

WHAT WE HEARD

DECEMBER 2024

Urban Forest Plan Phase 1 Engagement Summary Report



Learn more at:
letstalk.cnv.org/UrbanForestPlan

city
of north
vancouver

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ENGAGEMENT CONTEXT

Between January 15 and February 20, 2024, we engaged with the community to gather input that will help shape the Urban Forest Plan. This report provides an overview of phase 1 engagement for this project and summarizes what we heard.

Objectives of Phase 1 Engagement:

- ▶ **To inform the public** about the status of the urban forest, the role of the urban forest in the community, including the unique environmental, economic, and social value, and the opportunities and challenges for urban forest management.
- ▶ **To consult the community** to help develop a long-term vision and goals for the Urban Forest Plan that capture the community's perspective on the urban forest, and to identify challenges and opportunities to preserve, protect, grow and enhance the urban forest.
- ▶ **To build community awareness, support, and advocacy** for the urban forest and the Urban Forest Plan.

Community input will be considered alongside City long-term strategies and policy, industry standards, and best practices for urban forest management in the development of the Urban Forest Plan.

ABOUT THE URBAN FOREST PLAN

The City of North Vancouver is developing an Urban Forest Plan to better protect, manage and grow the urban forest to deliver long-term benefits to our community.

The Urban Forest Plan will provide a road map to protecting and enhancing our community's tree canopy. The plan will include baseline information about trees in the City and describe the vision, goals and actions needed to protect and grow the urban forest over the next 30 years.

This plan aligns with the City's Climate and Environment Strategy, which was endorsed by Council in June 2024. A key policy direction of the strategy is to *restore, protect, and enhance natural areas and biodiversity on public and private property*. Learn more at cnv.org/EnvironmentStrategy.

Stay up to date on the latest project updates at letstalk.cnv.org/UrbanForestPlan



HOW WE ENGAGED

Phase 1 of the Urban Forest Plan engagement offered a mix of in-person and virtual opportunities for the community to learn about and provide feedback on the project.

We heard from approximately 650 people during this phase, including 233 survey participants, over 100 students, and around 250 attendees at our pop-up events. This diverse range of engagement facilitated meaningful conversations and provided valuable insights that will help inform the development of the Urban Forest Plan.

OPPORTUNITIES	DESCRIPTION	RESULTS
SURVEY	An online and print survey was available where people shared their vision and values of the urban forest.	233 survey responses were received.
MAPPING EXERCISE	A mapping tool was provided both online and in-person to allow people to identify and comment on their favourite areas of the urban forest, as well as what can be improved.	206 locations were pinned on the map.
POP-UPS	Pop-ups were held on various dates, times and locations around the community including North Vancouver City Library and The Shipyards.	Six pop-ups were held where staff had conversations with over 250 people .
PUBLIC WEBINAR	An informational webinar was held where the public was able to ask questions and share feedback. The presentation was recorded and posted on the City's urban forest web page.	One webinar was held that included 10 attendees .
SCHOOL WORKSHOPS	Youth workshops were held at Carson Graham Secondary School with grade 10 students.	Four school workshops were held that included over 90 students .
YOUTH COMMITTEE WORKSHOP	An in-person workshop was held with the North Vancouver City Library Teen Advisory Council, which includes students from grades 8 through 12.	One teen workshop was held that included 18 students .
INTEREST HOLDER WORKSHOP	An online interest holder workshop was held that included community groups, arborists, developers, School District 44, Vancouver Coastal Health and District of North Vancouver.	One interest holder workshop was held that included 14 people , representing 13 organizations and businesses .
COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL PRESENTATIONS	The project was presented to the City's Advisory Design Panel and Advisory Planning Commission to keep them informed of the project.	Two Committee of Council presentations took place.
PROJECT ENGAGEMENT PAGE	A project engagement web page was created to provide information about the project including timelines, key dates and research.	There were over 825 visits to the project page during the engagement period.
DIGITAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN	A digital media campaign ran that shared information about the current state of the urban forest and invited participation in the engagement.	There were 68,000 impressions across Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter).

WHAT WE HEARD

VALUES

Those we heard from expressed a strong appreciation for the trees in the community, recognizing the many benefits the urban forest provides. The top three valued aspects of the urban forest are:

- ▶ **Habitat Support:** Trees provide habitat for native plants, animals, and other organisms.
- ▶ **Climate Mitigation:** Trees help address climate change through carbon capture, flood protection, and temperature regulation
- ▶ **Well-being:** Trees enhance mental and physical well-being.



Youth workshop

CONCERNS

The feedback we received highlights concerns about the current and future state of the urban forest, particularly in light of increased urbanization and climate change. The most frequently raised concerns include:

- ▶ **Pressure from development:** Respondents voiced concerns about the loss of trees due to development. They emphasized the need for greater protection of existing trees during new developments and called for site designs that prioritize tree retention.
- ▶ **Tree protection on private property:** Participants expressed concerns about the protection of trees on private property, advocating for enhanced and expanded tree protection measures, especially in lower-density neighborhoods. They also stressed the importance of retaining native species and large, healthy trees.
- ▶ **Lack of new tree planting:** Those we heard from feel there are an insufficient number of trees being planted throughout the community, especially in densely populated areas and locations with limited shade. Participants also voiced a desire for greater diversity in tree species, emphasizing conifers and trees adapted for a changing climate.
- ▶ **Climate change impacts:** Respondents are concerned about the impacts of climate change on trees, especially regarding heat, drought, wildfires, pests, and diseases. They also expressed a desire for more shaded areas to help mitigate the effects of increasingly hot summers.
- ▶ **Management and maintenance of trees on public land:** Community feedback emphasized the need for enhanced management and maintenance of public trees. This includes regular monitoring, hazard tree management, effective watering infrastructure and schedules, as well as proactive responses to diseases and invasive species.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The feedback received from all areas of the engagement has been summarized into key takeaways organized under the themes of planning, protecting, planting, managing, and partnering. These themes align with the draft structure for Urban Forest Plan recommendations, ensuring that community feedback is considered as we develop the plan.

PLANNING

- ▶ In 30 years, the community envisions the City as having an expanding urban forest made up of healthy, mature and native trees that form the community's identity and provide various ecological and social benefits.
- ▶ There is significant concern about the current and future impacts of urbanization and climate change on trees, especially from heat, drought, wildfires, pests, and diseases.
- ▶ There is a strong desire for more shaded areas throughout the community to mitigate the effects of increasingly hot summers.
- ▶ Residents value their greenspaces and appreciate the accessibility to parks and recreational sites.
- ▶ People want to have trees integrated into all areas of the City, including higher-density neighbourhoods.

PROTECTING

- ▶ The community would like to see more trees retained throughout the City, especially native species and large, healthy trees.
- ▶ There is strong desire for greater protection of existing trees during new developments and site designs that prioritize tree retention.
- ▶ There is support for enhanced and expanded tree protection regulations that apply to all private property, including lower-density neighbourhoods.

PLANTING

- ▶ There is strong support for planting more trees throughout the community, particularly in densely populated areas like Lower Lonsdale and locations with limited shade. Additional priority areas include trails, corridors and greenways, urban parks and natural areas.
- ▶ Planting a diversity of tree species is very important to the community, especially native species, conifers, trees adapted to a changing climate and trees that support biodiversity.

MANAGING

- ▶ There is call for enhanced management and maintenance of trees on public land to respond to increased urbanization and a changing climate. This includes regular monitoring, hazard tree management, effective watering infrastructure and schedules, as well as proactive responses to diseases and invasive species.

PARTNERING

- ▶ Many residents have participated in urban forest stewardship activities or expressed an interest in doing so. There is desire for more opportunities to get involved, including educational initiatives and volunteer opportunities.
- ▶ Residents of multi-unit housing identified barriers to participating in stewardship activities, such as planting trees on private property and watering street trees.
- ▶ There is a strong desire from the community to enhance partnerships and collaboration with partners to grow the urban forest. This includes working with the North Shore municipal governments, Vancouver Coastal Health, North Vancouver School Board, other community and environmental organizations, and Sḵwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh Nation).

NEXT STEPS

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their vision and feedback on the urban forest. The input summarized in this report will help us make decisions about the Urban Forest Plan actions and priorities. Community input will be considered along with City long-term strategies and policy, industry standards and best practices for urban forest management.

To learn more and to stay up to date on the project, visit the project engagement page at letstalk.cnv.org/UrbanForestPlan.

APPENDIX

Who We Heard From

We heard from about 650 people in Phase 1 of the Urban Forest Plan project. This included 233 survey respondents, over 100 students, around 250 people who dropped by the pop-up booths, and 14 participants in the interest holder workshop.

Survey Demographics¹

OF THE SURVEY RESPONDENTS

96%

live on the
North Shore
(223/233)

83%

of the North Shore
residents live in the
City of North Vancouver
(186/223)

59%

of the City residents
live in Lower or
Central Lonsdale
(110/186)

45%

of total respondents
live in a condo or
apartment
(103/231)

34%

of total respondents
live in a single-
detached home
(78/231)

16%

of total respondents
live in a duplex, triplex,
fourplex or townhouse
(37/231)



52%
of total respondents
are above
45 years old
(116/221)

48%
of total respondents
are below
45 years old
(105/221)



¹ All survey demographic questions had a 'prefer not to say' option.



What We Heard

The community was asked what aspects of the urban forest they value most. The responses from survey participants and students during the school workshops were²:

1. Provides habitat for native (local) plants, animals and other organisms
(249 selected)
2. Helps address climate change by capturing and storing carbon, supporting flood protection and shading and cooling our streets and buildings (227 selected)
3. Supports mental and physical well-being (198 selected)
4. Supports stormwater management and purifies air and water (120 selected)
5. Provides places to recreate and socialize (86 selected)
6. Creates a sense of community identity and celebrates our heritage (41 selected)
7. Provides economic benefits, including boosting tourism and supporting food production (7 selected)
8. None, the urban forest is not a priority to me (4 selected)



Youth workshop

96% of survey respondents said planting trees in their neighbourhood is important or extremely important.

86% said that protecting and planting native trees in the community is important or extremely important, despite the challenges these trees face due to climate change.

Priorities for Tree Planting

Survey respondents indicated the importance of tree planting across various locations in the City³. While most participants indicated that planting is important in all areas, certain locations received particularly strong support:

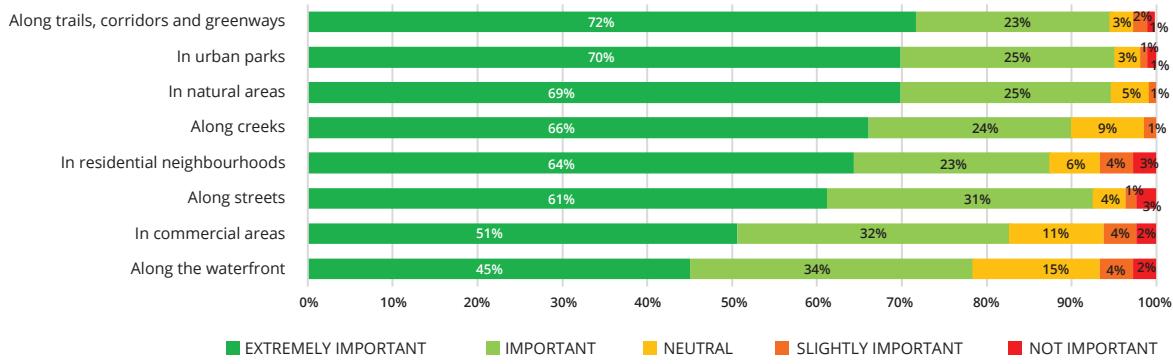
- ▶ Along trails, corridors and greenways (95% rated as important or extremely important)
- ▶ In urban parks (95% rated as important or extremely important)
- ▶ In natural areas (95% rated as important or extremely important)

There was slightly more disagreement regarding the importance of planting in commercial areas, along the waterfront, and in residential neighborhoods. However, the majority still viewed these locations as important for tree planting.

² Participants were invited to select up to three of the options from the list. This was a mandatory question.

³ Survey respondents were invited to select one response per location on the list. This was an optional question.

Tree Planting Priority Areas

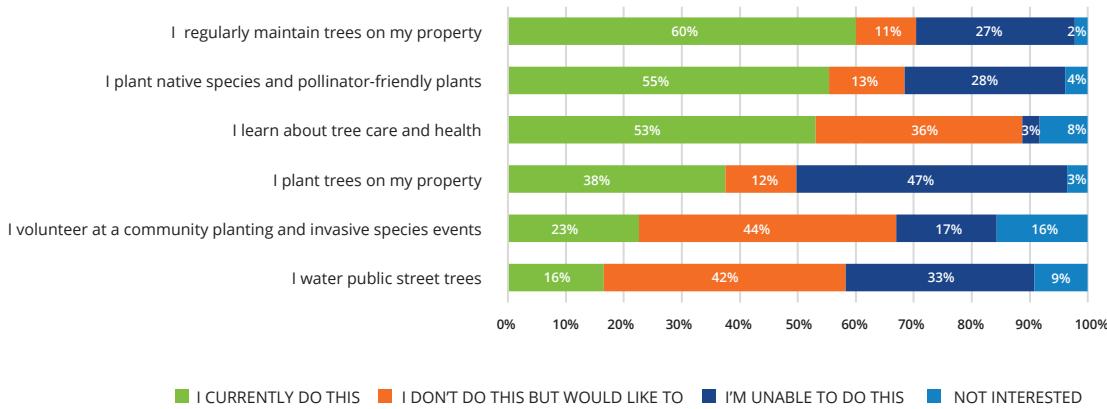


Survey respondents were invited to share additional thoughts on tree planting in the community. Overall, participants expressed a strong desire to increase canopy coverage across the City (43 mentions). They emphasized the importance of planting the *right tree in the right place*. The *right tree* refers to selecting appropriate species (19 mentions), such as native species adapted to the local climate and trees that support biodiversity. The *right place* involves planting in suitable locations to ensure successful establishment and longevity of the trees (23 mentions).

Community Stewardship

Community stewardship refers to the involvement of community members in planting or caring for the urban forest on both City and private lands. Survey respondents were asked how they support a healthy urban forest⁴. A significant proportion of respondents are committed to learning about tree care and health to support the urban forest, with 53% already doing so and 36% expressing interest.

Supporting the Urban Forest



In open feedback, the primary barrier to participation mentioned by survey respondents was their housing type. Residents of multi-unit housing noted that participating in urban forest stewardship activities, such as planting trees on private property and watering street trees, is challenging (38 mentions). Other barriers highlighted included a lack of awareness and knowledge (28 mentions).

⁴ Survey respondents were invited to select one response per stewardship activity on the list. This was an optional question.

Mapping Exercise

Community members were invited to use a mapping tool to identify areas in the urban forest that they value or believe need improvement. In total, 206 locations were marked, comprising 61 places identified online and 145 places noted during pop-up events and school workshops.

Places of Value

Participants submitted a total of 127 places they value in the urban forest (37 online and 90 in-person). These submissions were scattered throughout the City, predominantly within City parks. These places are valued for reasons such as:

- ▶ Providing wildlife habitat
- ▶ Enhancing aesthetic appeal
- ▶ Recreation opportunities, including play amenities for children, shaded areas, walking trails and the connectivity of the trail system
- ▶ Connection to nature
- ▶ Opportunities to foster community



The Shipyards pop-up

Places Needing Improvement

Participants submitted a total of 79 places in the urban forest they feel are in need of improvement (24 online and 55 in-person). Many of the locations selected were concentrated in Lower Lonsdale. Overall, concerns were focused on the need for:

- ▶ More shade
- ▶ More trees in parks, especially Cloverley Park, Victoria Park and Waterfront Park
- ▶ More street trees, particularly along Lonsdale Avenue, Keith Road and Grand Boulevard
- ▶ Tree replacements following tree removals



Example of in-person mapping: places of value are highlighted in green and areas identified for improvement are marked in yellow.