

A close-up photograph of several hands holding a clump of dark soil. A tree trunk is visible in the upper center, and the hands are positioned around the soil, suggesting the process of planting. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal rectangle containing the title text.

TREE PLANTING PLAN

50,000 TREES / 25 YEAR PLAN



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MUNICIPALITY OF THAMES CENTRE TREE PLANTING PLAN

1. Overview

The Municipality of Thames Centre initiated a Tree Planting Plan as a result of a Council Resolution (188-2023), put forward on June 12, 2023.

The World Economic Forum put forth an initiative in 2021 to plant 1 Trillion Trees by 2030. The Federal Government of Canada joined in and committed to planting 2 Billion Trees within Canada.

The Municipality of Thames Centre recognizes the importance of Trees in the daily lives of its residents and wants to work towards ensuring it does its part in the goal of planting 2 Billion Trees within Canada.

The original resolution provided for the following Pillars:

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement is key to ensuring the success of any tree planting plan within Thames Centre. By increasing awareness amongst citizens, staff, local landowners and residents alike about the benefits of trees and how to care for them it can enhance the number of trees planted each year.

NATIVE TREES

Planting native species of tree helps to re-establish the original ecosystem of the Carolinian forests of this area. Planting of native species also ensures a better chance of survival of the tree canopy.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVOLVEMENT

In order to promote a healthy canopy and tree coverage within the Municipality of Thames Centre, a partnership between private citizens and businesses along with public entities and indigenous partners needs to be developed and encouraged. Partnerships and agreements with not-for-profit organizations and external partners will assist in delivering the goals. Public-private partnerships can assist in leveraging any Municipal investment and maximize the impact and value for money.

PROTECTION OF EXISTING TREES

Sustaining the current tree coverage within the developed and rural areas of the Municipality is an important benefit to the environment and the enjoyment of the natural beauty of Thames Centre for the current and future residents.



IDENTIFYING HERITAGE TREES

Forests Ontario defines a Heritage Tree that is a notable specimen because of its size, form, shape, beauty, age, colour, rarity, genetic constitution, or other distinctive features. Identifying and protecting trees that meet the definition, helps keep the ecological history of the area around.

RECOGNITION OF INDIGENOUS RESPECT FOR THE NATURAL WORLD AND RIGHTS OF THE TREATIES

Indigenous peoples have long had spiritual, physical, social and cultural connection with the land. The health of the land and water is central to Indigenous culture. By recognizing their views of the natural world, we can learn a lot about stewardship of trees and the natural world.

2. Visions

INCREASE TREE COVERAGE WITHIN THAMES CENTRE

Planting trees is one of the ways of sustaining and increasing the tree coverage within the Municipality, however, planting alone is not sustainable to ensure the increase of the tree coverage and ensure sustainable coverage for the future. Maintaining and protecting current tree coverage cannot be overlooked in favour of planting alone. The benefits seen from trees increase as the tree grows, so protecting trees, along with planting sees a greater return on investment.

Not all tree species are desirable. Concentration on planting of native species of tree helps to re-establish the original ecosystem of the Carolinian forests of this area and also ensures a better chance of survival of the trees. Locally sourced and native trees are the best adapted to survive and thrive in the conditions.



Development of partnerships with existing organizations and groups allow for the utilization of already established knowledge and programs and promote the community awareness of the plan. As the public lands are limited, a community wide strategy and buy in is important and ensuring that landowners and businesses are an important part of this plan to ensure we can increase tree coverage. It is anticipated through partnership, the Municipality can facilitate 50,000 trees planted over 25 years.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS OF THE IMPORTANCE IN THAMES CENTRE

Education and Awareness are the crucial first steps towards engagement and interest in the trees of Thames Centre. Most of the trees within Thames Centre are thought to be on private land, a broad community awareness and engagement is needed to ensure that goals of this strategy are met.

The Municipality alone can not do all that is necessary to preserve and expand the tree coverage, however the Municipality has a critical role in providing leadership and education to assist and engage the community.

Programs and initiatives need to be developed to promote planting of trees both on public and private property. Initiatives such as the Tree Cycle Program run by ReForest London which encourages residents to pot their extra or unwanted trees from their yards and donate them to be planted by others in Thames Centre. Current programs need to be advertised more to bring more awareness.



STEWARDSHIP AND PROTECTION OF TREES IN THAMES CENTRE

Stewardship means caring for our natural environment, including trees and forests and understanding how we affect the natural processes on which life depends. Stewardship includes monitoring and maintaining trees. A range of methods and actions need to be used to engage our community and stakeholders as stewards.

Part of stewardship would include taking inventory of trees, identifying heritage trees and learning from the Indigenous culture's connection and stewardship of the land.

Currently the Municipality has a number of policies in place to protect and increase trees within the Municipality:

- Protection and Enhancement of Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy (CP-A-3.3) include resolution #183-2021
- Tree Planting Guideline By-law (84-2002)
- Nature Heritage Feature and Green Space Policies incorporated in the Municipality of Thames Centre Official Plan
- Middlesex Natural Heritage Systems Study
- Middlesex County Woodlands Conservation By-law
- County Forest Management

Expanding, reviewing and updating these policies, within our control, can assist in our stewardship responsibilities.

Development of partnerships to maintain and enhance the tree cover in Thames Centre.

Develop and maintain a list of native trees and ensure that materials developed relating to trees encourage the purchase and planting of native species.

3. Next Steps

A variety of tools, mechanism, and approaches will be needed to ensure the successful implantation of this plan.

In order to achieve our visions of Increasing the Tree Coverage in Thames Centre, Education and Awareness of the Importance of Trees and Stewardship and Protection, a work plan will need to be developed, with short, medium and long term goals.

Measurement tools will also need to be developed.

Review of current policies and by-laws should be contemplated to ensure that Thames Centre is doing all it can to meet the visions of this plan.

4. Conclusion

This Plan will serve as the basis for decision making and development of a work plan to achieve the vision of Increased Tree Coverage, Education and Awareness and Stewardship and Protection of Trees in Thames Centre.

THAMES CENTRE PARTNERS

Kettle Creek CA

KCCA would be pleased to partner and build other programs that meet the needs of Thames Centre.

Our base program that is described in the apportioning agreement supports the planting of 45,000 – 50,000 seedlings per year throughout the entire watershed. Tree seedlings are available to landowners within the Kettle Creek watershed for \$0.40/seedling. Minimum order of 200 seedlings, orders over 500 seedlings are eligible to be planted by the KCCA tree planting crew for \$0.50/seedling.

ADDITIONAL TREE PLANTING OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Greening Communities**

This program offers larger seedlings in smaller quantities for landowners who may not have a large acreage but want to plant 20 or more trees on their property.

Municipal Cost: \$1,000 (administration fee). Landowners pay a per seedling cost.

KCCA administers the program; landowner deal directly with KCCA. KCCA orders trees, communicates with landowners, handles invoicing, packing orders and holding tree pick up days.

2. **Large Stock Rural Street Tree Program**

KCCA staff work with the municipality to identify areas on rural roads where large stock tree planting would be appropriate. In the past municipalities have used this to delineate road allowances and increase tree planting numbers.

Municipal Cost: KCCA is currently reviewing the administrative/implementation costs for this program. Pre-pandemic costs were approximately \$3,000 plus the cost of the trees.

3. **Free/Low Cost Seedlings**

Municipalities may choose to subsidize tree planting for their own landowners. This would involve increased workload from KCCA staff to specifically target a municipality through forms of direct marketing (flyers and door to door sales) and follow-up visits to ensure tree survival. Municipalities could choose to subsidize all or some of the landowner share of the tree.

Upper Thames River CA

Forestry and Tree Planting - Upper Thames River Conservation Authority



TREE POWER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Tree Power program began in 2010 in partnership with London Hydro. More than 10 years ago, the late Bill Kunz initiated a new tree planting program through his work with London Hydro. Bill brought his vision to the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) and the Tree Power London program was born. Bill helped build the program, with the slogan, "Harness the power of trees by planting a native hardwood tree in your yard." The program provides native, hardwood trees to residents at an affordable price by partnering with community sponsors and/or municipalities.

Bill's slogan draws from the many benefits that trees provide and including;

- Energy Savings - reduction of home electricity consumption by reducing cooling costs in summer months and reducing heating costs in the winter months by blocking winds.
- Reduced stress and improved health
- Increased property value
- Flood protection
- Improved soil, water conservation, carbon sequestration, and increased wildlife habitat
- Reduced air pollution, increased tree canopy and a very cost-effective way to combat climate change.

The program has since grown and is currently running in three other municipalities in addition to London. Examples of the tree species provided in the past include: Autumn Blaze Maple, Basswood, Black Cherry, Hackberry, Paper Birch, and Tulip Tree. Cost per tree for the customer has been in the \$20 to \$30 range. Trees are picked up by the customers at a pre-determined date and time.

A unique website is made for each Tree Power program. Sales open approximately one month prior to the tree pick up date. Each Tree Power website includes an FAQ document about tree planting and care. This is attached to the email sent to everyone who purchases a tree. UTRCA staff also answer questions customers may have during the tree pick up day and/or any follow up phone calls and emails with inquiries.

1) WHAT UTRCA DOES:

- Orders, picks up and delivers trees
- Creates, hosts website
- Promotion via media release and social media posts
- Manage online sales
- Follow up with tree purchasers: confirming orders, reminders of tree pick up day

- Create staff and volunteer schedule for tree hand out day(s)
- Provide staff for tree hand out (2 to 3)
- Follow up re: remaining trees

2) WHAT THE MUNICIPALITY AND/OR SPONSOR DOES:

- Providing funding
- Promotion via sharing media release, social media posts, include in mailings
- Provide a location for tree hand out
- Provide staff/volunteers for tree hand out (2 to 3)

Greenhouse Academy



Thames Talbot Land Trust



Middlesex County



Thames Centre Landowners,
residents, volunteers, service
clubs, etc.