PLANT MORE
TREE PLANTING STRATEGY
DRAFT

In 2014, The City of London, adopted the "City of London Urban Forest Strategy – Enhancing The Forest City". The long term vision of the strategy is a healthy, diverse and extensive urban forest for today and the future. London is The Forest City. The guiding principles to implement the strategy are to plant more, protect more, maintain better and engage the community. Together these principles will be used to reach the goal of increasing London's tree canopy cover to 34% by 2065.

This report describes how we'll achieve that goal together and outlines the first five year Action Plan. It will require close partnerships with the community to be successful. Tracking and monitoring tree planting to better understand impacts such as tree establishment success and mortality will be undertaken in efforts to reduce overall expenses and grow the canopy quicker. This strategy is a living document and will be reviewed and revised as best management practices are investigated and adopted.

CONTENTS

WHY PLANT MORE?

OUR TREE COVER IS DECREASING, FROM
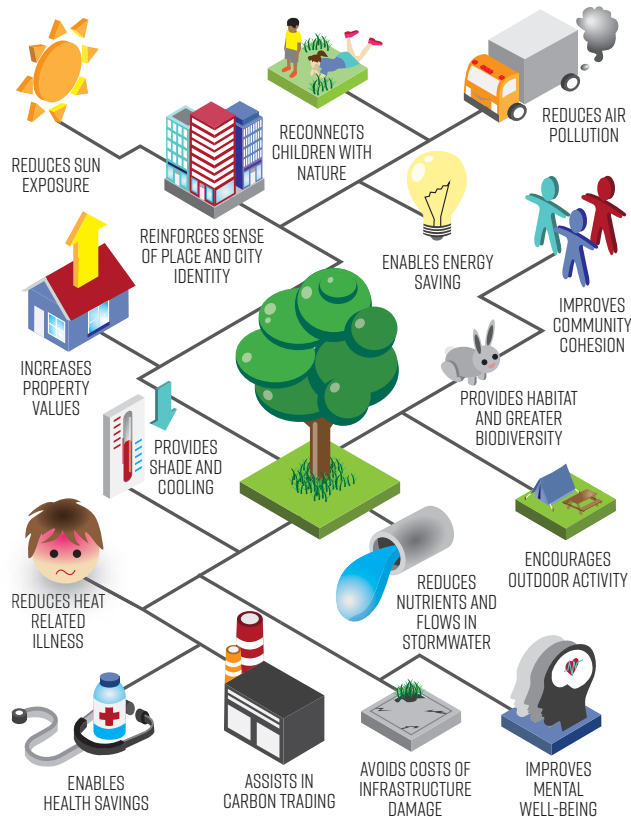
24.7%

OF THE CITY IN 2008, TO

23.7%
IN 2015

REPRESENTING THE LOSS OF

178,000 TREES

MAINLY DUE TO THE LOSSES OF

ASH
TREES

FROM THE EMERALD ASH BORER

BENEFITS OF AN URBAN FOREST

REDUCES SUN EXPOSURE

RECONNECTS CHILDREN WITH NATURE

REDUCES AIR POLLUTION

REINFORCES SENSE OF PLACE AND CITY IDENTITY

ENABLES ENERGY SAVING

IMPROVES COMMUNITY COHESION

INCREASES PROPERTY VALUES

PROVIDES SHADE AND COOLING

PROVIDES HABITAT AND GREATER BIODIVERSITY

ENCOURAGES OUTDOOR ACTIVITY

REDUCES HEAT RELATED ILLNESS

REDUCES NUTRIENTS AND FLOWS IN STORMWATER

ENABLES HEALTH SAVINGS

ASSISTS IN CARBON TRADING

AVOIDS COSTS OF INFRASTRUCTURE DAMAGE
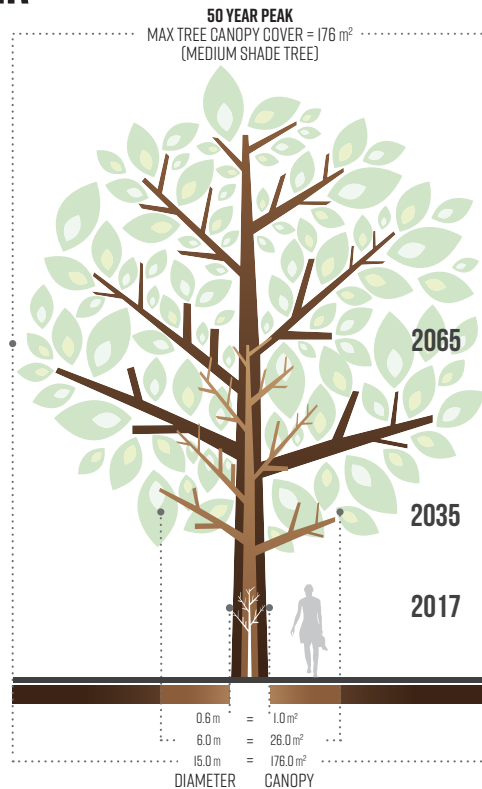
IMPROVES MENTAL WELL-BEING

CONTEXT

The City has a number of policy documents that require enhanced levels of tree planting, to support the health and well-being of residents in our growing City:

THE LONDON PLAN

URBAN FOREST STRATEGY

MIDDLESEX NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEMS STUDY

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE CITY OF LONDON

TREE PLANTING

TO REAFFIRM LONDON AS

THE FOREST CITY,

COUNCIL APPROVED A TARGET OF

34%

TREE CANOPY COVER BY 2065

TREE CANOPY COVER

The area covered by the vertical projection of tree crowns; the area within the drip-line.

50 YEAR PEAK
MAX TREE CANOPY COVER = 176 m²
(MEDIUM SHADE TREE)

2065

2035

2017

0.6 m	=	1.0 m²
6.0 m	=	26.0 m²
15.0 m	=	176.0 m²
DIAMETER		CANOPY

TREE GROWTH & MORTALITY

Trees grow exponentially, but not all reach maturity.

TREE GROWTH

MORTALITY
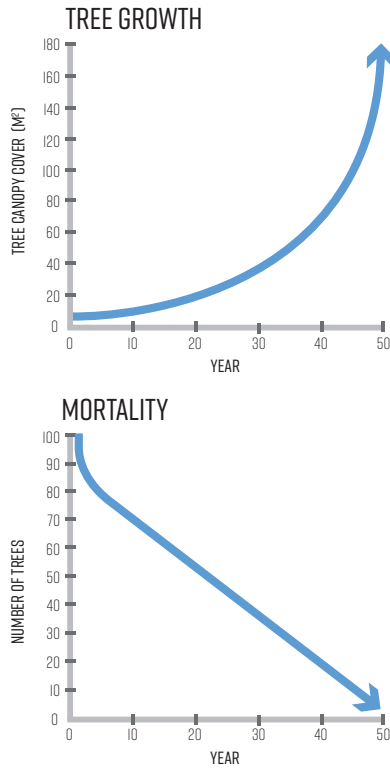
CANOPY COVER GOAL

To achieve our Forest City goal of 34% tree canopy cover, we need to grow additional tree canopy over an area of 2,430 hectares by 2065.
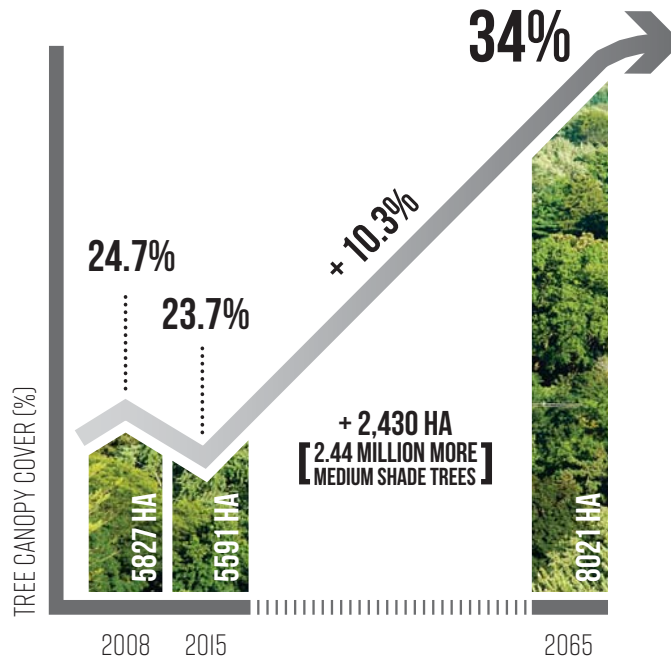
THAT IS APPROXIMATELY
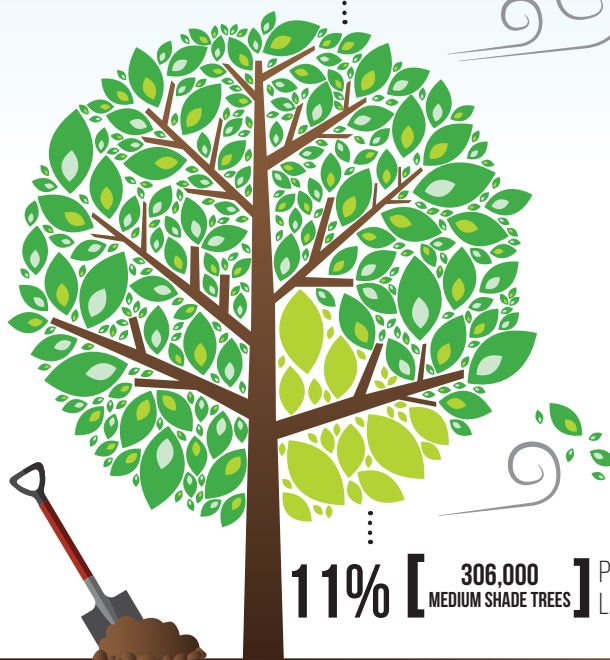
400 X

THE AREA OF

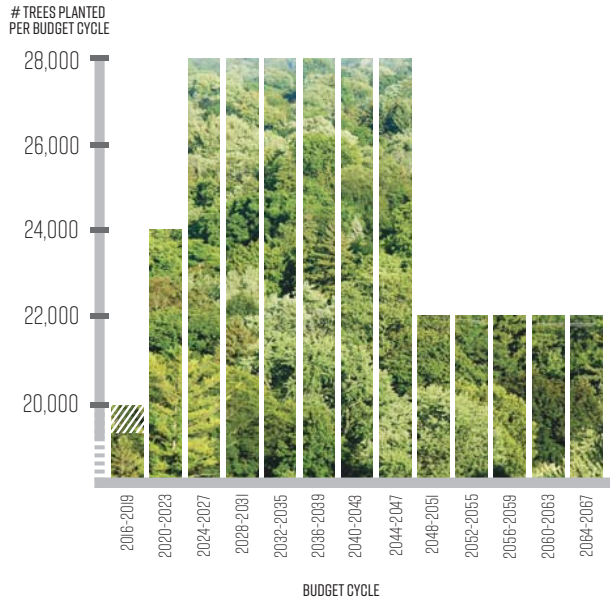# VICTORIA PARK

AT 100% TREE CANOPY COVERAGE

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

City-owned lands within the Urban Growth Boundary are already at 42% tree canopy cover. The City will aim for 11% of the required new tree canopy target, averaging one Victoria Park of new tree canopy cover for each year of planting. Everyone else will be encouraged and supported by the City and its partners to plant seven Victoria Parks every year starting in 2017.

89% [**2,156,000 MORE** MEDIUM SHADE TREES] PRIVATE LANDS

11% [**306,000** MEDIUM SHADE TREES] PUBLIC LANDS

CITY PLANTING

TREES PLANTED
PER BUDGET CYCLE
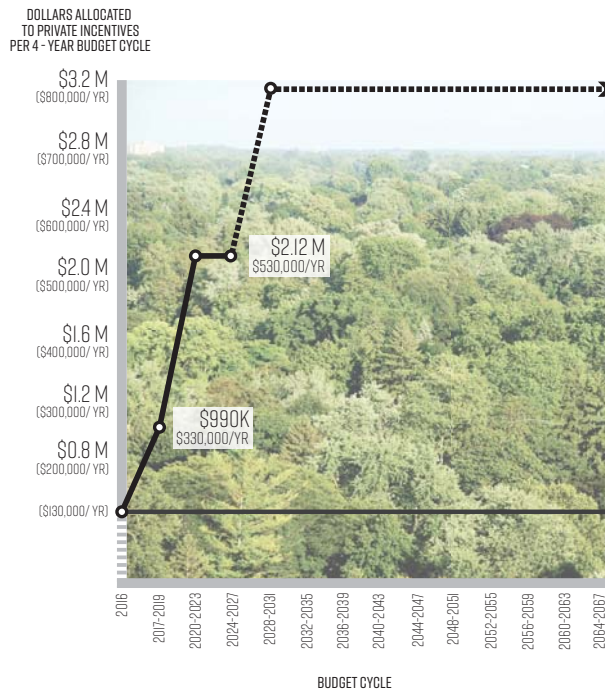
28,000
26,000
24,000
22,000
20,000

BUDGET CYCLE

Council approved an additional $1.8 million ($450,000/year) for tree planting in the 2016-2019 budget cycle only.

10 PLANT MORE

PRIVATE TREE INCENTIVES

The City spent $1.63 million in 2016 on tree planting, of which $130,000 went towards incentives for tree planting on private lands.

DOLLARS ALLOCATED
TO PRIVATE INCENTIVES
PER 4 - YEAR BUDGET CYCLE

$3.2 M ($800,000/ YR)
$2.8 M ($700,000/ YR)
$2.4 M ($600,000/ YR)
$2.0 M ($500,000/ YR)
$1.6 M ($400,000/ YR)
$1.2 M ($300,000/ YR)
$0.8 M ($200,000/ YR)
($130,000/ YR)

$2.12 M $530,000/YR

$990K $330,000/YR

BUDGET CYCLE

NOTE: Incentives may be leveraged to initiate more tree planting on private property. To remain on target, incentives may rise to $800,000 per year by 2028.

PLANT MORE; PLANT BETTER

The City shall increase the number of trees planted, reduce tree mortality and increase average tree life expectancy to achieve our goal.

CONSISTENT WITH THE LONDON PLAN...

1 Implement Planting Strategy for achievable canopy cover targets.

2 Plant More – on public lands

3 Plant More - on Private Lands

4 Plant Better – implement best practices

ACTIONS

1. IMPLEMENT PLANTING STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVABLE CANOPY COVER TARGETS

2017- 2023 (to achieve it) and then continuing	Reduce new tree mortality in year 1 to 4% or less, and no more than 3% mortality in year 2 and 2% mortality in year 3 with watering strategy.
2017 onwards	Implement a long term communications strategy to educate and engage citizens about tree protection and planting goals.
2018	Assess and implement contract-growing of suitable trees in a range of sizes to supply future needs.
2018 onwards	Plant the largest-growing and longest-lived species suitable for that location.
2020 onwards	Prioritise City planting by (1) low tree canopy cover areas (2) largest area available (3) ease of planting.

2. PLANT MORE – ON PUBLIC LANDS

2017 (already underway	Naturalise wherever possible.
2018	Conduct cost: benefit analysis for enhanced Downtown tree planting.
2018 onwards	Identify and protect potentially plantable boulevard space before licensing for private purposes.
2018 onwards	Assess encroachments of City lands and implement restoration or licensing; allocate realised fees to tree planting and tree maintenance programs.
2020	With London Hydro, achieve appropriate planting of small, medium and large stature trees within tree-height distance of power lines.
2020 onwards	Maximise shade tree planting on public lands.
2020 onwards	Plant more climate appropriate conifers.
2020 onwards	Utilize vacant public lands for tree planting.
2020 onwards	Prepare detailed 5-year planting plans by neighbourhood, to enhance the urban landscape and restore heritage or cultural landscapes.

3. PLANT MORE – ON PRIVATE LANDS

2017 (already underway)	Support planting and continual care of food-bearing trees.
2017 (already underway)	Continue and expand tree planting initiatives by or for persons with a disability.
2017 onwards	Collaborate with community partners to identify new, and support existing, programs.
2018 onwards	Create a tool lending library; donate tree care equipment.
2020 onwards	Plant City trees in private yards if there is insufficient space on nearby City land.
2020 onwards	Enter into partnerships to plant and manage trees on institutional lands to benefit the wider community.

4. PLANT BETTER – IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES

2017 onwards	Start the process to improve species diversity. Prioritise species origin & provenance (1) native to Ontario (2) Native to North America (3) non-native. Implement assisted migration where appropriate. Avoid any species that is invasive.
2018 - 2020	Amend by-laws and tree planting guidelines to require more trees be planted, with low mortality in establishment.
2018	Revise planting standards to optimise soil volume, soil quality and other factors for success.
2018 onwards	Implement better physical tree protection measures.
2019 - 2022	Monitor success of reducing mortality and adjust Planting Strategy as needed.
2020 onwards	Prioritise species origin & provenance (1) native to Ontario (2) Native to North America (3) non-native. Avoid any species that is invasive.
2020 onwards	Apply maximum parking requirements, to support 30% canopy cover with shade tree planting.