WHAT IS THE ‘NEIGHBOURHOOD TREE MATCHING FUND’?

The heart and essence of London is our neighbourhoods. London’s neighbourhoods are about people and places and how they work in partnership to make great places to live, work and play.

London Strengthening Neighbourhood Strategy Resident Task Force

Plant more, protect more, maintain better.

London’s Urban Forest Strategy Mission

Integrating the visions and efforts of London residents and the City Council, the ‘Neighbourhood Tree Matching Fund’ helps to improve, build and strengthen London neighbourhoods and improve the quality of life for everyone.

With the support of the City of London, the ‘Neighbourhood Tree Matching Fund’ allows neighbourhood groups to initiate, manage and implement tree planting projects that make a difference to our urban forest for today and the future.

WHY DO WE NEED MORE TREES?

London’s urban forest provides many environmental, social and economic benefits and services to our society including;

- shade and cooling
- connects children with nature
- improves community cohesion
- enables energy savings
- reduces air pollution
- reinforces a sense of place and city identity
- assists in carbon storage
- increases property values
- encourages outdoor activity
- providing habitat and greater biodiversity

Through London’s Urban Forest Strategy four guiding principles are the cornerstone to building and sustaining a green and growing city:

1. **Protect**: more trees on both public and private property where they are providing benefits or supporting the integrity of natural features. The trees that will provide the most services 40 years from now are already in the ground.

2. **Maintain and Monitor**: existing trees. Proper and regular maintenance will improve the health and increase the life and value of trees.

3. **Plant More and Enhance**: the urban forest canopy cover. All trees will die, but cannot be replaced naturally in many urban locations. Strategic planning can maximize the benefits, increase biodiversity and reduce long term risk from damaging agents.

4. **Engage the Community**: in the management of our urban forest. Approximately ¾ of all trees in urban areas are privately owned and this percentage is even higher in rural areas. The community can often leverage resources that are not available to City Administration.
HOW DOES THE ‘NEIGHBOURHOOD TREE MATCHING FUND’ WORK?

1. A neighbourhood group identifies a location(s) in their neighbourhood that would benefit from tree planting.
2. The group submits an application, including a budget and site map to the City of London.
3. A review committee evaluates and approves or declines the application.
4. If the project is approved, the City of London provides funds up to $30,000 to match the equivalent contribution the neighbourhood makes through a combination of volunteer labour; donated services; donated materials and supplies; and other funds raised. For example, if a neighbourhood group contributes $2,500, the City of London matches this contribution with $2,500 for an approved project. Money and resources from other City of London departments; funds and services, can be listed but not counted as part of the group’s match.
5. The City of London will provide information regarding purchasing, planting and caring for trees.

WHAT TYPES OF PROJECTS WILL BE FUNDED?

Tree planting must occur on “private property”. This fund will NOT fund trees planted on public property. The city has other programs and partners who plant on public lands.

For the purpose of the Neighbourhood Tree Matching Fund “private property” is defined as:
   a) private residential property and
   b) any property not directly owned by the City or any of its Agencies, such as Libraries or Community Centers or parks.

Applications will:
• Clearly outline the community matching effort
• Be originated, planned and put into action by the neighbours and community members who will be affected by the project
• Define the number of trees tailored to the available space
• Plant native species first but recognize that some non-native species survive better in certain locations. The city will provide a list of acceptable species. It should be recognized that the species of trees should be matched to the site conditions.
• Use funds to purchase trees, mulch, soil, stakes and tree guards.
• Provide a site plan showing structures such as buildings, other elements (such as hydro lines, driveways, sidewalks), property lines, proposed planting boundaries and proposed planting locations. Aerial photography available on the CityMap website provides a good base for this map. http://www.london.ca/Maps/Pages/new-citymap.aspx
• Plant trees according to the City of London Planting Standards which are available at http://www.london.ca/business/Resources/Consultant-Resources/Documents/Specs%20and%20Reqs%20Manual%202014/12-DSRM-Tree-Planting-Guidelines.pdf
• Plant all trees by November 1, 2016
WHO CAN APPLY TO THE ‘NEIGHBOURHOOD TREE FUND’

Community groups/organization with a registered not-for-profit or charitable number is eligible to submit an application for funding. A neighbourhood based group who does not have a registered not-for-profit or charitable number can partner with a community group/organization.

Groups may include:
- Place of worship
- Not-for-profit organizations
- Schools
- Community / neighbourhood / business associations
- Co-operative housing

Applicants must demonstrate that they are open and inclusive and that the group is composed of a significant number of committed people who live and/or work in the neighbourhood.

Ineligible Applicants
- Government agencies, political groups, district councils, hospitals.
- Organizations outside the City of London limits.
- Applicants who have received City of London funding and have not submitted a final report and budget.

HOW TO APPLY FOR THE ‘NEIGHBOURHOOD TREE MATCHING FUND’?

Applicants must complete the ‘Neighbourhood Tree Matching Fund’ Project Application Tool (see Appendix A.)

1. WHO - Applicant Data
   a. Name of neighbourhood-based, registered not-for-profit group. If the applicant is an ad-hoc group, being sponsored by a not-for-profit group, the ad-hoc group must also be documented as the Project Lead and the not-for-profit as the sponsoring Applicant (see Section III).
   b. Contact information
   c. Business Registration information

2. WHAT - Project Description and Information
   a. Project goal and expected outcomes if the project is approved and completed.
   b. Project origin – what is the origin of the project idea?
   c. Project location / catchment area
   d. Neighbourhood support for project
   e. Neighbourhood engagement, involvement and participation
   f. Skills and abilities that will be developed as a result of the project
   g. Sustainable legacy from the project
3. **HOW MUCH** - Budget Worksheet (see Appendix B)
   a. Precise amount of funding that is being sought by the applicant
   b. Summary of budget for how funds will be used
   c. Summary of neighbourhood match contributions

4. **WHEN** – When can we apply for funding?
   Applications must be submitted to the City of London by **Friday February 12, 2016**. Applications will be evaluated, decisions made and the applicant notified of the decision not later than April 8, 2016. Funds must be expended and the project completed by Nov. 1, 2016.

5. **Agreement**
   By submitting this application, the Applicant acknowledges and agrees that in the event of being awarded City funds pursuant to the ‘*Neighbourhood Tree Matching Fund*’ Program, the applicant will comply with the requirements set out in the ‘Neighbourhood Tree Matching Fund’ Guidelines accompanying the application form.

6. **Neighbourhood Support**
   As this project will impact people beyond those in the applicant group, their support must be demonstrated at the application stage. Accordingly, applicants must submit a minimum of **two letters of support** for the proposed project. Letters can be from local community or neighbourhood groups, businesses, or residents living in the neighbourhood that will be impacted by the project.

   Letters of Support from City of London staff or City Councilors will **not** be accepted.

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**HOW ARE MATCHED CONTRIBUTIONS VALUED FOR THE APPLICANT?**

There are four types of contributions that applicants can present to match the ‘*Neighbourhood Tree Fund*’ contribution. They include cash, volunteer labour, donated professional services and donated materials and supplies. Applicants are encouraged to use the potential volunteer labour fund contribution to leverage other contributions. The specific rules governing each type are as follows:

**Volunteer Labour**

Individuals can contribute time to a project in many ways, including: serving on project committees; implementing action steps from the workplan; attending community meetings; leading the group, etc. Volunteer labour is valued at $20 per hour. Volunteer time spent on planning, fundraising, design and organizing will be tallied commencing on the application approval date.

**Donated Professional Services**

Donated professional services must be relevant to the project and proportionate to its needs. Examples include landscape architect, arborist, ecologist etc. Donors must document the hourly value of their professional services on their letterhead. Services are valued at their customary rates, up to a maximum of $75 per hour. An individual or business that will be **compensated** for any project-related work **cannot** also pledge their time as a volunteer nor donate other goods or services to the project.
**Donated Materials and Supplies**
All donated materials and supplies (soil, tools, etc.) are valued at their retail prices. Borrowed equipment can also be considered as part of the match, valued at the standard rental fee. Donors of the materials and supplies must provide documentation on their letterhead of the value of the match.

**Cash Donations**
Cash donations can be secured from fundraising events, individuals, foundations, businesses and the community.

**HOW WILL APPLICATIONS BE EVALUATED**
Each application will be evaluated based on a number of key criteria, including the following:
- Feasibility of project
- Clearly articulated outcomes that are expected from the project. Outcomes should align to the London Urban Forest Strategy (identified on page 1). Does the project:
  - Enhance the urban forest canopy?
  - Encourage residents to protect, maintain and monitor the health of planted trees?
  - Involve and empower members of the neighbourhood?
- Tangible benefits to the neighbourhood, such as create or improve green spaces, etc
- Organized and thoughtful budget that clearly outlines the neighbourhood match. The neighbourhood contribution should be appropriate to the funding request and reflect the neighbourhood’s capacity to contribute.
- Neighbourhood letters of support for the project
- How many trees will be planted
- How will people be trained to plant trees and where to plant them

**Review Process**
A *City of London Review Committee* will review all applications against a set of feasibility criteria, related to City of London by-laws, policies and legislative or contractual guidelines and procedures. This review committee will be comprised of employees from the following service areas:
- Planning
- Parks & Recreation
- Environmental & Engineering Services
- Neighbourhood, Children and Fire Services
- Other relevant Subject Matter Experts, as deemed necessary for the feasibility review process

Upon final approval applicants will be notified by email of the status of their project. Successful applicants will be issued a Grant Agreement in order to receive funds. Upon receipt of the signed Grant Agreement, funds will be allocated by the City of London to the applicant.
WHAT ARE THE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS?

All ‘Neighbourhood Tree Matching Fund’ recipients must submit a final report describing the project outcomes and successes and verifying the project expenses and resources and that the trees have been registered on the Million Tree Challenge website. A Financial Statement of expenditures and copies of receipts must be submitted within 90 days of project completion.

Successful applicants are asked to submit stories and photos of their activities to be shared as part of the ‘Neighbourhood Tree Matching Fund’ celebration.

Successful applicants must register the number of trees planted on the Million Tree Challenge website within one month of completion of planting www.milliontrees.ca