Pathway to a Sustainable Urban Forest:

IMPLEMENTATION of the URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

2022-2031

Official Community Plan

Green Strategy

Urban Forest Management Plan

City of **Saskatoon**

Green **STRATEGY**

saskatoon.ca/**trees**

Contents

Saskatoon's urban forest is a defining part of our community that provides immeasurable benefits – ecologically, socially, culturally, and economically.

Photo credit: Discover Saskatoon

Introduction

Saskatoon's urban forest is a defining part of our community that provides immeasurable benefits – ecologically, socially, culturally, and economically. Trees connect us to nature, each other, and ourselves, as well as to other species that our urban forest supports. Trees also provide essential services such as improvements to air and water quality, cooling and shade, stormwater management, and climate adaptation and mitigation benefits.

Saskatoon's urban forest is made up of diverse tree species that grow in a variety of settings throughout the city. The City of Saskatoon (the City) Parks Department is responsible for the care of approximately 110,000 trees on boulevards, on centre medians, in parks, and at civic facilities. Trees in residential yards, the river valley, naturalized parks, afforestation areas, school grounds, and commercial, industrial, and institutional lands also contribute to Saskatoon's urban forest.

The Pathway to a Sustainable Urban Forest: Implementation of the Urban Forest Management Plan 2022-2031 (Implementation Plan) identifies opportunities to lead initiatives that will contribute to the effective management, protection, enhancement, and growth of Saskatoon's urban forest. This Plan prioritizes and further defines the recommended actions from the City's Urban Forest Management Plan by including specific initiatives for 2022-2031. These initiatives are organized in two-year time frames so that resources can be sought through the City's multi-year budgeting process.

Collaboration and integration will be key to success. As such, this Plan aligns with multiple strategic priorities: in particular, the Official Community Plan (Section 2.7 Urban Forestry: "To protect the urban forest through sustainable practices, including new planting and the protection and maintenance of existing trees throughout the City"); and Action 3.4 "Implement the Urban Forest Management Plan" in Pathways for an Integrated Green

"The Implementation Plan identifies opportunities to lead initiatives that will contribute to the effective management, protection, enhancement, and growth of Saskatoon's urban forest."

Network (Green Pathways). The Plan also identifies multiple internal and external stakeholders to support this work.

As responsible stewards of Saskatoon's urban forest, the City of Saskatoon Parks Department is committed to caring for the trees that enhance our community and supporting the many gifts they provide.

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that our community is located on Treaty 6 Territory and the Traditional Homeland of the Métis. Indigenous Peoples, primarily Cree, Dakota, and Saulteaux, have called this area home for thousands of years. Today, Saskatoon is home to Indigenous Peoples from a diversity of cultures and language groups. The City recognizes the distinct order of government of First Nations and Métis and is committed to maintaining strong relationships through meaningful dialogue with Indigenous communities and organizations. Strengthening cooperation and mutual support by working in partnership with Indigenous communities toward respective community goals and objectives is vital to fostering more inclusive communities.

Reconciliation is rooted in the land. Urban forestry plays an important role in caring for the land and the trees in Saskatoon; it does so with full acknowledgement of and appreciation for the importance of land to Indigenous cultures and healing. As we reaffirm our commitment to reconciliation and honour our Indigenous partners, rights holders, and neighbours, we also reaffirm our commitment to nature and all beings it sustains.

Guiding Principles

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation	The urban forest is resilient to the impacts of climate change, supports climate adaptation measures, and enhances the City's climate change mitigation efforts, through carbon sequestration, shade, transpiration, stormwater management, and reduced urban heat island effect.
Ecological Integrity	The urban forest is protected and restored to enhance wildlife habitat, biodiversity, and ecosystem health.
	Trees are planted, preserved, and managed as part of a continuous, connected green network.
Education and Partnerships	The Urban Forestry team pursues partnerships and creates educational opportunities to achieve collective goals.
Equitable, Accessible, and Welcoming	Trees and canopy cover are equitably distributed throughout the city.
	Treed areas are accessible, welcoming, connected, and in good condition throughout the city.
	Equity and inclusivity guide decision-making; recommendations from the City's Equity Toolkit are considered in urban forestry initiatives.
	A reconciliation lens is applied to urban forestry work. Indigenous rights holders, communities, and organizations are included in decision-making.
High Quality	Canopy cover is increased and tree health is maintained so that residents have access to high-quality green spaces.
Integrated and Multifunctional	The urban forest offers integrated functions with other municipal and local services, and it aligns with the City's strategic priorities.
Public Safety	Hazard trees are assessed and actions are taken to mitigate risks.
	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design is considered when designing treed spaces.
Recognizable and Unique Place	The urban forest facilitates placemaking, creates unique spaces, contributes to natural and cultural heritage, enhances views, and beautifies our city.
Sustainability	Triple Bottom Line indicators guide decision-making to achieve multiple environmental, social, economic, and governance co-benefits.
Well-being	The urban forest provides access to nature and improves community health and well-being.

Action Areas

The following sections describe the Implementation Plan's recommended actions in detail. Additional planning and budgeting related to the specific initiatives will be required to guide more detailed aspects of implementation. Each action includes key performance indicators (KPIs), as well as specific initiatives with anticipated timelines, resource needs, and key stakeholders.

The tree represents the plan at a glance with the green shading indicating progress towards completing each action. After 10 years, the goal will be to see each action completed.
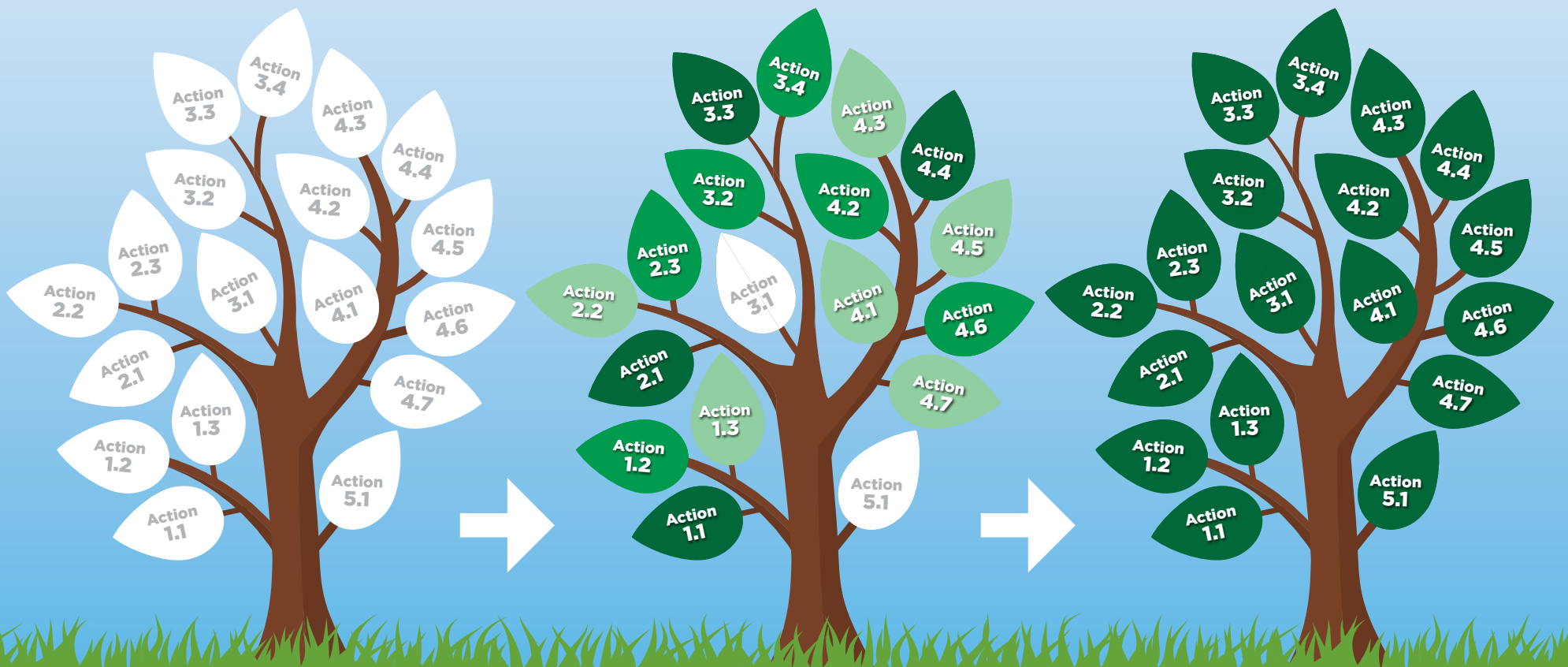
1. Planning for Trees

Action 1.1: Incorporate additional urban forestry considerations in planning and development processes, including sector, concept, infrastructure, and utility plans.

BACKGROUND: Over the past few decades, utility and infrastructure conflicts have sometimes hindered tree planting on City property, such as along boulevards, on medians, and on easements, and have led to future issues related to tree health and mortality. Up-front planning and collaboration will be required to ensure that (a) protection, compensation, and planting considerations are proactively communicated and addressed; (b) utility and infrastructure conflicts are minimized; and (c) the City meets its 15-20% canopy cover target by 2060.

CURRENT STATUS: Collaboration between departments and development stakeholders has been improving when development-related decisions are made. However, the Urban Forestry team has not yet been formally included in some review processes, which means that tree planting and protection considerations are sometimes overlooked.

KPIs

- Utilities and other infrastructure allow for tree planting so that the City can meet its 15-20% canopy cover target. City specifications and standards allow adequate space for tree planting.
- Inclusion of the Urban Forestry team in formal review processes for sector plans, concept plans, and other infrastructure and development processes. Clear, well-understood process for how and when they are involved.
- Clear process to decide on and approve tree planting locations.

- Number of trees planted per hectare in developing neighbourhoods (including the actual number of trees planted, compared to the planned number of trees).
- Record keeping related to tree planting (e.g., what, where, condition of site, proximity to utilities) shared among all development stakeholders.
- The Urban Forestry team is included in the City's Natural Area Screenings process, where appropriate, to identify natural tree stands that should be considered for protection.
- Internal working group or committee formed to focus on development processes related to the urban forest.
- Decision-making aligned with Urban Forestry Policy from the Official Community Plan: "Tree conservation or replacement [is] a consideration in the review of applications for Concept Plans, rezoning, subdivision, discretionary use, and infrastructure rehabilitation. Applicants may be required to submit tree surveys as part of the development review process."
- Decision-making aligned with Urban Forestry Policy from the Official Community Plan: "The urban forest will be sustained and enhanced along City streets by establishing standards for the planting of trees on City boulevards and buffer strips, to be enforced through the subdivision and servicing agreement approval process. The location and species of trees will be compatible with nearby public infrastructure and utilities, both above and below ground, as well as the area's natural ecosystem."

PRIORITY LEVEL: High

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Secure project management resources to lead initiatives.
	B.	Establish a working group or committee to • identify issues with, address gaps in, make improvements to, and monitor successes of internal processes related to the urban forest; • develop short- to medium-term improvements in order to meet the Urban Forestry policies in the Official Community Plan and address the KPIs identified in the Urban Forestry Implementation Plan; and • coordinate with the Green Network Steering Committee and project team to ensure that the urban forest is considered.
	C.	Using government funding (application pending) conduct a study that looks at planning and development processes and tree planting specifications and standards to improve the success of tree planting programs.
2024-25	D.	Establish a clear, well-understood process for how and when Urban Forestry is involved in formal review processes (e.g., for sector and concept plans, Natural Area Screenings, and other infrastructure and development processes).
	E.	Establish a process for Parks to work with utilities, developers, and City staff to optimize the number of suitable spaces for trees on both public and private property, with the goal of meeting the City's 15-20% canopy cover target.
	F.	With the working group and other partners, begin implementing short- to medium-term improvements.
2026-27	G.	Monitor whether the changes being made are leading to desired outcomes and identify opportunities for further refinement and remaining gaps in development-related processes.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Director (Parks)

Lead
• Project Manager (Parks; currently unresourced)

City Partners
• Building Standards
• Construction & Design
• Planning & Development
• Roadways, Fleet and Support
• Sustainability
• Saskatoon Land
• Saskatoon Light and Power
• Saskatoon Water
• Technical Services
• Transportation

Community Partners
• Development industry
• Utilities, telecom companies
• Crown corporations

Action 1.2: Enhance tree planting opportunities in consultation with internal and external partners.

BACKGROUND: There may be opportunities to improve collaboration and communication between internal departments and the development industry to improve tree planting in public spaces. There may also be opportunities for Urban Forestry to be more involved when landscape plans for private property are submitted to the City to meet Zoning Bylaw requirements.

CURRENT STATUS
- Urban Forestry reviews tree planting plans for new park designs and park upgrades.
- In some cases trees are planted by developers, the City, and other stakeholders in public spaces that are not reviewed by Urban Forestry.
- The Zoning Bylaw regulates landscape plans on private property for commercial, institutional, industrial, mixed-used, and multi-family developments. The landscape plans identify the size, type, and location of trees to be planted; Urban Forestry is included in the review process when landscaping may impact trees on City property.

KPIs
- Number of landscape designs and planting activities reviewed and approved by Urban Forestry per year. Landscape designs and planting activities in this context include developer-planted trees on public property; landscape plans submitted by external applicants as part of a building permit application; designs for parks, neighbourhoods, and public green spaces; and plans for City-led development or capital projects.
- Numbers and types of trees planted on public land by groups other than Urban Forestry.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Secure project management resources to lead initiatives.
2024-25	B.	Establish and formalize the role of Urban Forestry in reviewing internal and external landscape designs and planting activities. This role may include identifying the types of work that would benefit from an urban forestry review; developing review criteria to improve tree planting and protection opportunities; and establishing how to participate in new or existing review and approval processes.
2026-27	C.	Once a formalized process for reviewing landscape designs and planting activities is in place, monitor the outcomes, successes, and challenges annually.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
- Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
- Project Manager (Parks; currently unresourced)
- Landscape Architect (Parks)

City Partners
- Building Standards
- Planning & Development
- Sustainability

Community Partners
- Development industry

Action 1.3: Secure funding for urban forestry initiatives through internal and external sources.

BACKGROUND: Parks would like to work toward a strategic approach to obtaining funding to enhance the urban forest, achieve canopy cover objectives, contribute to sustainability, and meet greenhouse gas reduction targets.

CURRENT STATUS
- The City's Finance Department supports employees with federal grant applications through their Senior Financial Business Partner.
- There may be opportunities to collaborate with other departments on grant applications and budget requests.

- Partial or matching funds are often required to secure external grants. The availability of existing capital from the Parks Department will determine whether external funding can be leveraged.

KPIs
- Inventory of funding opportunities developed.
- Number of funding applications submitted.
- Number and dollar amount of successful applications.
- Number and types of funding partners.
- Number of business cases and budgets approved by City Council.
- Amount of additional funding for urban forestry initiatives.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium-High

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Secure project management resources to lead initiatives. As part of this role, they will seek out and secure external funding opportunities (grant writing); develop business cases and budget requests; manage funding requirements, reporting, and contracts; and collaborate with other departments, including Sustainability and Finance, on applications and business cases.
	B.	Update and formalize the Deferred Tree Replacement Account eligibility criteria, prioritization process, and decision-making authority.
	C.	Apply for the following funding opportunities: • Federal Government – Natural Infrastructure Fund • Federal Government – 2 Billion Trees Request for Proposals (in partnership with the Meewasin Valley Authority (Meewasin)) • Federal Government - Canada Community Revitatlization Fund
2024-25	D.	Identify, apply for, and manage external funding opportunities annually.
2026-27	E.	Develop a strategic approach to funding urban forestry initiatives that • identifies what funding sources are available to municipalities for urban forestry initiatives; • outlines how other municipalities are financing their urban forestry work (e.g., their funding sources, approaches they use to secure funding, creative financing approaches, who is involved in grant writing and securing funding); • highlights innovative or best practices utilized by other municipalities to fund their work; • identifies funding structures for long-term, sustained maintenance of large planting initiatives (what do other municipalities do to ensure they have adequate resources to maintain thousands of new tree assets after a large planting project is complete?); • identifies existing networks and resources that could provide valuable insight (e.g., parkpeople.ca); • determines what role (if any) park philanthropy, private donations, and in-kind community investments could play in urban forest initiatives; • establishes parameters to ensure transparent and equitable processes are used when seeking funding opportunities and evaluating projects; and • provides recommendations on how to develop an effective and strategic approach to funding urban forestry initiatives.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
• Project Manager (Parks; currently unresourced)

City Partners
• Finance   • Sustainability

Community Partners
• Multiple

The Parks Department leads the City's tree planting and maintenance programs and adds trees to the urban forest annually.

2. Growing the Urban Forest

Action 2.1: Reach city-wide canopy cover of 15-20% by 2060.

BACKGROUND: Improving the health, size, and benefits of our urban forest is a core action of the Urban Forest Management Plan. The City of Saskatoon has a target of 15-20% canopy cover by 2060, which was informed by Saskatoon's Tree Canopy Assessment.[1] The latest measurement showed overall canopy cover of 9% (Figure 1). The target includes all trees on both public and private property.

CURRENT STATUS: The Parks Department leads the City's tree planting and maintenance programs and adds trees to the urban forest annually. Programs include the following:

- *Plant by Request:* Homeowners in existing neighbourhoods may opt for a City tree planted adjacent to their property (on the boulevard). The resident agrees to water the tree for the first three years of establishment.
- *Community Tree Planting Program:* Homeowners in new neighbourhoods may opt in for a City tree planted adjacent to their property (on the boulevard). This program is levy funded. The resident agrees to water the tree for the first three years of establishment.
- *Industrial Planting:* Business owners may opt in for a City tree planted adjacent to their property (Parks also contacts businesses directly). This program is levy funded. Urban Forestry waters these trees during the first three years of establishment.

- *Urban Reforestation:* Tree planting takes place in neighbourhoods that have lost canopy cover. Neighbourhoods are chosen based on the number of planting sites and the amount of canopy loss. For planting sites on boulevards continuous with a resident's front yard (rather than on a separated boulevard), residents may opt out and request that the tree not be planted. Urban Forestry waters these trees during the first three years of establishment.
- *Park Reforestation:* Viable planting sites are filled in parks and on City properties.

Trees are also grown on private property by residents, businesses, and other landowners.

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1   The Tree Canopy Assessment (2021) provides information on Saskatoon's existing tree canopy, quantifies canopy cover by neighbourhood and land use, guides urban forestry decision-making, and recommends the following targets:
- 15-20% canopy cover by 2060
- 90% species suitable for future climate change
- Less than 3.5% annual mortality in trees fewer than five years old
- More than 30 years Safe Useful Life Expectancy for 90% of urban forest (an important measure of the health and survival of the largest, most beneficial trees)

Figure 1 – Canopy Cover by Neighbourhood in 2017

Canopy cover is highest in neighbourhoods near the city centre (excluding the Downtown), with lower canopy cover in neighbourhoods closer to city limits.

Source: City of Saskatoon Canopy Assessment – Geospatial Summary Report.

South Saskatchewan River

Canopy Cover (%)

0 - 2%	5 - 10%
2 - 5%	10 - 15%

15 - 20%   > 25%
20 - 25%

KPIs

- Canopy cover targets set by type of land use, and broken down by private and public land.
- Canopy cover metrics tracked city-wide, broken down by neighbourhood, type of land use, and private and public land:
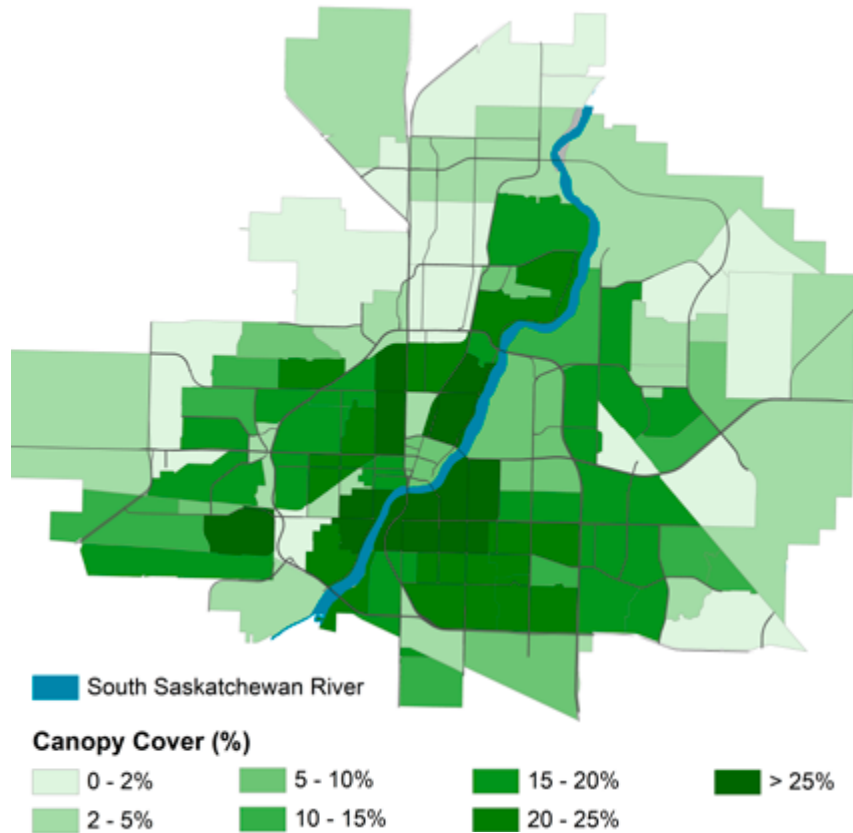
- Percentage canopy cover
- Average change in canopy cover per hectare
- Percentage of canopy growth from existing trees
- Percentage of canopy growth from new trees
- Percentage total canopy growth compared to percentage total canopy loss
- Number of City trees planted compared with number of City trees removed
- Number and location of viable planting sites.
- Number of new locations planted with trees each year.
- Young tree mortality for boulevard and median trees, park trees, and trees in other areas.
- Safe Useful Life Expectancy for boulevard and median trees, park trees, and trees in other areas.
- Causes of tree mortality.
- Greenhouse gases sequestered (tonnes carbon) by the urban forest:
  - Estimated sequestration benefits of the urban forest (city-wide, broken down by private and public land where possible)
  - Estimated sequestration benefits provided annually by newly planted trees, including estimated future sequestration benefits provided once trees reach maturity
- Per Urban Forestry Policy (b) from the Official Community Plan: "The urban forest [is] developed and managed as a continuous system."
- Per Urban Forestry Policy (f) from the Official Community Plan: "The Zoning Bylaw [contains] bonusing provisions for the conservation of existing trees."

PRIORITY LEVEL: High

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Using government funding (application pending), conduct a planting site assessment to guide Saskatoon's tree planting strategy for the next 5-10 years. The assessment will confirm the locations of suitable planting sites (both longer-term or permanent sites and shorter-term or temporary sites), including the condition of these sites, types and sizes of trees suitable for each site, the timing and sequencing of planting, the feasibility if on private land, feasibility criteria for planting, site prioritization, and existing and future conflicts (e.g., utilities, road expansions). The results of this assessment will connect to the City's existing tree planting programs by highlighting the desired number and types of plantings per program per year, as well as support tree species diversification (Action 2.2: Diversify tree plantings and reduce reliance on ash and elm).
	B.	Establish guidelines and agreements for community organizations and volunteers to plant trees on City property (e.g., in appropriate park, community garden, and open space locations). Use Edmonton's Request to Plant program as a potential model. Pilot the program with SOS Trees Coalition for the Hilliard Street plantings.
	C.	Work with Sustainability on an approach for planting fruit trees and shrubs on public land and in community gardens, including the following: • The feasibility of various sites to support fruit trees, including appropriate species and locations. • Identification of goals, opportunities, potential partnerships, challenges, and barriers. • A review of existing research and opportunities for further examination. • Initiatives to support Green Pathways Action 5.1 which works with and supports partners to incorporate food and fruit production or traditional food systems into high priority urban areas.
	D.	Participate in planning and review related to the City's corridor study areas to improve pedestrian environments along major corridors (e.g., 8th Street, Idylwyld), including street tree plantings and/or enhancements.
	E.	Identify procedures and actions that reduce tree mortality and increase life expectancy, such as adapting irrigation; increasing soil volume; improving soil quality; planting in suitable locations; ensuring adequate space, clearance, and slope; addressing factors such as sump pumps and road salt; finding locations that can accommodate replacement trees after a tree is damaged or removed; and ensuring that adequate tree protection measures and maintenance activities are implemented. There may be opportunities to research outcomes or trial designs in collaboration with internal or external partners.

INITIATIVES

2024-25	F.	Secure project management resources to lead initiatives. Resources will be used for planning, designing, and implementing initiatives that will meet canopy cover target of 15-20% by 2060.
	G.	Identify opportunities to improve Park's tree planting programs, based on municipal best practice, canopy cover targets, and Triple Bottom Line implications. Options could include (a) no change to the existing programs, (b) improved communications and advertising of existing programs, (c) enhancements to the existing programs, and (d) transitioning to opt-out approaches where appropriate.
	H.	Support Green Pathways Action 2.1: "Upgrade and restore parks for enhanced green infrastructure": • Develop an equitable tree planting approach to ensure canopy cover and quality are equitably distributed throughout the city, and that treed areas are accessible, welcoming, connected, and in good condition. • Build on the planting site assessment work conducted as part of Initiative A. • Review the existing park upgrade prioritization process to ensure that the City's Triple Bottom Line and equity toolkit considerations are applied; green space connectivity, distribution, and accessibility are considered; and trees and green infrastructure are considered required upgrades (not just built or grey infrastructure). The first step may be to apply the City's canopy cover targets to the decision-making process, whereby parks and neighbourhoods with less than 15-20% canopy cover are prioritized.

INITIATIVES

2026-27	I.	Conduct Tree Canopy Assessment update including new measurements of carbon storage and sequestration and other ecosystem services.
	J.	Secure funding for more significant urban forestry improvements in parks. For example, seek increased funding to • expand the existing Park Enhancement Program, whereby Community Associations use an annual intake process to apply for park upgrades (e.g., trees, benches, play equipment). Community Services funds a small portion of these projects, while Community Associations usually do significant fundraising. • address the list of outstanding Local Area Plan recommendations related to Parks, as identified by Planning & Development.
	K.	Review the Zoning Bylaw and develop a list of recommended changes to support tree planting and preservation. As part of the review, identify • whether the existing requirements for industrial, commercial, and residential properties encourage or restrict tree planting and preservation (intentionally or unintentionally); • opportunities to enhance the landscape guidelines, setback requirements, rear and front yard requirements, and tree and shrub planting requirements; • whether a "no net tree- or canopy-loss" objective should be considered, whereby minimum tree coverage standards are required; and • opportunities to include bonusing provisions for the conservation of existing trees.
	L.	Secure funding for incentive programs to support tree planting and preservation. Identify options by researching best practices and programs from other jurisdictions. Incentives could be designed to encourage • developers to plant more trees on private property than are required by the Zoning Bylaw's landscaping requirements; • residents and businesses to plant trees on their property; • residents and businesses to participate in the City's opt-in planting programs; • industrial and commercial plantings, as well as plantings in other low-canopy areas; and • enhancements to the City's Storm Water Management Credit Program (currently trees and vegetated areas do not qualify for the credit). Numerous incentive mechanisms are possible, including grants, utility credits, property tax abatements, rebates, giveaways, and waived permit fees, among others (see the Corridor Growth Incentives and Financing Tools Report for additional opportunities). Incentive programs could be delivered in collaboration with other departments or Green Infrastructure incentives.

INITIATIVES

2028-29	M.	Start delivering incentive programs.
	N.	Work with other departments and external partners to explore opportunities for innovative planting projects: • Brownfield remediation using trees and green infrastructure. • Restoration of contaminated, abandoned, vacant, and/or derelict properties into park or other green space. • Tree planting and green infrastructure installations in areas that are difficult to maintain or access, including berms, underutilized sites, and pedestrian walkways located outside of formalized park areas. • Agrivoltaics pilot to demonstrate how productive green space and energy can be created simultaneously. Projects combine ground-mounted solar photovoltaic panels with tree, shrub, and other plantings beneath or between the rows; panels are installed with enough height to allow people and equipment to pass underneath and to prevent prohibitive shading.
	O.	Identify opportunities to protect existing and create new afforestation areas within the Saskatoon region through environmental reserve designations (or similar), land acquisition, or other means.
2030-31	P.	Conduct Tree Canopy Assessment update.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
• Project Manager (currently unresourced)

City Partners
• Indigenous Initiatives
• Planning & Development
• Public Policy and Government Relations
• Recreation & Community Development
• Sustainability

Community Partners
• Businesses
• Community Associations
• Development industry
• Landowners
• Meewasin
• Province of Saskatchewan
• Residents
• Saskatoon North Partnership for Growth (P4G)
• SOS Trees Coalition
• University of Saskatchewan

Action 2.2: Diversify tree plantings and reduce reliance on ash and elm.

BACKGROUND: Parks has set a target to transition the urban forest to no more than 10% of any single species and no more than 20% of any genus (Figure 2). This target will drive species selection, diversification, and trials, while also lowering risks to the urban forest from tree pests. The goal is to diversify tree species, genera, and families in the urban forest, especially outside of natural areas.

Figure 2: Types of Trees on City Property (by Genus)

Includes trees from Parks' Tree Inventory, which includes trees in parks, boulevards, and medians

Elms 25.43%
Ashes 22.78%
Spruces 10.73%
Other* 6.94%
Lindens/ Basswoods 6.91%
Cherries/ Plums 1.99%
Oaks 2.25%
Crabapples 3.12%
Pines 4.84%
Maples 6.53%
Poplars 6.91%
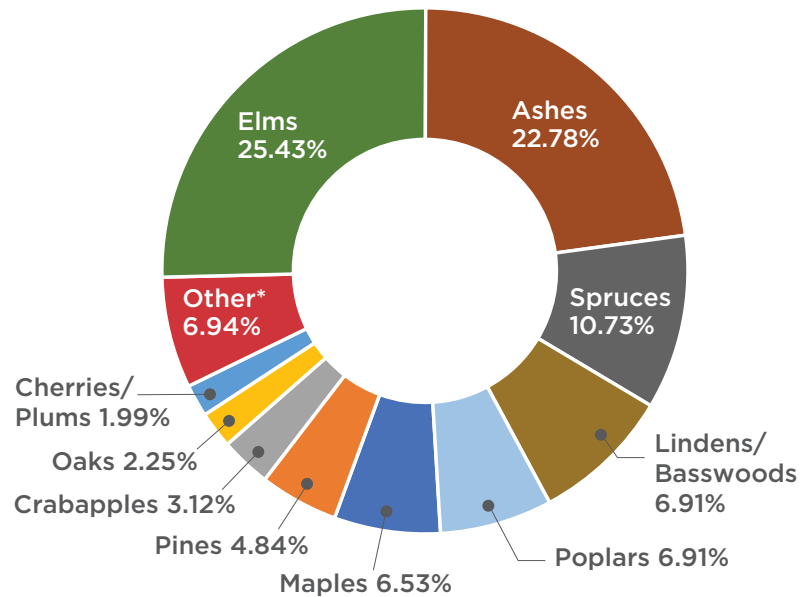
Other: Willow, larch, mountain ash, birch, lilac, hawthorn, buckeye, alder, fir, pear, hackberry, Russian olive, walnut, cedar, ironwood, corktree

Source: Parks Department, 2022

CURRENT STATUS: Urban Forestry reviews availability of new and less common tree species annually, trials new species, grows some trees from seed in their propagation area, conducts research, and attends educational seminars.

KPIs

- Percentages of ash and elm.
- Percentages of new and less common species.
- Percentage of native species.
- Percentage of locally sourced tree seeds and seedlings.
- Partnerships established to conduct trials and research, where appropriate.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Continue existing work to trial new and less common species in the nursery and other City locations (e.g., boulevards), using a tree species selection process that prioritizes trees that may be more resilient to climate change impacts and tree pests. This may also include • collecting locally sourced tree seeds to ensure locally adapted tree species; • developing species-specific planting strategies for less common species – for example, elm may be better suited for boulevard and median plantings, while less common species may have a better chance of success if planted in parks due to more favourable growing conditions; • connecting work to Initiative 2.1A (planting site assessment); and • partnering with other departments to update tree species lists, including collaboration with Planning & Development on the landscape guidelines in the Zoning Bylaw.
2024-25	B.	Secure resources for additional staff training, as needed, focused on species selection and options, climate impacts, and tree planting trends in the prairies. Seek opportunities annually for one or more staff members.
2026-27	C.	Establish partnerships (with the University of Saskatchewan, Meewasin, and/or other partners) to conduct ongoing research on tree planting trials. Study, monitor, and model tree species success based on climate change scenarios and related impacts (e.g., storms, drought, pests).
	D.	Study the feasibility of a new nursery and Urban Forestry facility. Coordinate with other civic departments and potentially Meewasin to identify a suitable location with appropriate drainage, soil, etc. • Nursery: As a greater diversity of species are trialled in Saskatoon, having a site to plant, establish, and study the success of species will become increasingly important. Maintenance, including wildlife management, will be vital to planting success and productivity at the nursery. Additional staff resources for propagation, as well as a heated propagation area, will also be considered. • Urban Forestry facility: To facilitate the growth of Saskatoon's Urban Forestry team, a new staff facility will be required. The current operations facility at the Vic Rempel yards has space constraints and aging infrastructure. For example, it is unable to accommodate additional office spaces, does not have access to washrooms and running water, and has insufficient space to store equipment.
2028-29	E.	Create an understory and succession planting strategy to increase the age, size, and species diversity of the urban forest, as well as limit the impact when existing trees are removed. Also identify opportunities where small tree species, shrubs, or grasses should be planted instead of large trees. Find locations to install plantings that mimic natural habitat.
	F.	Follow the recommendations of the feasibility study (initiative D). The recommendations may require securing sufficient funding to purchase, rent or lease land to accommodate a new nursery or potentially an alternate plan for the delivery of nursery services.
2030-31	G.	Begin implementing recommendations from the succession planting strategy (e.g., through pilots).
	H.	If supported through initiatives D and F, begin construction of a new nursery.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
• Nursery Supervisor, Entomologist, Urban Forestry Contract Administrator, Forestry Analyst (Parks)

City Partners
• Facilities Management
• Sustainability

Community Partners
• Meewasin
• Saskatchewan Ministry of Environment
• University of Saskatchewan

Action 2.3: Track and monitor the health and performance of the urban forest.

BACKGROUND: Monitoring performance indicators and defining targets will help the Urban Forestry team identify opportunities to maintain and improve tree health, reduce replanting, and save on tree replacement costs. Environmental, health, and community co-benefits may also be tracked in partnership with other departments.

CURRENT STATUS: Parks' Forestry Analyst and Tree Clerk track some data related to urban forestry, and it is reported publicly in the Parks Annual Report and Saskatoon's Environmental Dashboard.

KPIs

• Annual report of urban forest metrics, including
  - numbers and species of trees planted, watered, pruned, removed;
  - when trees are removed from watering routes;
  - stumping activity;
  - causes of tree decline; and
  - numbers and species of trees in natural stands and shelterbelts.
• Numbers and types of urban forestry inquiries and complaints (from internal and external stakeholders, as well as the public).
• Additional reporting to support KPIs in actions 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.3, and 5.1.
• Use of data to inform strategy.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Low-Medium

INITIATIVES

2026-27	A.	Secure project management resources to lead initiatives.
	B.	Action 2.3 relies on completion of a tree inventory system. See Action 3.4: "Design and implement an integrated tree inventory and work order management system." This is anticipated to support tracking and monitoring in real time and create a central location where data is housed. Track important urban forest metrics and make program changes as needed.
	C.	Identify data gaps by assessing the types of data that the Parks Department, other departments, and Meewasin already gather, as well as the types of outstanding data required to monitor the Implementation Plan's KPIs.

STAKEHOLDERS

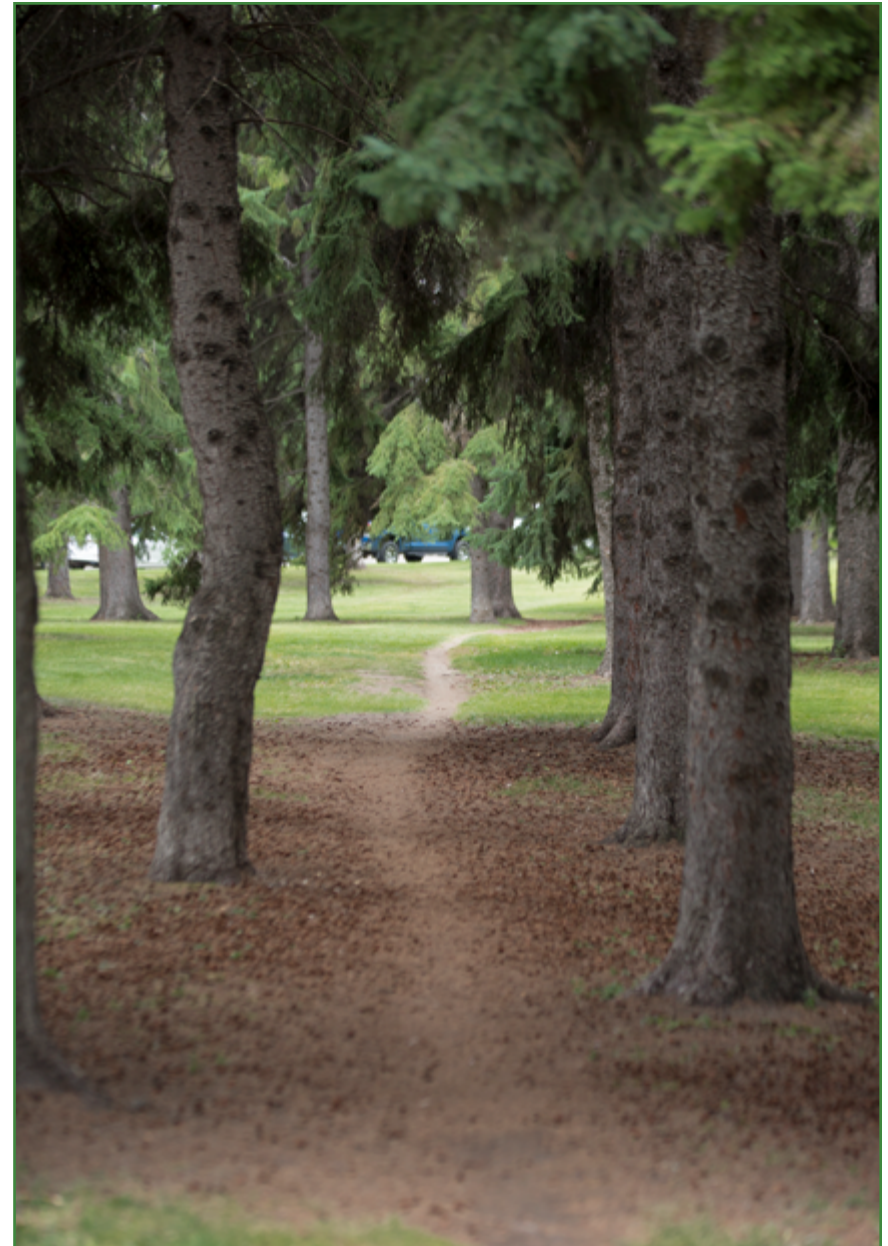*Accountability*
• Director (Parks)

Lead
• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

City Partners
• Planning & Development
• Sustainability

Community Partners
• Meewasin

The City of Saskatoon has a target of 15-20% canopy cover by 2060. The target includes all trees on both public and private property.

3. Managing the Urban Forest

Action 3.1: Develop new or improved management plans for City sites that require dedicated maintenance.

BACKGROUND: While trees on boulevards, on centre medians, and in parks follow a defined tree maintenance service level and pruning cycle, trees on other City properties do not. Dedicated maintenance is required in these locations to ensure the urban forest remains healthy, safe, and able to provide benefits to the community.

CURRENT STATUS: City trees in parks are pruned every 13 years, those along streets are pruned every seven years, and those in shelterbelts are pruned every 15 years; however, there are other sites that do not have a regular maintenance schedule. Furthermore, some City facilities are charged for tree maintenance costs, while others are not. Some areas are managed by Parks, some are managed by other departments (such as golf courses), and other areas lack clarity in terms of who is responsible for tree maintenance. Some sites have no funding for maintenance (e.g., expressways) or insufficient funding for maintenance (e.g., Woodlawn Cemetery and Memorial Avenue). A more consistent approach, clear roles and responsibilities, and additional operational resources will be needed to ensure City trees are adequately maintained throughout the city.

KPIs

- Completion of tree inventories for the City sites that require dedicated maintenance.
- Completion of an overarching tree maintenance strategy or a series of management plans for the City sites that require dedicated maintenance.
- Operational funding secured to deliver dedicated maintenance as outlined in the tree maintenance strategy and management plans.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium-High
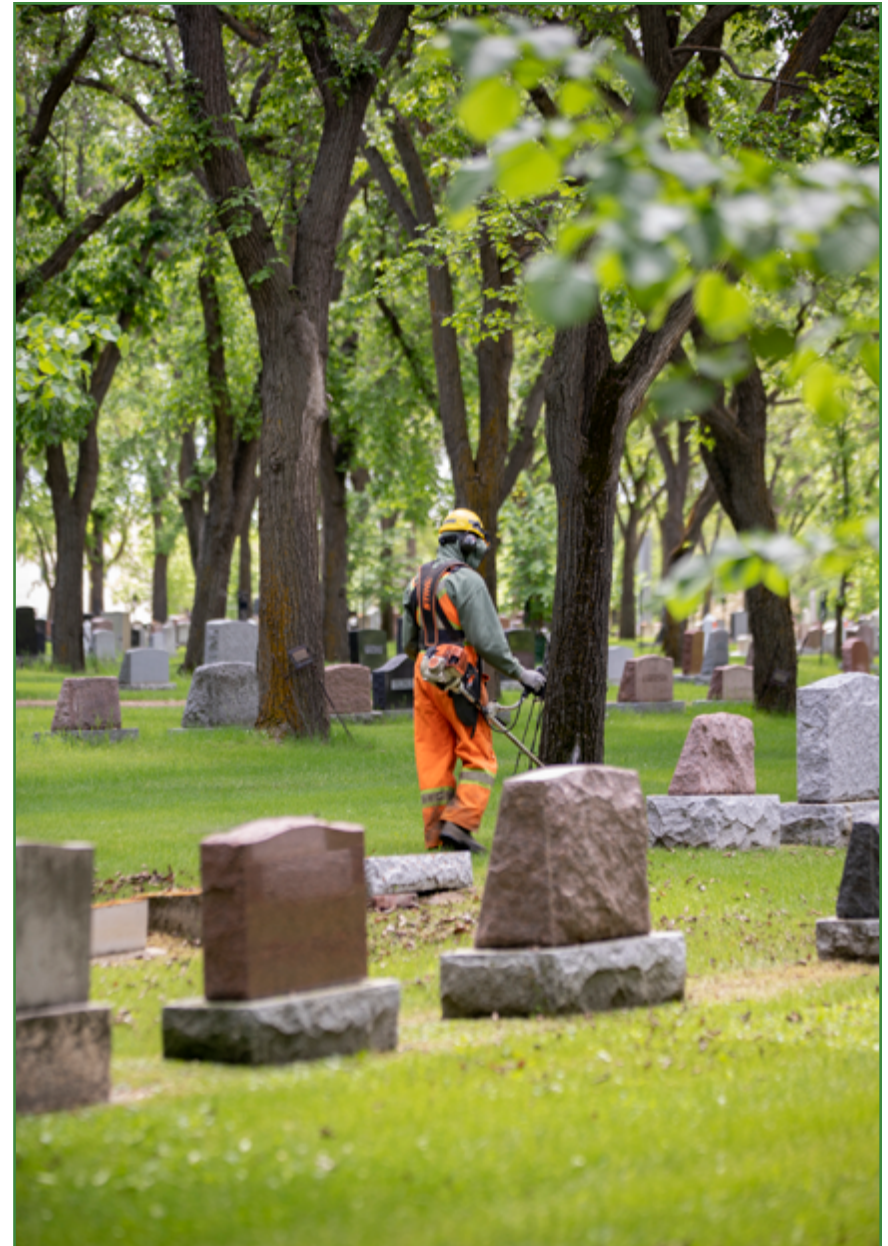
INITIATIVES

2022-23	A. Secure project management resources to lead initiatives.
	B. Identify the specific areas that require (or may require) new or improved management plans, such as the following: • Leisure Centres and civic facilities • Golf courses • Woodlawn Cemetery and Memorial Avenue • Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park and Zoo • Expressways, berms, and shelterbelts • Corridor growth areas (under development) • Natural river valley areas • Natural tree stands • Afforestation areas • Straddling trees[2] • Transportation or pedestrian corridors • Trees in back lanes • Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

2   Straddling trees (those with trunks growing partially on City property and partially on private property) may also need to be considered, depending on future changes to Council Policy: Trees on City Property C09-011.

INITIATIVES

2024-25	C.	Develop the maintenance strategy and/or management plans. Determine whether the areas identified for dedicated maintenance would be better suited to one overarching maintenance strategy, or to their own individual management plans. Also identify the components that need to be included in the scope:

- Tree inventories for the areas identified for new or enhanced maintenance, including
  - confirmation of tree species and locations;
  - confirmation of which trees are on City property;
  - identification of which trees are already managed by Parks, as well as trees that will be added to Parks maintenance in future; and
  - establishment of tree categories to identify which trees have similar maintenance needs
- Desired service levels, pruning cycles, and maintenance schedules (types of work, frequency) for each location and/or tree category
- Appropriate tree species, planting approach, and landscaping for each area
- Irrigation requirements and approaches (e.g., active irrigation; no irrigation; opportunities for stormwater, grey water, or raw water)
- Roles and responsibilities of other City departments or facilities and external organizations (e.g., Meewasin, BIDs)
- Scenarios where tree maintenance may be better suited within a Natural Area Management Plan or Natural Forest Plan[3]
- Funding or resource requirements and operational implications
- Engagement with staff and key stakeholders

D. Seek operational funding to deliver the desired level of service as outlined in the resulting strategy or strategies.

E. Monitor cyclical pruning of shelterbelts, park trees and street trees to assess resourcing and ensure the service level is maintained.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
- Operations Manager (Parks)

Lead
- Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)
- Project Manager (Parks)

City Partners
- Facilities Management
- Planning & Development
- Recreation & Community Development
- Sustainability

Community Partners
- Meewasin
- SOS Trees Coalition
- Friends of the Saskatoon Afforestation Areas
- BIDs

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3 *Both Meewasin and the City protect and manage natural stands and afforestation areas. However, there are cases where it is unclear who provides maintenance and what level of service should be applied. During Green Infrastructure Strategy engagement, a Natural Forest Plan was suggested as an opportunity to address these gaps.*

Action 3.2: Expand the use of non-potable and reclaimed water for trees.

BACKGROUND: Some municipalities use stormwater, grey water, and raw water for irrigation purposes – for example, by storing stormwater in underground cisterns for future reuse, reusing grey water from spray pads, or utilizing water directly from water bodies or storm ponds.[4] There are also opportunities to improve irrigation systems (existing and future) to be more efficient and conserve water.

CURRENT STATUS
- The Sustainability Department is leading the City's Water Conservation Strategy. As part of this strategy, the City is exploring opportunities to improve watering efficiency, reduce irrigation requirements, and identify non-potable sources of water for tree irrigation.
- Non-potable water is used for tree watering from the Stonebridge retention pond pumphouse.
- 20th Street has infrastructure to direct stormwater to the street tree wells before draining into a catch basin.

KPIs
- Litres of stormwater, grey water, and raw water reclaimed for watering trees.
- Litres of potable water saved.
- Leaks in tree irrigation systems identified and addressed.
- Irrigation systems and equipment designed and used to water trees take advantage of water conservation technologies.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium

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4   *Stormwater* includes rainwater and snowmelt that flows overland; it either enters the City's storm drain system, flows directly into a natural water body (e.g., the river, wetland), or is directed into a green infrastructure system (e.g., cisterns, storm ponds, bioswales, Silva Cells). ***Grey water*** *is relatively clean wastewater from sources such as pools, spray pads, washing machines, and showers. It has potential for reuse in some cases, such as irrigation.* ***Raw water*** *includes untreated water directly from the river.*

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Using government funding (application pending) and in partnership with the Sustainability Department, conduct a study to identify barriers (e.g., regulatory, infrastructure) to using non-potable water (e.g., raw water, storm water, spray pad and paddling pool water reuse) for irrigation (either on site, or stored and transported elsewhere in water trucks). Explore opportunities to decrease evaporation around spray pads and paddling pools using tree plantings and green infrastructure.
2024-25	B.	Ensure tree watering continues to be included in the implementation of the City's Water Conservation Strategy, specifically highlighting the following: • Coordinate with Action 3.1: "Develop new or improved management plans for City sites that require dedicated maintenance." • Identify the state of existing irrigation infrastructure in BIDS and other areas. Address ongoing issues by carrying out leak detection and performance checks; identifying the most cost-effective ways to irrigate trees; planning and designing new tree wells for improved access to active and/or passive watering (e.g., redirecting stormwater);[5] coordinating group plantings and larger planting sites where possible (rather than individual plantings); and researching how other municipalities – especially those with similar drought and heat conditions – are overcoming issues in their jurisdictions.
	C.	In partnership with the Sustainability Department and based on the findings of the study (Initiative A), implement projects to reuse spray pad and paddling pool grey water, and carry out projects to decrease evaporation around spray pads using tree plantings and green infrastructure.
	D.	Study potential opportunities and benefits of using water from existing stormwater ponds and identify challenges including silt, water quality, contaminants, and the risk of spreading aquatic invasive species.
	E.	Explore a partnership with Saskatoon Water's stormwater team to pilot the use of engineered stormwater systems or products that support tree establishment in areas where water is limiting.
2026-27	F.	In partnership with City pool facilities, coordinate watering opportunities with pool drainage. For example, use grey water from outdoor, indoor, and paddling pools to fill watering trucks to water trees.
	G.	Pilot reuse of storm pond water to irrigate trees and parks based on the findings of the feasibility study (Initiative D).
	H.	Explore opportunities to increase use of raw water for tree watering. Identify candidate sites, the location of existing raw water lines, and regulatory restrictions and requirements; analyze costs, and general feasibility.

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5   *Unirrigated tree wells need to be designed in such a way that trees can still be effectively watered throughout their entire lifespan.*

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Operations Manager (Parks)

Lead
• Water Conservation Project Manager (Sustainability)
• Irrigation Specialists (Parks)

City Partners
• Facilities Management
• Planning & Development
• Recreation & Community Development
• Saskatoon Water
• Sustainability

Community Partners
• BIDs
• Community Associations
• Development industry
• Provincial government
• Water Security Agency

"Some municipalities use stormwater, grey water, and raw water for irrigation purposes – for example, by storing stormwater in underground cisterns for future reuse, reusing grey water from spray pads, or utilizing water directly from water bodies or storm ponds."

Action 3.3: Develop an enhanced service level for urban forestry in Business Improvement Districts.

BACKGROUND: Trees are an essential part of Saskatoon's Business Improvement Districts (BIDs); however, these trees face additional stressors and impacts that can make tree survival more difficult. For example, these trees are surrounded by hard surfaces, are more susceptible to damage by being in areas of high pedestrian and vehicle traffic, and suffer occasional vandalism. Not only that, but the BIDs have been impacted by the sudden loss of many black ash due to the recent cottony ash psyllid outbreak. The loss was unprecedented, and it quickly and dramatically changed the face of the BIDs. An enhanced service level will be examined to facilitate

- planting of larger trees where tree vandalism or damage has been a recurring issue or where significant gaps in the canopy exist;
- enhanced pruning and maintenance, especially of larger trees;
- increased monitoring of tree health; and
- collaboration between the BIDs and the City.

CURRENT STATUS: Parks has started tracking cases of tree vandalism and damage in the BIDs. They also track information related to tree wells, including locations of planted and unplanted tree wells; conflicts (e.g., lack of irrigation, stump to remove, tripping hazards, sightline issues, interference with driveway, bus stop, or utility); and actions to be taken (e.g., tree replacement, stump removal).

Urban Forestry has started discussions with the Riversdale and Downtown BIDs, as well as Planning & Development, to explore options for improvements. A few short-term opportunities have been identified to reallocate some existing resources in the

following ways: plant larger basket trees[6] in locations that have experienced recurring challenges; explore the potential for alternative plantings in empty tree wells that cannot support trees; and plant smaller container trees[7] to fill in current gaps.

KPIs
- Young tree mortality in the BIDs.
- Safe Useful Life Expectancy in the BIDs.
- Number of trees removed in the BIDs, including the reason (e.g., vandalism, type of damage, pest).
- Numbers of empty tree wells and planted tree wells.
- Number and type of new plantings in the BIDs (e.g., basket trees; container trees; alternative plantings such as grasses, shrubs, vines).
- Number of tree replacements each year in the BIDs.
- Response time for maintenance and replanting.
- Size of tree at time of planting.
- Pruning cycle.
- Diversity of tree species.
- Number and effectiveness of underground structural cells.
- Number of irrigated and non-irrigated tree wells.
- Number of tree grates, tree guards, and other tree well infrastructure.
- Increase in canopy cover in the BIDs.
- Improved communication between the City and the BIDs. Annual updates provided between the BIDs and the City.
- BID, business, and resident satisfaction with the BID areas.

PRIORITY LEVEL: High

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6   Larger basket trees are often 2-3 metres (7-10 feet) in height.
7   Smaller container trees are often 1.5-2 metres (5-7 feet) in height.

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A. Secure project management resources to lead initiatives.
	B. Confirm the data Parks and Planning & Development currently track and how; identify gaps and improvements; and integrate BID monitoring with Action 2.3: "Track and monitor the health and performance of the urban forest." This monitoring may include mapping tree planting and mortality, tracking vandalism and other types of damage, monitoring the number of empty tree wells (including the reason they're empty), tracking the health and maintenance needs of BID trees, and monitoring the success of alternative plantings (e.g., grasses, shrubs, vines). Determine a format to report information annually to the BIDs and through the Parks Annual Report.
	C. Plant larger basket trees in the Downtown BID along 2nd Avenue and 19th Street where existing trees have struggled to establish or have been vandalized. Plant smaller container trees in the remaining Riversdale BID tree wells. Plant several smaller container trees in Downtown BID tree wells.
	D. Using government funding (application pending) and in partnership with Planning & Development, pilot alternative plantings in tree wells that cannot accommodate trees, using solutions such as grasses, boulders, vines, groundcovers, shrubs, or pots.
	E. Draft options for an enhanced service level for urban forestry in the BIDs. Seek funding to operationalize the new service level improvements, such as • improving frequency, level, and types of maintenance; • filling empty tree wells and installing alternatives where required; • increasing funding for larger tree plantings and quicker replacements; • improving communication and collaboration between the City and the BIDs; and • establishing cost- and/or maintenance-sharing agreements for certain types of streetscape improvements, installations, or activities.
	F. Reassess the City's tree planting strategy in commercial areas or boulevards by identifying opportunities for group plantings in locations where individual plantings may not (or have not) been successful.
2024-25	G. Continue to track, monitor, and map tree wells and median trees in BIDS. Report results to the BIDs and through the Parks Annual Report. Use the results to inform planning.
	H. Monitor the success of the alternative planting pilots that were installed as part of Initiative D.
2026-27	I. About every five years, review the data, identify gaps, and make improvements.
	J. Review successes and challenges of the new BID service level. Adjust if necessary.
	K. Continue communicating, sharing data, and collaborating with the BIDs.

Photo credit: Discover Saskatoon/Carey Shaw Photography

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
- Operations Manager (Parks)
- Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
- Project Manager (currently unresourced)

City Partners
- Planning & Development

Community Partners
- BIDs

Action 3.4: Design and implement an integrated tree inventory and work order management system.

BACKGROUND: Increasing efficiency and accuracy of the City's tree inventory and work order management system is crucial, as field employees need field access to an inventory system to update the status of tree pruning and maintenance requests, and to obtain information about City trees when conducting work.

The Urban Forestry team receives many requests to determine whether trees are on public or private property. Making the tree inventory and map available to the public would increase access and convenience for residents. Specifically, the inventory and map could be used by the public to identify property lines, determine which trees are protected under the City's policy and future bylaw, identify desired planting sites on both public and private property, view work status (e.g., when a tree is scheduled for pruning, maintenance, or replanting), gather urban forest data (e.g., species, size, location), engage in community-science monitoring programs, and participate in urban forestry initiatives.

CURRENT STATUS: The Urban Forestry team currently manages a tree inventory of about 110,000 trees in parks, boulevards, and medians for internal use. Inventories have also been completed for Woodlawn Cemetery, as well as 450 naturalized tree stands or shelterbelts. Planning & Development (Urban Design) has also mapped out tree wells in the BIDs in a mobile-friendly format. Given the number of trees that Parks manages and because the conditions of trees change over time, it is challenging to keep the information current.

KPIs
- Integration of a new work order management system.
- Percentage of work order information input from the field.
- Number of employees able to update and access the system.

- Amount and type of urban forestry inventory information accessible in the field.
- Number of urban forest activities (planting, watering, pruning, removing, stumping) tracked through the integrated tree inventory and work order management system.
- Tree inventory and map made accessible to the public (freely available online).

PRIORITY LEVEL: High

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A. Transition tree-related data management to Fusion.
	B. Develop a tree inventory application that can be easily updated in the field as required and integrated with the Fusion system.
	C. Develop and implement work order and application processes that will track and report on asset management and KPI data.
	D. Develop an external inventory accessible to the public. This would first require determining what types of information should be made available to the public, as well identifying which processes could be streamlined by making tree-related information publicly available.
2024-25	E. Refine tree inventory processes to ensure ongoing accuracy.
	F. Maintain synchrony between the public tree map and integrated tree inventory.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
- Operations Manager (Parks)
- Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
- Forestry Analyst (Parks)

City Partners
- Information Technology
- Planning & Development

Community Partners
- Businesses
- Residents

Trees are an essential part of Saskatoon's Business Improvement Districts (BIDs); however, these trees face additional stressors and impacts that can make tree survival more difficult.

Photo credit: Discover Saskatoon

4. Protecting the Urban Forest

Action 4.1: Develop a new tree protection bylaw for trees on City property and update existing Council Policy C09-011.

BACKGROUND: Existing City processes and Council Policy: Trees on City Property C09-011 have not been sufficient to prevent damage to and loss of City trees. Updating the existing policy and creating a new tree protection bylaw will significantly improve the City's ability to protect trees on City property, provide a mechanism for enforcement and compensation when trees are damaged or removed, and provide an opportunity to create up-to-date tree protection specifications and measures.

CURRENT STATUS: Council Policy: Trees on City Property C09-011 has been in place since 1989 (updated in 2010). It outlines some of the City's expectations in terms of tree protection and has occasionally been effective in (a) limiting tree removal or damage, and (b) securing financial compensation when losses occur.

KPIs
- Updated existing Council Policy: Trees on City Property C09-011.
- New tree protection bylaw for trees on City property adopted by City Council.
  - Engagement with internal and external stakeholders informs development of updated policy and new bylaw.
- Once the bylaw comes into effect:
  - Level of protection for trees, including those with social, cultural, heritage, and/or environmental value.
  - Rates of tree injury and removal due to construction and development.

  - Level of bylaw compliance; number and types of bylaw infractions.
  - Level and types of compensation for tree damage or removal.
  - Process for directing compensation for tree damage or removal.
  - Number of Tree Protection Plans in place.
- Per Urban Forestry Policy (a) from the Official Community Plan: "Through the Trees on City Property Policy (refer to Council Policy No. C09-011), the City will promote the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of a diverse network of forest vegetation, consisting of trees and other plant material on private property, boulevards, buffers, parks and open space, the riverbank, and afforestation plots."

PRIORITY LEVEL: High

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	• Draft a tree protection bylaw based on research, municipal best practice, engagement with internal and external stakeholders (see Action 4.2: "Develop a formalized tree protection process that ensures clarity and balance for stakeholders who conduct work near City trees"), and the City's Triple Bottom Line indicators. • Update existing Council Policy: Trees on City Property C09-011 to reflect current best practice and to complement the new bylaw. • Establish an approach to support operationalization of the tree protection bylaw, including enforcement, permit process, education and capacity building, monitoring/tracking, and incident reporting. • Identify how the new bylaw might impact existing City practices, policies, and bylaws.
	B.	Connect this work to actions 1.1: "Incorporate additional urban forestry considerations in planning and development processes, including sector, concept, infrastructure, and utility plans," and 1.2: "Enhance tree planting opportunities in consultation with internal and external partners."
	C.	Review and update specifications and standards (see Action 4.3: "Update and consolidate tree protection specifications for work that takes place near City trees").
	D.	Secure project management resources to continue this work and resources to operationalize the bylaw.
2024-25	E.	New tree protection bylaw comes into force. Deliver education, communications, and capacity building for staff, stakeholders, and the public to support the transition and inform them of the new requirements and procedures.
	F.	Enforcement begins following a transition period.
2026-27	G.	Review successes and challenges of the new bylaw and enforcement approach. Assess whether additional resources are needed and whether changes to the bylaw may be necessary. Adjust approach as needed.
2028-29	H.	Review policy and bylaw every 2-3 years.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Director (Parks)
• Operations Manager (Parks)
• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
• Project Manager (currently unresourced)

City Partners
• Multiple (e.g., Building Standards, Community Standards, Construction & Design, Planning & Development, Roadways, Fleet, and Support, Saskatoon Land, Saskatoon Light & Power, Saskatoon Water, Solicitors, Sustainability, Technical Services, Transportation, Water & Waste Operations)

Community Partners
• Multiple (e.g., building and development industry, contractors, excavation services, landscaping professionals, Meewasin, SOS Trees Coalition, utilities, Friends of the Afforestation Areas)

Action 4.2: Develop a formalized tree protection process that ensures clarity and balance for stakeholders who conduct work near City trees.

BACKGROUND: The City has set goals to support development as well as to protect and enhance the urban forest. However, there are cases where it is challenging to balance tree protection and development projects. The intent of this action is to develop a process to determine when, what, and why priorities take precedent, and to provide clarity on solutions. Areas of focus include protecting trees in infill areas, reducing the number and types of utility and infrastructure conflicts, and designing new neighbourhoods to better accommodate trees.

CURRENT STATUS: Urban Forestry works with builders, developers, utilities, and other City departments to identify tree protection opportunities. However, the process is informal and in need of improvement and formalization.

> *Mayor's Infill Roundtable (2017): "The value and requirements of tree protection are not communicated early enough in the process and sometimes challenges infill realities" (Barrier 1.5).*

KPIs

- New tree protection process that is clear and straightforward.
  - Consultation with internal and external stakeholders.
- Tree protection process aligned with updated Council Policy: Trees on City Property C09-011 and the new tree protection bylaw.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium-High

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A. Engage with internal and external stakeholders as the tree protection bylaw is being developed (see Action 4.1: "Develop a new tree protection bylaw for trees on City property and update existing Council Policy C09-011"). This engagement will include conversations about tree protection processes, requirements, and specifications. Opportunities for collaboration and innovation will also be discussed. Some areas may require further discussion and engagement.
	B. Connect this work to actions 1.1: "Incorporate additional urban forestry considerations in planning and development processes, including sector, concept, infrastructure, and utility plans," and 1.2: "Enhance tree planting opportunities in consultation with internal and external partners."

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
- Director (Parks)   • Operations Manager (Parks)
- Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
- Project Manager (currently unresourced)

City Partners
- Multiple (e.g., Building Standards, Community Standards, Construction & Design, Planning & Development, Roadways, Fleet, and Support, Saskatoon Land, Saskatoon Light & Power, Saskatoon Water, Sustainability, Technical Services, Transportation, Water & Waste Operations)

Community Partners
- Multiple (e.g., building and development industry, contractors, excavation services, landscaping professionals, utilities)

Action 4.3: Update and consolidate tree protection specifications for work that takes place near City trees.

BACKGROUND: Currently, tree protection specifications are listed in multiple City documents, which can lead to a lack of clarity for the building and development industry, as well as City departments. This action includes working with stakeholders to review, evaluate, and update existing specifications to present clear, consistent requirements that support tree protection.

CURRENT STATUS: The City has multiple tree protection documents, including the following:
- Council Policy C09-011 Trees on City Property "Schedule C"
- Saskatoon's Urban Forest: A Guide to Urban Forestry Services
- Call Before You Design or Build Near City Trees
- Tree Protection Requirements webpage
- Park Development Guidelines and Standard Construction Specifications – "Site Construction (02065 Existing Plant Material)"

KPIs
- New or updated specifications.
- Specifications written in industry-accepted format, including standard detail drawings (where applicable).

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium-High

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Engage with internal and external stakeholders as the tree protection bylaw is being developed (see Action 4.1: Develop a new tree protection bylaw for trees on City property and update existing Council Policy C09-011). This engagement will include conversations about tree protection specifications, processes, and requirements.
2024-25	B.	Create one consolidated set of tree protection specifications.
	C.	Create standard detail drawings and templates to accompany text-based specifications, where appropriate.
	D.	Work with Communications to ensure messaging is consistent in other documents and that the City's tree protection specifications are communicated appropriately to different audiences.
	E.	While reviewing tree protection specifications, establish agreed-upon tree planting specifications to ensure adequate soil volume, quality, and space exist for newly planted trees.
2026-27	F.	Review specifications and drawings every 2-4 years. Update as needed based on industry best practice. Inform stakeholders of changes.

STAKEHOLDERS
Accountability
- Operations Manager (Parks)
- Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
- Project Manager (Parks)

City Partners
- Multiple (e.g., Building Standards, Construction & Design, Infrastructure Specification & Product Review Committee, Roadways, Fleet, and Support, Saskatoon Water, Technical Services, Transportation, Water & Waste Operations)

Community Partners
- Building and development industry
- Utilities

Action 4.4: Develop an urban forest invasive species management strategy in collaboration with local and regional partners.

BACKGROUND: The recent cases of Dutch elm disease in Saskatoon, along with the loss of City ash trees as a result of the cottony ash psyllid infestation, illustrate the need to identify threats to the urban forest. A unified strategy will help proactively mitigate threats and costs associated with Dutch elm disease, cottony ash psyllid, emerald ash borer, European buckthorn, and many other pests. Adequate resourcing and clarifying jurisdiction will be essential to effectively managing invasive species.

CURRENT STATUS: Parks is beginning work on an integrated pest management (IPM) strategy to address weeds and other pests that affect Saskatoon's parks and green spaces. While not specifically focused on the urban forest, there will be important connections and overlap between the IPM Strategy and the urban forest Invasive Species Management Strategy. Some IPM work is already underway, particularly in response to threats affecting ash and elm.

KPIs
- Completion of an Invasive species management strategy.
  - Engagement with key stakeholders.
- Level of public knowledge/awareness about invasive species threats to the urban forest.
- Number, types, and locations of trees affected by pests.
- Types and numbers of invasive species that impact Saskatoon's urban forest, and the level of risk they each pose to the urban forest.
- Baseline data on the types and numbers of species that rely on and are supported by Saskatoon's urban forest (including native species: mammals, pollinators, breeding and migratory birds, and species at risk).
  - Level of risk that invasive species pose to these species.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Identify how the urban forest Invasive species management strategy will connect to the broader City's integrated pest management strategy (under development), as well as Green Pathways Action 1.2: "Manage and restore natural areas through natural area management plans".
2024-25	B.	Develop an Invasive species management strategy for high-risk pests or diseases that impact (or could impact) the urban forest, including but not limited to Dutch elm disease, cottony ash psyllid, emerald ash borer, and European buckthorn. The strategy will also do the following: • Identify how climate change may affect the types and levels of invasive species impacts in Saskatoon. • Include recommended actions to reduce and manage invasive species in specific areas, such as medians and boulevards, parks, naturalized parks, infill areas and new developments, afforestation areas, the river valley, and natural areas. • Rely on engagement with key stakeholders, including staff, regional partners, Meewasin, and the Province of Saskatchewan. • Gather baseline data on (a) the types and numbers of invasive species that pose risks to Saskatoon's urban forest, and (b) the types and numbers of non-invasive species that are supported by Saskatoon's urban forest, and how (e.g., habitat, nesting, food).
	C.	Continue to work with the Sustainability Department and Water & Waste Operations to identify invasive species disposal options, including • lowering or removing landfill fees for elm wood disposal; • identifying opportunities to use elm wood for mulch or other uses in the future; • revisiting the elm composting pilot; and • identifying alternate disposal methods for other invasive species or infected plant materials (e.g., pyrolysis, anaerobic digestion).
2026-27	D.	Implement recommendations from the Invasive species management strategy.
	E.	Deliver invasive species community programming, including the following: • Deliver an invasive species education and communications campaign. • Work with community partners to develop a volunteer program or programs for invasive species identification and removal. • Work with commercial nurseries and greenhouses to reduce the risk of bringing in infected, infested, or invasive plant material.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Operations Manager (Parks)
• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
• Entomologist (Parks)

City Partners
• Communications & Public Engagement
• Sustainability
• Water & Waste Operations

Community Partners
• Commercial nurseries/greenhouses
• Meewasin
• Province of Saskatchewan
• Regional Municipality of Corman Park
• Saskatoon North Partnership for Growth (P4G)
• SOS Trees Coalition
• Friends of the Afforestation Areas

Action 4.5: Explore tree protection for private property.

BACKGROUND: Protecting trees on private property has great potential to support Saskatoon's canopy cover targets. While the percentage of canopy in Saskatoon is currently higher on public land than private land, the area of private land is larger. In addition, trees on private property generally have a greater growth rate than trees on public property. To support tree protection on private property, other municipalities have enacted private tree bylaws and offered programs and incentives.

CURRENT STATUS: Some community members and organizations have shown interest in a tree protection bylaw and City-supported planting programs for trees on private property.

KPIs
• Level of protection for trees on private property.
• Number of trees on private property.
• Public engagement to determine the level of interest and support for private tree protection.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Low

INITIATIVES

2028-29	A.	Identify opportunities to better protect existing trees on private property. Review municipal best practices, conduct research, and coordinate internal and public engagement. Explore the level of community support, benefits, and potential drawbacks of private tree protection options (including the potential development of a private tree bylaw for Saskatoon), as well as opportunities to increase the number of trees on private property.
2030-31	B.	Begin development of tree planting and protection programs supported through engagement.
	C.	If there is a high level of community support for a private tree bylaw, take steps toward bylaw development.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability	*City Partners*
• Director (Parks)	• Multiple
Lead	*Community Partners*
• Project Manager (currently unresourced)	• Multiple

Action 4.6: Deliver education and outreach initiatives for staff and the public.

BACKGROUND: Education programs and communications campaigns can help raise awareness of the value of the urban forest, as well as build capacity for effective tree protection. Enhancing work in this area could include expanding existing programs, partnering with other departments and community organizations, supporting equity and diversity, and engaging the public in stewardship, planting, maintenance, or community-science activities.

CURRENT STATUS: Communications & Public Engagement have supported multiple outreach initiatives to date using various methods: educational booklets and brochures, website and social media communications, flyers, Community Association updates, public service announcements, signage, and educational booths at public events). Urban Forestry has also supported community events such as Arbor Week[8] and provided school

tours of the nursery; however, efforts have been inconsistent due to a lack of resources.

KPIs

- Number and scope of internal outreach and education efforts.
- Tree protection measures incorporated by other departments throughout the planning, design, and implementation stages of projects and operations.
- Number and scope of public outreach and education efforts.
- Participation in activities and number of people involved.
- Number of people reached through public awareness and communications activities, where possible.
- Partnership agreements.
- Increase in website visits.
- Social media engagement (e.g., likes, shares, comments).

PRIORITY LEVEL: Medium

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8   Arbor Week is held annually during the last week in May, with Arbor Day being the last Friday of May. SOS Trees Coalition plans tree-related activities, including tree planting initiatives, education, and partnerships.

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A. Partner with the Sustainability Department to deliver the existing Dutch elm disease campaign focused on communicating the provincial pruning ban, elm disposal requirements, and prohibited storage and transportation.
	B. Partner with the Sustainability Department to include tree-focused content and programming in the existing Healthy Yards and Student Action for a Sustainable Future programs. Focus on tree protection and ways the community can support the health and growth of the urban forest.
	C. Partner with the Sustainability Department on Green Pathways Initiative 5.1.1: "Green network food program."
	D. Using government funding (application pending), and in partnership with the Sustainability Department, communicate the value and purpose of the urban forest and naturalized plantings.
	E. Clarify and communicate the process for residents to request pruning of public trees and root clean-out of pipes. The City currently provides these services to residents under certain circumstances (e.g., to provide clearance around buildings and improve safety).
	F. Educate the public on new trial species that have been planted. Include information on the types of species, why they're being trialled, and how community members can support these trees.
2024-25	G. Secure resources to hire an Environmental Coordinator to lead this work, including resources for communications and engagement.
	H. Determine Urban Forestry's communications needs over a multi-year period, including key messages, campaign ideas, customer service requirements, and communications tactics (e.g., social media campaigns, website improvements, fact sheets, infographics, how-to videos, FAQ for City staff, signage, presentations, trade shows and community events, magazine articles, curriculum resources, activity booklets, Urban Forestry phone and email hotline). Coordinate with the other departments (e.g., Sustainability) on messaging.
	I. Add an urban forestry category to the Environmental Cash Grant program for community projects (or coordinate with the existing Green Infrastructure grant).
	J. Work with SOS Trees Coalition, Meewasin, Gardening at USask, and other tree-focused community organizations to help identify • where education and outreach related to urban forestry is already underway, including who is involved in this work and opportunities for enhancement; and • how volunteers can help support urban forestry objectives through monitoring, protection, and education. Initiatives could include stewardship programs, community-science, invasive species removal, and other forms of educational or capacity-building programs.
	K. Formally recognize and participate in education and/or tree planting activities for days of awareness (e.g., Arbor Week, National Forest Week, Earth Day). Work with community organizations to lead these initiatives.
	L. Develop educational resources for City staff (focused on tree protection measures, policy and bylaw requirements, the value of trees, etc.). Also provide educational materials that can be circulated by other departments to support Parks' communications efforts.

INITIATIVES

2026-27	M.	Develop an education campaign introducing people to the value and variety of trees in our urban forest. Consider working with SOS Trees Coalition on their existing educational initiative, whereby storytelling and fun facts are used to create audio tours of various tree species in Saskatoon parks.
	N.	Work with the City archivist, SOS Trees Coalition, equity groups, Indigenous groups, and others to write up the history of Saskatoon's urban forest, unique trees, treed areas, and key people who have supported this work.
	O.	Work with the Sustainability Department to create a Tree Coach and tree rebate program, using the existing Compost Coach program as a template.[9]
	P.	Develop a communications campaign about fruit trees (e.g., where fruit trees are located on public land, fruit identification, how and when to pick fruit).
	Q.	Work with other departments to develop landscape guidelines for private property that include, for example, tree placement and planting considerations, along with other healthy yard and garden recommendations.
2028-29	R.	Deliver targeted communication in neighbourhoods or areas that experience higher rates of (a) tree vandalism or other damage, (b) policy or bylaw infringements, (c) complaints, and/or (d) service requests.
	S.	Develop a community-science monitoring program in partnership with community organizations and Meewasin.
	T.	Design a program focused on engaging youth in volunteer stewardship projects.[10]
2030-31	U.	Create planted areas such as treed spaces to celebrate, recognize, and reflect upon individuals, organizations, or events that have made significant contributions to Saskatoon's urban forest and/or furthered equity in our community.

9   *The Saskatoon Compost Coach program is coordinated by the Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council (SWRC) on behalf of the City of Saskatoon (the Sustainability Department contracts the SWRC to conduct this work). The SWRC's Compost Coach Coordinator trains volunteers to do community education and outreach, attend trade shows or other events, and conduct home visits to answer residents' questions and troubleshoot problems. They also publish how-to guides, create educational videos, run workshops, administer $20 compost and rain barrel rebates, and manage a composting hotline (phone and email). They provide the Sustainability Department with an annual report of their activities and results.*

10   *An opportunity was identified in the IWG2S* Coming Home report: "The Representative and the Indigenous WG2S Centre would investigate ways to empower Saskatoon's Indigenous youth to replace graffiti with art, clean up playgrounds and parks, and engage in other community beautification projects. The Centre could work with schools to bring together Indigenous children and youth from across the City. Indigenous children and youth also want to be proud of the spaces and the City they live in. We help them to discover their pride by empowering them to become stakeholders with us."*

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
• Environmental Coordinator (currently unresourced)

City Partners
• Communications & Public Engagement
• Recreation & Community Development
• Sustainability

Community Partners
• Multiple (e.g., Community Associations, Gardening at USask, Meewasin, SOS Trees Coalition, University of Saskatchewan)

Action 4.7: Work with other departments to develop a formalized asset valuation approach for trees.

BACKGROUND: Trees provide immeasurable benefits: they offer ecosystem services, support human health and well-being, and contribute to the social and cultural fabric of the city. Public trees in Saskatoon (excluding shelterbelts and afforestation areas) were valued at $530 million in 2020. Despite their importance, our trees are not accounted for on any balance sheet or through other valuation methods.

CURRENT STATUS: In 2017, the Parks Asset Management Plan was presented to City Council to highlight a funding plan that would be required to maintain park assets to the desired condition. In 2021, a update on the Parks Asset Management Plan was presented to City Council. The update highlighted a gap of 4.85 million and identified a funding plan to help close the gap. Several assets are covered under the Plan (e.g., pathways, irrigation systems, play structures); however, green infrastructure (including trees) is not considered.

KPIs
• Accounting of public trees as asset categories in the City's Corporate Asset Management Plan.
• Include ecosystem services value, replacement value, compensation value, and intrinsic value of public trees in the Parks Asset Management Plan.
• Appraised dollar value of public trees in parks, boulevards, and medians.
• Value of public trees using a Natural Capital Asset Valuation approach.
• Consideration of tree value when City departments budget for and plan initiatives.

PRIORITY LEVEL: Low-Medium

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A.	Secure project management resources to lead initiatives.
2024-25	B.	Collaborate with Sustainability and Corporate Asset Management as they develop a level of service for natural assets and identify how to integrate green infrastructure into other Asset Management Plans. Work with them to include trees as an asset category in the City's Corporate Asset Management Plan.
2026-27	C.	Identify changes to the existing Parks Asset Management Plan: • Incorporate green infrastructure assets and the urban forest. • Describe the value of the urban forest from multiple lenses – ecosystem services value, replacement value, compensation value, intrinsic value. • Consider climate projections and data as they relate to managing Saskatoon's urban forestry assets over the long term. • Create service level(s). • Identify risks (and how to manage them).

The urban forest and other green infrastructure can be valued in several ways. For example:

1. *Ecosystem services value:* The value trees provide in terms of air, water, and soil quality; carbon sequestration; stormwater management; and other Natural Capital Asset Valuation outcomes.

2. *Replacement value:* The amount it costs to replace a tree or trees if damaged or removed.

3. *Compensation value:* The appraised value of a tree or trees based on the Guide for Plant Appraisal by the Council of Tree and Landscape Appraisers.

4. *Intrinsic value:* The full value of a tree beyond the above valuation metrics. It may include our emotional, spiritual, and personal connection to trees, as well as their value to other species and nature.

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
• Operations Manager (Parks)
• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
• Project Manager (currently unresourced)

City Partners
• Corporate Asset Management
• Sustainability

Community Partners
• As needed

Trees provide immeasurable benefits: they offer ecosystem services, support human health and well-being, and contribute to the social and cultural fabric of the city.

5. Reimagining the Urban Forest

Action 5.1: Enhance the environmental, social, and cultural benefits of the urban forest.

BACKGROUND: The following initiatives support opportunities for collaboration and partnerships; explore environmental, social, and cultural connections; and reimagine the role of the urban forest as a lever for equity and meaningful change.

CURRENT STATUS: These initiatives were not identified in the original Urban Forest Management Plan, they've been identified as key areas of growth to align with the City's strategic priorities.

KPIs

- Identification of co-benefits:
  - Environmental benefits including reduced emissions from operations and ecosystem services (e.g. carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, and flood mitigation)
  - Economic benefits
  - Social and cultural benefits
- Creation of inclusive initiatives:
  - Urban forestry initiatives that reflect the City's reconciliation, equity, diversity, and inclusion (REDI) objectives, as stated in the City of Saskatoon's Strategic Plan 2022-2025
  - Participation that is representative of the demographics in the community

PRIORITY LEVEL: High

INITIATIVES

2022-23	A. Coordinate with Meewasin on the opportunity to develop a national urban park in Saskatoon.
	B. Participate in internal engagement when the Sustainability Department takes steps to achieve Green Pathways Initiative 1.3.1: "Traditional Land Use and Knowledge Assessment" to aid the City's understanding of the cultural, historical, and spiritual importance of this land.
	C. Identify opportunities to enhance procurement practices by applying a Triple Bottom Line lens in tenders and requests for proposals, as required by the Triple Bottom Line Policy C08-001 and Purchasing Policy C02-045. Support diverse employers, as well as suppliers, contractors, businesses, and industries that have strong sustainability practices.
2024-25	D. Conduct a study that identifies opportunities to connect urban forestry initiatives to the City of Saskatoon's REDI objectives[11]. For example: • Conduct an urban forestry accessibility audit. Identify recommended upgrades to treed areas, including parks, natural areas, and afforestation locations; and identify activities and partnerships to support people living with disabilities or who experience barriers to nature. • Review the urban forest from a diversity and inclusion lens. Work with BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, people of colour) community members and allies, newcomers, and 2SLGBTQ community members and allies to identify opportunities to create a variety of safe, secure, and inviting urban forestry spaces, activities, and partnerships. • Review the urban forest from a reconciliation and anti-racism lens.[12] Work with Indigenous rights holders and stakeholders to identify opportunities to create urban forest spaces, activities, and partnerships that address and acknowledge systemic issues that result in racism, segregation, and discrimination. Also identify opportunities to incorporate the Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) Calls to Action, ceremony, and tree teachings into urban forestry initiatives. Work with Indigenous communities and organizations, as well as other departments, to explore traditional land management and governance models for the green network. • Identify opportunities to improve park and green space access for people experiencing poverty.
	E. Participate in discussions related to the City's homelessness strategy to help support those who are setting up encampments in parks and treed areas.

11 *"We need less talk about "returning to normal" and more about actions that address systemic discrimination, the displacement of people experiencing homelessness, and anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in our park systems, policies and organizations." (https://ccpr.parkpeople.ca/2021/overview/lessons)*

12 *Applying an anti-racism lens is the "active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices and attitudes so power is redistributed and shared equitably." Taking this approach can help us identify and define the cultural gaps that lead to widespread social inequality, achieve authentic forms of equity, and make cross-cultural understanding an effective way to create change in positive and equitable ways. (City of Saskatoon, ayisiyiniwak: A Communications Guide)*

INITIATIVES

2026-27	G.	Secure resources to implement recommendations from the urban forestry REDI study.
	H.	Work with the Sustainability Department to conserve energy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions while conducting urban forestry activities and maintenance. For example: • Transition equipment to electric or low-emission fuel where possible. • Reduce idling where possible. • Reduce vehicle kilometres traveled. • Reduce single-passenger trips • Identify other opportunities that would support the City of Saskatoon's Low Emissions Community Plan.
	I.	Collaborate with the team leading the Recreation and Parks Master Plan implementation. In particular, find overlap in terms of the following: • Partnerships • Volunteer strategy • Communications strategy • Identification and collection of appropriate data • Measures to address accessibility • Condition assessments on parks • Park amenities strategy • Landscape design standards • Needs assessment as part of planning • Land acquisition

INITIATIVES

2028-29	J. Many initiatives address climate change and creating a more resilient urban forest but as new climate patterns emerge there will be opportunity to work with the Sustainability Department on climate adaptation initiatives. For example: • Create a strategy that identifies how to manage the impacts of climate change on our urban forest (e.g., drought, flooding, extreme storms, ice, temperature swings, pests, diseases, fire). • Identify opportunities to plant shaded areas or "cool zones" throughout the City that are accessible to residents during times of extreme heat. Prioritize locations with low canopy cover and neighbourhoods where residents tend not to have easy access to air conditioned spaces. K. Work with the Sustainability Department and Water & Waste Operations to research uses and markets for recycled or recovered wood, tree trimmings, and other plant materials (such uses may include energy recovery, wood pellets, engineered wood products).
2030-31	L. Explore co-ownership or co-management opportunities for unique plantings on non-park land (e.g., community orchard or forest, shade garden).

STAKEHOLDERS

Accountability
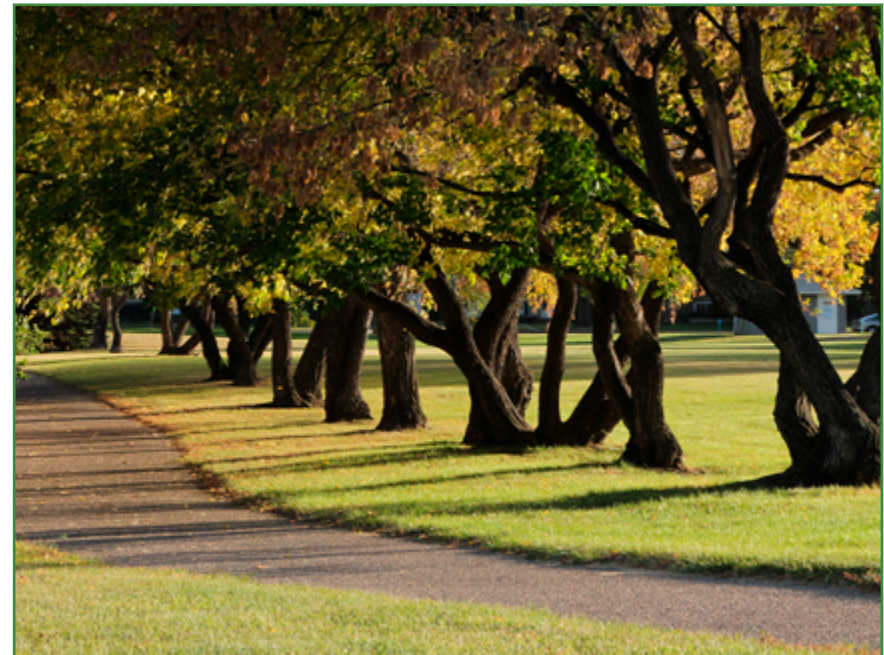• Superintendent (Parks – Urban Forestry)

Lead
• To be determined

City Partners
• Communications & Public Engagement
• Indigenous Initiatives (Truth and Reconciliation)
• Organizational Strategy Execution
  (Cultural Diversity and Race Relations)
• Planning & Development
• Recreation & Community Development
• REDI Stewardship Committee
• Sustainability

Community Partners
• Multiple

The City of Saskatoon Parks Department is responsible for the care of approximately 110,000 trees on boulevards, on centre medians, in parks, and at civic facilities.

Action 3.4
Action 3.3
Action 4.3
Action 4.4
Action 3.2
Action 4.2
Action 2.3
Action 4.5
Action 2.2
Action 3.1
Action 4.1
Action 4.6
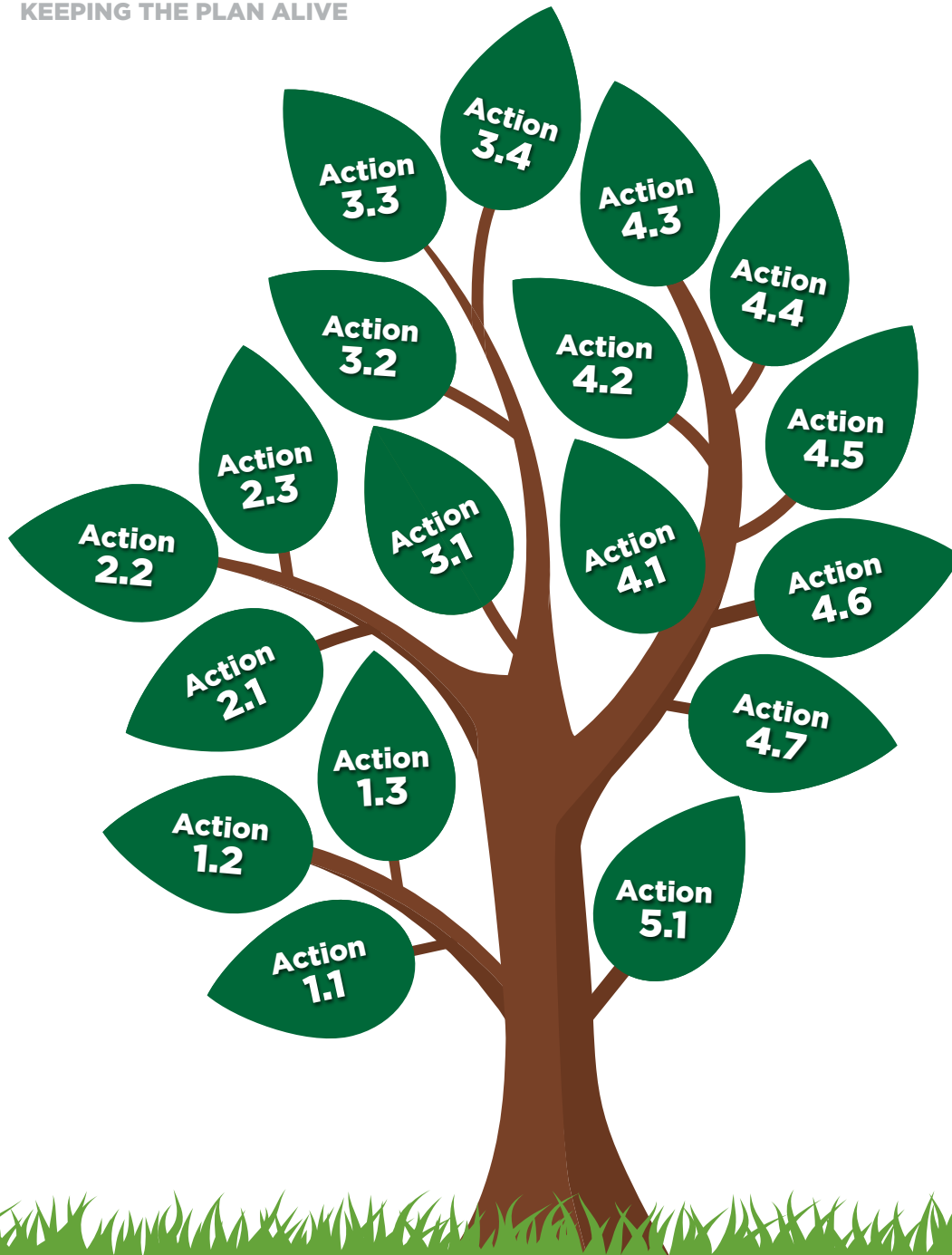Action 2.1
Action 4.7
Action 1.3
Action 1.2
Action 5.1
Action 1.1

Keeping the Plan Alive

Tracking and Monitoring

Parks will report on the Implementation Plan's KPIs and actions through the Parks Annual Report. Key data and updates will also be listed on the City's Environmental Dashboard (Urban Forestry). While progress will be tracked through a range of KPIs, there may be data limitations in certain areas. Parks will also identify potential partners to support this work (e.g., Sustainability, Meewasin) so that tracking and monitoring become more robust over time.

Funding Approach

In order for the initiatives outlined in this Implementation Plan to be successful, funding will be required to support the various stages of development, implementation, and operation. Budget requests will be brought forward to City Council in advance of each budget cycle. Where possible, external funding opportunities and partnerships will be explored to help support the initiatives outlined in this Plan.

Phase	Description
Develop	Includes activities such as research, pilots, design, and engagement that are typically completed using capital funding.
Implement	Includes finalizing the necessary components for a successful initiative following approval and funding. Activities will vary depending on the specific initiative. Implementation typically utilizes capital funding to start, with a transition plan to operating funding.
Operate	Includes ongoing delivery of the initiative to meet expected service levels. Once operational, budgets may be adjusted from time to time to reflect actual costs, as well as future changes, enhancements, or expansions.

Risk Management

A series of risks to the urban forest were identified as part of Saskatoon's Municipal Natural Assets Initiative Risk Assessment, conducted in 2021-22. These include process-related risks (e.g., gaps in planning, strategy, and coordination); impact related risks (e.g., climate change, pests, human-caused damage); risks related to inadequate protection and competing priorities; and insufficient resources for ongoing operations, upgrades, planning, enhanced service levels, and new initiatives.

As initiatives move forward, initiative-specific risks will be identified and communicated with corresponding mitigation measures.

Appendix A – Strategic Alignment

Appendix A illustrates current strategies, plans, planning tools, and enabling legislation relevant to the urban forest.
(City of Saskatoon Canopy Assessment - Background Review, p. 8).

Guiding Policy and Plans
- Official Community Plan
- Council Strategic Plan
- Regional Planning Initiatives
- Corporate Asset Management Plan
- Plan for Growth

Enabling Legislation
Planning and Development Act, 2007

Bylaws, Policies, and Guidelines

Associated Plans and Strategies
- Green Strategy
- Pathways for an Integrated Green Network
- Recreation & Parks Master Plan
- ★ Urban Forest Management Plan
- Climate Adaptation Strategy
- Active Transportation Plan
- Sector Plans, Neighbourhood Concept Plans, Infill Strategy

Enforceable
- Zoning Bylaw
- Storm Water Management Utility Bylaw
- Environmental Policy
- Trees on City Property Policy
- Landscape Design and Development Standards*
- Recreational Use of Storm Water Retention Ponds Policy
- Wetland Policy
- Park Development Guidelines
- Subdivision Bylaw
- Civic Heritage Policy
- Street Design Policy
- Natural Area Standards*
  *to be adopted
- Design and Development Standards Manual

Voluntary
- Boulevard Gardening
- Low Impact Development Design Guide
- Community, Allotment and Vacant Lot Gardens

City of
Saskatoon

saskatoon.ca/trees

Prepared by
City of Saskatoon Parks Department

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