



London
CANADA

Trees and Forests Advisory Committee (TFAC) communications update



July 28, 2021



Engaging the community

The Educational Initiatives and Outreach Subcommittee (EIOS) of the Trees and Forests Advisory Committee (TFAC) has provided suggestions to assist the City in engaging the community.

- These suggestions were designed to aid the City in addressing two of its strategic goals:
- Strategic Goal 15: Consult and cooperate with citizens at the neighbourhood level to **embrace citywide urban forest goals** and objectives
- Strategic Goal 17: **Facilitate public understanding** of urban forest management



2014 City of London Urban Forest Strategy (UFS)

Before we get to the more recent EIOS suggestions, there were three action items from the 2014 Urban Forest Strategy to address:

- **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.
- *Given that the City's ability to reach residents digitally through our website and various social media platforms has grown significantly since 2014, the Communications team feels that there are more cost effective, efficient and environmentally sound ways to share this information with residents.*



2014 City of London Urban Forest Strategy (UFS)

- **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.
- *When the new website was rolled out in 2020, the decision was made to eliminate the staff directory to improve cyber security. That said, the new website is also much easier to navigate and all of the main pages under the “Trees” heading have easy-to-identity contact information listed.*



2014 City of London Urban Forest Strategy (UFS)

- **17.5 Develop and implement a comprehensive communication strategy.** Ensure that the strategy is coordinated by Corporate Communications.
- *Communications has worked with Urban Forestry staff to develop ongoing communications that **embrace citywide urban forest goals and facilitate public understanding.***



Suggestions from the Educational Initiatives and Outreach Subcommittee

In 2020, the EIOS provided a list of suggestions to help residents **embrace citywide urban forest goals** and **facilitate public understanding**.

From that list of suggestions, there has been progress made toward some **successes**, decisions made that can lead to **alternative solutions**, and **opportunities for further collaboration**.

Successes

- The main landing page for all content related to trees at london.ca/trees has been revised.
- Note that the treeME grant program and Veteran Tree Incentive Program areas are much easier to find.
- Matthew Brown is working with Jill-Anne Spence and Andy Beaton to implement suggestions and address comments from the May 2021 TFAC EIOS website document.



Privately owned trees

Learn more about the private Tree Protection By-law, apply for a tree permit and find helpful tips for taking care of your trees.



Tree planting and watering

Learn how to request a tree for the City boulevard in front of your residence and how to properly water your trees.



treeME grant program

Learn more about treeME, a community grant program that provides London residents with the funds to plant trees on private property in their neighbourhoods.



City trees

Learn how City owned trees are taken care of and report issues with City trees in your neighbourhood.



Maintenance and trimming

Learn about how the City maintains trees in London, how trees may be affected by construction and how to protect tree roots.



Veteran Tree Incentive Program (VTIP)

The City is helping Londoners maintain their large veteran trees for longer with a one-year pilot program.



Report a problem with a tree

Report tree issues such as a fallen branch or dead tree. Request a tree planting or tree inspection.



Pests and diseases

Learn more about pests and diseases that could be a risk to trees in our community and how to protect your trees from them.

Successes cont.



- The Communications team has worked with Forestry Operations on social media campaigns and electronic billboard content encouraging residents to care for their trees in summer months.

Successes cont.



- The Communications team continues to work with Jill-Anne Spence and the Urban Forestry team to educate residents about L.D.D. (*Lymantria dispar dispar*, formerly known as the gypsy moth) in an effort to protect urban forests.



Alternative solutions

- Original suggestion: Produce fact sheets and/or tri-fold pamphlets with information on a range of tree care topics.
- *As noted previously, the City's digital reach is quite broad and the Communications team feels that a digital campaign would be cost effective, efficient and environmentally sound.*
- Original suggestion: Determine if the London Free Press (LFP) would be willing to collaborate to publish a series of articles.
- *The City of London does not have in-kind advertising available from the LFP for this topic, but we can leverage our relationships with groups such as London Environmental Network, Green Economy London, etc. to engage with the community.*



Opportunities for further collaboration

- The TFAC EIOS made the following additional suggestions that warrant further discussion:
- For the City of London to develop an annual program with clear budget for educational activities.
- Undertake a “roving tree tag” initiative to temporarily place oversized information tags on trees in parks across London.
- *The City doesn't currently have the budget for these broad initiatives, but Urban Forestry continues to educate on L.D.D.*
- Hold an annual information session for landscapers and other related contractors.
- Hold an annual information session on tree care for the public.
- *While the City hasn't held in-person public information sessions due to COVID-19, it is something we can consider moving forward.*



Questions and next steps

- Any questions?
- The Communications team will continue to implement suggestions and address comments from the May 2021 TFAC EIOS website document and will report back at the next TFAC meeting.