

2014 Service Change Case

Service	Land Use Planning
Initiative	Municipal Tree Planting Fund – “Tree Bank”

Financial Implications (\$ 000)							
	Change to Gross Expenditure	Change to Non Property Tax Supported Revenue	Net Change to Property Tax Levy	2014 Tax Levy Impact %	Incremental Net Change Future Years \$ (if applicable)		
					2015	2016	2017
Capital Budget Impact							
Operating Budget Impact	50		50				
Staffing Implications							
# of FT / FTEs impacted	None						

Background
<p>On January 28, 2014 Municipal Council asked passed the following resolution:</p> <p>“the Civic Administration BE DIRECTED to report back at the next Planning and Environment Committee meeting with respect to initiatives that the City and the public could undertake to ensure that more trees are planted to make the Million Tree Challenge more successful”</p> <p>While a separate report will be brought forward at a later date to consider other medium and long term strategies for assisting the Million Tree Challenge, this business case has been brought forward to address the timing of the 2014 budget deliberations.</p> <p>The City of London invests in tree planting in a number of different ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerald Ash Borer funding – which has been put in place to remove Ash trees on City-owned property and replant trees of other species over time • Street tree infill program – to plant trees in boulevards within existing neighbourhoods • Street tree planting in new neighbourhoods (paid for by those who develop subdivisions) • Woodland management funding – to manage woodlands (involving a tree planting component) • Tree planting as part of parks projects (new parks and park improvement)

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- Trees in roads and other public works projects
- Contribution to ReForest London
- Contribution to the Veteran’s Memorial Parkway project

Because tree planting is only a component of each of these activities, the annual City investment in tree planting can only be estimated - approximately \$750k.

Clearly, the greatest number of trees per municipal dollar has been generated by community tree planting programs like the Million Tree Challenge and the Veterans Memorial Parkway projects. Utilizing the majority of the above investment, the City planted approximately 3,800 trees in street boulevards and in parks 2013. Meanwhile, with a relatively small share of the overall expenditure, the Million Tree Challenge hopes to inspire planting of 100,000 trees per year, on average. The Million Tree Challenge reported a leveraging factor of 8.5:1– including in-kind community work, donations, reduced tree costs, etc.

While planting in road allowances is a practice that Staff believes is best done by the City, planting in appropriate municipally owned parks and natural areas has been very successfully undertaken by the community. Furthermore, leveraging municipal dollars to inspire planting throughout the City, on privately owned land, is what the Million Tree Challenge focuses upon most heavily.



The Million Tree Challenge is falling short of its target. Just under 160,000 trees have been planted in the first two years of the program. Recognizing the importance of trees in the Forest City, Council has asked Staff to consider a means for assisting the Million Tree Challenge.

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A municipal tree planting reserve fund (colloquially referred to as a “Tree Bank”) could assist. The purpose of such a “Tree Bank” would be to establish a dedicated fund that can be contributed to, and drawn upon, specifically for tree planting on private lands, The fund would be drawn upon for tree planting that involves community and business collaboration. It would tap into community in-kind tree planting labour, and to seek out contributions of materials, discounted trees, etc. so that tree planting investments are maximized.

- Charitable donations from individual members of the public
- Charitable donations from businesses, institutions, industry, etc.
- Contributions to the fund from Council when trees are removed for public projects (outside of the natural heritage system)
- Contributions to the fund from any private sector entity that wishes to remove trees (outside of the natural heritage system) to develop a property and would like to compensate accordingly
- Annual investment by Council, with the potential for contributions during the budget cycle

The logistics around these and other funding sources for the Tree Bank would need to be considered in depth to understand what is practical and achievable.

Performance Measures Impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dollars contributed to the “tree bank” by members of the public, business, institutions - # trees planted per year - # trees planted per \$1,000 - ratio of dollars of in-kind services and trees planted / dollars invested by the City (leverage factor)

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Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - tree planting throughout London – assist in meeting the Million Tree Challenge Targets - civic image, improve community health and wellness, reduce energy costs, reduce pavement replacement rates, assist in natural heritage health, etc. - leverage municipal investment in tree planting - engage the community – the public, business, institutions in tree planting - increasing tree canopy cover thereby improving environmental quality and social benefits
Risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - uncertainty relating to contributions from non-municipal sources