# Urban Forest Strategy
Online Open House

District of Saanich

May 16, 2024

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Presentation Overview

- Project Context
- What we've Learned
  - State of the Urban Forest
  - Engagement
- Strategic Framework
  - Vision, Goals, and Targets
  - Strategies and Actions
- Questions and Feedback

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Project Context

What is an Urban Forest?

Components of Saanich's urban forest

native forest

streamside tree

street tree

park tree

landscaping tree

yard tree

Natural Areas	Rural Land	Riparian Areas	Parks	Urban Trees	Foreshore

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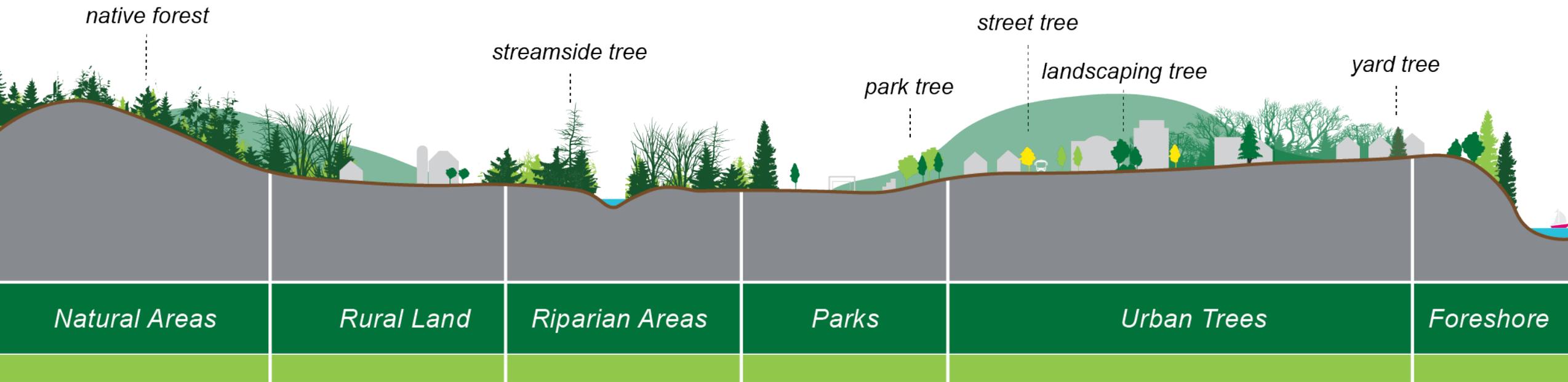
Saanich's Urban Forest Strategy will…

- ✓ Renew the Urban Forest Strategy with guidance for today's challenges
- ✓ Align with and support other District policies and priorities
- ✓ Engage the public and key stakeholders
- ✓ Establish the baseline state of the urban forest
- ✓ Provide a long-term vision for the urban forest
- ✓ Provide a 10-year implementation road-map

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Project scope

We are here

Information gathering	State of the Urban Forest	Public engagement	Urban Forest Strategy Update

Spring 2022   Fall - Winter 2022   Winter 2023   Spring 2024

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Project scope

Information gathering	**State of the Urban Forest**	**Public engagement**	**Urban Forest Strategy Update**

Task	Key deliverables
Background Research & Review	✓ Peer City Review ✓ Urban Forest Program Budgets and Service Levels ✓ Best Management Practices
Inventory, Mapping, & Analysis	✓ Canopy summaries and analysis ✓ Field work for data collection ✓ State of the Urban Forest Report ✓ Tree Equity Score
Engaging the community and stakeholders	✓ Online mapping tool ✓ Public survey ✓ Open houses/workshops (public and staff) ✓ Council/Committee presentations
Updating the Urban Forest Strategy	✓ Recommendations + Implementation Plan • Interim UFS document (Draft) • Finalized UFS document

Complete

To come

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Work completed to date

State of the Urban Forest Report

District of Saanich
Urban Forest Strategy Update

State of the Urban Forest Report

FEBRUARY 2023

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Progress on the 2010 Urban Forest Strategy

The 2010 Urban Forest Strategy resulted in positive changes to regulations and practices that increased tree protection in the municipality and grew public awareness. With the renewal of the Urban Forest Strategy, now is an appropriate time to review the actions and assess progress on implementation.

The 2010 Urban Forest Strategy organized its actions within seven *Strategies*. The seven strategies are to:

» **Grow the Urban Forest Canopy**

» **Amend the Tree Preservation Bylaw**

» **Develop Urban Forest Guidelines**

» **Integrate the UFS with other District and Regional Initiatives**

» **Inventory the Urban Forest**

» **Develop an Urban Forest Operations Program**

» **Engage the Community**

14 actions are listed within the strategies. In the table on the following pages, actions are listed as complete, in progress, or not started.

In total, three actions are complete, ten actions are in progress, and one action is not started.

Action Update: 2010 Urban Forest Strategy Implementation

3 Complete

10 In Progress

1 Not Started

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What we've Learned

District-wide canopy cover

Canopy cover (*2019*): **43%**

Tree Canopy

- - - Urban Containment Boundary

31% canopy cover within the UCB
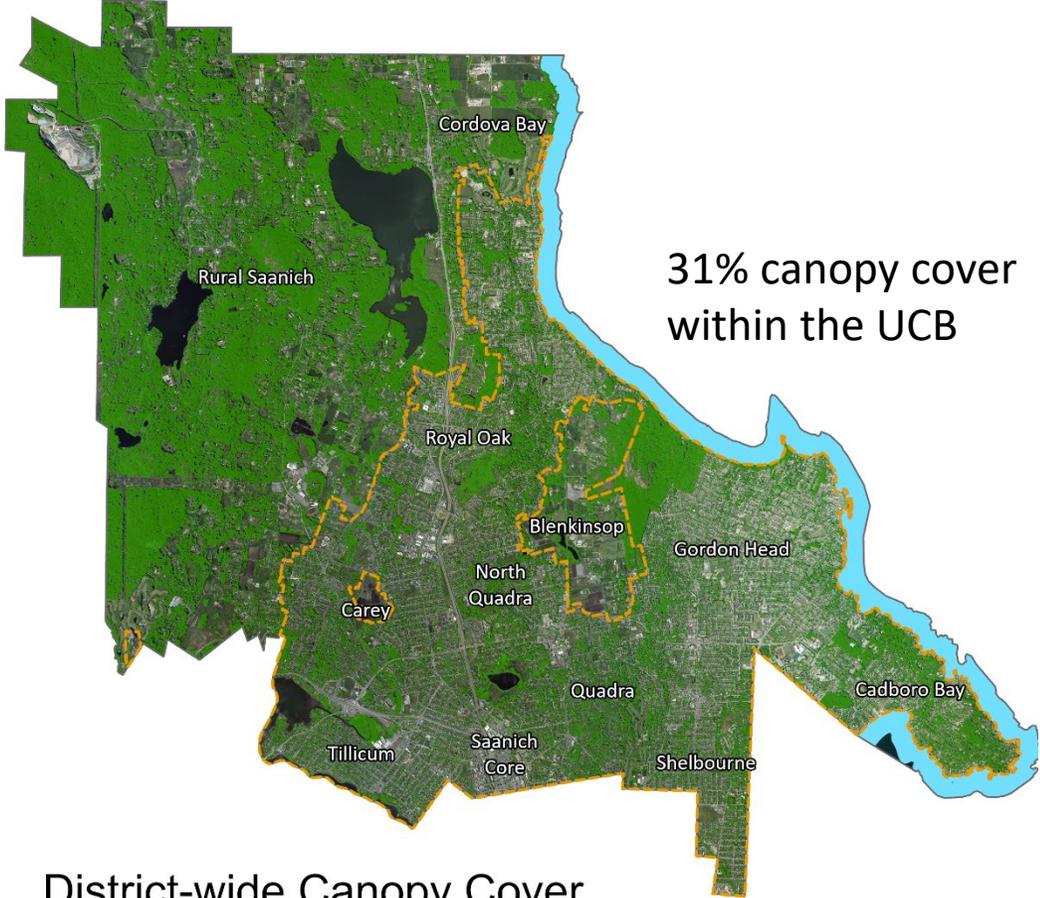
District-wide Canopy Cover

Where trees are located in Saanich

Trees on Saanich-owned property, including:

205,000

Trees over roadways

116,800

Trees in Saanich Parks

79,800

Trees on other District property

8,400

537,000
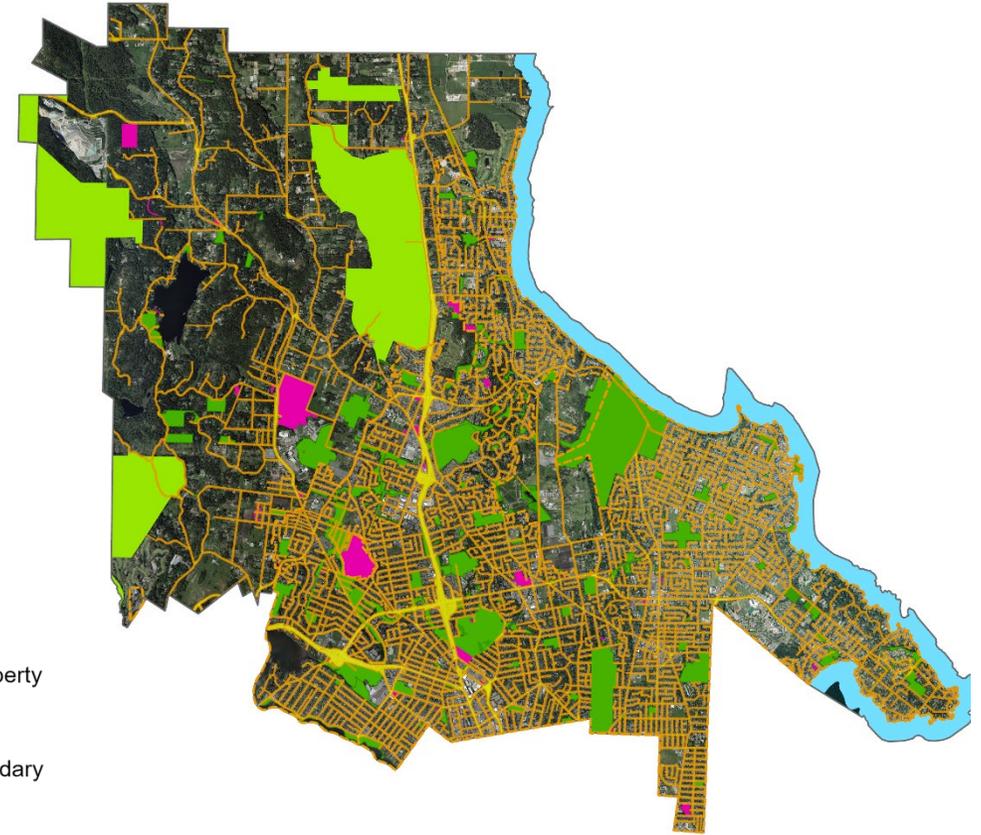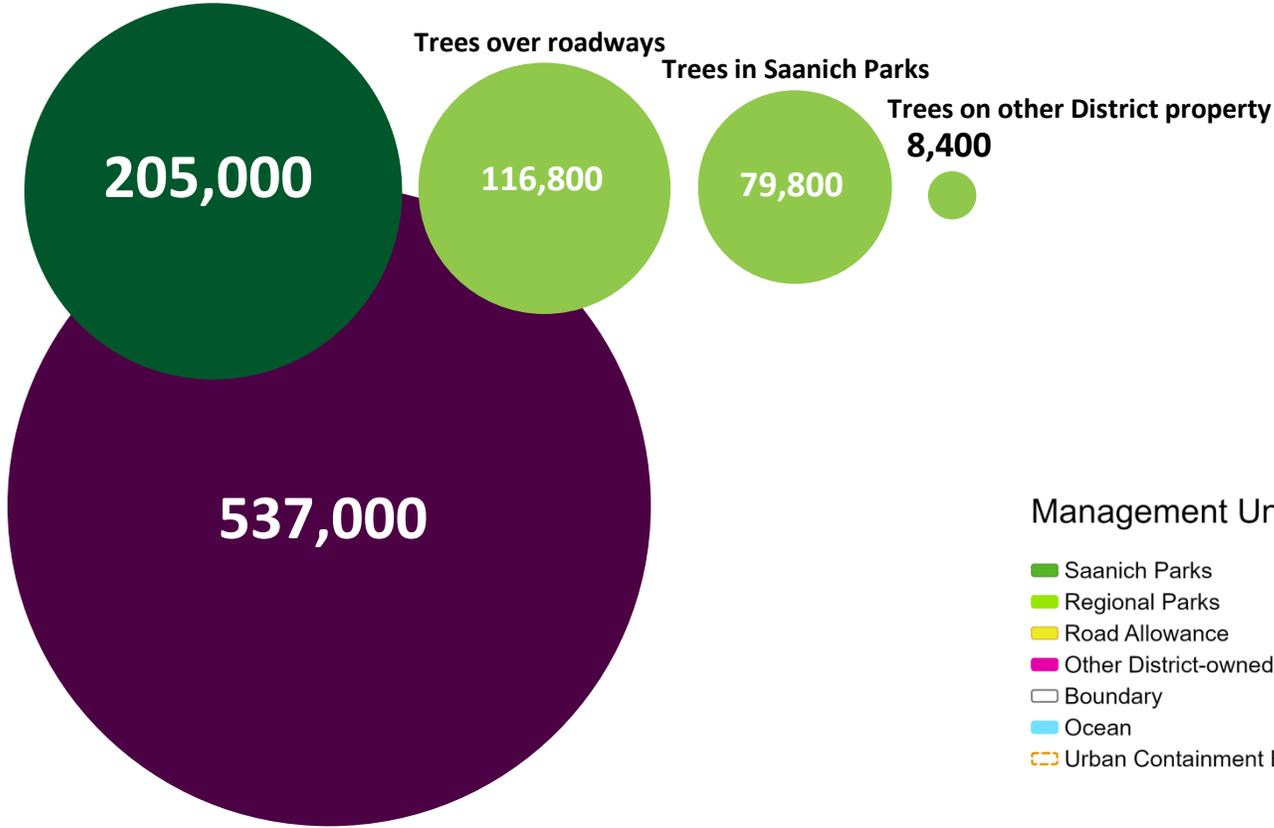
Trees on property not owned by Saanich, including Regional Parks and private land.

Management Units

- ■ Saanich Parks
- ■ Regional Parks
- ■ Road Allowance
- ■ Other District-owned Property
- ▢ Boundary
- ■ Ocean
- ⬚ Urban Containment Boundary

State of the Urban Forest

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Tree equity score

- Equity indicators include:
  - Climate and temperature
  - Income
  - Age
  - Race and ethnicity
  - Employment status
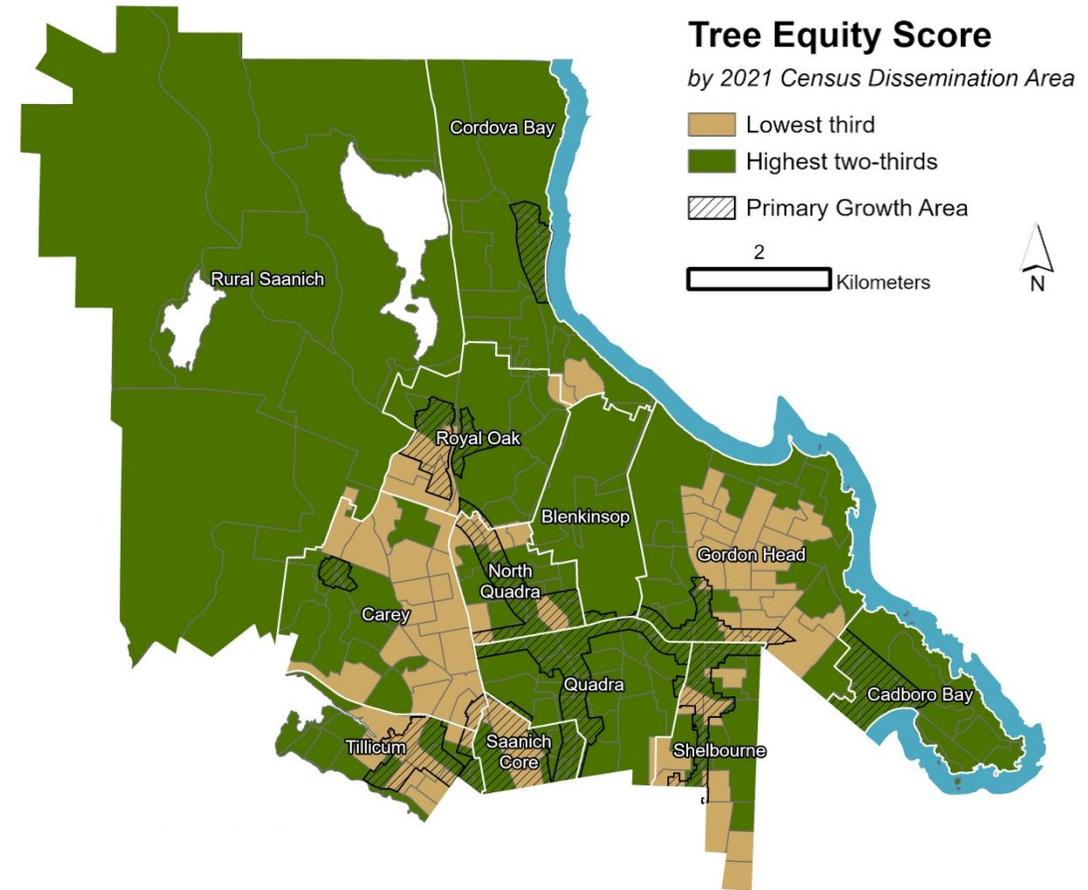
A lower tree equity score = A greater priority for increasing tree canopy

Tree Equity Score
by 2021 Census Dissemination Area

- Lowest third
- Highest two-thirds
- Primary Growth Area

2 Kilometers

N

Progress made since 2010

➢ Saanich has made progress since the 2010 Urban Forest Strategy, including:
  ➢ Creation of the Urban Forest Reserve fund
  ➢ Adopting the Tree Protection Bylaw
  ➢ Investing in stewardship programs
➢ Challenges for implementation include:
  ➢ Limited resources
  ➢ Planting site availability
  ➢ Conflicting or competing priorities for space
  ➢ Climate risk

Urban Forest Report Card

🔴🟠🟢🟢 2022 program grade (in colour)
—○» Work already in progress is expected to improve rating
—○— Assessment based on partial or interim data

FAIR   GOOD
POOR   16   16   OPTIMAL
5   2023 URBAN FOREST REPORT CARD   0

| Poor | Fair | Good | Optimal |
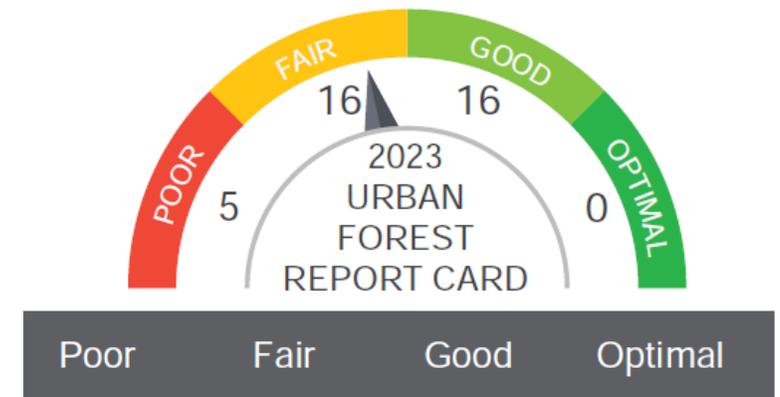
Phase 1 engagement: summary

Who we heard from:

- 380 survey respondents

- 312 mapping tool submissions

- 100 attendees at the in-person open house

- 49 attendees at the virtual open house

- 15 organizations at the stakeholder workshop

Area	Percentage
Quadra	14%
Rural Saanich	10%
North Quadra	10%
Shelbourne	9%
Tillicum	8%
Carey	8%
Royal Oak	7%
Cadboro Bay	6%
Cordova Bay	4%
Blenkinsop	4%
Saanich Core	3%

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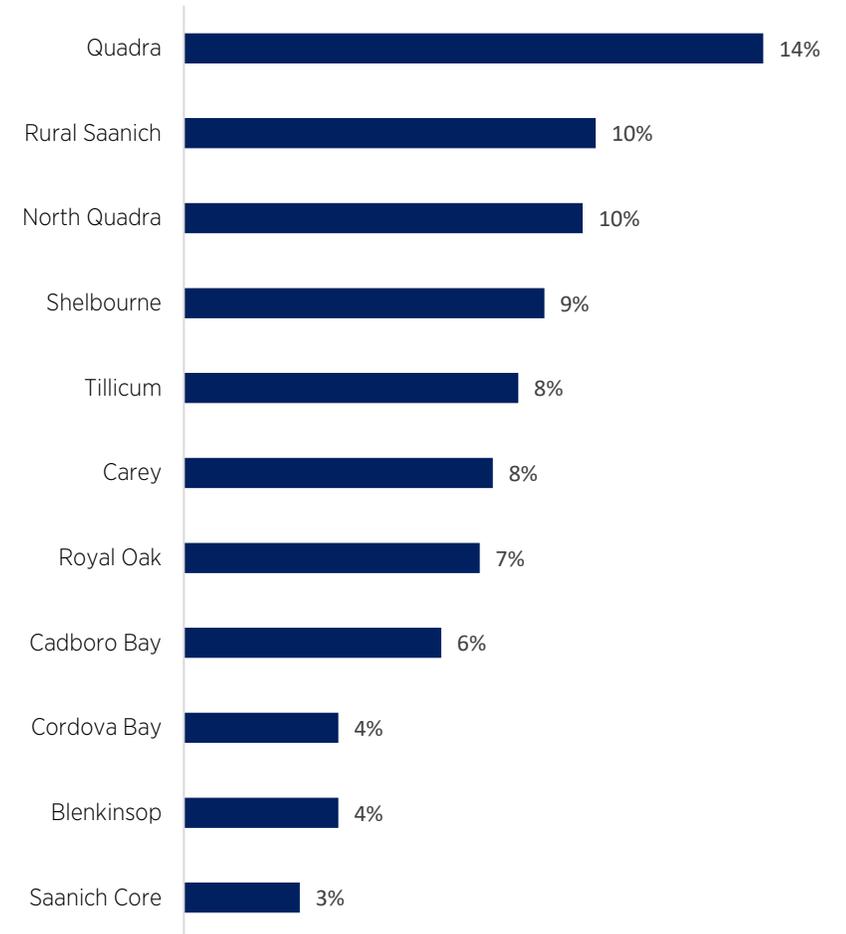
Phase 1 engagement: summary

Vision

- Native
- Diverse
- Well-protected
- Mature

Priorities

- Increased canopy cover
- Restore forest ecosystems in parks
- Provide incentives and public education
- Improve development standards to create better planting spaces
- More retention, better protection and more replacements, ideally on-site
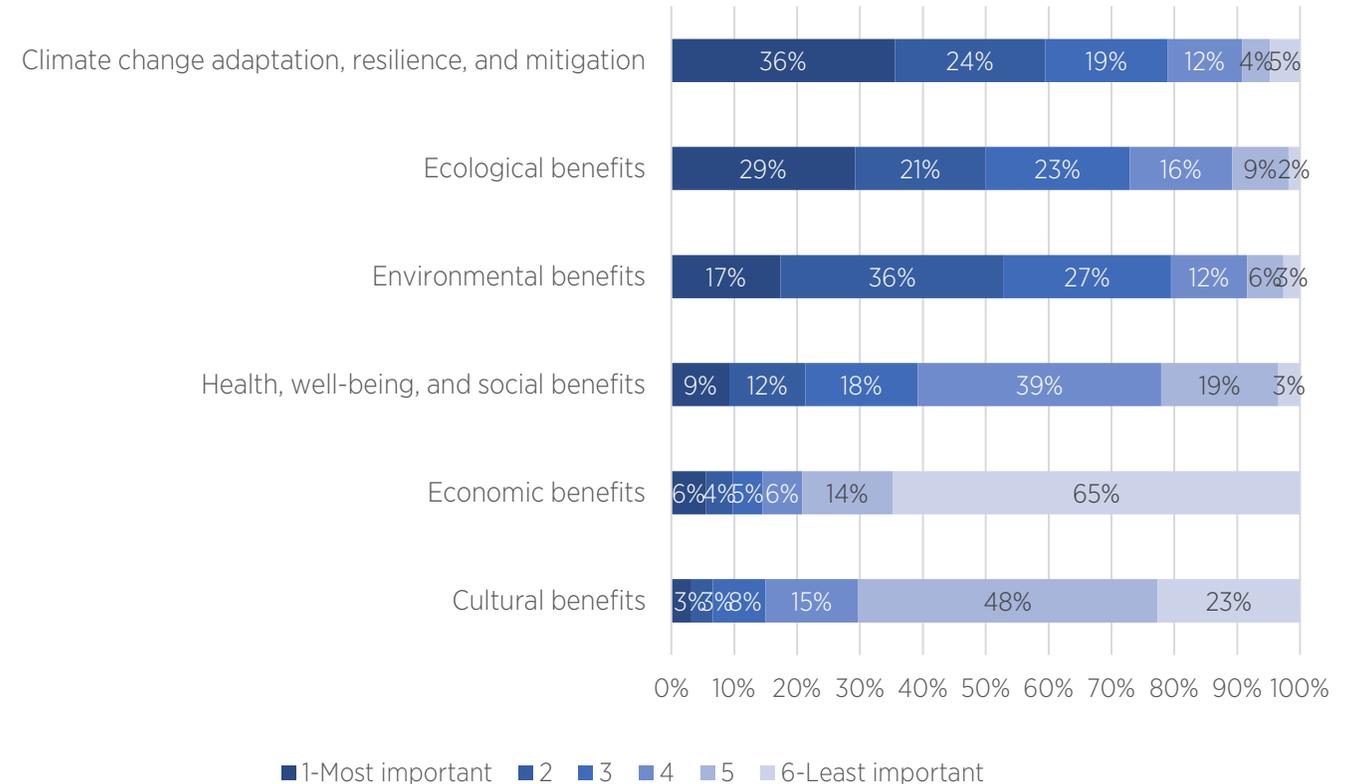
	1-Most important	2	3	4	5	6-Least important
Climate change adaptation, resilience, and mitigation	36%	24%	19%	12%	4%	5%
Ecological benefits	29%	21%	23%	16%	9%	2%
Environmental benefits	17%	36%	27%	12%	6%	3%
Health, well-being, and social benefits	9%	12%	18%	39%	19%	3%
Economic benefits	6%	4%	5%	6%	14%	65%
Cultural benefits	3%	3%	8%	15%	48%	23%

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Strategic Framework

The Strategy

1. Introduction

2. Background and context

3. What we have: status and trends

4. What we do: Saanich's urban forest program

5. Drivers of change

6. Vision for the future

7. The action plan
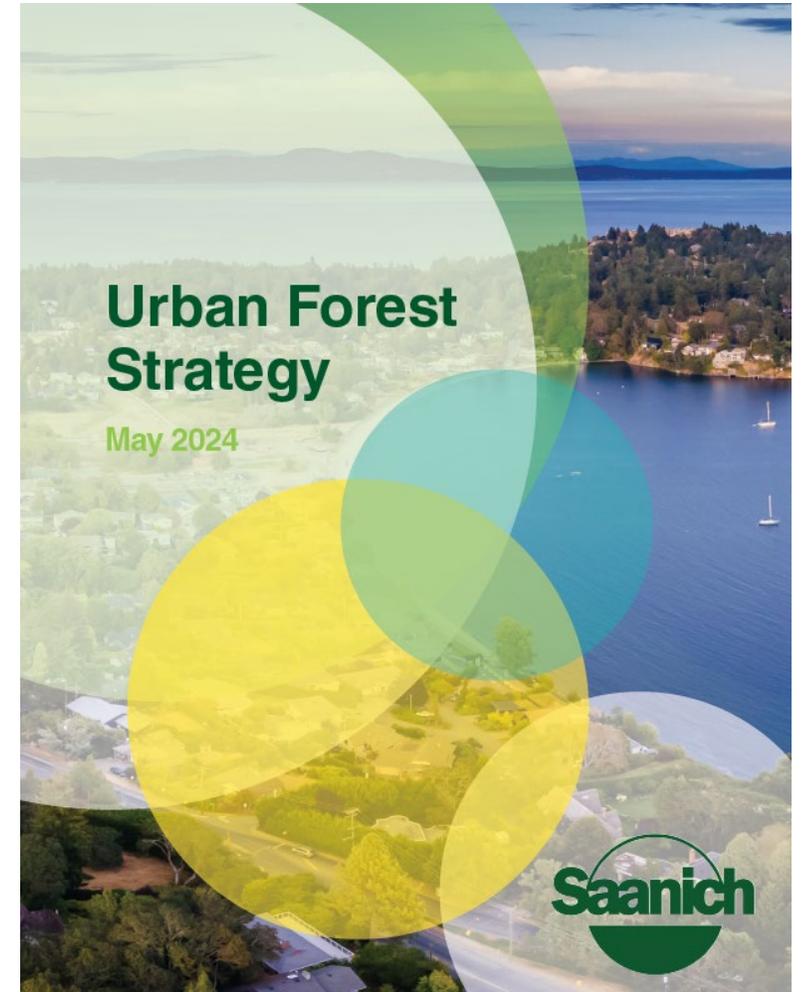
Urban Forest Strategy

May 2024

Saanich

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Strategic framework

Proposed Vision

The urban forest in Saanich is a thriving, interconnected system of trees and forests across the municipality, nurtured by the entire community to support the health and well-being of current and future generations.

Setting a canopy target

Saanich OCP Land Use

- **Industrial Lands**
- **Institutional**
- **Knowledge Centre**
- **Neighbourhood**
- **Neighbourhood Hub**
- **Park**
- **Primary Growth Area**
- **Rural Areas**
- **Rural Village**

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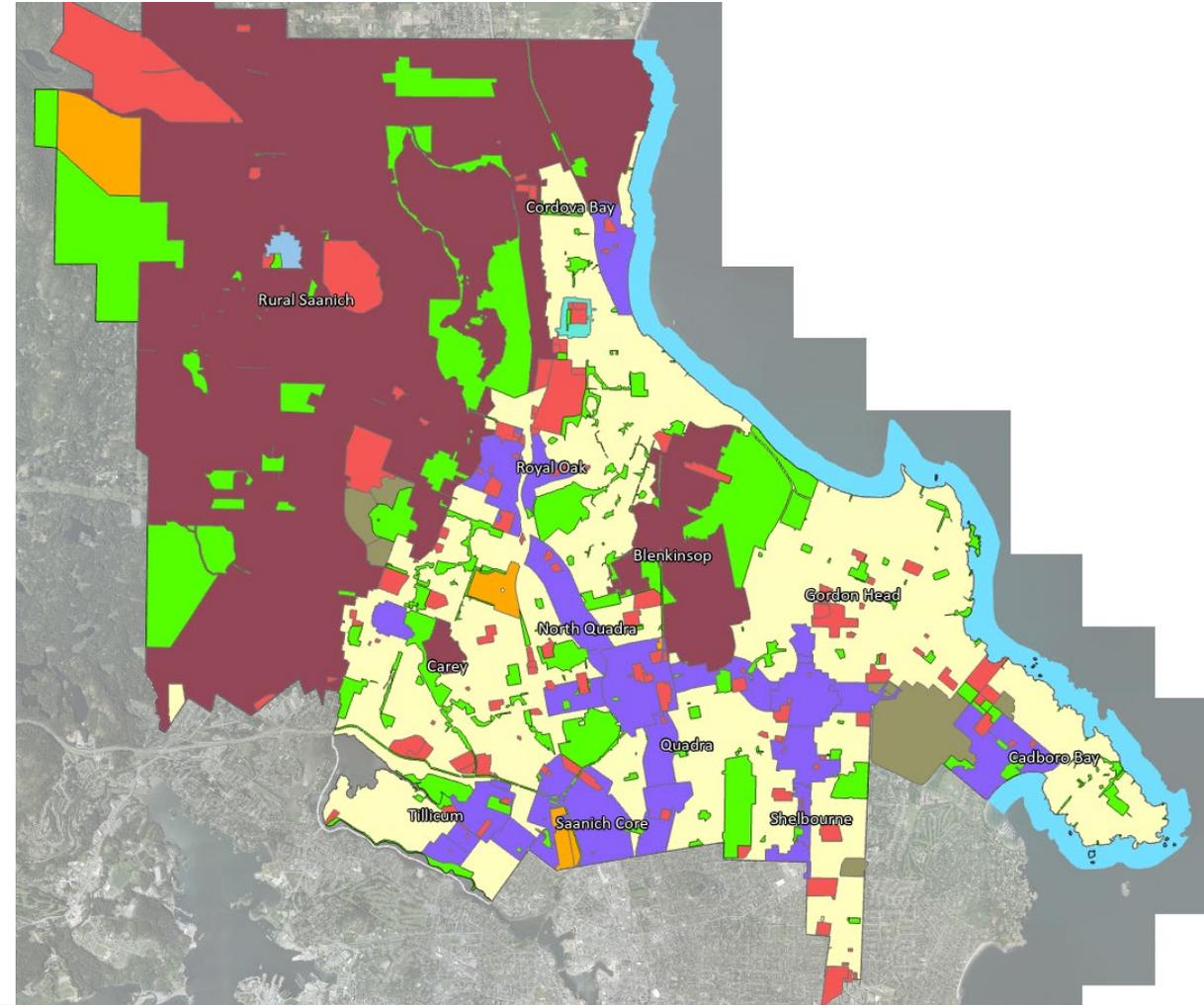
Setting a canopy target

Saanich OCP Land Use

Future Land Use	Land Area (incl. ROW)	Canopy (2019)
Industrial Lands	177	31%
Institutional	687	47%
Knowledge Centre	158	30%
Neighbourhood	2983	31%
Neighbourhood Hub	16	28%
Park	1468	70%
Primary Growth Area	934	24%
Rural Areas	4225	46%
Rural Village	18	48%
District-wide Average	10665	**43%**
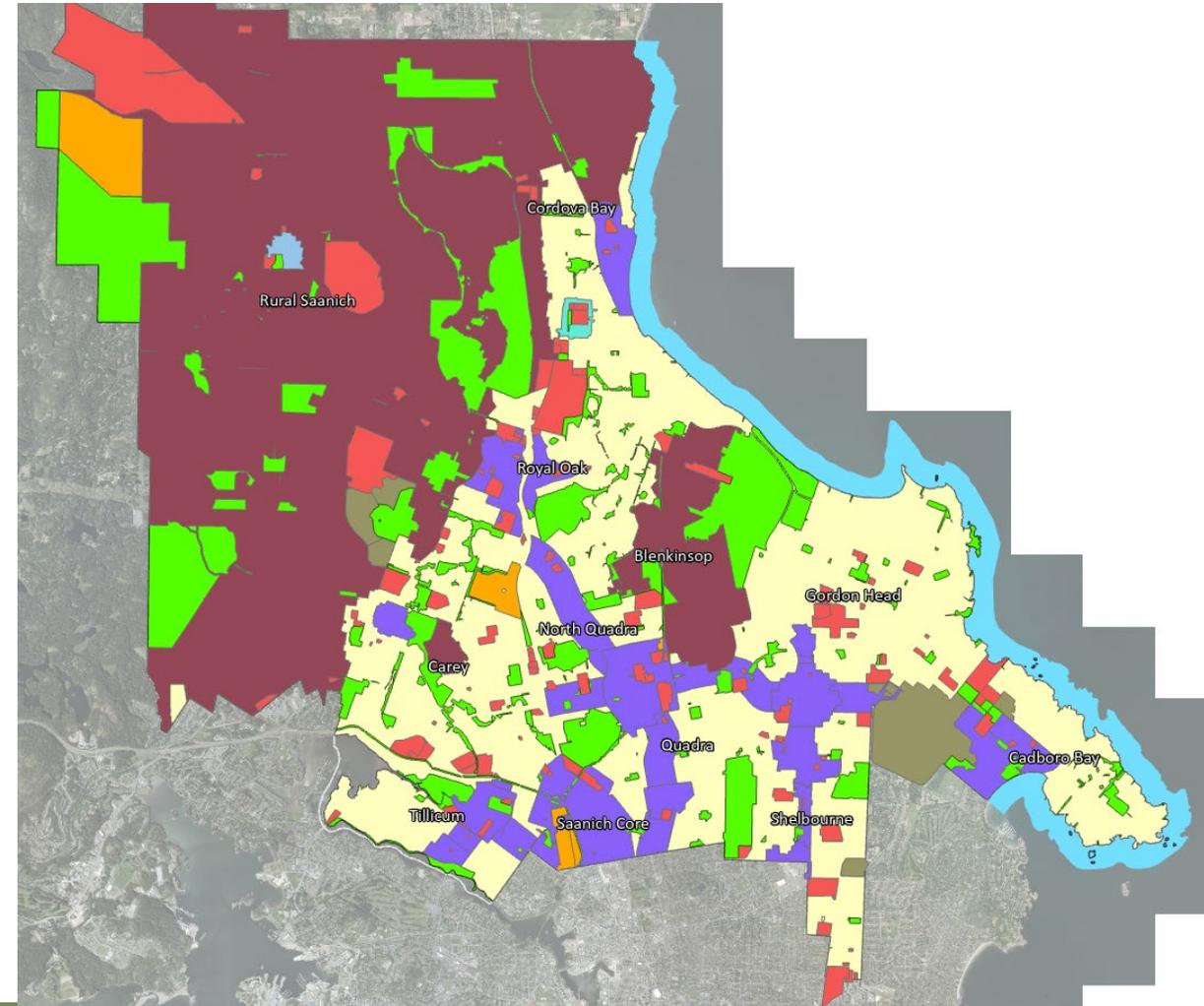
Target proposed

Assumes

- 160 ha of canopy loss
- 53,000 trees planted
- Understory restoration planting
- Dead tree replacement

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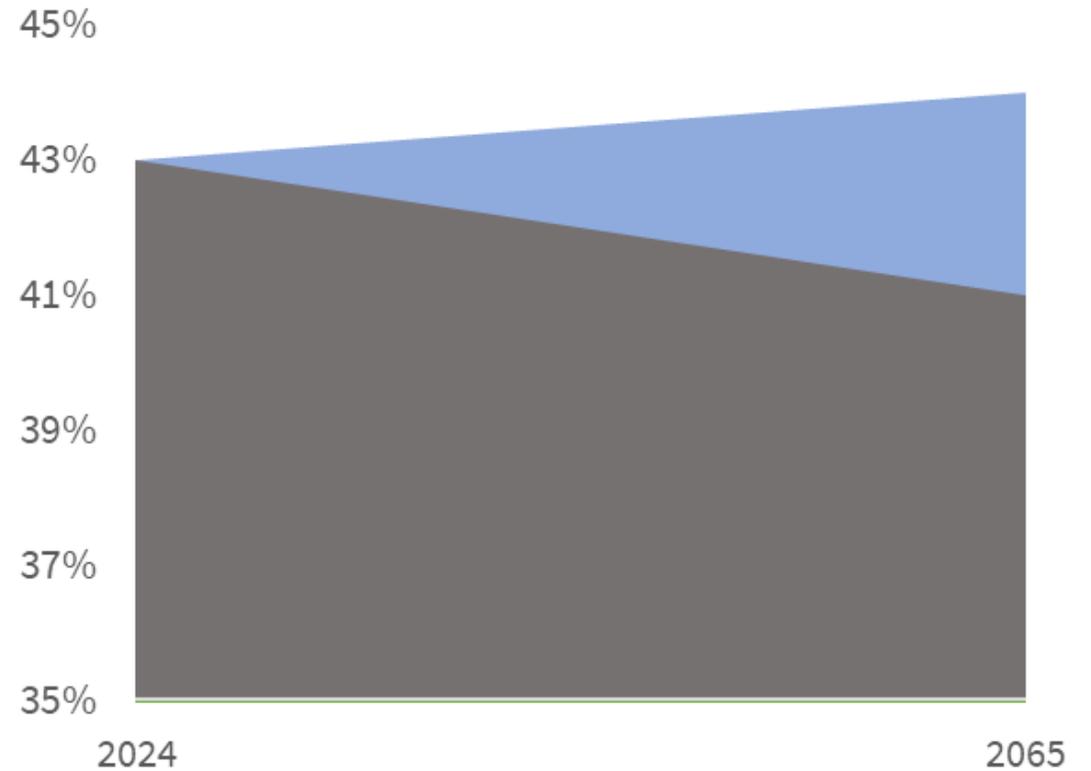
Targets anticipated by land use

Land Use	Land Area (ha)	Canopy Cover (2019)	Target Canopy Cover (2064)
Industrial Lands	177	31%	31% ↔
Institutional	687	47%	47% ↔
Knowledge Centre	158	30%	30% ↔
Neighbourhood	2,983	31%	35% ↑
Neighbourhood Hub	16	28%	30% ↑
Park	1,468	70%	72% ↑
Primary Growth Area	934	24%	20% ↓
Rural Areas	4,225	46%	46% ↔
Rural Village	18	48%	48% ↔

What do canopy targets look like?
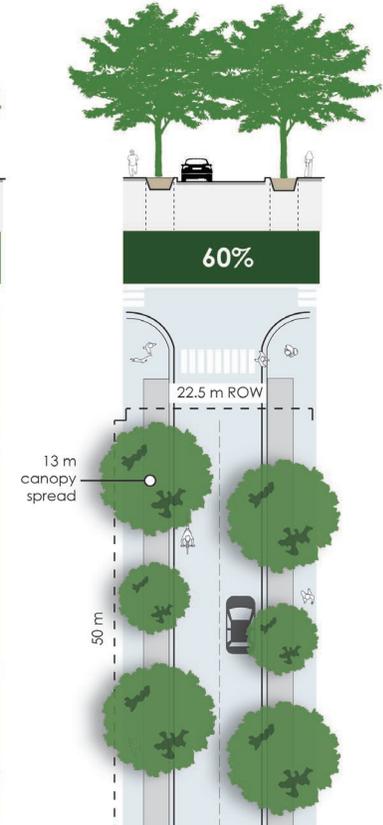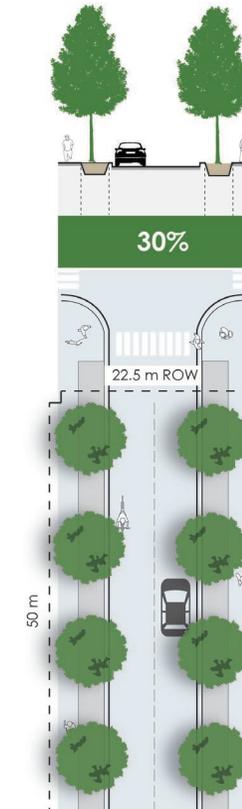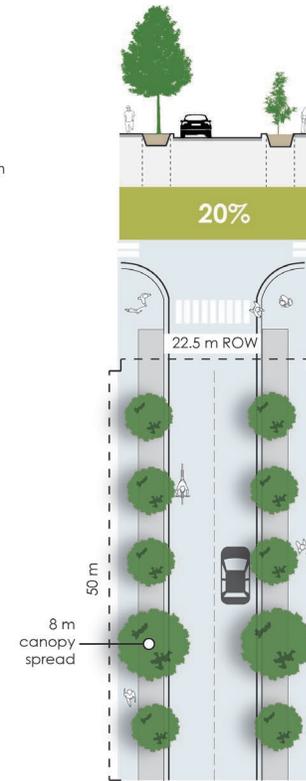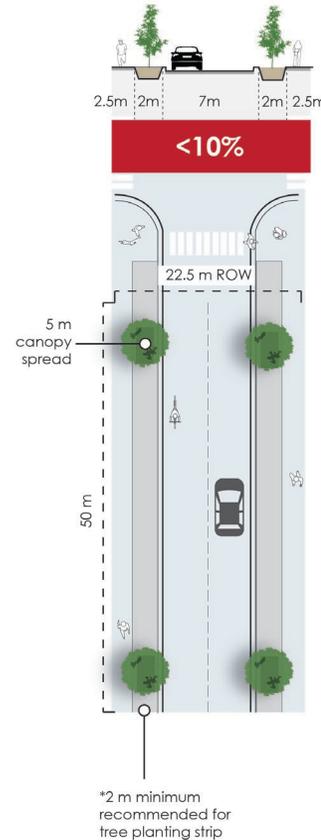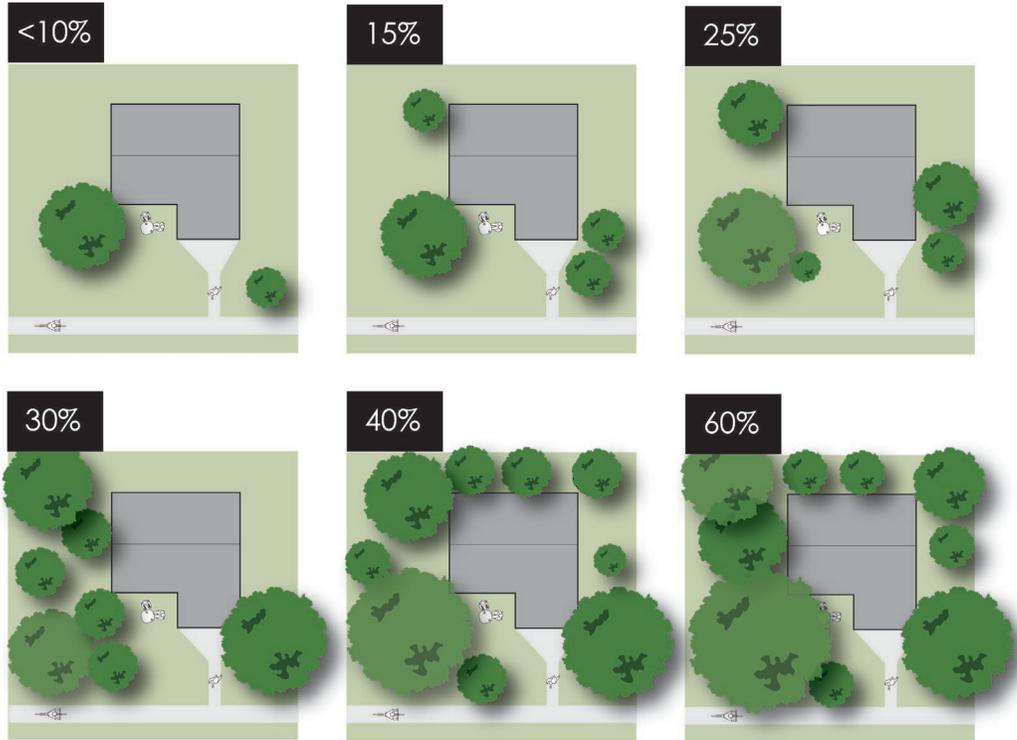
Where Planting will Happen

Achieving 44% canopy cover by 2064

continued native forest restoration and underplanting 50,000 trees and shrubs

planting 6,000 new park trees

planting 20,000 new street trees

planting 28,000 new landscape and yard trees

Natural Areas	Rural Land	Riparian Areas	Parks	Urban Trees	Foreshore

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Draft Goals

1. **Protect**, **connect**, and **enhance** the urban forest
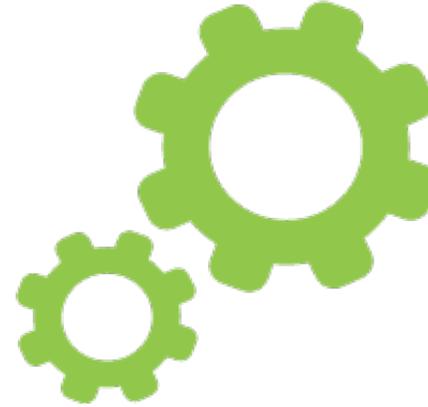
2. **Manage** the urban forest in alignment with best practices

3. **Foster** a culture of **community care** for the urban forest

4. **Monitor** performance and **adapt** strategies

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Goal 1: Protect, Connect, and Enhance

- **Strategy 1.1.** Improve policy, regulations, processes and standards for integrating trees and forests into the built environment.

- **Strategy 1.2.** Expand the urban forest in areas of low tree canopy cover and higher social need.

- **Strategy 1.3.** Improve the quality and suitability of trees being planted for the site and climate requirements in urban locations.

- **Strategy 1.4.** Connect and enhance natural forests.

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Goal 2: Manage to Support Trees

- Strategy 2.1. Transition to more proactive urban forest maintenance.

- Strategy 2.2. Incorporate urban forest assets into the natural asset management plan.

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Goal 3: Foster Community Care

- **Strategy 3.1.** Build community knowledge of and participation in urban forest management.

- **Strategy 3.2.** Continue to build relationships with W̱SÁNEĆ, Songhees, and Esquimalt First Nations Governments and Indigenous Peoples through urban forest management.

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Goal 4: Monitor and Adapt

- **Strategy 4.1.** Seek to fill knowledge gaps that influence confidence in urban forest management.

- **Strategy 4.2.** Monitor change, report, and adapt management to new information.

- **Strategy 4.3.** Incorporate current science into decision-making.

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Opportunities to Engage

- Online Survey

hello.saanich.ca/en/

Thank you