

UFORE Recommendations Update - 2019

UFORE RECOMMENDATION	2015 ACTION PLAN	2019 UPDATE
1. Refine the results of the urban tree canopy (UTC) analysis to develop an urban forest cover target.	Staff will continue to work with our Urban Forest Consultant, Silvicon, in an effort to develop achievable canopy targets and a strategy to implement a plan to increase canopy cover. Staff will report back to Council with appropriate recommendations as the information becomes available.	Updated tree inventory in 2015 and 2018. Inventory updates are planned for capital as inventory grows due to development. Official targets have not been set.
2. Build on the results of the urban tree canopy analysis (UTC) and the priority planting index to prioritize tree planting and establishment efforts to improve the distribution of ecosystem services, including urban heat island mitigation and storm water management.	Priority Planting Index has been identified in the scope of works associated with the Update of the urban tree inventory approved as capital project #73148. The planting index will encompass all areas where tree planting can potentially occur in an effort to comply with the recommendation.	Gap analysis has been completed, identifying municipal unplanted street blvd planting areas for which staff utilize to increase canopy cover. Also identifies areas in parks and openspaces, these areas are utilized for community planting events
3. Increase leaf area in canopied areas by planting suitable tree and shrub species under existing tree cover. Planting efforts should continue to be focused in areas of the Municipality that currently support a high proportion of Ash species.	This recommendation will be addressed in concert with the provision in the Landscapes Standards included in Appendix1 Policy A.	In addition staff have been working to help regenerate woodlots where large tracts of Ash dominant forest have been removed by EAB. This has been supported through partnerships with MNR Rangers program.
4. Utilize the Pest Vulnerability Matrix during species selection for municipal tree and shrub planting.	Staff have developed a tree and shrub planting list that take into consideration pest vulnerability included in Appendix 2 Policy B Tree Planting and Approved Plant List.	Ongoing
5. Establish a diverse tree population in which no species represents more than five per cent of the tree population, no genus represents more than 10% of the tree population, and no family represents more than 20% of the intensively managed tree population both municipal-wide and at the neighbourhood level.	This Recommendation has been addressed in Appendix 2, Policy B on page 2, section 2.0.	Ongoing
6. Utilize native planting stock grown from locally adapted seed sources in both intensively and extensively managed areas.	Local seed stock has been utilized when available and will continue to be sourced where feasible and where possible.	Ongoing, request this where applicable through procurement of product.

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<p>7. Evaluate and develop the strategic steps required to increase the proportion of large, mature trees in the urban forest. This can be achieved using a range of tools including Official Plan planning policy, by-law enforcement and public education. Where tree preservation cannot be achieved, Official Plan policy can be considered that will require compensation for the loss of mature trees and associated ecosystem services.</p>	<p>The current Tree protection By-law is an effective tool in the preservation of all trees greater than 20cm. in diameter. Additionally, a new Tree Removal Policy which is Appendix C Policy C establishes significant compensation measures for all trees removed that are subject to any Land Planning related application.</p> <p>The Heritage Tree Policy (Appendix 7 Policy G) is also an effective means to preserve our larger significant trees.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>8. Develop municipal guidelines and regulations for sustainable streetscape and subdivision design that ensure adequate soil quality and quantity for tree establishment and eliminate conflict between natural and grey infrastructure.</p>	<p>The Parks and Recreation Services Department has developed and applied minimum landscape standards to all land planning and development applications. More recently these landscape standards have been revised and bolstered and consolidated into Appendix 1 Policy A. This policy establishes all criteria for plant material soils including detailed specifications.</p>	<p>ongoing</p>
<p>9. Explore the application of sub-surface cells and other enhanced rooting environment techniques for street trees. Utilizing these technologies at selected test-sites in the short-term may provide a cost-effective means of integrating these systems into the municipal budget.</p>	<p>Staff has conducted significant research into the use of sub-surface cells and enhanced rooting environment in specialized or difficult planting sites. An example of this is the proposed Yonge Street Promenade landscape project, where the use of Silvacells is being investigated as a means to provide a sustainable streetscape. Pending available funding this technology will be recommended and utilized where possible.</p>	<p>These cells are starting to be incorporated into design through developers in hard landscape designs. Cells are being proposed through the Library Square project and will certainly be explored for the Yonge St Promenade project in future.</p>
<p>10. Reduce energy consumption and associated carbon emissions by providing direction, assistance and incentives to residents and businesses for strategic tree planting and establishment around buildings.</p>	<p>Staff have been working with LEAF (Local Enhancement & Appreciation of Forests) an organization that partners with municipalities in the planting of trees and shrubs on Private properties. Staff will continue to explore opportunities for funding incentives to develop a sustainable private yard tree planting program in partnership with LEAF or other similar organization to occur in 2016.</p>	<p>This partnership continues currently and is available to residents for a reduced fee, though the Town does not funding incentives in place currently.</p>
<p>11. Research and pursue new partnerships and opportunities to enhance urban forest stewardship in Aurora.</p>	<p>Staff continues to work with the MNR Junior Ranger program each whereby wood lot improvement projects have been conducted in both the Case and Vandorf Woodlots. The Department remains committed to this program and will continue to pursue all available urban forest stewardship opportunities.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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12. Pursue the development of an urban forest communication plan that guides the dissemination of key messages to target audiences.	Staff will investigate the implementation of a urban forest communications plan and work with our communications division on both content and delivery of key messages on a consistent basis this will be on ongoing initiative commencing in late 2015.	Webpage is constantly updated with Block pruning notices, EAB treatments etc and social media is leveraged now to reach a wider audience through our cross promotion of LEAF/Community planting events etc.
13. Explore the development and implementation of a municipal staff training program to enhance awareness of tree health and maintenance requirements generally, and of proper tree protection practices to be used during construction activities.	Staff responsible for the management of the urban forest receive regular training on all aspects of urban arboriculture and continue to stay abreast of all current forest health issues and tree care.	Ongoing Now include training for summer students, specific to trees and importance of not injuring bark during turf maintenance operation. Engineering retains an arborist for all road reconstruction projects
14. Establish an interagency Urban Forest Working Group to liaise with existing stakeholders and build new partnerships in the implementation of urban forest program objectives.	Staff continue to participate in the York Region Forestry Forum where staff meet on a regular basis with their counterparts in the nine regional municipalities for the purposes of information exchange and discussions on emerging issues in York Region.	Ongoing participation in the York Region Forestry Group Parks and Forestry N6 Groups have been established and meet regularly to discuss and exchange information.
15. Explore and develop targets that achieve a comprehensive distribution of ecosystem services and improve overall landscape function.	Aurora is in the very fortunate position in that there are many natural and unaltered green spaces and natural features widely distributed throughout the Municipality The future Wildlife Park will add yet another very diverse ecosystem to the Town of Aurora.	Wildlife park now in development with many ecological features being established and extensive planting. LID features being included on development plans, which are planted with many different species and help with water. Highland gate parkland is being naturalized. Staff continue to secure greenspace through development and are working to naturalize parkland through design.
16. Monitor the distribution, structure and function of the urban forest using the methods employed in this baseline study. A potential monitoring scenario may consist of a cover mapping assessment (UTC) at a five year interval and a field-based assessment (i-Tree Eco) at a ten year interval.	Staff will continue to work with York Region and the Metro Region Conservation Authority in an effort to monitor the urban forest at both the five-and ten-year windows, pending available financial resources.	Ongoing Region starting to plan for next round of monitoring in which the Town will be partnering in, pending funding.
17. Support research partnerships that pursue the study of climate change and its impacts on the urban forest and that evaluate the potential for planting more hardy and southern species in select locations.	This recommendation will be taken under advisement and may be considered at a later date in the event that the Corporation becomes involved in such a study.	Status quo. Staff have been in discussions with LSRCA and Regional Forum about effects of climate change and impact on species etc. Staff planting different species currently that have not been able to grow in area – pushing the growing zones and species tolerance.
18. Develop and implement an urban forest management plan for the Town of Aurora.	The Urban Forest Management Plan has been completed and is the subject of this report.	Comprehensive Urban Forestry Management Plan completed in 2015