

The tree canopy contributes positively to:

- Reducing stormwater volumes
- Climate change mitigation
- Air pollution reduction
- Heat island mitigation
- Lower energy use
- Erosion reduction
- Enhancing human health – mitigating skin cancer, asthma and lung diseases risks, reducing heat event effects, etc.
- More attractive street design and function/complete streets/walkable communities
- Crime reduction and enhanced community safety, slows traffic
- Local food strategy
- Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity
- Supporting tourism
- Attracting business, other employers and new residents

Issues Affecting Tree Canopy and Living Green Infrastructure:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change • Drought and flooding • Wind storm damage • Disease and insect threat and damage • Invasive species (vegetation & exotic insects) • General tree maintenance • Damage from general city maintenance procedures and equipment (grass-cutting and snow removal) • Absence of life conditions necessary for healthy trees (urban sidewalk trees, Leda clay, etc.) • Tree planting programs • Intensification and infill/construction impacts • Suburb development /land clearing • Site alteration • Aggregate extraction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive agriculture • Protection of urban/rural Natural Features and Special Areas/Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSW), Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) • Transportation infrastructure maintenance and construction • Grey infrastructure (other than roads, bridges, etc.) maintenance and construction • Loss of habitat and species • Provincial Acts and Statements (e.g. Drainage Act, Planning Act, Municipal Act, Provincial Policy Statement, etc.) • Education of city staff, elected representatives and public re policies, practices, procedures and bylaws |
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Bylaws that can help to protect living green infrastructure and sensitive ecosystems:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional growth strategies • Official community plans • Zoning bylaws • Development permit areas • Impact assessment • Watercourse protection bylaws • Rainwater management bylaws • Landscaping bylaws | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree protection bylaws • Soil removal and deposit bylaws • Pesticide use bylaws • Invasive species bylaws • Security payments • Subdivision servicing bylaws • Development cost charges bylaws • Riparian tax exemption bylaws |
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Appendix: Suggestions for Specific Content Components of a Tree Canopy Master Plan

OFGAC further recommends that components of a comprehensive Tree Canopy Master Plan would include the following specific actions:

New components:

- Developing and Implementing a Heritage Tree Designation Process
- Developing and Implementing a Rural Tree/Forest Conservation Bylaw (compliment to the Urban Tree Conservation Bylaw)
- Developing and Implementing a Site Alteration Bylaw
- Developing and Implementing a Wildlife Strategy
- Undertaking comprehensive annual data collection and mapping to establish baseline information which will facilitate more informed decision-making
- Developing and Implementing a comprehensive public education and outreach strategy
- Implementation of a comprehensive city staff education strategy
- Development of a public volunteer component
- Allocating staff and funding to fully implement the Tree Canopy Master Plan

Modifying existing plans, policies and processes:

- Incorporating, as a priority, retention of existing tree canopy/living green infrastructure in all city policies and practices
- Fully funding and implementing the Urban Natural Features Acquisition Plan
- Modifying the existing Urban Tree Conservation Bylaw with additional measures to strengthen retention of existing trees
- Adding stronger elements to the existing Environmental Impact Statement process and Tree Conservation Reports to benefit retaining existing trees
- Increasing staff delegated to the assessment of Environmental Impact Statement Reports
- Increasing permanent staff and funding for Forestry Services Division

The above list is not comprehensive - merely a beginning. After in-depth examination of the TCMP concept by city staff, further gaps and actions should be identified.

Note: It would be of great benefit to the city's Tree Canopy if an Intensification Master Plan that addressed many current planning and development issues which result in the net loss of trees and greenspaces was also developed and implemented as soon as possible.