Million Tree Challenge Status Update  
Ivan Listar

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING ON MARCH 23, 2015

FROM: JOHN M. FLEMING  
MANAGING DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER

SUBJECT: MILLION TREE CHALLENGE STATUS UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Planning and City Planner, this information report BE RECEIVED by Planning and Environment Committee as a fulfilment of the yearly update for the Million Tree Challenge.

PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER

January 21, 2014 Million Tree Challenge Status Update to Planning and Environment Committee
January 22, 2013 Million Tree Challenge Status Update to Planning and Environment Committee
February 9, 2012 Report to Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee regarding Impact of Services Review Committee 2012 Funding Recommendations on Implementation of the Emerald Ash Borer Strategy and Million Tree Challenge

BACKGROUND

The Million Tree Challenge (MTC) is an initiative to engage Londoners to plant one million trees in the City over the next ten years. It was launched in June 2011 with ReForest London and the City as founding partners.

Most of the land within the city is privately owned, so inspiring Londoners to plant trees at their homes, businesses, children’s schools and places of worship is key to growing a robust urban forest and achieving our million tree objective. The program seeks partners from the private business sector and the public to plant the trees. The initiative addresses key City strategic priorities of building a sustainable city and strengthening our communities.
A formal partnership model and governing and implementation structure has been established that includes a Steering Committee, Volunteer Action Teams and ReForest London Resource Teams. The partnership model was selected to engage, motivate, and celebrate the accomplishments of all the partners in order to provide community involvement and to leverage the limited resources of any one organization or individuals. Additional information on the model and structure has been previously reported.

**Partnerships and Public Participation**
- **Leveraged $744,337** in 2014 through raised funds, donations of time, services, goods and media appearances. This represents a 7.4:1 leverage ratio for every dollar of the $100,000 funded by the City.
- **177 Partners and growing.** The number of partners increased substantially in the last year from the 141 in 2014. A full list of partners is included in the attachment.
- **72 Community events** in 2014 including tree plantings, sales and giveaways. Five of these community planting events were organized by the City because of the City’s ability to support and promote smaller group plantings in public park space. Our ability to provide leadership and accommodation to organizations like Girl Guides and the Bereaved Families provides them an opportunity to participate in tree planting activities in a small, local group setting instead of larger planting projects hosted by one our partners.
- **Over 6,500 Volunteer hours** of labour have been provided by participants in 2014.
- **2,519 Individuals and organizations** are registered with the Million Tree Challenge

**Major Events and Initiatives**
- **National Forest Week and National Tree Day (September 22-29):** Million Tree Challenge Partners gave away over 1,900 trees at 37 locations on one day alone. The City of London gave away 300 one-gallon saplings at five locations across the city. Sixteen other partners participated in the week’s celebrations through various community planting events.
- **Sovereign Woods restoration:** Approximately 1,800 trees and whips were planted to reforest lands recently rezoned as open space from industrial. Major partners with the City included Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, Thames Valley District School Board and Saunders Secondary School students.
- **The Neighbourhood Tree Captains program,** has 39 volunteer Captains working year-round throughout the City. They raise awareness of trees in their neighbourhoods and assist with acquiring trees for private property, tree sales and local planting projects. They delivered over 1,000 trees to residents in 2014. One Neighbourhood Tree Captain also rallied the members of a condominium corporation to adopt City land on Old Riverside Drive which, through collaboration with the City, was transformed into a well-treed neighbourhood pocket park.
- **Western Fair:** A Million Tree Challenge booth was staffed for the full 10 days of the Fair. Approximately 2,500 native seedlings were given new homes and almost 10,000 people received information on the importance of urban trees.
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- **The Veterans Memorial Parkway**: Over 500 large trees were planted by over 500 volunteers along the Parkway. Another 221 were planted by ReForest London in the Oxford/Crumlin area as a joint venture. Additionally, 300 trees were given away by the City to participants and residents. The Veterans Memorial Parkway initiative also won the prestigious national Green For Life Community Award from the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association.

- **Growing Trees**: In partnership, high schools and other facilities that have greenhouses produced 1,756 seedlings, many of which were distributed directly into the community by participating schools.

- **Native Tree Sales and Giveaways**: Altogether there were 11 tree sales and dozens of tree giveaways that distributed almost 11,000 trees across London. In addition to the already mentioned initiatives, some of other notable venues included the joint Upper Thames River Conservation Authority/London Hydro tree sale partnership in the spring, Forest City Road Races and the Labatt World Environment Day Forum.

- **Aftercare**: Naturalization projects in parks and planting projects in school yards require some care in the years after planting. In 2014, over 400 volunteers contributed almost 1,000 volunteer hours to perform maintenance, invasive species removal and other care to 20 planting projects. The volunteers are increasingly made up of companies and other groups looking to have a community action day for their employees or members. The willingness of these groups to do the less glamorous job of tree maintenance demonstrates the Million Tree Challenge messaging of the importance of tree care post planting is effective.

**GOING FORWARD FOR 2015**

The Million Tree Challenge program will continue to engage more private sector partners and leverage funds and resources in order to expand the program and to reach the goal of planting one million trees within 10 years. The program will continue building on the successful, established and new partner relationships and initiatives, such as the volunteer “Tree Captain” program.

For 2015, the main areas of focus will be on increasing the program’s capacity to deliver the program, attracting more industrial and institutional participation and increasing our private land tree planting. Additional emphasis will be on working with schools and interested partners to increase the number of trees planted in school yards and their local neighbourhoods. We will also be working more closely with our Conservation Authorities to facilitate planting programs in rural areas.

The MTC is also looking forward to Canada’s 150th birthday in 2017 and will be exploring opportunities and partnerships this year that may lead to a very significant increase in the number of new trees to be planted in the Forest City in 2017.

Masonville tree sale
Veterans Memorial Parkway
SUMMARY

The Million Tree Challenge is an on-going, successful initiative that has increased the awareness of the importance of trees as well as mobilized commercial, industrial, educational and institutional partners and individuals from across the City to plant trees. The Million Tree Challenge has an effective governance and implementation structure that leveraged over $7.44 for every dollar spent by the program in 2014 and has resulted in 236,314 trees registered to date.

I would like to acknowledge ReForest London and Barry Sandler for their contributions in the preparation of this report.

SUBMITTED BY:  

IVAN LISTAR, R.P.F.  
MANAGER, URBAN FORESTRY

RECOMMENDED BY:  

JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP  
DIRECTOR OF LAND USE PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER

cc: ReForest London  
cc: Trees and Forests Advisory Committee  

Attachment: Full list of MTC Partners
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Attachment: Full List of Million Tree Challenge Partners

Join our Growing List of Partners - 177

MILLION TREE CHALLENGE

Be One in a Million

Founding Partners: City of London and ReForest London

Business/Industry

A & M Garden Centre
Aknatun Operation
Amway Canada
Arthur German Landscape Architecture
Baseline Nurseries and Garden Centre
Big Valley Gardens
Bloom at the Market
Bolter Mountain
Boomerang Credit Union
Bowman Works in London
Brian Byrne, Regent Centre City Realty
Brown Enterprises
Bucky Publications
Bumbal Buzz Gardens
CLC Tree Services
Clown Drawn
Clinker
Corilla E. Tubor Fencing Office
Corunzae Architects Incorporated
Davy Tree
Dutch Markets LLP
Dx Trade Group Inc.
Dwettis
Eider’s Landscaping
Eastforest Homes
ECHO Power Equipment Canada
Fendal
Foresters
Furnaces
G & A Farm & Build Supply Inc.
Golder Associates
Goodfellow
Goodwill Industries
Greenside Farm
Green Side Up
Glen Montfort & Partners
Harley Home Hardware
Harison Parks LLP
Harman Greenhouses & Strawberry Farm
Hartslawn Gardens and Gardens
Heritage Garden Gallery
Home Hardware – London East
Hopkin Leadership Institute Inc.
Horte Craft Ltd.
Hunningbird Homes
Inland Nurseries
Industries Unlimited
Ingenius Canada Inc.
Joe Fondi’s Restaurant
John Zatkof Ltd.
Key Contact
KFPID LLP
Labatt Breweries
Landcare Native
Landcare Ontario
Landtree Services
Lapbrook Marketing & PR
Leaf Landscaping Solutions
Lumbers LLP
Libro Financial Group
Little Creek Tree Farm
London Bridge Child Care Services
London Baby Sops
London Chamber of Commerce
London Community Foundation
London Convention Centre
London Development Institute
London Economic Development Corporation
London Home Builders Association
London Harvest
London Leaf
London Mechanical Plumbing & Heating
London St. Thomas Association of REALTORS®
MacKap Animation
McIntyre & Roberts Funeral Home
McIntyre-Lake Lawyers LLP
Microset Computer Corporation
Mountain Equipment Co-op
MNH Landscaping
Nicholson Sheffield Architects Inc.
NIP Blueprint
Norm’s Tree Service
Novak Law
Old Trust Company
Old Country Renewals
Pandora’s Gardens
Pawaukee Pond Water Gardens
Peachtree
Sasha’s
Seven Sisters Properties Limited
Springbank Garden Centre
St. William’s Nurseries and Ecology Centre
Sweetch
Sun Ray Technologies
To Friends of the Environment Foundation
Textbook Forest
The Achievement Centre International Inc.
The Community Fundraiser
The Living Centre & Living Arts Institute
The Tea House
TLC Landscaping
Tree Canada
Tragedy
Tik-Tok Technologies
Trial Planting
Tribal Planting
Tyrant Landscape Design Inc.
Union Gas Limited
Univer City Nursery
Verticle Greenhouses and Garden Centre
Verticle Greenhouses and Garden Centre
Verdant Landscape
Walker Construction
WAPRIL Media
Waste Management
Waste Solutions Canada
West End Pantry
Western Fair District
Western Research Park
White Oaks Mall
Wood Craft Furniture
WINMAR, London
Woods of Water
Woodland Cemetery
Yoga Shack

Community Organizations

Argile Community Association
Art of Living Foundation – London Chapter
Art on a Limb Studio
Artistic Food Nature Park
Bannockburn Families of Ontario Southwest Region
Boy’s and Girl’s Club
Byron Community Organization
Canadian Cancer Society – Elgin-Middlesex Unit
Cross Cultural Learner Centre

Emerging Leaders’ London Community Network
Food Not Laws
Forus City Road Races
Friends of Meadowlark Woods
Friends of the Goveas
Friends of the London Civic Garden Complex
Garden Club of London
Lambeth Community Association
Latein Canadian Community Corporation
London Farriar’s Horticultural Society
Layton Horticultural Society
London Microwave Gardeners
London Parent Running Club
London Public Library

London Strengthening Neighbourhoods Strategy
Montessori Academy
Nature London
Nilex Know
Old East Village Community Association
Old South Community Organization
Optimist Club of Summerdale
Pillar Nonprofit Network
SoCVC Canada – London Branches
SOHO Community Association
Sustainable Saws
Thames Talbot Land Trust
The Arthritis Society, Southeast Region
Trees and Forest Advisory Committee

Urban League of London
Veterans Memorial Parkway Community Program

Institutions

Fanshawe College
London Health Sciences Centre
Middlesex London Health Unit
St. Joseph’s Health Care, London
Victoria Public School
Western University

Media Partners

CTV London
The Londoner
JACK FM 103.3
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