. Joint initiatives with the UTRCA and ReForest London are being explored.

17. Facilitate public understanding of urban forest management

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>17.1 Maintain an urban forestry website that provides more focus on customer service, is updated with seasonally appropriate information about the urban forest, provides information about upcoming urban forestry events and provides updates related to urban forest strategy objectives.</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Forestry and tree information was updated as part of the new City website launched in 2020. The website provides information on tree maintenance, tree-related by-laws, tree protection measures, pests and diseases, and funding opportunities. Tree reporting has also been incorporated into the Service London portal to improve the collection, actioning and tracking of resident requests. Specific tree-related information is communicated to the public through various social media channels.</p>
<p>17.2 Continue to use opportunities such as National Forest Week, World Forestry Day, Earth Day, and National Tree Day to promote urban forestry and raise the profile of London’s urban forest.</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Public awareness campaigns through radio interviews, social media releases, presentations to residents, and other communications approaches are undertaken each year with various Forestry-related commemorative days/weeks. Forestry-related topics have also been showcased with the annual Public Works Week and partnerships with the Canadian Association of Girls in Science.</p>
<p>17.3 Develop and fund an education campaign for stakeholder groups about the benefits of trees, to encourage tree planting, and to foster proper tree care.</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Delayed – Community outreach and neighbourhood stewardship initiatives have not substantively progressed due to staffing capacity and prioritization of work loads. Funding to support enhanced community engagement may be included with a business case for the next Multi-Year Budget.</p>
<p>17.4 Provide a synopsis of legislation, policy, and By-laws that apply to tree removals. This can be included in educational materials on urban forest management in London.</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Forestry and tree information was updated as part of the new City website launched in 2020. The website provides information on tree maintenance, tree-related by-laws, tree protection measures, pests and diseases, and funding opportunities. Tree reporting has also been incorporated into the Service London portal to improve the collection, actioning and tracking of resident requests. Specific tree-related information is communicated to the public through various social media channels.</p>
<p>17.5 Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy. Ensure that the strategy is coordinated by Corporate Communications and all City departments participate in its development so that initiatives are coordinated and can be rolled out smoothly in the appropriate season (e.g., green-waste recycling in the fall, water conservation during the summer months, tree cutting permit to avoid the bird nesting season, etc.).</p>	<p>Medium Short-term (1-2 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – A Forestry Communications Strategy was created and implemented in 2022. Further enhancements related to trees and construction projects will be completed in 2025. Tree-related matters are routinely communicated through social media channels.</p>

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>17.6 Make the City website and staff directory more accessible/navigable to make it easier for the public to contact staff with questions or concerns about the urban forest.</p>	<p>Medium Medium-term (3-5 years)</p>	<p>Achieved – Forestry and tree information was updated as part of the new City website launched in 2020. The website provides information on tree maintenance, tree-related by-laws, tree protection measures, pests and diseases, and funding opportunities. Tree reporting has also been incorporated into the Service London portal to improve the collection, actioning and tracking of resident requests. Specific tree-related information is communicated to the public through various social media channels. Tree-related matters can also be communicated to the City by emailing trees@london.ca.</p>

18. Consult and cooperate with neighbouring communities on regional urban forest management issues

Action	Priority and Timeframe	Progress Update
<p>18.1 Establish and facilitate an inter-jurisdictional working group to identify common objectives, build collaborative working relationships, explore greening opportunities, and address funding challenges across the region. A range of regional issues are relevant to implementation and the focus of this working group including canopy cover targets, forest health management, biodiversity management, tree waste management and watershed management and conservation.</p>	<p>High Long-term (5+ years)</p>	<p>Delayed – Outreach to neighbouring communities on regional urban forest management issues has not substantively progressed due to staffing capacity and prioritization of work loads. Ad hoc initiatives and discussions are undertaken with Middlesex County (e.g., pest management and woodland fire mitigation). Funding to support enhanced community engagement may be included with a business case for the next Multi-Year Budget.</p>