

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE PLANTING STRATEGY

Prepared by: Amber Cantell (Vice-Chair, TFAC)

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The creation of a planting strategy is one component of the City's new Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) (p. 25, "1.3 Following the adoption of the new Official Plan, prepare a planting strategy for the City"). City staff announced to TFAC earlier this year that it was in development.

It has been proposed that this first phase of the planting strategy will deal with solely tree planting on public lands, with private lands to be dealt with at a later (as yet undetermined) date. Some concerns have come up at TFAC over the course of discussions about the Strategy, particularly around how different planting opportunities will be assessed for their ability to meet canopy cover targets and the relative costs to do so.

Therefore, it is recommended that for the Planting Strategy:

- 1) Staff be directed to prepare a **draft outline** of the proposed planting strategy and its parts, and to report back to PEC and TFAC on what each part would contain, with a final version to be prepared following consultation with PEC and TFAC.
- 2) Staff be directed to provide a **timeline** for the development of each part of the Strategy, and an overview of how the development will proceed (it being noted that in the UFS, this was listed as a short-term 1-2 year item, following approval of the UFS).
- 3) The Strategy should clearly establish how different planting activities will affect the canopy cover by 2035 (expressed as a percent), the target horizon for the UFS. The Strategy should include a **methodology to show how canopy cover projections will be calculated**, and any assumptions made. Doing so will allow staff, councillors and TFAC members to confidently assess different proposals for planting, and to effectively weigh their relative costs and benefits.

(For example: which will produce the greatest canopy gains over the long run - planting 1,000 young trees in a park which might have a mortality of 20% and a cost of \$5,000, or planting 20 caliper trees with a mortality of 10% and a cost of \$4,000 at a shopping mall?)

- 4) TFAC be requested to **review the canopy cover methodology** when it is prepared, and provide comment.
- 5) The final goal of the Strategy be to **identify what actions** (programs, types of plantings, etc.) **will be necessary to produce the 28% canopy cover target** (established by City Council on Sept. 2, 2014) in the most cost-effective manner possible. *(I.e. the sum of all recommendations should collectively result in 28% cover by 2035).*

Where different options have been considered, the analysis and comparison of each of those options should be included to show & justify why the preferred approach has been selected

(and to keep the other options on record should there be a need or opportunity for other ideas to be implemented).

Reaching 28% canopy cover in London will be extremely challenging: having an effective Planting Strategy which systematically analyses planting opportunities and assesses their impact on canopy cover will be essential in achieving it.