Public Works
Environmental Services Division

Street Tree Planting Program

Public Works Committee
September 16, 2013

Providing services that bring our City to life!
The City of Hamilton’s Street Tree Planting Program plants free trees in the City owned road allowance in front of residential properties, Parks and other City owned properties.

This program was introduced and approved by Council in 2004 and has steadily grown since then.

The Forestry’s Tree Planting Section has planted over 30,000 trees in the last nine years and is striving to plant another 6,000 trees in 2013.
Goals of the Street Tree Planting Program

Goals of the planting program include the following:

• To increase the tree canopy coverage in the City of Hamilton to over 35% by the year 2030
• To expand the species makeup of the city’s tree canopy through planting a diverse range of suitable tree species
• To increase the public’s awareness of the value and benefits of trees within the City of Hamilton
• To manage a healthy sustainable urban forest through dedicated professionalism and customer service
The benefits of a Street Tree Planting Program include:

- Improved air quality
- Reduction of the "Urban Heat Island" effect
- Storm water control
- Green house gas reduction
- Absorption of breathable particulates
- Noise abatement
- Improved health of citizens
- Aesthetically enhanced landscapes
- Enhanced property values
- Reduced heating/cooling costs
Street and Park Annual Tree Planting Statistics

- Year
  - 2004
  - 2005
  - 2006
  - 2007
  - 2008
  - 2009
  - 2010
  - 2011
  - 2012
  - 2013 (Projected)

- Number of Trees Planted
  - 2004: 1
  - 2005: 2000
  - 2006: 3000
  - 2007: 3000
  - 2008: 3000
  - 2009: 3000
  - 2010: 3000
  - 2011: 3000
  - 2012: 5000
  - 2013: 6000

Street Tree Planting Program
How to Receive a Free Street Tree

The Tree Planting Section is aiming to plant 6000 trees in 2013.

Residents interested in receiving a free street tree can make their request on-line, by telephone, or by filling out a request form and either mailing it in or dropping it off at a municipal service centre. Residents are able to write down their top three species choices.

A tree planting investigator will visit the location and work with the property owner to discuss their species choices and provide a recommendation for the most suitable tree species for the lot.
Street Requirement Overview

- On a standard lot, one tree may be planted on the road allowance portion of the property.
- A corner lot may accommodate up to three trees on the property; one in the front and two along the side.
- For further information, visit [http://www.treeshamilton.ca](http://www.treeshamilton.ca) or [http://www.hamilton.ca](http://www.hamilton.ca).
Tree Planting

Over eighty different varieties of trees are planted throughout the city, helping to diversify the urban forest. Diversification helps to reduce the vulnerability of the urban forest to species specific insects and diseases thereby reducing the threat of losing entire streetscapes.

Once trees are planted, Forestry staff maintain the trees for life.
The Forestry and Horticulture Section purchased 2,000 reusable tree watering bags in 2013 for use on trees planted in parks, other city owned green spaces and on non residential road allowances.

Benefits of tree watering bags include:
• Water is not lost to run-off or evaporation
• The bags provide 5 – 9 hours of continuous water for a new tree
• Deep root growth is promoted
• Each bag holds up to 55 litres of water
• Refilling occurs every 7 to 10 days

Trees planted in front of homes are watered by the resident.
Outreach

Forestry staff are involved with the following organizations and outreach programs:

• Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG), McMaster University
• School Outreach Project
• Children’s Water Festival
• Advisory Committees
• Volunteer Groups
• Commemorative Tree Program
Program Marketing

The Street Tree Planting Program uses many different marketing tactics to raise awareness of the program. These include:

- Print advertising, brochures, mail-outs
- Door knockers listing the benefits of a tree
- Lawn signs welcoming a new street tree
- Truck wraps advertising the program
- Social media (Facebook and Twitter)
- City websites
- Staff presentations and outreach
- Hand delivery of brochures to homes that do not currently have a street tree
- Interviews on CH Morning Live and Cable 14
- Advertising on Gator Bags
Challenges

The following items pose a challenge to the growth of a healthy urban forest:

- Smaller road allowances and a lack of growing space and soil volume
- Competition with underground utilities
- Urban intensification
- Construction
- Tree pests and diseases
- Turf cutting equipment
- Vandalism
- Storm events
Canopy Coverage

A 2009 urban forest cover study determined the canopy coverage in the urban areas of the city to be 18.76%.

The City’s goal is to increase the tree canopy coverage to over 35% by the year 2030.

Through continued tree planting and maintenance programs, canopy coverage can be enhanced.
Every Tree Counts

Street Tree Planting Program
Questions?

For further information please contact

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