

## **ATTACHMENT #2**

### **SUMMARY REVIEW OF THE TREE PLANTING STRATEGY ACTION ITEMS (see pages 12-13)**

#### **1. Implement Planting Strategy for Achievable Canopy Cover Targets**

1.1 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.

Status: Ongoing. Acquiring, storing data including an updated City tree inventory 2019. Tree giveaways continue to provide opportunity to discuss planting techniques with recipients. Recommend carrying over into next Tree Planting Strategy

1.2 Implement a long-term communications strategy to educate and engage citizens about tree protection and planting goals.

Status: Delayed, excepting for ad hoc opportunities in staff reports and media interviews. However, work is underway to understand why people decline trees, so to better educate and engage them through a consortium of municipalities in Ontario. Recommend implementing early in next Tree Planting Strategy

1.3 Assess supply and implement programs to provide suitable trees in a range of species and sizes for future needs.

Status: Complete. The city entered short-term planting contracts over multiple years for caliper trees.

1.4 Plant the largest-growing and longest-lived species suitable for that location

Status: Complete, for City contracts. Work is still required to educate public who choose ornamental trees or shrubs where a shade or large tree could be grown.

1.5 Prioritize City planting by (1) low tree canopy cover areas (2) largest area available (3) ease of planting.

Status: Complete

#### **2. Plant More – On Public Lands**

2.1 Naturalise wherever possible.

Status: Substantially complete, with new naturalisation crew operated through the summer to deal with issues. Overall success may be improved by public acceptance of “weediness” in early years before transition to more desirable appearance and species. Recommend educating public within communications plan about visual expectations of naturalisation phases

2.2 Identify and protect potentially plantable boulevard space before licensing for private purposes.

Status: Ongoing, challenging to implement. Boulevard Tree Protection By-law informs the process. Recommend that Environment & Infrastructure, holder of the Boulevard Tree Protection

By-law, to administer all boulevard licensing requests, with fees directed to an appropriate account(s).

2.3 Assess encroachments of City lands and implement restoration or licensing; allocate realized fees to tree planting and tree maintenance programs.

Status: This action was challenging to implement due to multiple relevant by-laws. Ongoing, on a complaint-received basis. There has been no pro-active enforcement. Pro-active enforcement requires a change to City by-law by approval of Council, more staff resources, and a change in City policy as to when enforcement of boulevard encroachments would be appropriate. Since May 2021, most or all relevant by-laws are vested with Environment & Infrastructure, which should streamline any future process. Recommend that Environment & Infrastructure, to receive and consider complaints and recommend enforcement of encroachments of City lands, including ESAs.

2.4 With London Hydro, achieve appropriate planting of small, medium and large stature trees within tree-height distance of power lines.

Status: Complete. The City has agreed with London Hydro to implement Electrical Safety Authority standards for tree species and location.

2.5 Maximize shade tree planting on public lands.

Status: Complete, informed by and subject to design standards and requirements.

2.6 Plant more climate-appropriate conifers.

Status: Challenging, partially complete. Generally, on boulevards, conifers are a sight line issue. Future fire risk from conifers has to be considered in the Planning process (Provincial Policy Statement/London Plan). Conifers are more often planted in naturalisation projects where the ecological land classification and species profile match. Recommend continuing to explore opportunities to plant more conifers

2.7 Utilize vacant public lands for tree planting.

Status: Delayed. Will likely be informed and implemented through the Climate Emergency Action Plan. Recommend deferring to Climate Emergency Action Plan

2.8 Prepare detailed 5-year planting plans, by neighbourhood, to enhance the urban landscape and restore heritage or cultural landscapes.

Status: Incomplete. The first cultural heritage landscape on City lands was designated at Westminster Ponds - now transitioning through a comprehensive restoration of the site and its remaining buildings, spearheaded by Reforest London. Recommend including in the next Tree Planting Strategy.

### **3. Plant More – On Private Lands**

3.1 Support planting and continual care of food-bearing trees.

Status: Complete. Food trees continue to be distributed through tree giveaways - roughly 15% of all trees offered, and “Neighbourgood” suggestions and City grants continue to be utilised to support community gardens and orchards.

### 3.2 Continue and expand tree planting initiative by or for persons with disabilities

Status: Ongoing. Tree giveaways have included an option to pre-order and request volunteers to assist with delivery and planting. Tree giveaways during the pandemic also meant persons did not have to exit their own vehicle.

### 3.3 Collaborate with community partner to identify new, and support existing, programs such as the Million Tree Challenge.

Status: Complete, ongoing with opportunities continually assessed and invited e.g., “Neighbourgood” suggestions and community grants. The city greatly expanded the TreeMe Community Grant Program, from \$35,000 per annum to \$250,000 per annum, but did not offer the program in 2020/2021, due to the pandemic. A new Veteran Tree Incentive Program, although not tied to tree planting, was developed in 2019/2020 and piloted in 2021.

### 3.4 Create a tool lending library; donate tree care equipment

Status: Underway. The city in 2021 assisted by way of a grant to develop a tool lending library hosted by Reimagine, a local business, Urban Forestry will be assisting with tree-planting tools.

### 3.5 Plant City trees in private yards if there is insufficient space on nearby City land

Status: This is a policy requirement in the London Plan and is expected to become more commonplace as the City builds inwards and upwards. Recommend including in next Tree Planting Strategy.

### 3.6 Enter into partnerships to plant and manage trees on institution lands to benefit the wider community.

Status: Delayed. Recommend including in next Tree Planting Strategy.

## **4. Implement Best Practices**

4.1 Start the process to improve species diversity. Prioritize species origin & provenance (1) native to Ontario (2) native to North America (3) non-native. Implement assisted migration where appropriate. Do not plant any species that is invasive.

Status: Complete, ongoing

4.2 Amend by-laws and tree planting guidelines to require more trees be planted and to ensure optimal establishment rates through regular watering and tending

Status: Complete. New trees on streets are watered under City contract. Tree planting contracts maximise the number of trees subject to design standards, which are themselves under annual review and revision. The 2021 Tree Protection By-law and 2019 Boulevard Tree Protection By-law require more trees to be planted to replace any healthy tree that is removed, based on 1 tree per 10cm diameter removed.

4.3 Revise planting standards to optimize soil volume, soil quality and other factors for success

Status: Substantially complete. Forestry Operations engaged a consultant in 2020 to re-write Chapter 12, Design Specifications and Requirements Manual and continues to monitor sub-division "soils". Enforcement of the new requirements will commence in 2022

#### 4.4 Implement better physical tree protection measures.

Status: Ongoing, substantially complete. Introduction of new requirements in 2021 Design Specifications and Requirements Manual, which will also inform City contracts

#### 4.5 Monitor success of reducing mortality and adjust Planting Strategy as needed.

Status: Partially complete, ongoing. More information required regarding mortality estimates. Monitoring of success has been underway since 2018 as more data has been captured with the creation of a new staff position in Forestry Operations, in 2021 expanding to an additional person. Recommend including in next Tree Planting Strategy

#### 4.6 Apply maximum parking requirements, to support 30% canopy cover with shade tree planting.

Status: Complete but adjusted through appeal process for the London Plan. The goal now is to maximise sustainable canopy cover without a specific percentage imposed