

Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) – Work Plan

Work Plan Goal:

To prepare an Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) that will proactively guide the preservation, management, and enhancement of the City of Hamilton’s trees and forests on public and privately-owned lands in the urban area for the next 20 years.

Objectives:

1. To engage stakeholders, agencies, landowners, and the public.
2. To review and document current policies, programs, and regulations relating to tree and forest protection, maintenance, and enhancement in Hamilton.
3. To recommend future City policy, regulations, programs, and partnerships (actions) to achieve the goals of the Strategy.
4. To recommend targets and performance indicators to monitor the Strategy’s effectiveness.

Strategy Scope:

The urban forest refers to all trees and woodlands on public and private properties within the urban area of the City of Hamilton.

In consultations with community stakeholders and City staff in the summer of 2015, it was noted that protecting and enhancing tree cover in urban and rural areas requires different approaches. There was a consensus that the Strategy should focus on the urban area, since preserving tree cover in the urban area is considered a higher priority to mitigate the Urban Heat Island Effect / Climate Change impacts, to divert storm water flows, to improve air quality, aesthetics, and overall quality of life. It was concluded that the Strategy should focus on the urban area due to harsher growing conditions and increased benefits that urban trees provide in contrast to rural trees. Therefore, this Work Plan has been prepared for an UFS. After the UFS has been completed, a Rural Forest Strategy will be prepared.

Project Process and Timeline:

Key Milestone Date	Task/Action/Deliverable
Q1 2017	UFS Consultant Request for Proposal approved.
Q2 2017	UFS Consultant Retained. (Note: The consultant will undertake research and best practices, data collection, drafting the strategy and

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	implementation plan. They will attend all public Open Houses, UFS Team meetings and present the Strategy at a Council Meeting.)
Q2 2017	<p>Urban Forest Strategy Team (UFST) Terms of Reference prepared by Natural Heritage Planner and consultant.</p> <p>(Note: The UFS Team will consist of 20-25 members and will meet up to six times during the Strategy preparation. Their role will be to provide input, expertise, and their resources, if needed. They will help facilitate Focus Groups and attend the Open House and engage the public.)</p>
Q2 to Q3 2017	Consultant will research and gather information on existing policies and programs related to Urban Forest Management in Hamilton and other jurisdictions (e.g. Ontario and Canadian legislation, best practices).
Q3 2017	<p>First meeting of UFS Team to introduce project.</p> <p>(Note: to discuss draft vision, goal and objectives, develop theme areas to explore with Focus Groups and recruitment strategy for members of the public to participate in Focus Groups.)</p>
Q3 to Q4 2017	<p>Opportunities, challenges, and data gaps will be identified.</p> <p>Second meeting of UFS Team to discuss public engagement plan.</p> <p>Public engagement Plan prepared (Natural Heritage Planner and consultant).</p> <p>Web page, social media set up.</p>
Q1 to Q3 2018	<p>Consultant background research, interviews, mapping completed.</p> <p>Third meeting of the UFS Team to discuss consultant work to date.</p> <p>Focus Group sessions held in one or two evenings for each theme area.</p> <p>(Note: up to six themes will be explored in a session per theme. The UFS Team will help to facilitate.)</p> <p>Consultant to begin drafting Strategy.</p>
Q3 to Q4 2018	Draft UFS completed by consultant.

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	Draft circulated to UFS Team and other City staff, residents, Focus Groups. Fourth meeting of UFS Team Meeting to discuss draft UFS.
Q1 2019	Public Open House to get input on draft UFS.
Q2 to Q3 2019	Revision of UFS based on input. Presentation of Final UFS and Report to Council. Council approval.

Table 1: Tentative List of Stakeholders, City Staff, and Organizations for Engagement:

Category	Organization/Affiliation
City Staff	Parks Planning Risk Management Forestry Planning Communications Development Planning, Heritage and Design Planning Information Systems (GIS) Urban Renewal Growth Management Public Health Parks Operations and Maintenance
City Committees	Hamilton Clean and Green Clean Air Hamilton
Elected Officials	Mayor and Councillors
First Nations	
Environmental Organizations	Environment Hamilton Trees for Hamilton Hamilton Releaf Evergreen Dundas Valley Tree Keepers Hamilton Naturalists' Club Green Venture Cootes to Escarpment Ecopark HIEA (Hamilton Industrial Environmental Association) Bruce Trail Conservancy
Agencies	Hamilton Conservation Authority Conservation Halton Grand River Conservation Authority

Category	Organization/Affiliation
	Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Royal Botanical Gardens Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Academic Institutions	McMaster University Mohawk College Hamilton Public School Board Hamilton Separate School Board
Community Groups	Local Business Improvement Associations (BIAs)
Development Industry	Hamilton-Halton Homebuilders' Association Development Industry Liaison Group
Railways	Canadian National Rail (CNR) Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR)
Utilities	Hamilton Hydro Bell Canada Enbridge Ontario Gas, Enbridge Pipelines.
Recreational	Hamilton Golf and Country Club Royal Botanical Gardens