Dear Mayor, Councillors, City Staff,   March 7, 2023

Re: Comments on 'One Canopy Tree Planting Strategy, 2023-61

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The 'growing the city's tree canopy' initiative is an important component to building a city that is a desirable place to live, work and play for all. I have several points that are intended to supplement the work that your very capable staff have outlined in their report:

a) The importance of growing the city's tree canopy should not be lost in all the talk of needing to build more housing; A balance between the natural and human community worlds needs to be strived for. The 'value' of trees to a municipality are becoming increasingly acknowledged in the ecological goods and services they provide freely to the community, the province and the world.[1] [2] Perhaps in this regard some additional quantification of the value of increasing the City's tree canopy to Guelph can be included in a new 'Our Future' subsection of the Introduction.

b) As the city intensifies, there will be more and more design conflict in the wants and needs between attempting to protect and enhance tree natural capital and the desire to build new housing units. It is important to not lose sight on the need to <u>design in</u> the provision for trees in proximity to where people are. This is associated to the physical and mental wellbeing aspects associated with trees.[3] With this being said, I think it is imperative that the City work to protect existing tree canopy in the older part of Guelph. The City's push for intensification is and will have a dramatic impact on maintaining the current tree canopy in the City. The City's rather dated 'Private Tree Protection By-law 2010-19058' https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/TreeBylaw.pdf requires updating NOW prior to the enactment of the City's comprehensive Zoning By-law that will pre-zone intensification development across Guelph.

c) In reading through the report concerning 'Tree Size Matters!' (Figure 7) some additional quantification of the *exponential benefits* of large-canopied trees should be noted. As a long time Guelph citizen, there is general public cynicism/criticism that there is an unfair replacement policy in effect via the offsetting compensation rules, i.e., a 100 year old mature tree is replaced with some saplings in far and away settings of the community. Further exploration and explanation of things here would be appreciated.

d) The last area for comment relates to the 'Priority Planting Tool' for establishing prioritization categories for future tree planting initiatives. In reading through the report, it is unclear how nodes and corridors for natural systems are enhanced via the placement of treed 'green stepping stones' across the city. There is much academic literature on this topic, and I would encourage some additional branching out of criteria to encompass tree planting to enhance existing natural communities.[4] [5]

All the best in your continuing work and stewardship of the Guelph community!

Sincerely,

Paul Kraehling, PhD., MCIP RPP (Ret.)

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[1] TD Economics (2014). Urban Forests: The Value of Trees in the City of Toronto
https://economics.td.com/domains/economics.td.com/documents/reports/PDF%20modification/Urban%20Forests.pdf

[2] TD Economics Special Report (Sept. 2014). The Value of Urban Forests in Cities Across Canada
https://www.td.com/document/PDF/economics/special/UrbanForestsInCanadianCities.pdf

[3] Ulrich, R. S. (1984). View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. *Science*, 224: 42-421.

[4] Racine, Vincent (2021): Human | Wildlife, Stitching The Fabric : Connectivity Strategies For Identified Gaps in Toronto's Ravines. Toronto Metropolitan University. Thesis. https://doi.org/10.32920/ryerson.14648040.v1

[5] Rudd, Vala, J., & Schaefer, V. (2002). Importance of Backyard Habitat in a Comprehensive Biodiversity Conservation Strategy: A Connectivity Analysis of Urban Green Spaces. Restoration Ecology, 10(2), 368–375.
https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1526-100X.2002.02041.x