

Opportunities for Future Work

This attachment provides an overview of opportunities for future programs, projects, and initiatives on private land that City Council may choose to direct Administration to explore further. The opportunities outlined in the table below were informed by engagement with stakeholders including representatives from the development industry and environmental groups, an Edmonton Insight Community online survey, and research conducted by University of Alberta that includes a jurisdiction scan of other Canadian municipalities.

Opportunities for future work are categorized according to the intended outcome on Edmonton's urban forest (grow, preserve, maintain or monitor), the level of effort required and the anticipated impact of the program, project or initiative on Edmonton's canopy targets.

- **Grow:** Programs, projects, and initiatives that contribute to the growth of the urban forest. This includes but is not limited to planting new trees.
- **Preserve:** Programs, projects, and initiatives that support the preservation of existing trees.
- **Maintain:** Programs, projects, and initiatives to maintain the health and vitality of the urban forest.
- **Monitor:** Programs, projects, and initiatives for monitoring and collecting data on the urban forest.

The method used to assess the "level of effort" and "impact" involved a comprehensive review of Canadian cities' policies, reports, and documents, alongside relevant academic articles and studies that incorporate a more international perspective. This approach enabled the identification of the most common and long-standing strategies employed by other municipalities with similar challenges and canopy targets, ensuring that the assessment was grounded in both practical experience and scholarly research. The citations noted throughout the attachment are fully referenced using footnotes, available at the end of the document.

A preliminary assessment of effort and impact reflect a three-step scoring system: low, medium, and high. Additional work would be required to fully understand the benefits, risks and costs of opportunities for future work.

Level of Effort

- **Low:** Requires minimal resources, including funding, staff resources, and time, typically characterized by straightforward implementation processes.

Attachment 2

- **Medium:** Requires moderate resources and coordination, involving more complex planning and execution but is manageable within existing administrative structures.
- **High:** Requires significant resources, extensive planning, coordination, and potentially new administrative processes or policy changes, often requiring long-term commitment and substantial investment.

Impact

- **Low:** Limited and localized effects on the urban forest, contributing marginally to overall goals.
- **Medium:** Measurable improvements to the urban forest, contributing significantly to maintenance, preservation or growth objectives.
- **High:** Substantial, widespread benefits, significantly advancing urban forestry goals, including large-scale environmental, social and economic impacts.

Where relevant, examples of best practices from other Canadian municipalities have also been included in the table below.

Potential Projects, Programs or Initiatives	Outcome	Level of Effort	Impact
Inspections and Compliance			
<p>Landscaping Compliance Programming for Small Scale Residential Development</p> <p>Currently, Administration does not collect landscape securities or conduct landscaping inspections or compliance activities to ensure that landscaping is completed per the approved development permit for small scale residential development. Future work may include expanding the program to encompass small scale residential development, including using</p>	Grow	<p>High</p> <p>Requires additional staff and operational procedures, investment for software licenses¹, developing and executing a communications strategy to inform and educate developers and homeowners about landscape requirements (e.g.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Will support greater compliance with Zoning Bylaw landscaping requirements, contributing to the growth and maintenance of the urban forest⁴ with proper planning, adequate funding, and effective implementation⁵. Inspections, particularly with use of technological assets, and</p>

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technology to support inspections and compliance activities.		Calgary “YardSmart” ²). Administrative and financial resources, as well as a communication and enforcement strategy would be required ³ .	required maintenance periods can have significant impact on urban tree canopy ^{6,7} .
Incentives for New Development			
<p>Enhanced Zoning Bylaw Incentives</p> <p>Enhance Zoning Bylaw incentives to retain mature trees during development. This could include the following incentives relating to small scale residential development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing additional regulations for reduced setbacks where trees are preserved. For example, reducing the rear setback where a tree is preserved in the front yard. • In addition to waiving the requirement for a new tree (which the Zoning Bylaw already allows), waive the requirement for 4 shrubs where a tree is preserved for small-scale residential development on lots less than 8.0m wide. 	Preserve	<p>Medium</p> <p>Would require amending regulations to incorporate incentives for tree preservation, requiring staff to develop and implement the changes and stakeholder engagement^{8,9}. Depending on the specific incentive, it may also create additional complexity and effort during permit review.</p> <p>Would require a process to inspect and ensure trees that are preserved are healthy, safe and sustainable.</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Generally speaking, enhanced incentives can increase the retention of mature trees during development, contributing to the preservation of existing tree canopy and promoting sustainable urban growth^{10,11}. However, the effectiveness of any incentive depends on the value of the original requirement compared with the value and practicality of the alternative being incentivized. Further analysis of this potential approach can be found in Attachment 3.</p>
Expand Existing Education and Stewardship Programs			
<p>Promote Root for Trees</p> <p>Root for Trees engages volunteers in planting</p>	Grow	Medium	<p>High</p> <p>This program facilitates tree</p>

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<p>native tree and shrub species within publicly-owned naturalized areas across the city. The program provides volunteers with knowledge that they may take back and apply to their own properties.</p>		<p>Expanding the reach and impact of this program to include private property would require additional resources for volunteer and/or partner coordination, planting activities, and educational outreach. As this program is already established for public planting initiatives, promoting the existing program and expanding the reach with more events, within resources, would be more in line with the program objectives. Establishing ongoing partnerships would require a moderate amount of effort¹².</p>	<p>planting in the city while providing education and awareness for Edmontonians which they may apply to their property¹³. Promoting the program to include private property will contribute to planting more trees and increasing green areas throughout the city, which will provide long-term environmental benefits¹⁴. Many municipalities have similar programs¹⁵. Partnerships with school boards and community leagues would help support residential planting.</p>
<p>Develop New Education, Stewardship, Incentives and Grant Programs</p>			
<p>Tree Giveaways</p> <p>In addition to existing tree giveaways provided through Root for Trees, explore opportunities to develop tree giveaway programs for private property that provide trees to Edmontonians free of charge or at a subsidized cost. Educational resources with guidance on how to plant and care for trees should be provided along with free trees. Opportunities for</p>	<p>Grow</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Organizing tree giveaway events requires planning, coordination¹⁶, and distribution logistics, along with creating educational materials¹⁷.</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Free or subsidized tree giveaways could significantly increase the number of trees planted on private property, enhancing the overall tree canopy and promoting environmental awareness¹⁸.</p>

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<p>partnerships and corporate sponsorships to support tree giveaways on private property should be explored.</p> <p>Other Canadian municipalities have tree and shrub giveaway programs, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City of Calgary's Branching Out program which in 2024 provided 5,000 trees. Participants are required to complete an e-learning module to participate in the program. • The City of Vancouver's Branch Out Program is a pilot project that provided 250 trees to households in two neighbourhoods with low tree canopy coverage. Households had to meet criteria to be eligible (e.g. having a yard big enough for a tree) and were provided tips for planting and maintenance. • The City of Ottawa's Green Acres Rural Reforestation Program provides rural landowners with subsidized tree seedlings, planting plans, and assistance with care post-planting. Funds are provided up to 50% through cost-sharing. <p>The City of Toronto offers multiple tree giveaway programs that are delivered through partnerships, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Backyard Tree Planting Program supports backyard tree planting at a subsidized cost and is delivered in 			

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<p>partnership with Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting on Private Property Program supports tree planting on private property through cost-sharing. The program is available for private industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential landowners and is delivered in partnership with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). The Community Canopy Program provides trees for homeowners to plant in a strategic location on their property. The program is supported by a mapping tool that helps homeowners calculate where to plant trees on their property to maximize the benefits of their trees including air, water, energy, and carbon sequestration. The program is delivered in partnership with the Arbor Day Foundation. 			
<p>Grant Programs</p> <p>Explore opportunities for grant programs to support planting on private property. This may include developing new grant programs that are administered by the City of Edmonton or developing partnerships with existing grant providers. Alternative funding sources including corporate sponsorships should be explored.</p> <p>Other Canadian municipalities have grant programs to support planting on private property, including but not limited to:</p>	<p>Grow</p>	<p>Medium / High</p> <p>Developing and administering grant programs necessitates securing funding sources, establishing application processes, and monitoring compliance, requiring moderate administrative efforts¹⁹. Funding would be required, however another way to fund this work may be through corporate</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Grants provide financial support for tree planting on private property, encouraging broader participation and resulting in significant urban forest expansion. Grants at the individual or neighborhood scale encourage civic responsibility, as plantings by an individual will contribute to the whole neighborhood²¹.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City of Toronto’s Community Planting and Stewardship Grant supports tree planting and stewardship on private land by non-profit organizations. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$100,000 and must be matched. The City of Toronto’s Greening Partnership Grant supports planting on private land through partnerships with public school boards, hospitals, colleges, universities and other eligible institutions. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$100,000 and must be matched. The City of Ottawa’s Schoolyard Tree Planting Grant Program provides trees which are planted on school property. Applicants must demonstrate that they can care for and maintain the trees and report back to the City. 		partnerships or partnerships with existing organizations such as Tree Canada, CN EcoConnexions, etc. ²⁰	
<p>Tree Sale Events</p> <p>The City of Edmonton may host tree sale events where trees from local nurseries are subsidized by the City and provided to Edmontonians at a lower cost.</p> <p>The City of Surrey hosts tree sales four times a year, offering trees at \$20 each on a first-come, first-served basis. There are approximately 1,000 trees available and residents can purchase up to three trees per property.</p>	<p>Grow</p>	<p>Low</p> <p>Hosting tree sale events would require coordinating with local nurseries, organizing sales logistics, and promoting the events, which can be managed with minimal resources^{22,23}.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Offering trees at subsidized prices makes them more accessible to residents, promoting private property tree planting and contributing to urban forest growth^{24,25}.</p>
<p>Additional Educational Resources</p>	<p>Grow, Preserve</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Medium/High</p>

Potential Projects, Programs or Initiatives	Outcome	Level of Effort	Impact
<p>Additional educational resources could be developed to support Edmontonians to plant and maintain trees on their property. This may include developing communications and marketing campaigns to promote new resources.</p> <p>New resources may provide additional information regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planting: Guidance for homeowners on planting trees, including selecting appropriate locations for planting and follow-up care. Resources could include guidance on identifying the locations of utilities before planting. ● Species selection: Guidance to support selecting species that are appropriate for Edmonton’s climate. This may include providing recommendations for native species and climate-resilient landscaping. When developing recommendations for climate-resilient species, Edmonton’s changing climate should be considered. ● Maintenance: Guidance on how to properly maintain trees and other landscaping on private property. This may include tips for watering, pruning, disease and pest management. ● Minimum landscaping requirements: Increasing awareness of minimum landscaping requirements in the Zoning Bylaw for new development and methods for enforcement in efforts to increase 		<p>Creating additional educational materials would require minimal resourcing. Work required would include content development and marketing efforts²⁶. A process is needed for monitoring and maintaining educational materials. The creation of educational resources is important for public awareness and preventing tree loss²⁷.</p>	<p>Increasing public knowledge and awareness about tree care and benefits promotes better maintenance practices, supporting the overall health and growth of the urban forest²⁸. Creating targeted resources for children and youth may increase effectiveness in the long term²⁹.</p>

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<p>voluntary compliance with the regulations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits and value of trees: Providing information about the ecological, cultural, and climate-related benefits of trees in addition to the benefits that trees provide on private property such as reduced energy bills as a result of the shade and cooling provided by trees. • Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Consider how native species and medicinal plants may be incorporated as part of future programs. <p>The City of Calgary has a comprehensive set of resources related to trees on private property, including tips for planting, watering, pruning, and disease prevention. The resources are offered in a variety of languages. The City also has a Top Tree Species webpage which provides guidance on the types of species that are appropriate for Calgary's climate and weather, including recommended species that provide shade, bear fruit, or flowers. The City has also developed e-learning modules, including the Right Tree, Right Location module which is required to be completed before registering for the Branching Out tree giveaway program. The module and accompanying printable reference guide include information on species and location selection, planting and maintenance, tree health, tree protection plans and bylaw requirements.</p>			
Recognition Programs (Certificates, Plaques,	Preserve	Medium	Medium

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<p>etc.)</p> <p>Develop recognition programs for commercial, industrial, and institutional establishments to acknowledge and reward efforts in sustainable practices, such as tree planting and maintenance.</p> <p>Vancouver Greenest City Leadership recognizes those who have made significant contributions to the goal of becoming the Greenest City in the world. Persons and organizations can be nominated.</p>		<p>Recognition programs require thoughtful design and consistent management to be effective. Key activities include setting criteria, organizing award events, and ongoing promotion³⁰. Developing and implementing programs would involve coordination and collaboration but would likely not require extensive financial resources or technical expertise³¹.</p>	<p>Recognition programs help create social norms for caring about the environment. They encourage community involvement and promote sustainable practices by offering positive reinforcement and public acknowledgment³². By using public promises, these programs motivate people to adopt greener practices^{33,34}.</p>
<p>Low Impact Development Partnership with EPCOR</p> <p>Explore partnership with EPCOR to support the installation of low-impact development on private property, including commercial, industrial, and institutional land.</p> <p>There are numerous examples of programs in which municipalities and utilities have worked with private property owners across all sectors to install green stormwater infrastructures on private properties. Examples include partnerships with non-profit tree planting partners, public education, rebate programs and designated capital funding for projects. Examples of these programs include the City of Ottawa, the</p>	<p>Grow</p>	<p>High</p> <p>Partnerships would require significant coordination with EPCOR, substantial planning, funding, policy alignment and implementation efforts³⁵.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Promoting LID on private property contributes to sustainable urban growth, enhancing the environmental resilience and ecological health of the urban forest³⁶. This approach covers all components of the program, not only tree planting or retaining mature trees³⁷.</p>

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City of Saanich and Sacramento, California.			
<p>Stormwater Rebate Program</p> <p>As part of its 2025-2027 Performance Based Regulation (PBR) application, EPCOR is exploring a stormwater rebate program. The proposed program aims to improve stormwater management at the lot level by providing rebates for a number of different eligible projects, including the installation of LID. While the program’s primary goal is to improve stormwater management and reduce flood risk, this often includes the addition of trees. This program has been proposed to include single-family, multi-family, industrial, commercial and institutional properties.</p>	<p>Grow</p>	<p>Medium / High</p> <p>This program would be led by EPCOR and would require significant planning, engagement and administrative effort on the part of the utility.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>While the focus of the program is on improving on-site stormwater management through green infrastructure it is anticipated this would result in a number of tree installations in addition to other plants and infrastructures.</p>
<p>Pursue Options for Resilient Landscaping on Private Property</p> <p>Urban landscaping and green infrastructure can play a key role in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change in many ways, including providing habitat for species, managing stormwater runoff, sequestering carbon, and reducing the heat island effect.</p> <p>In an effort to expand green infrastructure and support climate resilience on private property, opportunities to incentivize, educate and regulate landscaping will be pursued.</p>	<p>Grow, Preserve</p>	<p>High</p> <p>This would require medium to high effort due to the need for policy development, technical analysis, engagement³⁸, and ongoing support for private property owners. This involves significant investment in terms of both cost and effort; comprehensive planning and amendments to the Zoning Bylaw, requiring administrative and legislative</p>	<p>High</p> <p>High potential impact due to its broad reach in mitigating climate change effects, contributing to biodiversity, urban cooling, and promoting green infrastructure^{40, 41}. Climate resilient landscaping would also contribute more broadly to the City’s climate goals by reducing the effects of urbanization and climate change⁴².</p>

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<p>A Council motion was passed during the October 16-23, 2023 Zoning Bylaw 20001 Public Hearing to include an analysis on the landscaping provisions as part of the Zoning Bylaw's one-year review report and to provide amendment options to further implement the work of climate resilience in planning and development, if necessary.</p>		<p>work, and maintenance³⁹.</p>	
Maintenance and Monitoring			
<p>Greenhouse Gas Inventory Sequestration Methodology Improvements</p> <p>Expand and improve the accounting of carbon sequestration for the Corporate and Community Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Inventory.</p> <p>Current methods only provide a basic estimation of the City's sequestration capacity and do not include accounting for any low-impact development or other open space natural features. Expanding GHG accounting to include these features may improve carbon accounting and better reflect the City's overall contribution to greenhouse management.</p>	Monitor	Medium / High	Medium
<p>Technology Improvements</p> <p>Explore an outcomes-based measure for urban forest growth, such as per cent canopy cover.</p>	Monitor	High	Medium

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<p>While The City Plan sets the two million trees target, per cent canopy cover is a more effective measure for urban forest growth. The two million individual trees target works well when considering ornamental and boulevard trees, but the per cent canopy cover measures factors in natural and naturalized areas, tree growth, and tree maturity, where a simple tree count would not. In addition, per cent canopy cover is a measure used in other cities and therefore helpful for comparisons across jurisdictions.</p>		<p>new measurement technologies, and would require remote sensing technology or Geographic Information Systems (GIS)-based tools. This requires significant investment in technology and training⁴³. Expertise in data analysis is crucial as well⁴⁴.</p>	<p>more effective urban forest management and policy-making⁴⁵. The use of technology in urban forestry can enhance the accuracy of canopy cover assessments and support strategic planning for urban green space expansion^{46, 47}.</p>

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Attachment 2

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