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Trees and Forests Advisory Committee: Advisory Committee Work Plan for 2020

Executive Summary:

Serving as a resource and information support group for the City of London, the Trees and Forest Advisory Committee (TFAC) works to aid the City of London in implementing its Urban Forest Strategy. To this end, TFAC has outlined 13 initiatives the committee plans to undertake in 2020, as detailed in the document that follows. These initiatives address ten of the strategic goals set forth in the Urban Forest Strategy and span all four of its guiding principles: Plant More, Protect More, Maintain Better, and Engage the Community.

Initiatives have been organized by the guiding principle(s) addressed, or alternatively as *Multifaceted or Overarching Initiatives*.

Plant More:

- 1) Site Plan Control By-Law Review
- 2) “No Net Loss” Policy
- 3) Design Specifications and Requirements Manual – Chapter 12, and Standard Contract Documents Review
- 4) Shade Policy

Plant More and Protect More:

- 5) Design Specifications and Requirements Manual – Chapter 12, and Standard Contract Documents Review

Protect More:

- 6) Companion Planting to Promote Native Biodiversity
- 7) Review Cash-in-Lieu Policy

Maintain Better:

- 8) Planting and Monitoring Efforts

Engage the Community:

- 9) Skills Development for Professionals within the Community
- 10) Educational Initiatives and Outreach

Multifaceted and Overarching Initiatives

- 11) Urban Forest Strategy Progress Monitoring
- 12) Committee Professional Development
- 13) Monitoring of Work Plan and Recommendations

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Colour Coding of Initiatives

	UFS: Plant More
	UFS: Protect More
	UFS: Maintain Better
	UFS: Engage the Community
	Multifaceted and Overarching Initiatives

Guiding Principle: Plant More	
Initiative:	Site Plan Control By-Law Review
Responsible Party:	Amber, Site Plan Control By-Law Review Subcommittee
Timeline:	March 2020 through December 2020
Goal:	Review the Site Plan Control By-Law document to provide comments for improvements.
UFS Strategic Goal:	1 Achieve appropriate canopy cover across the community.
UFS Action:	1.1 Establish canopy cover targets by place type and implement them through a framework of planting strategy, Planning District, Site Plan Control Area By-law and other policies, guidelines or regulations to be developed, and with community engagement (see Table 1 in UFS).
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review existing site plan control by-law; begin compiling list of topics “for staff consideration”. 2) Review draft of updated version when it is supplied to TFAC; provide recommendations to PEC.
Current Status:	Not started.

Guiding Principle: Plant More	
Initiative:	“No Net Loss” Policy
Responsible Party:	Roberto Mannella
Timeline:	April 2020
Goal:	Develop strategies and/or guidelines to prevent loss of canopy cover during property development.
UFS Strategic Goal:	1 Achieve appropriate canopy cover across the community.
UFS Action:	1.4 Implement a policy of no net loss of tree canopy cover as a fundamental principle or baseline from which to determine and project tree canopy cover targets.
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Define objective of a “no net loss” policy 2) Determine staff member(s) to assist 3) Report back to TFAC on the feasibility of implementing a policy
Current Status:	Not started.

Guiding Principle: Plant More	
Initiative:	Shade Policy
Responsible Party:	Randy
Timeline:	TBD
Goal:	To address the potential creation of a shade policy. <i>Note: This was previously recommended and supported by PEC. However, it does not appear to have been mentioned in the new Parks Master Plan.</i>
UFS Strategic Goal:	N/A
UFS Action:	N/A
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Request update on status. 2) Discuss issue with Middlesex London Health Unit, since they have expressed an interest in this issue previously. 3) Make follow-up recommendations, if necessary.
Current Status:	Not started.

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Guiding Principle: Plant More		Guiding Principle: Protect More	
Initiative:	Design Specifications and Requirements Manual – Chapter 12, and Standard Contract Documents Review		
Responsible Party:	AnnaMaria		
Timeline:	Tentative, pending public release of document (late 2020)		
Goal:	Review the Design Specifications and Requirements Manual (Chapter 12), and Standard Contract Documents to provide comments for improvements.		
UFS Strategic Goal:	2	Develop a tree establishment program driven by canopy cover targets, maintenance capacity, and “right tree, right place” principles.	
	6	Improve urban forest health.	
UFS Action:	2.2	Develop standards and include species-appropriate minimum soil volumes, planting medium (mixture), and watering in all tree planting specifications.	
	6.1	Revise policies to support opportunities to either retain native topsoil or redistribute more topsoil on-site post development to improve the quality of tree planting sites.	
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review existing design specifications and requirements manual with subcommittee, propose changes. 2) Provide comment on updated drafts for public comment when they are released. 3) Address current guidelines on soil quality for boulevards in new subdivisions, with respect to their ability to sustain healthy tree growth. 4) Compare the City of London’s soil guidelines to those of other cities. 		
Current Status	Documents requested from City		

Guiding Principle: Protect More	
Initiative:	Companion Planting to Promote Native Biodiversity
Responsible Party:	AnnaMaria
Timeline:	TBD
Goal:	Increase biodiversity through companion planting, utilizing native understory vegetation alongside urban trees. This will aid in maximizing ecological service provision, through creation of habitat for birds and other wildlife, and will also aid in reducing run-off and soil erosion.
UFS Strategic Goal:	4 Preserve and enhance local natural biodiversity.
UFS Action:	4.2 Manage natural areas to enhance biodiversity (i.e., enrichment planting, retention of wildlife trees and coarse woody debris, uneven distribution of plantings, proactive management of invasive species to enhance native species, etc.).
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) identify areas within the city that can support cluster plantings of trees on public land. 2) Make recommendations for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enhancing provision of ecological services, including nutrient cycling, reducing runoff and erosion, and providing food and habitat for native wildlife. b. Utilizing native groundcovers, shrubs, and other understory vegetation to reduce competition between trees and turf grass.
Current Status:	Not started.

Guiding Principle: Protect More	
Initiative:	Review Cash-in-Lieu Policy
Responsible Party:	AnnaMaria
Timeline:	TBD
Goal:	Prevent loss of canopy cover through the cash-in-lieu policy within the Parkland Conveyance and Levy By-law
UFS Strategic Goal:	5 Enhance and enforce municipal policies.
UFS Action:	5.3 Increase staff and resources for enforcement of tree protection related by-laws and site plan implementation to protect City assets.
	5.5 Consider new policies and review/enhance existing policies around tree retention for subdivision developments, including the retention of shelterbelts and hedgerows as desirable features between developments.
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Review and make suggestions on the cash-in-lieu policy within the Parkland Conveyance and Levy By-law 2) Make suggestions for alterations to policy or enforcement, to reduce loss of canopy cover
Current Status	Not started.

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Guiding Principle: Maintain Better	
Initiative:	Planting and Monitoring Efforts
Responsible Party:	Amber
Timeline:	TBD
Goal:	Develop measures to assess planting and tree maintenance activities conducted by the city.
UFS Strategic Goal:	8 Maintain publicly owned trees to maximize current and future benefits provided to the site.
	10 Complete a comprehensive urban forest inventory and apply to management decision-making.
UFS Action:	8.3 Identify pruning dependant and high failure potential species within the street tree population, and consider for phased replacement with more reliable species.
	10.3 Monitor the performance of newly planted species and assess their performance. Adaptively manage future species selection based on monitoring outcomes.
Tasks:	<p>1) Develop recommendations as to what data should be recorded during planting, establishment and pruning (etc.). This will aid in determining:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How many trees are removed per year? b. Survival rate by species. c. How long a city-owned urban tree in London typically live, including whether this is improving or worsening.
Current Status:	Not started.

Guiding Principle: Engage the Community	
Initiative:	Educational Initiatives and Outreach
Responsible Party:	Amber, Marnie (Educational Initiatives and Outreach Subcommittee)
Timeline:	February-May 2020
Goal:	Aid tree owners in caring for their trees, by promoting education on trees and tree care topics (e.g. “volcano” mulching, planting and staking, watering, etc.). Target the public, property managers/larger-scale property owners (e.g. hospitals, nursing homes), and relevant businesses (e.g. landscapers, arborists) Provide feedback on the City of London website, to enhance access to information on trees and tree care.
UFS Strategic Goal:	15 Consult and cooperate with citizens at the neighbourhood level to embrace citywide urban forest goals and objectives.
	17 Facilitate public understanding of urban forest management.
UFS Action:	15.2 Prepare tree care or tree information cards for species-specific practices like tree watering and species identification, and identifications of their locations using the tree inventory. Send cards out at seasonally appropriate times to residents who have those trees on the boulevard in front of their house.
	17.5 Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy. Ensure that the strategy is coordinated by Corporate Communications and all City departments participate in its development so that initiatives are coordinated and can be rolled out smoothly in the appropriate season (e.g., green-waste recycling in the fall, water conservation during the summer months, tree cutting permit to avoid the bird nesting season, etc.).
	17.6 Make the City website and staff directory more accessible/navigable to make it easier for the public to contact staff with questions or concerns about the urban forest.
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provide suggestions to aid the City of London in improving their website and enhancing knowledge about pertinent tree topics. 2) Suggest educational campaign options for the city in relation to “volcano mulching” and other common tree maintenance issues. 3) Consult with the city on their current educational campaigns and planning. 4) Potentially work with the city’s graphic designers to help develop materials. 5) May also address topics such as benefits of trees and canopy cover loss prevention in a similar manner.
Current Status:	Subcommittee formed.

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Guiding Principle: Engage the Community	
Initiative:	Skills Development for Professionals within the Community
Responsible Party:	Alex Morrison
Timeline:	TBD
Goal:	(Under development)
UFS Strategic Goal:	<p>14 Consult and cooperate with local nurseries, arborists, landscapers, etc. (urban forestry services) to embrace citywide urban forest goals and objectives.</p> <p>17 Facilitate public understanding of urban forest management.</p>
UFS Action:	<p>14.2 Facilitate training and education workshops to communicate and obtain feedback on regulatory changes, professional report standards, canopy cover goals, tree retention techniques, best management practices and City expectations for supervision and tree management plans on development sites.</p> <p>17.3 Develop and fund an education campaign for stakeholder groups about the benefits of trees, to encourage tree planting, and to foster proper tree care.</p>
Tasks:	TBD
Current Status	Not started.

Multifaceted and Overarching Initiatives	
Initiative:	Urban Forest Strategy Progress Monitoring
Responsible Party:	Amber
Timeline:	TBD
Goal:	<p>Monitor the progress of the Urban Forest Strategy, a multi-million dollar 20 year strategy to help ensure the growth and health of one of the Forest City's most important features.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing advice on the formation and implementation of London's Urban Forest Strategy is at the core of TFAC's mandate.
UFS Strategic Goal:	<i>(All UFS Strategic Goals)</i>
UFS Action:	<i>(All UFS Actions)</i>
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> TFAC has requested to receive updates on UFS progress from staff twice per year, at our regular meetings. Set dates for implementation update presentations with staff. Amber to review suggested metrics from earlier TFAC and share with committee and staff (for use in the update presentations). Review implementation tasks from the implementation plan and make recommendations concerning their execution and/or timelines as needed.
Current Status:	

Multifaceted and Overarching Initiatives	
Initiative:	Committee Professional Development
Responsible Party:	Marnie
Timeline:	On-going
Budget:	\$300 (tentative)
Goal:	Identify professional development, educational, or outreach opportunities for TFAC members to attend to help keep abreast of current developments in urban forestry (e.g. urban forestry conferences, seminars).
UFS Strategic Goal:	<i>The UFS strategic goals and actions that relate to these opportunities will depend on the conferences and other events scheduled in 2020.</i>
UFS Action:	
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Aim to have at least 2 TFAC members attend forestry, urban forestry, arboriculture, or related events this year.
Current Status:	Not started.

Multifaceted and Overarching Initiatives	
Initiative:	Monitoring of Work Plan and Recommendations
Responsible Party:	Marnie
Timeline:	On-going
Goal:	Monitor the progress of TFAC's work and status of the recommendations made, in order to track their progress/status and follow-up as required.
UFS Strategic Goal:	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17
UFS Action:	1.1, 1.4, 2.2, 4.2, 5.3, 5.5, 6.1, 8.3, 10.3, 14.2, 15.2, 17.3, 17.5, 17.6
Tasks:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain an up-to-date list of TFAC's recommendations and their status.
Current Status:	<i>Refer to status of individual items (above).</i>