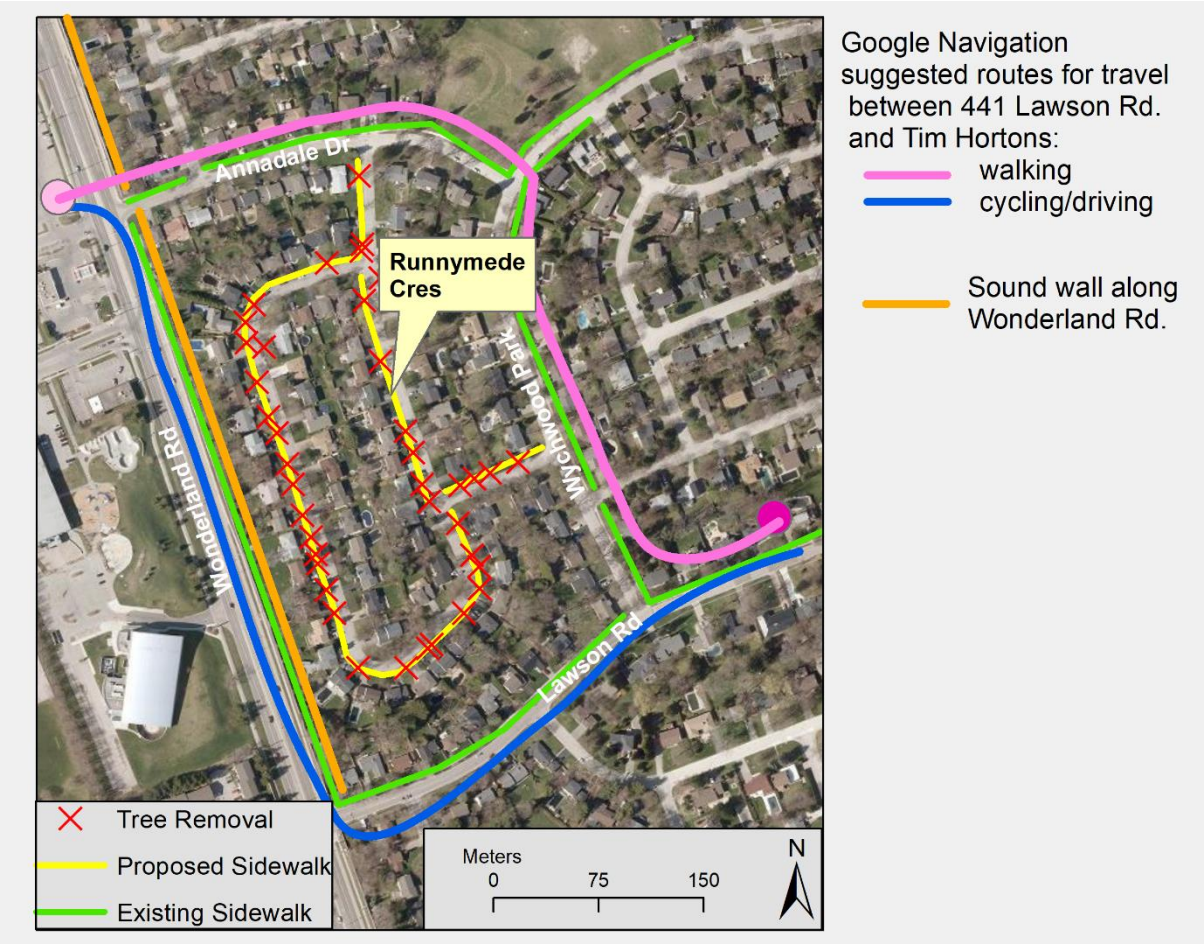
Dear Civic Works Committee,

I respectfully request delegation status to address the Civic Works Committee to share concerns regarding the proposed removal of a minimum of 39 mature trees on Runnymede Crescent.

I am resident of Runnymede Crescent and live here with my partner and our two young children. I, with the help of other concerned residents and parents, have spent the last two weeks gathering information from other residents on our street. In the last two weeks alone, 50 of the 68 houses on Runnymede (as well as some households nearby) have emailed to express their opposition to the removal of these mature trees (see Appendix 1), with emails coming in daily. In general, we oppose the removal of the trees on our street, for the following two key reasons: 1) **the nature of our Crescent – it is a very low traffic area that is not part of a greater sidewalk network** and, 2) **the trees provide substantial benefits to the well-being of those on the street and the wider community**. These points are addressed briefly below.

1) Runnymede Crescent is a very low traffic are, it is not a through-route, nor part of a sidewalk network.
    a. Runnymede Crescent is a destination not a route. The traffic that we see on our street is minimal, and almost exclusively residents. **Figure 1** shows how self-contained our street is. Our crescent does not provide access to any facilities or services. Also, shown on the map is that the proposed sidewalk will not directly connect to an existing sidewalk network.

Figure 1: Map showing the existing and proposed sidewalk and travel routes in the neighbourhood. Note that Runnymede Crescent is not part of the through routes.



b. Evidence of the low traffic volume is that Runnymede Crescent does not even qualify for a traffic survey. Residents confirm the low traffic volume and the safety of the street, some of whom have lived on Runnymede Crescent for over 40 years.

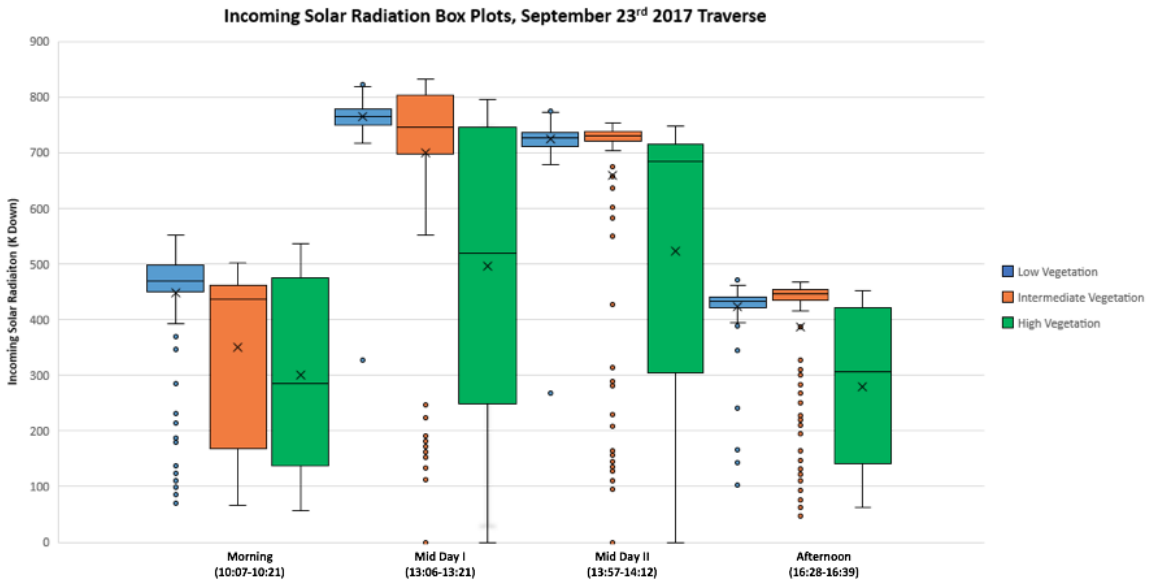
"Traffic on this street is extremely low and generally limited to its residents and their own personal visitors. We have been known to play many a game of basketball and street hockey for 2 or more hours and be interrupted no more than 2-3 times to make room for a passing car during that entire time. Our children can safely play together Outside of our homes." – Runnymede Resident

"We have been here for 5 years and have never felt unsafe walking on the roadside. There is such little traffic and what there is, are residents of the street and expect pedestrians. We walk our dog, the kids play basketball, and all vehicles are slow and very respectful." – Runnymede Resident

2) The trees provide substantial benefits to the well-being of those on the street and the wider community.
    a. The mature trees on our street contribute to a dense canopy (see **Figure 2**). This canopy moderates heat during hot summer months. Reducing the canopy, in the face of increasingly hot summers, puts the well-being of our residents at risk. Recent research by Western University demonstrates the impact of high vs low levels of vegetation on street temperature in London Ontario (**Figures 3-4)**. Newly planted trees will *not* provide the same benefit as mature trees.

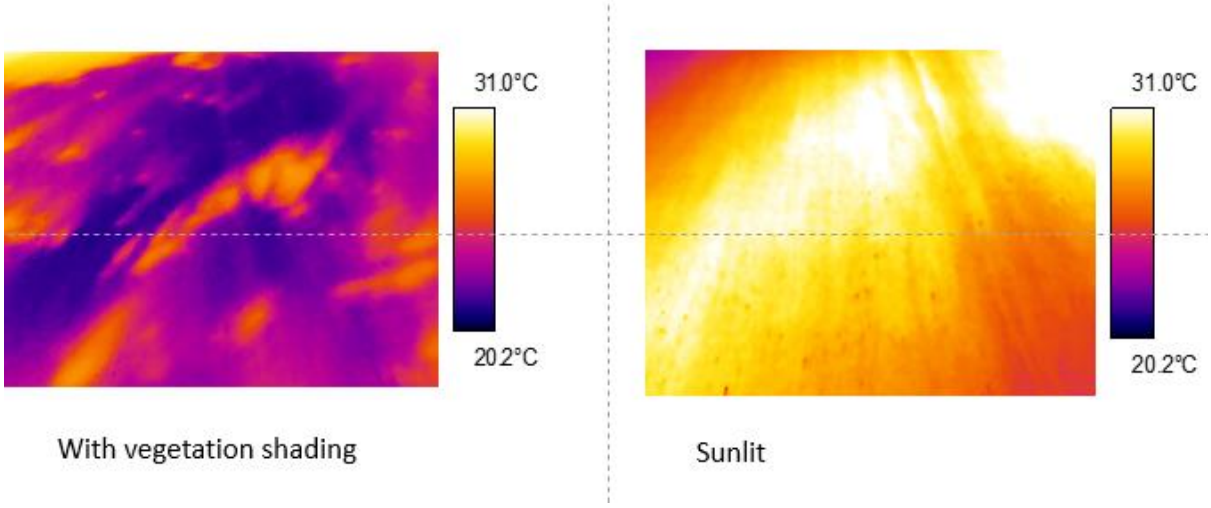
Figure 2: Photos of the canopy extending Runnymede Crescent

Figure 3: Solar Radiation & Road Surface Temperature Analysis



Note: Median incoming solar radiation is lowest in high vegetation areas; highest variability at solar noon, and highest variability in the high vegetation neighborhood. These numbers correspond with the road surface temperature. This supports that during the day road surface temperatures, as well as incident solar radiation, will be reduced in areas with higher vegetation cover. Figure provided by Prof. Jamie Voogt, Department of Geography, Western University.

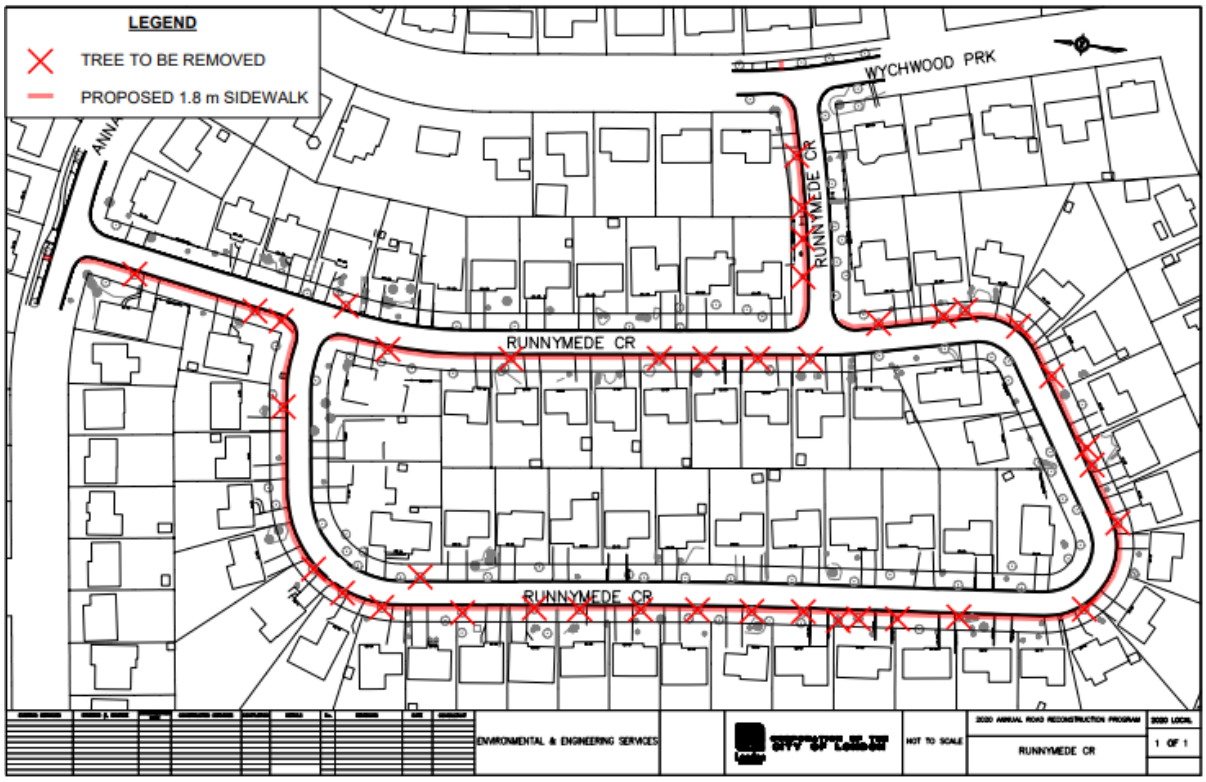
Figure 4: Road Surface Temperatures (NE London)



Note: From this imagery we see that the road surface is substantially cooler with vegetation shading. Figure provided by Prof. Jamie Voogt, Department of Geography, Western University.

b. Mature trees provide substantial ecosystem value in urban environments, intercepting rain and slowing run-off rates, while providing important wildlife habitat. The proposed works will result in a substantial reduction to of the mature forest canopy in our neighbourhood (**Figure 5)**.

Figure 5: Minimum trees proposed to be cut



c. Finally, the mature trees provide valuable benefits to those residing on this quiet street, young and old. This is evident by many personal accounts, for example:

"To chop down all these thriving beautiful trees would be to cut down what is most representative of our neighbourhood."- Runnymede Resident

"We commonly see several types of birds, rare hawks and falcons included, that are in and around our front trees that would be cut."- Runnymede Resident

"Our beautiful trees provide shade in the summer for a quiet walk and for shaded play. We are so happy to have them taking care of the air pollution from nearby heavy traffic areas. Please let us remain a part of the "Forest City"." - Runnymede Resident

In summary, there is a strong opposition among our residents to the removal of a minimum of 39 mature trees to install sidewalks. Runnymede crescent has extremely low traffic. Removing these mature trees will eliminate the substantial benefits they provide to our neighbourhood.

I give written permission for my submission to be placed on the public agenda and on the City of London website, with my email address removed.

My understanding that the next meeting is February 19th, 2020, and I request the opportunity to address this issue on this date. Please advise me if my request will be placed on the agenda.

If you require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me by email.

Sincerely,

Gina Martin