

Urban Tree Canopy Plan (UTCP) Discussion Paper





Introduction

The Urban Tree Canopy Plan (UTCP) would provide the Town of Saugeen Shores with an Urban Tree Canopy management strategy that will reflect the Town's vision, values, and corporate priorities.

It will become an important document in guiding staff and residents in providing a healthy tree population that provides aesthetic, environmental, ecological and economic benefits to the Town of Saugeen Shores.



Existing Town Policies

- ✓ Official Plan identifies Environmental Protection lands and contains provisions for the protection of significant woodlands
- ✓ Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) for development applications submitted under the Planning Act within or near woodlands
- ✓ 2:1 ratio of trees planted to trees removed required in significant woodlands and identified Special Policy Areas (if development is authorized, a planting plan is needed to replace trees removed at ratio of 2:1)
- ✓ Asset Management – trees are green infrastructure
- ✓ Parks and Trails Master Plan

Existing Town Regulations

Property Standards By-law (applies to dead and dying trees)

Bruce County By-law (all woodlands greater than 1 hectare)

Parks By-law

Zoning By-law – example: zoning protection of woodlands via restrictions on use in EP zones

Site Plans and Subdivisions – example: one tree per lot

Existing Town Guidelines, Procedures and Programs

Development Applications

- ✓ EIS Guidelines
- ✓ Standard subdivision agreements include one tree per lot

Town Land

- ✓ Parks...planting, pruning, maintenance, etc.
- ✓ Roads and Road Allowances....pruning, maintenance, etc
- ✓ Plans for Helliwell Park and Jubilee Park and Northshore Park

Tree Sale

- ✓ Saugeen Shores has sponsored the Annual Tree Sale since 2013, working with community groups and local nurseries
- ✓ The program offers trees for sale to residents for planting on private land at a subsidized rate for pickup at a local nursery.

Existing Town Resources

Current and planned tree planting (e.g. 10,000 tree planting initiative)

Current tree maintenance of Town-owned trees

Current staffing and roles:

- 1 Certified Utility Arborist
- 1 By-Law Enforcement Officer,
- Peer review provided by County for development applications

Summary of Existing Policies, Regulations, Guidelines, Procedures and Resources

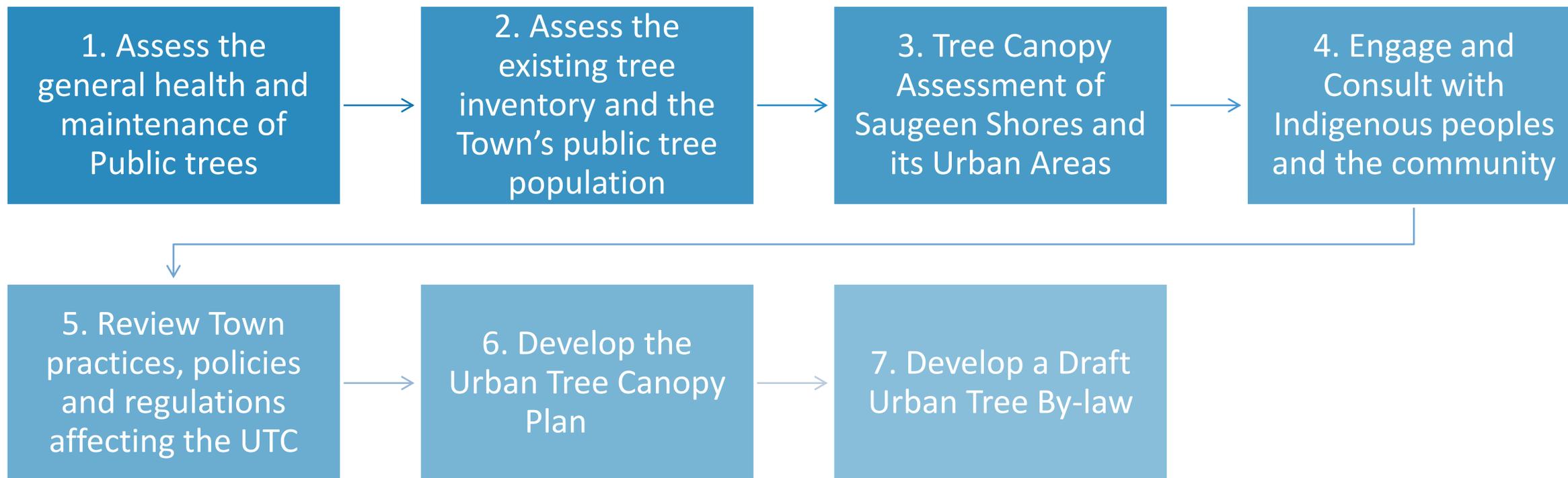
Trees and Tree Canopy are considered well in policy and in implementing through development applications

As well, the Town manages its trees well

Stronger policies, procedures, guidelines and tools, including a Tree Conservation By-law are strongly encouraged as outlined the draft Canopy Plan

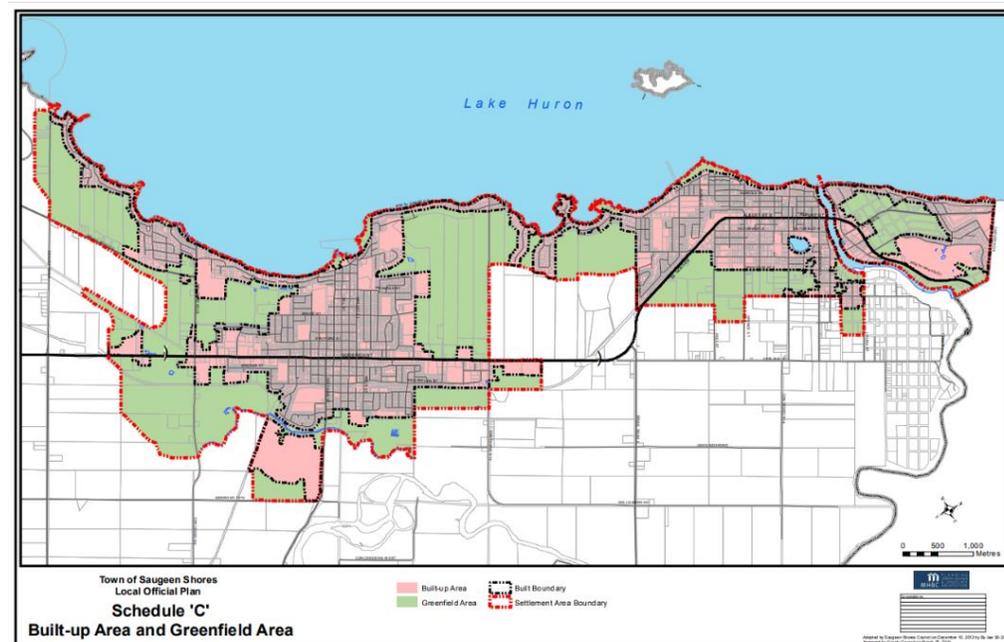
Background

Steps taken in the development of the Urban Tree Canopy Plan project:



Public Tree Assessment

- ✓ A survey that is conducted by driving Town roads throughout the Urban Settlement Area and noting aspects regarding the trees; species, size, health, condition, distribution, and maintenance needs.
- ✓ This assessment provides insights into the Towns urban forest with the ability to map the degree of tree maintenance required and recommended actions.



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Tree Inventory

- ✓ While the Town does continue to update the inventory, it appears periods of tree inventory have been missed

Canopy Cover Assessment

- ✓ Used *i-Tree Canopy* technology which is a science-based methodology to measure tree canopy cover in communities.
- ✓ Results of the Analysis estimated canopy cover for the entire urban settlement area of the Town of Saugeen Shores to be 39.6%. The major contributors being residential, agricultural, open space and environmental protection areas at 28.7%. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the canopy.

Engagement

The Town engaged the community in the development of the Urban Tree Canopy Plan. This included the following:

- April 2024- Newspaper Notice published and circulated to external agencies
- April- Alternative consultation provided to community groups and organizations
- April- May- Online Engagement Survey published through Social Pinpoint platform
- May 2024- Public Meeting

Public Meeting Notice

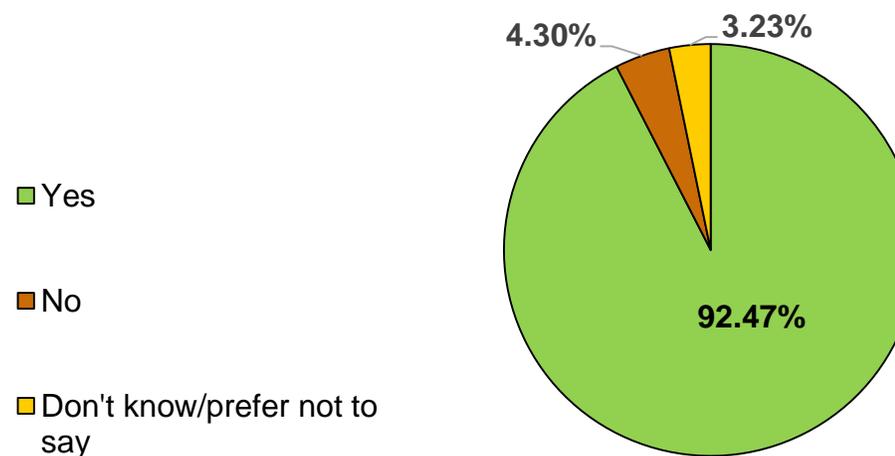
You're invited to the Town of Saugeen Shores Public Meeting regarding the development of an Urban Tree Canopy Plan

Communications

A total of nine (9) questions were asked to get a better understanding of what the community wanted out of the UTCP. Including:

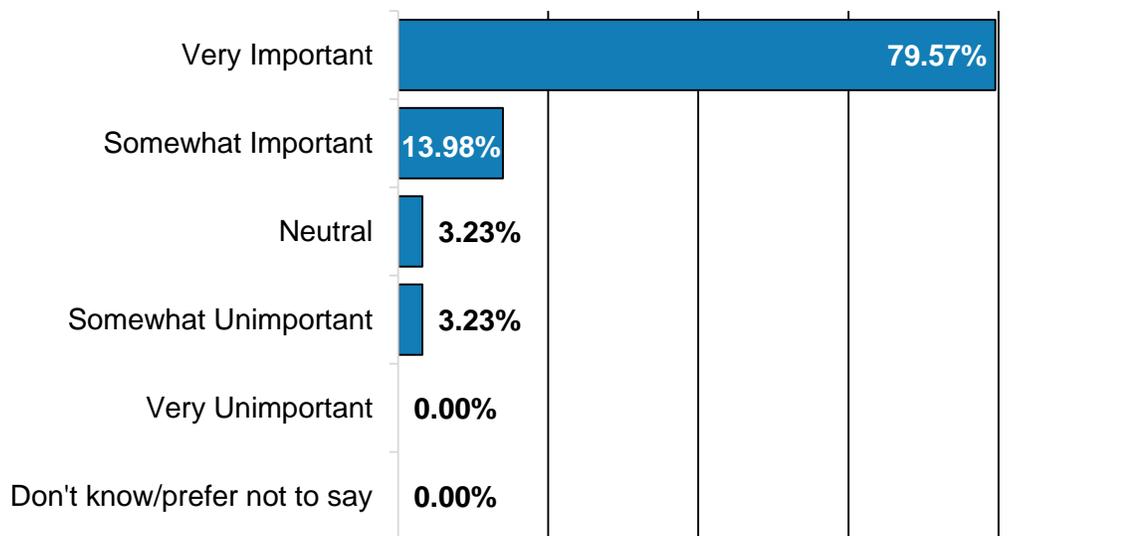
Draft Vision: The Town of Saugeen Shores recognizes and values the environmental, social, cultural, and economic contribution of the urban tree canopy to our community. The Town will, in partnership with its residents, and businesses work to conserve and, where sensible, increase urban tree canopy coverage that is diverse, healthy and a sustained asset for future generations.

2. Do you agree with the Draft Vision and Draft Goals?

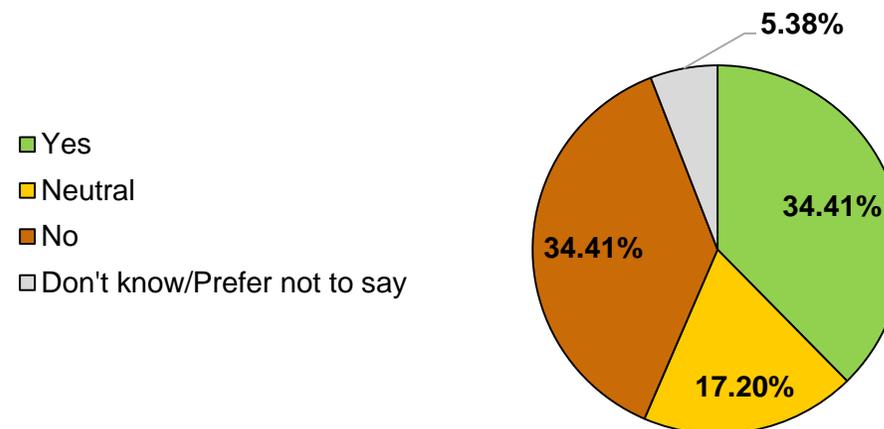


Communications

5. How important is it to you that the Town continue to measure and track the tree canopy coverage in Saugeen Shores?



7. Generally, more than 75% of trees within the Town's Urban Settlement Area Boundary are located on private property. Do you think the Town's Urban Settlement Area would benefit from a by-law that addresses the cutting of trees on private property?



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How the Town Achieves the Vision

1. Understand Current Canopy Cover in Saugeen Shores Settlement Area

2. What does the Town want to achieve with the Canopy
The Town wants to conserve and where possible, increase canopy cover.

3. How do we Conserve and Increase Canopy Cover in Saugeen Shores?

Develop multiple tools that that coordinates and complement each other to achieve a vision.

4. What Tools can the Town implement to Conserve Canopy in Saugeen Shores?

- i. Improve Tree Maintenance
- ii. Increase awareness
- iii. Strong development review process
- iv. Tree Conservation By-law

5. What Tools can the Town implement to Increase Canopy in Saugeen Shores?

- i. Tree Planting Program

Preliminary Recommendations

Williams and Associates have made the following recommendations:

- Update relevant Town policies regarding planting trees in new developments.*
- Saugeen Shores should diversify their urban forest by planting less common species of trees including oaks, sycamore, and hackberry.*
- Perform corrective pruning on younger trees in Saugeen Shores. particularly in removing codominant stems on younger trees*
- Along the Saugeen Rail Trail and in natural areas and on other Town-owned land,*
 - Control invasive plants such as buckthorn, garlic mustard and Manitoba maple*
 - Plant additional trees and shrubs to occupy the open areas created by invasive species control and to replace the ash trees killed by the Ash Borer.*
 - Shade tolerant trees should be planted in the understory of areas dominated by poplar to diversify the future forest.*
- Over time, Town-owned Manitoba maple and ash trees should be removed and replaced with native species.*

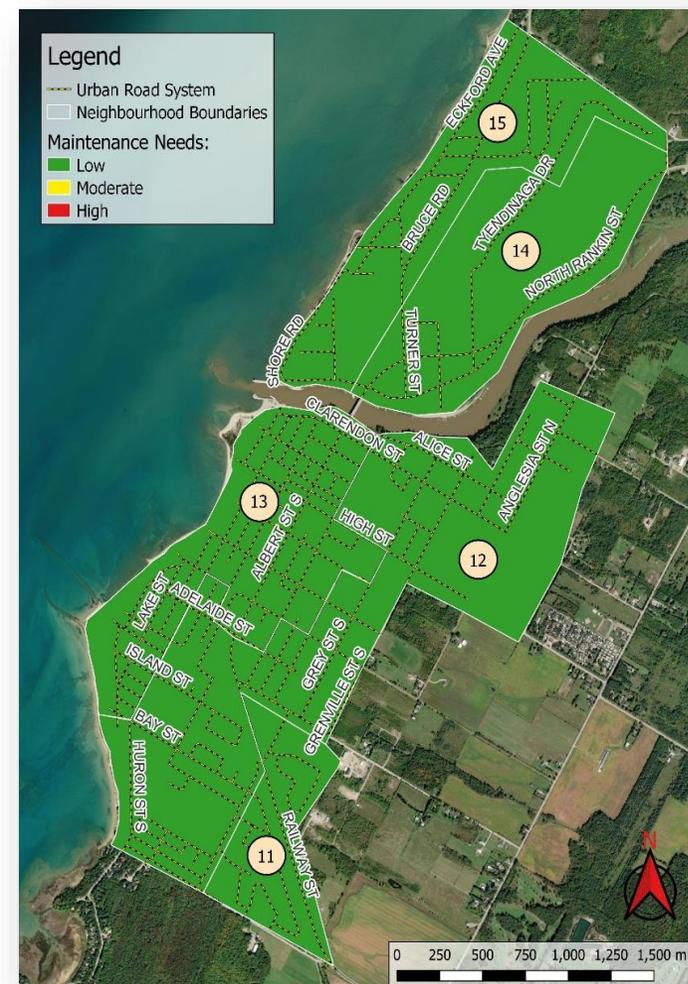
Preliminary Recommendations

- Update the Public Tree inventory (as already contemplated in the 2024 Business Plan) to provide a database that can be updated in live time to support tree management and inclusion of trees as green infrastructure in the Town Asset Management Plan.*
- The Town should strengthen policies to maintain Urban Tree Canopy Cover in its Official Plan, Section 2.6 Environmental Features.*
- The Town should strengthen policies to ensure tree cover is maintained through the development process, particularly the woodlands/heavily treed areas along the shores of Lake Huron and Saugeen River, shown in Figure 5.3.*
- Specifications for compensation requirements for tree removals should be included in planning documents. The ratio of planted trees to removed trees should increase with tree diameter as shown in Table 6.2.*



Preliminary Recommendations:

- The Town should continue to develop plans to plant trees on municipal properties, such as road allowances, parks, and facilities.
- A plan to reforest the closed landfill in Port Elgin could be developed to contribute to a more substantial increase in canopy cover. Small high-density patches (i.e. Miyawaki or micro forests) of trees in municipal parks and facilities.
- In addition to the annual tree sale, the Town should engage with and support private and commercial landowners to plant trees on their properties through communications campaigns, logistical/technical support and access to funding.
- The Town should amend its Official Plan to recognize the public tree as green infrastructure and inclusion in the Asset Management Policy as non-core, biologic assets.



Preliminary Recommendations:

- The Town consider amending the Property Standards By-law (or Clean Yards By-law) to include hazardous trees in Treed Areas that may be threatening adjacent properties*
- The Town should document the qualifications for professionals who author or approve Tree Protection Plans, Tree Retention Plans and Hazard Tree Assessment reports.*
- Designate staff person as the Town Urban Forest Manager to review and coordinate urban forest management, Chair community and interdepartmental committees that foster communications among departments, the community and Council.*
- Establish an Urban Forest Management Committee to guide Town tree establishment, removal, and management procedures.*
- The Town update its tree management practices to guide tree establishment, maintenance and removal. ANSI A300 Standards developed by the Tree Care Industry Association are standard and generally accepted industry standards for tree care practice.*

Preliminary Recommendations:

-The Town form an Interdepartmental Urban Forest Management Committee that includes representatives from all administrative units that affect the Urban Tree Canopy to help harmonize planning for trees in developments/construction, planting, tending, protecting, replacing and benefitting from trees.

-To diversify the tree age and size profile of the Annual Tree Planting, should add 20 to 40L (5 to 10 gallon) potted trees to the list of available trees.

-As per the Towns Annual Tree Sale program, trees available for purchase shall be limited to native trees and selected non-invasive exotic species. Trees shall be planted according to specifications as indicated in Appendix A.



TREE SETBACKS	
FACILITY	DISTANCE (M)
DRIVEWAYS	1.0 - 1.5
STORM/ SANITARY CONNECTIONS	1
RLCB LEADS	1
CURB OR WALKWAY	1
FIRE HYDRANTS	3
PAD MOUNTED TRANSFORMERS	3
STREETLIGHTS	5 FOR LARGE STATURE, 3 FOR SMALL STATURE
BUS STOPS	3
REGULATORY SIGNS	3
STOP SIGNS	10

Guidelines and Appendices

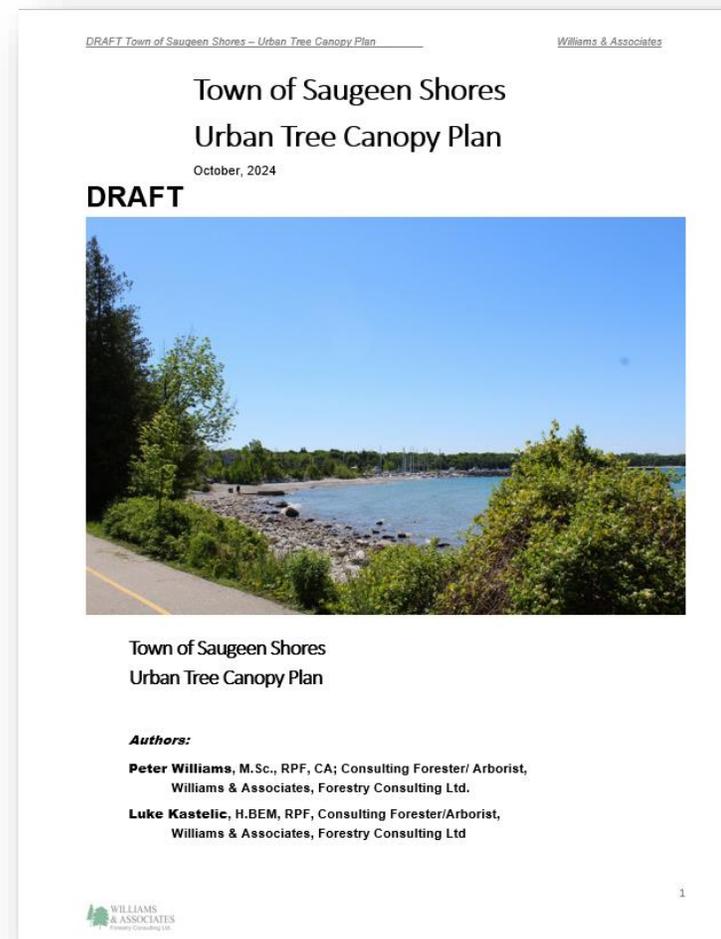
The Urban Tree Canopy Plan also includes guidelines as appendices, including:

- ✓ Tree Protection and Planting Guidelines
 - Protection of Existing Trees
 - Planting Specifications
 - Planting Material Specifications

- ✓ Tree Planting List and Species Preferences
 - Tree Planting List
 - Invasive Species List

What's Next?

- Review and consider comments received from Management and other departments
- Review and consider comments received from EAC meeting
- Bring Draft Plan to Council for information and consider comments received
- Bring Draft Plan and Tree By-law to Council



Questions

