URBAN FOREST STRATEGY

DRAFT GOALS & ACTIONS

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS
APRIL 17, 2019

Agenda

1:00 **Welcome and Introductions**

1:15 **Presentation: Urban Forest Strategy: Draft Goals and Actions**

- Spring 2018 Consultation Overview
- Hamilton UF Baseline Study
- Draft Goals and Actions to Sustain and Enhance Urban Forest

1:45 **Questions**

2:00 **Mentimeter Activity**

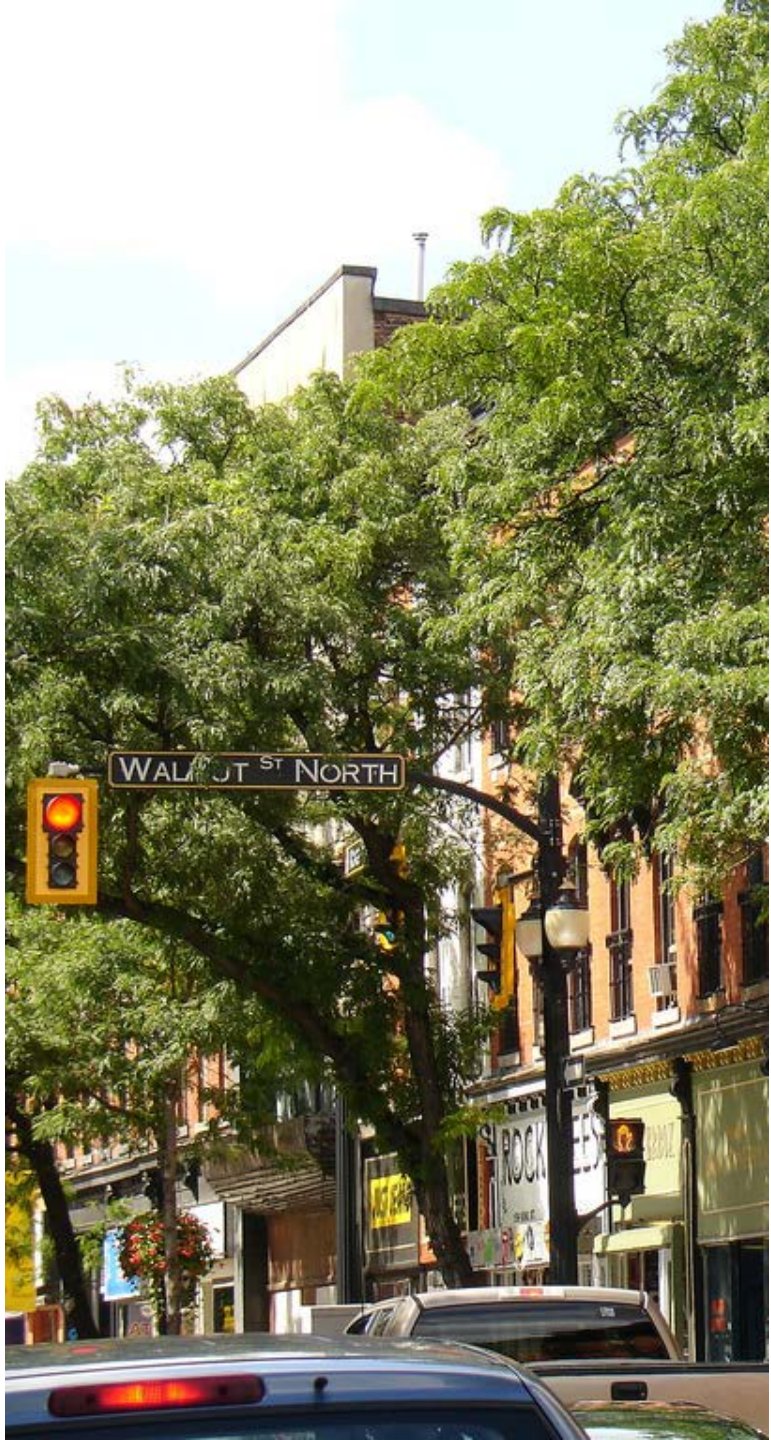
- Prioritize Actions!

2:10 **Break**

2:20 **Planting the Seed - Group Activity**

- Discuss & Update Prioritize Actions!
- Implementation Opportunities & Challenges

3:20 **Next Steps and Closing**



Urban Forest Strategy

Hamilton Urban Forest Strategy

Spring 2018 Survey

Communicating the value of biodiversity and ecology.

Tree maintenance, removal and replacement.

Financial incentives and costs associated with trees (including aesthetics).

Increase, protect, distribute and prioritize canopy cover.

Connectivity between and accessibility to green space.

Public education and community outreach.

Natural areas, woodlots, parks.

The role that trees have in mitigating the impacts of climate change.

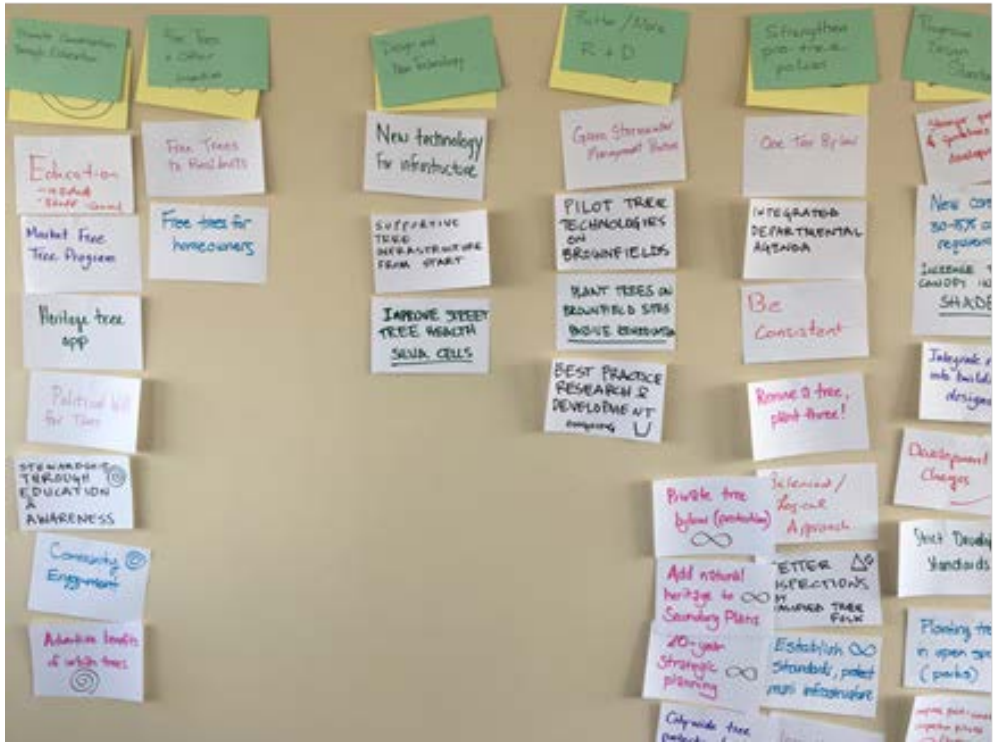
Impacts of new development and land use.

Implementation of the Urban Forestry Strategy.

Importance for human health.

Spring 2018 Stakeholder Workshops

- What do you value about Hamilton's urban forest? shade, air quality, beautification, mental health, diversity, habitat, relaxing
- What policies/guidelines would have the most impact? City-wide Private Tree By-law, Public Tree By-law, and Management Standards
- What land uses offer the best opportunity to improve urban forest? Open Space
- Key Opportunities Identified: partnerships, celebrate trees, By-laws, education, financial incentives, etc.



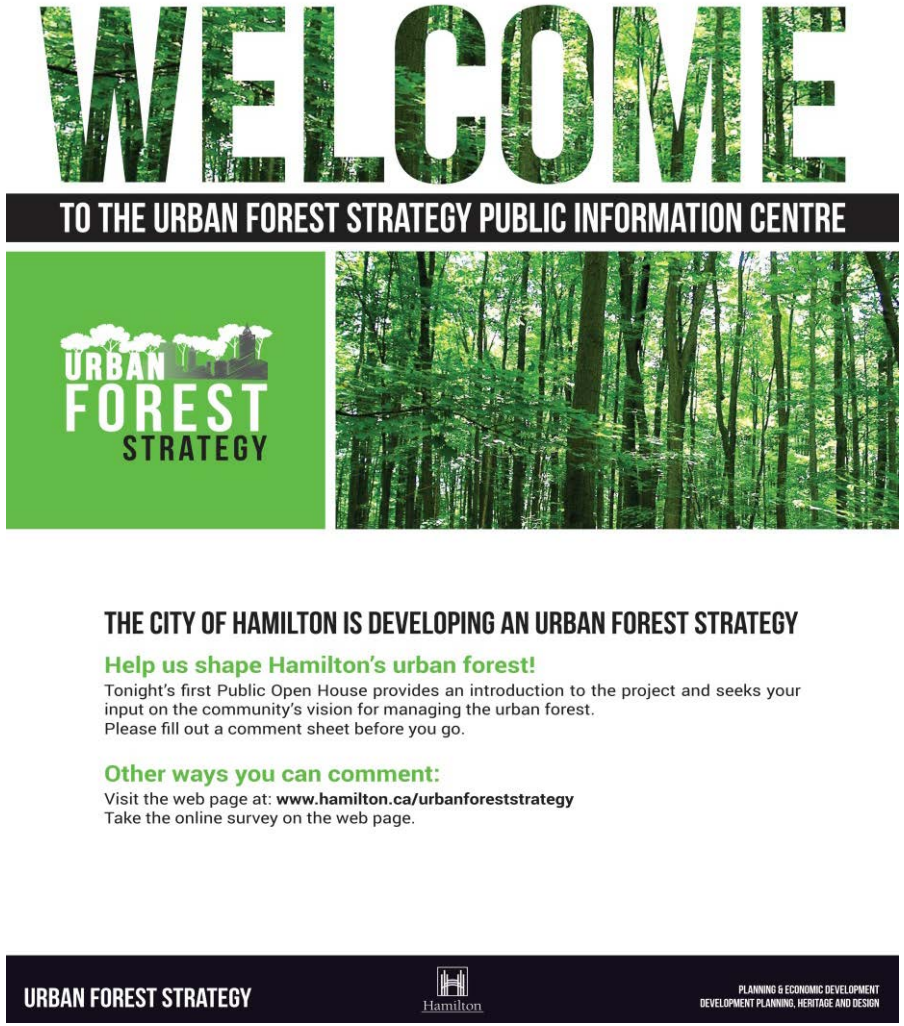
Spring 2018 Public Information Centre

Vision for Hamilton's Urban Forest:

- Multi-layered, naturalized, native trees
- Enhanced canopy cover in downtown
- Promote Niagara Escarpment
- Green neighbourhoods – public/private

Value about Hamilton's Urban Forest:

- Nature in the City
- Shading and cooling
- Better air quality
- Escarpment & green, lush views, beauty



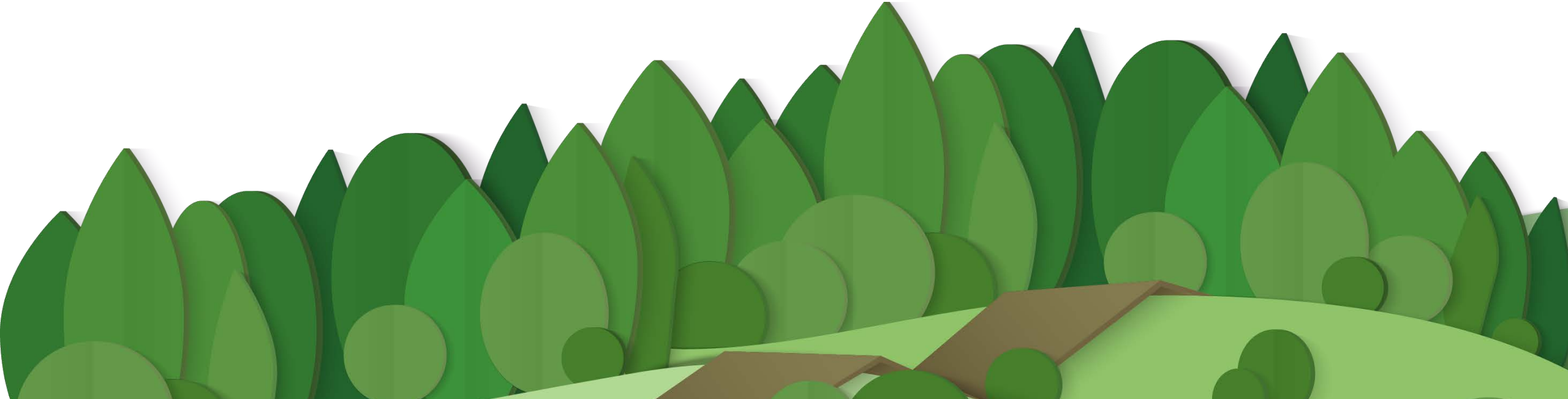
Draft Vision Statement

Hamilton Tree Canopy Goal

Hamilton's Official Plan sets a forest cover target of **30%** for the City.

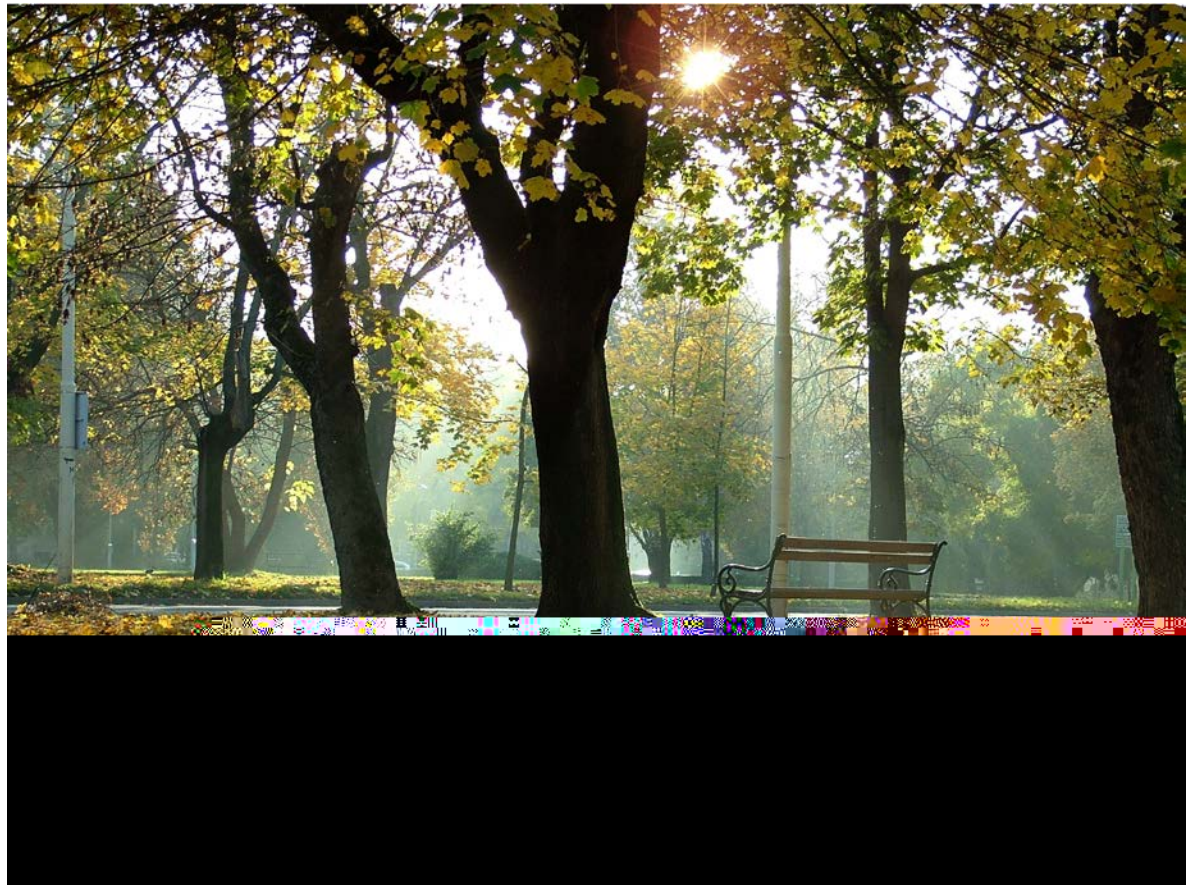
- Hamilton's urban forest is resilient and sustainable.
- It contributes to the health and well-being of citizens, and enhances the livability of the City.
- The City and all residents value the urban forest as an essential shared asset that should be intentionally planned and maintained for all future generations.

Goal 1: Plan & Act



Benefits of the Urban Forest

- Improves air quality by absorbing pollutants
- Cools air temperatures
- Regulates stormwater flow and improves water quality
- Mitigates climate change impacts
- Reduces energy use and carbon dioxide emissions
- Supports urban biodiversity
- Benefits mental and physical health of residents
- Increases property values
- Makes cities more beautiful & livable



Overall Tree Condition

- Majority of ‘dying’ and ‘dead’ trees were in parks, natural areas, cemeteries, recreational fields and golf courses.
- There is an opportunity to increase and improve the health of the tree canopy by removing and replacing dead and dying trees in these areas.
- Requires coordination between Forestry and Parks Departments and increased funding for lead City Sections addressing the issue.
- This could be paired with silvicultural treatments (woodland management) to promote regeneration of native species in priority areas.

Percentage of “Dying” and “Dead” trees in Open Space is the highest out of all land use categories – 3.1% and 9.8%, respectively.

Species Composition

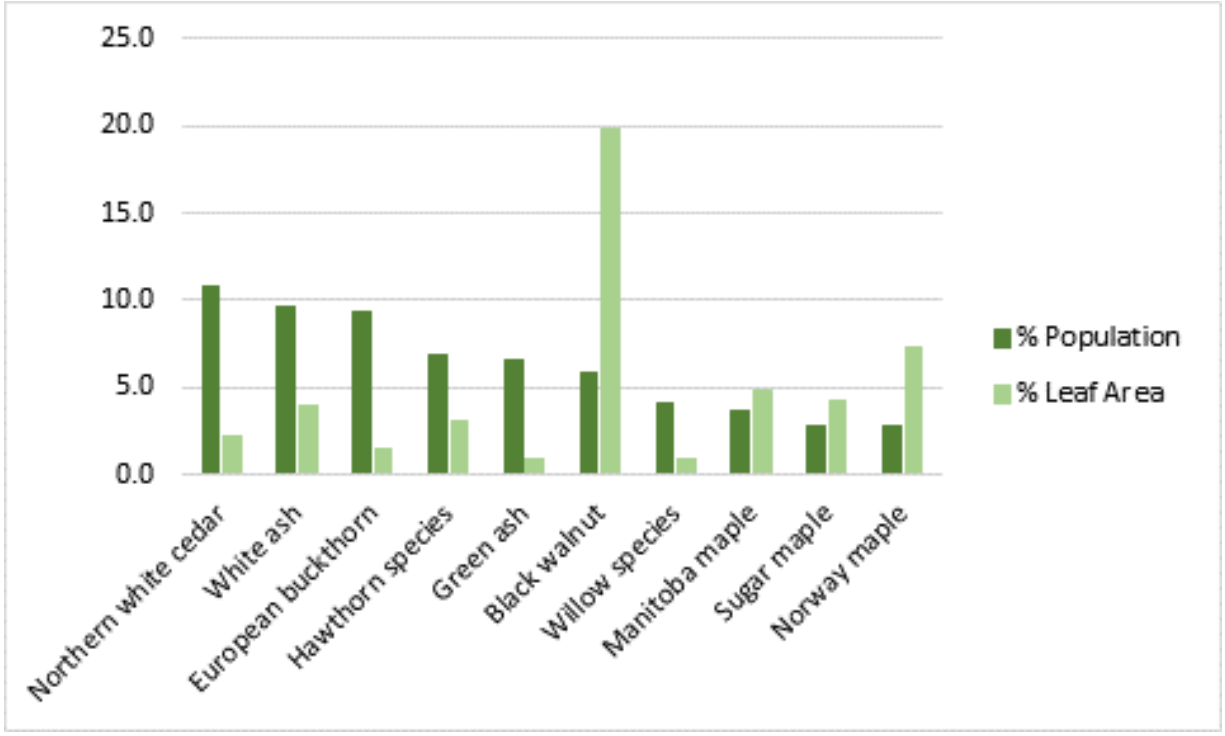
- Fairly good overall native species diversity
- Native black walnut represents about 20% of total leaf area
- Ash species still represent ~5% of total leaf area, but are threatened by Emerald Ash Borer
- Urban forest has a high presence of invasive species - 20-25% of the total urban forest leaf area is Category 1 and 2 invasive species

Category 1 Invasive Species

Excludes all other species and dominates site indefinitely.

Category 2 Invasive Species

Highly invasive, but tend to only dominate certain niches or do not spread rapidly from major concentrations.



Invasive Species

15.9% of the top ten species are invasive.

Species include:

- *Norway maple*
- *Manitoba maple*
- *European buckthorn*
- *black locust*

- Currently, there is minimal forest/vegetation management in publicly-owned natural areas and on private lands
- This creates a scenario where invasive species will continue to spread
- Invasive species present threats to biodiversity and recreational values

Forest Health

Potential pest and disease risks:

Pest	Number of Susceptible Trees	Structural Value ($)	Leaf Area (%)	Leaf Area (Hectares)
Gypsy Moth	1 million	376,000,000	15	4,262
Oak Wilt	52,000	115,000,000	2	656
Asian Longhorned Beetle	1.2 million	673,000,000	32	9,320

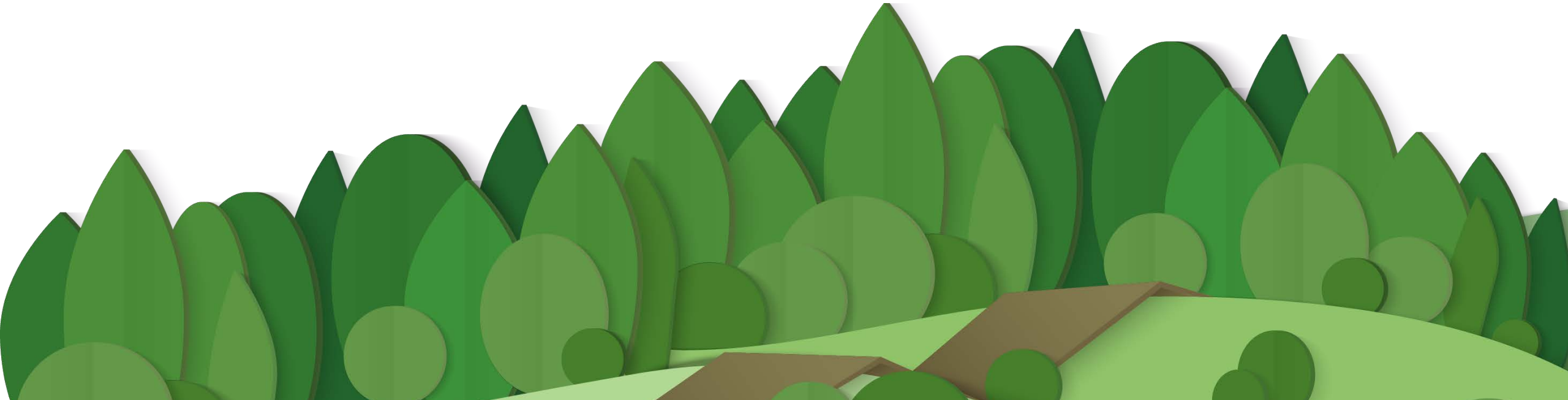
Hamilton monitored gypsy moth in 2016, 2017, and 2018 (based on egg mass counts)

Otherwise, the City doesn't have a systematic forest health monitoring program.

Risk Management

- Hamilton has had a regular grid pruning program in effect for several years
- Achieved a 7 year pruning cycle
- 87% of street trees are in ‘Good’ condition, 6% are dead or dying
- Hazard tree removal is done along trails in natural areas

Goal 4: Maintain

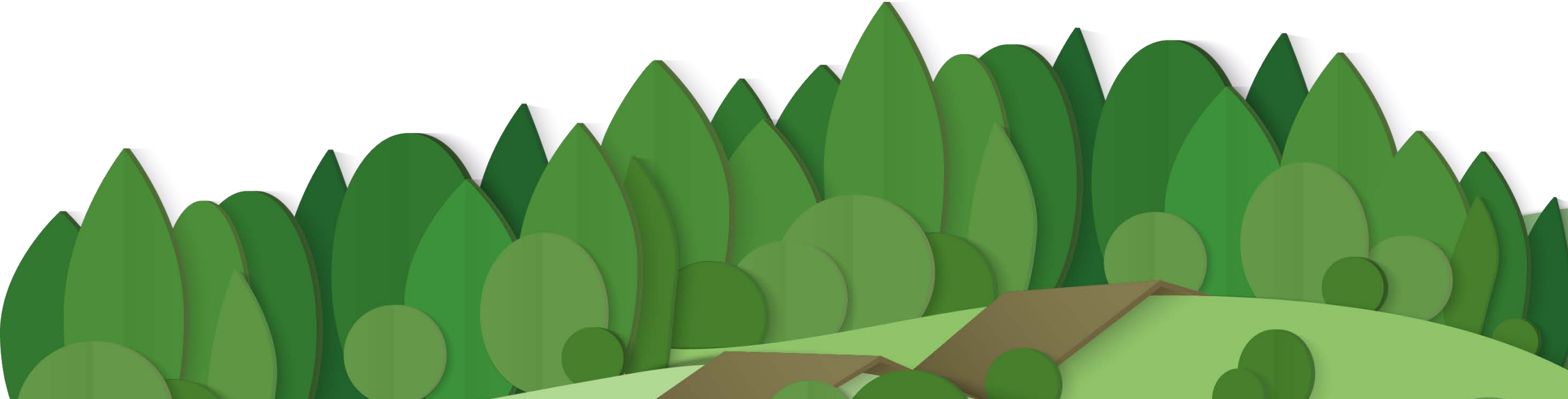


Communications and Outreach

Source: Trees Hamilton

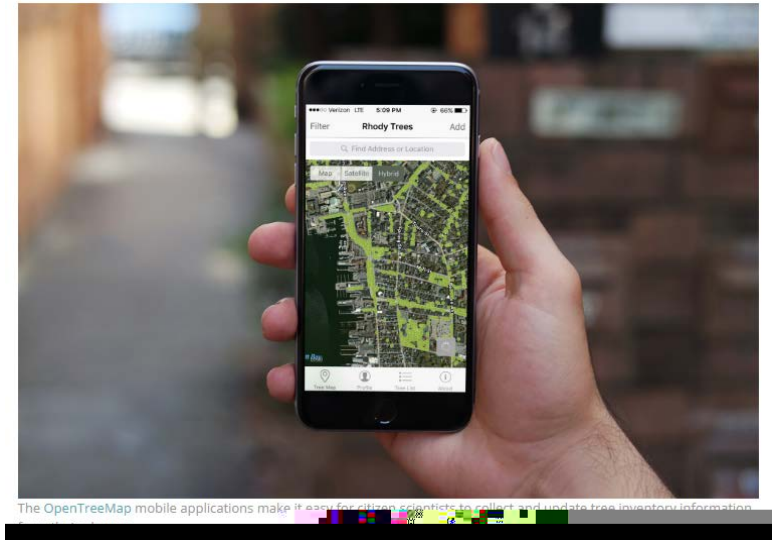
- Hamilton has established outreach and communications programs that promote urban forest awareness and engagement
- Challenge - lack of understanding of urban forest benefits and attitudes toward trees (e.g. trees considered to be an easily replaceable resource rather than a long-term asset worthy of investment)
- The Power of Maps
- Spatial data is a powerful communication tool
- Many cities have online mapping to describe the urban forest
- Can use existing inventory data to develop online maps of the City's forest resource

Goal 5: Communicate



Communications and Outreach

- Hamilton has an engaged non-profit community – citizen science has already contributed to information on the City's urban forest
- Citizen science could be used to increase public awareness and support for urban forestry and to collect data that can support specific forest management activities (e.g. invasive species tracking, tree removals, tree condition, tree planting, etc.)



Source: https://www.opentreemap.org/