



London  
CANADA

# Naturalization Initiatives in London

Presentation to the Trees and Forest Advisory Committee  
July 28, 2021 by Parks Planning and Design

[london.ca](http://london.ca)



# London Plan



## THE LONDON PLAN

EXCITING. EXCEPTIONAL. CONNECTED.

CONSOLIDATED MAY 23, 2019  
COUNCIL ADOPTED, JUNE 23, 2016  
MINISTER APPROVED, DECEMBER 28, 2016

Policies subject to LPAT Appeal PL170100 - May 23, 2019



The **London Plan** emphasizes **growing inward and upward** with policies that better address and **avoid threats to biodiversity** from:

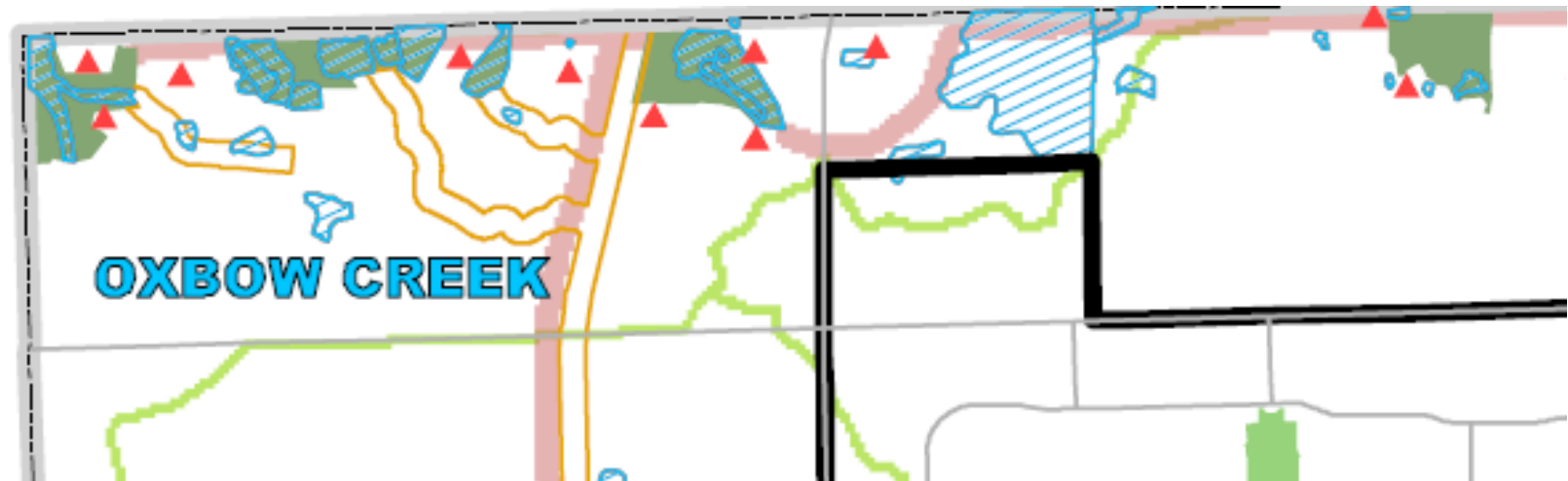
- habitat loss
- alien invasive species
- population growth
- pollution
- unsustainable use
- climate change






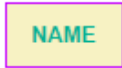

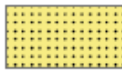






# London Plan

1301\_ The diversity and connectivity of natural features and areas, and **the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of Natural Heritage Systems, will be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved,** recognizing linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and groundwater features...

# Map 5 - Natural Heritage - Potential Naturalization Areas



## NATURAL HERITAGE SYSTEM

	Provincially Significant Wetlands		Name	Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest
	Wetlands		NAME	Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA)
	Unevaluated Wetlands			Potential ESAs
	Significant Woodlands			Upland Corridors
	Woodlands			Potential Naturalization Areas
	Significant Valleylands			Unevaluated Vegetation Patches

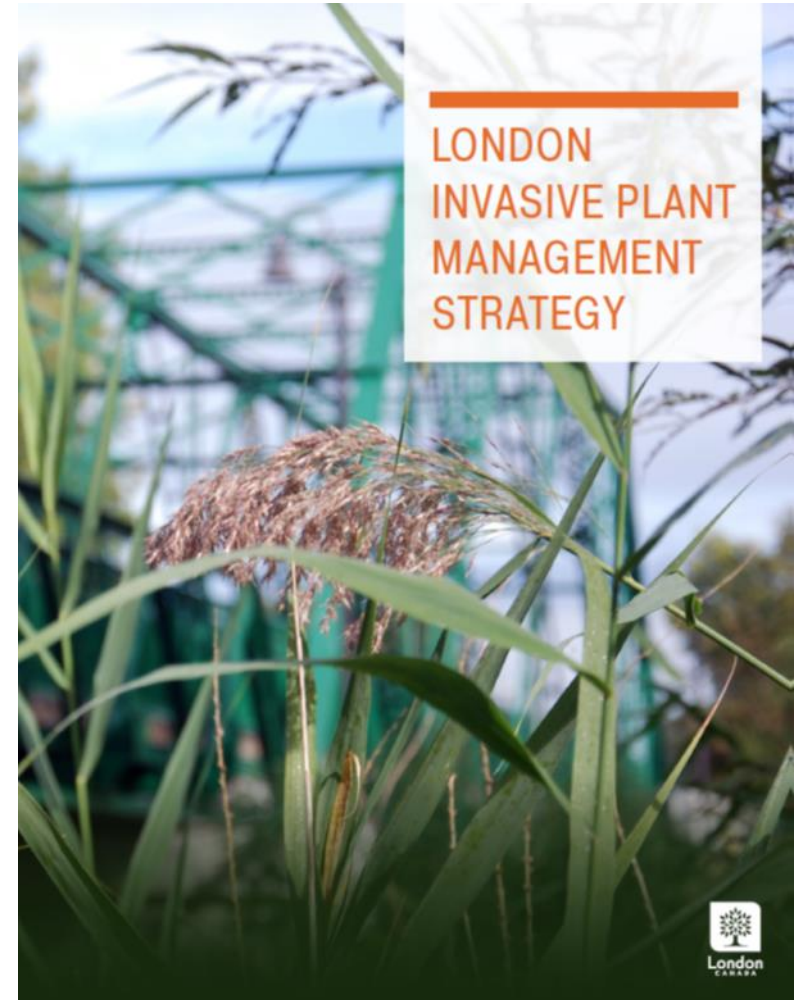


# Leaders in Invasive Species Management

The national Invasive Species Centre commended the City for excellent work completed under the London Invasive Plant Management Strategy (LIPMS):

“London is the first municipality in Ontario to create, approve and implement an invasive species strategy.”

“Beyond the tremendous ecological benefits of this strategy, London is enabling community-led engagement around invasive species control.”





# Leaders in Invasive Species Management

Westminster Ponds ESA – Ecological restoration of 4+ hectare area that was 80% non-native invasive buckthorn and dead ash trees in 2016.

**St. Williams NURSERY & ECOLOGY CENTRE**

### WHY NATIVE PLANTS?

Indigenous native plants:

- are critical to creating and maintaining healthy functioning natural ecosystems
- provide wildlife habitat and maintain important food webs (for example, bird populations depend on healthy native plant communities and the insects they feed on)
- provide important ecological services including:
  - o air and water purification
  - o helping to conserve water supplies
  - o preventing erosion and topsoil loss
  - o provide habitat for crop pollinators
- and because they are beautiful plants that truly connect us with the diverse places we live on this Earth.

### SAVE TIME AND MONEY AND HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

Using native plants often reduces the cost and energy of landscape maintenance by requiring less mowing and watering while also preventing the spread of probable invasive species. Native plants can save you time and money.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

You can play your role by ensuring that you are purchasing plant products that belong in the Ontario ecosystem, and that they were sourced in Ontario. Ask your supplier to identify the seed source of their product, and ensure that it is suitable for your application.

### ABOUT THIS PROJECT

St. Williams Nursery and Ecology Centre (SWNEC) was retained by the City of London to prepare and implement the ecological restoration plan for a 4 hectare area in the Westminster Ponds / Pond Mills Environmentally Significant Area (ESA). The City was generously awarded with a Canada 150 Community Infrastructure grant for the implementation of the accessible trails in the ESA. SWNEC's ecological restoration plan focuses on managing invasive exotic vegetation, primarily Common Buckhorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) to allow for the re-establishment of healthy native plant communities. SWNEC will continue to monitor and adaptively manage the area to achieve successful restoration outcomes. More details on the restoration plan are available from City of London Ecologist, Linda McDougall. © 519-661-2489 x 6494 lmcDougall@london.ca.

### ABOUT ST. WILLIAMS NURSERY AND ECOLOGY CENTRE

We are committed to protecting, conserving, and restoring natural biodiversity in Ontario landscapes. We take a scientific approach to producing top quality, Ontario sourced identified native seed and plants necessary for ecosystem restoration and sustainable land use management.

St. Williams Nursery & Ecology Centre  
www.stwilliamsnursery.com



Canada 150 Grant from Federal Government helped fund project which began in 2017 with wintertime mulching of the buckthorn and many standing dead ash trees. Project is successful and native species are now dominant. Drone photo by UTRCA

# Tree Planting Strategy

- ✓ Enhancing the urban forest is key to enhancing biodiversity, and, London Plan's Direction #4: Become one of the greenest cities in Canada.
- ✓ Council's target is to increase London's tree canopy cover to 34%.
- ✓ Fast tracking the **Tree Planting Strategy** is recommended in the [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#)



# Dingman Creek Wetland - 18 Hectares Naturalized

**COVID-19**

More ▾

London

## There are signs south London's 'cutting edge' wetland is working

A nesting pair of blue-winged teal ducks were spotted in Dingman Creek last summer

[Colin Butler](#) · CBC News · Posted: Feb 26, 2020 4:00 AM ET | Last Updated: February 26







# Park Naturalization Programs

Hundreds of successful projects over last 20 years with “Adopt a” groups, ReForest London, UTRCA & many others.



**Coves ESA Before and After**





# Park Naturalization Programs

ReForest London led 17 naturalization projects in 2019-20 & more on-track for 2021 supported by City and community volunteers.



Southcrest Ravine  
Fall 2019  
150 Trees and  
Shrubs, with 110  
volunteers from 8  
organizations



**ReForest London**  
planting the future today



# Naturalization Initiatives in London and Region

- **UTRCA** coordinates many naturalization projects on public and private lands in London every year with support from the City and volunteers
- **LTVCA, KCCA, ALUS Middlesex, Pollinator Pathways Project** and many others coordinate additional naturalization projects across the region
- City's **Neighborhood Decision Making** program funds additional naturalization projects
- **Carolinian Canada's Go Wild Grow Wild** events with support from the City raise awareness about naturalizing at home (90% of City is private land)



# Naturalization Initiatives In London

- 65% of London's parkland is now naturalized (35% is manicured)
- Area of naturalized parkland is up 5% from 5 years ago, demonstrating City's commitment to naturalization
- Mowing will be further reduced over next 5 years and beyond to continue this positive trend and improve sustainability

