

City of Langford  
Urban Forest Management Plan  
**Phase 1 Engagement  
Summary**

February 2024



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## 1.0 Scope of the engagement

The City of Langford is developing an Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP) to manage and grow the urban forest over the next 25 years and beyond. Langford’s urban forest faces complex challenges including ongoing urban development, the expansion of invasive species, and climate change impacts. The UFMP will establish guidelines for Langford’s urban forest and provide strategies and actions to protect and enhance the City’s urban forest. The UFMP will align with the community’s vision for the urban forest by integrating the outcomes of community engagement into the Plan.

The UFMP will involve two stages of public consultation. The first stage was completed in November 2023 to collect community ideas on a long-term strategic vision and goals for urban forestry. These ideas will help to direct the protection, enhancement and management of the urban forest. The second stage is planned for the spring of 2024 and will ask for input on the draft plan.

### Objectives for public engagement

- To inform the public about:
  - The status of Langford’s urban forest
  - The role of the urban forest in the community, including the unique environmental, economic, and social value of Langford’s urban forest
  - The opportunities and challenges for urban forest management, particularly due to ongoing development and climate change
- To consult the community in developing a long-term urban forest vision and goals that captures the community’s perspective on Langford’s urban forest
- To consult the community to identify challenges and opportunities to preserve and protect, grow, and maintain the urban forest
- To obtain feedback on the draft Urban Forest Management Plan, the Bylaw Update, and the prioritization of recommendations
- To build community awareness, support, and advocacy for the urban forest, the Urban Forest Management Plan, and the Tree Protection Bylaw

### Engagement activities

The public was invited to provide input through an online survey and an in-person open house. The team informed Open House participants through a presentation and were available to answer questions from the community. Youth at Belmont Secondary School were engaged through a presentation and visioning poster activity, where students could make urban forest enhancements across the City of Langford and present their outcomes to the classroom (**Appendix 1**). Details on engagement opportunities for Phase 1 are outlined in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Summary of engagement opportunities in Phase 1 Engagement

Date	Engagement Activity	Participants
November, 2023	<i>Survey</i>	337 respondents
November, 2023	<i>In-person Open House</i>	57 participants
November, 2023	<i>Belmont Secondary School (2 classes)</i>	48 participants



Public Open House at City Hall

### Communication tactics used

Langford residents will be invited to participate in each phase of the public engagement process. Information on engagement opportunities will be communicated using via several available online platforms to reach as many people as possible.

The platforms and email lists that will be used include:

#### Platforms:

- City of Langford website
- Dedicated UFMP project page on Let's Chat Langford
- City of Langford social media accounts (Instagram, Vid)
- City's online calendar (to include UFMP engagement event details)
- Project mailing lists
- Newsletters
- Press releases for the launch of the public open houses and online engagement tools

## 2.0 Who we heard from

More than 442 people participated in Phase 1 Engagement, including 337 survey respondents, 440 online mapping submissions, 57 people who attended the in-person open house, and 48 students.

### Survey demographics

Of the 337 survey respondents:

- 95% reside in the City of Langford
- 83% are homeowners, 12% are renters
- Most respondents live in South Langford (18%) and City Centre (16%) (**Figure 1**)
- 66% are 35-64 years old (**Figure 2**)

## City of Langford Urban Forest Management Plan – Phase 1 Engagement Summary

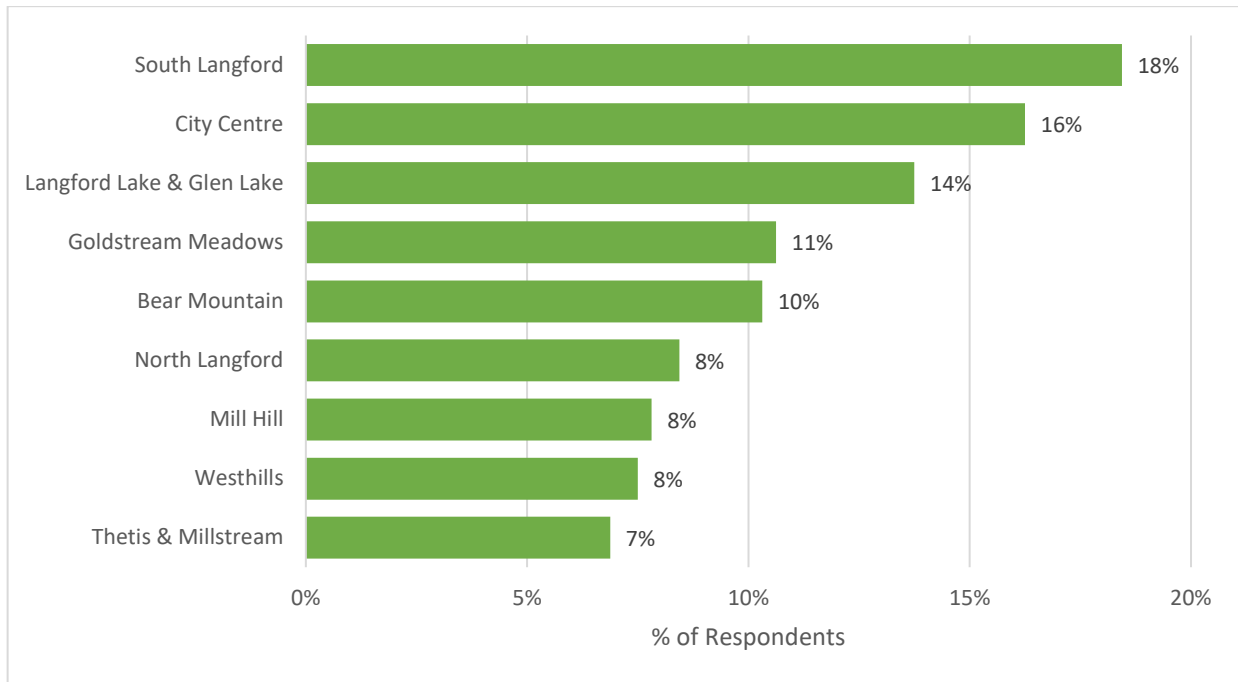


Figure 1. Where survey respondents reside (total respondents = 320)

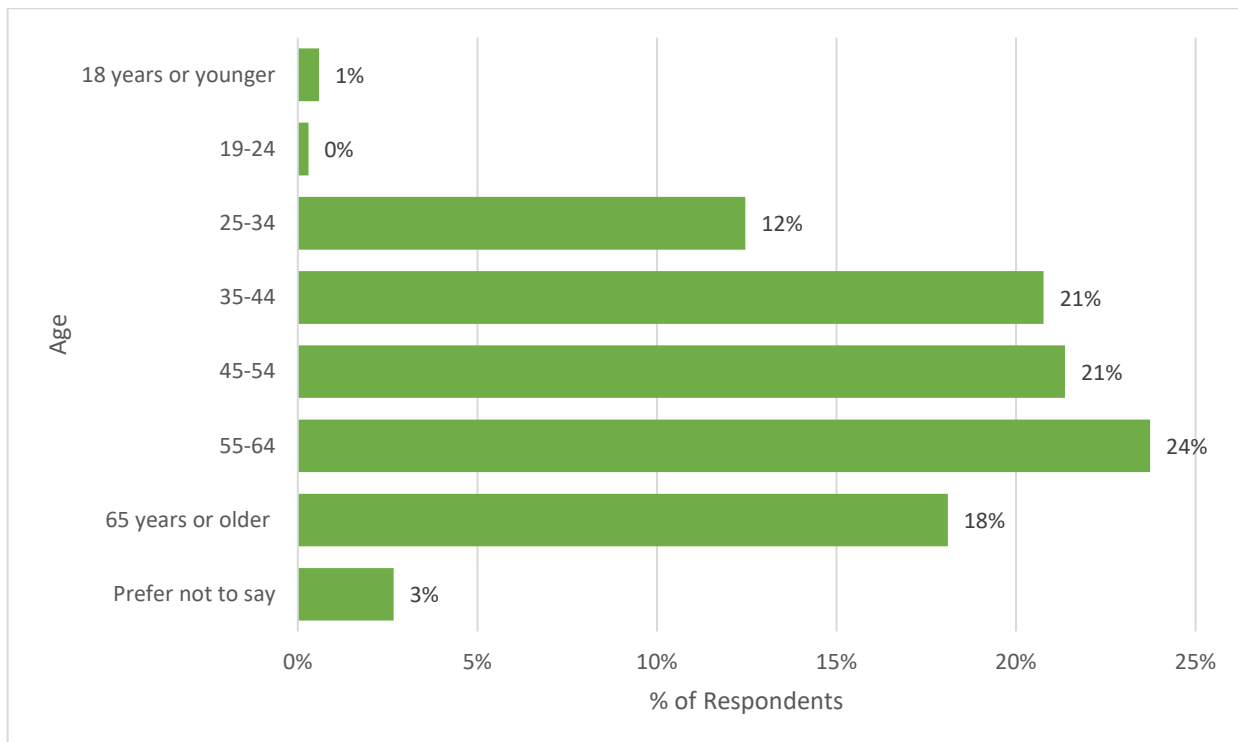


Figure 2. Age of survey respondents (total respondents = 337)



Survey respondents were asked to imagine what they would like Langford’s urban forest to look like in 2050 (Figure 3). The most common theme in the responses involved preserving existing mature trees in Langford as well as growing the urban forest (113 mentions). Respondents called for responsible development that protects existing trees, ensuring that trees are not seen as obstacles but as essential components of the cityscape (80 mentions). Respondents emphasized the importance of growing a diverse urban forest composed of native species and species that are adapted to climate change (70 mentions). Another key theme was equitable access to green spaces by way of tree lined streets, green neighbourhoods, and interconnected public green spaces (80 mentions). Respondents raised the importance of community involvement and stewardship of the urban forest (50 mentions). Some respondents stressed that residents should have a say in the management of trees, especially on private property (39 mentions).

Survey respondents were asked to rank the benefits they valued in an urban forest (Figure 5). Respondents ranked **ecological** (e.g., providing habitat and food for native plants and animals), **climate change resilience** (e.g., shading streets and buildings, carbon storage) and **environmental services** (e.g., rainwater management, air purification, wind protection) as the most important urban forest benefits to them and their community. Survey respondents ranked **health and social benefits, cultural, and economic**, as lower importance.

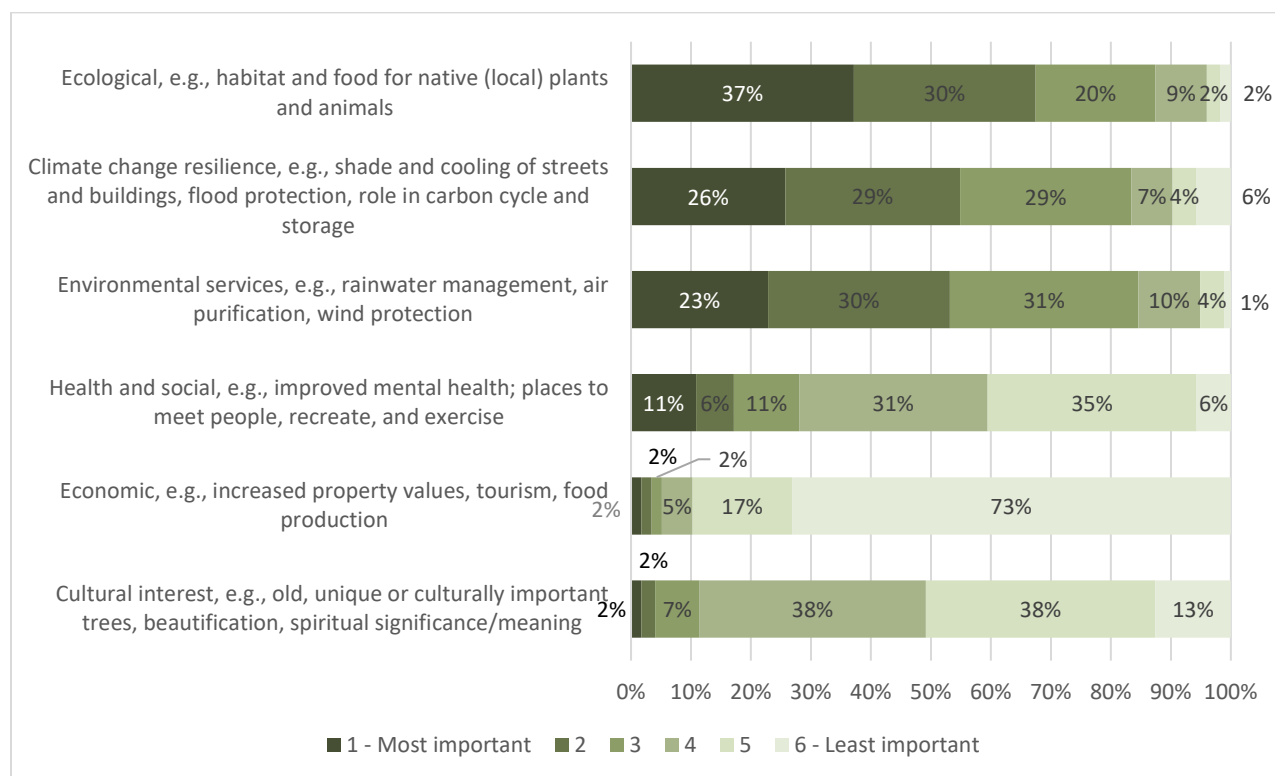


Figure 5. Respondents ranking of urban forest benefits (total respondents = 175)



### 3.1.2 Important urban forest places

Community members used the mapping tool, through the online platform or in-person during the Open House, to identify important urban forest places that they value or need improvement. A total of 440 locations were identified, including 161 (37%) places of value and 279 (63%) places needing improvements. Most locations were submitted for areas in the Langford Lake and Glen Lake neighbourhood (20%, 87 locations), and South Langford (13%, 59 locations).

#### Places of value

Places of value were distributed across Langford but were mostly concentrated within the Langford Lake and Glen Lake neighbourhood (36 submissions), City Centre (28 submissions), and South Langford (24 submissions) (**Figure 6**). Specifically, respondents valued municipal parks in the Downtown area for their cooling effects and aesthetic value. There was a strong emphasis on preserving existing natural spaces, particularly in Happy Hill, Mt Wells Park, and Langford Lake for their role in maintaining biodiversity, providing habitat for wildlife, and offering recreational opportunities for the community.

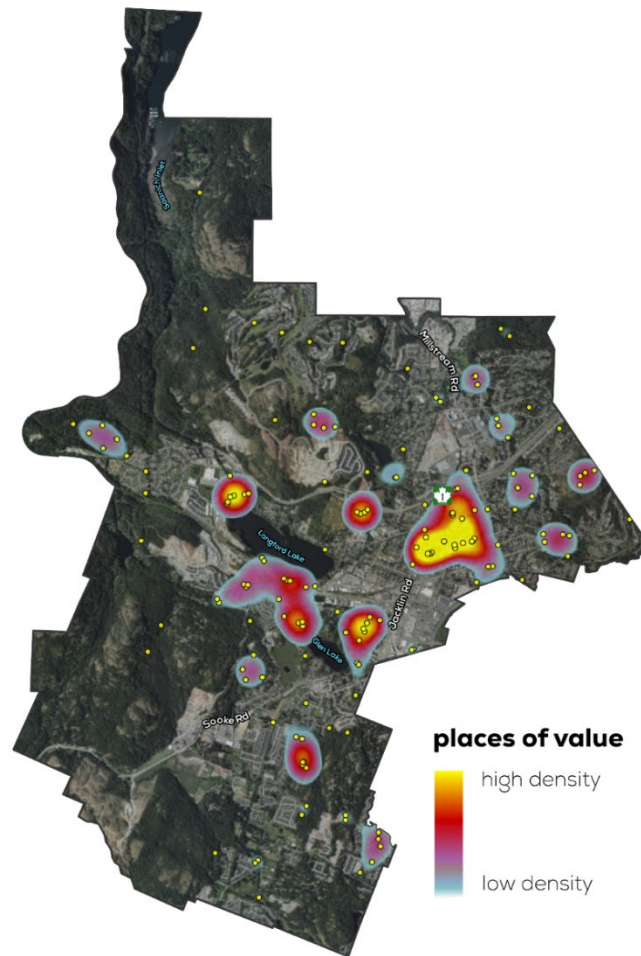


Figure 6. Places of value identified in urban forest using the online mapping tool (161 submissions)

*“Rain garden park with diverse trees, great example of integrated stormwater management.”*

- Respondent on valuing a point near Glen Lake Park.

### Places needing improvement

Urban forest places needing improvement are summarized in **Figure 7**. Out of the total 279 submissions, most submitted places were in the Langford Lake and Glen Lake neighbourhood (51 location; 20% of submissions), on Bear Mountain (40 locations, 14% of submissions) and in the Westhills neighbourhood (39 locations, 14% of submissions). Lots of emphasis was put on protecting existing forested areas and parks across the city, with particular focus on protecting native species like arbutus (*arbutus menziesii*) and Garry oak (*Quercus garryana*) (52 locations). A significant portion of points were placed in areas where development has replaced previously forested land, such as in the Westhills neighbourhood and at the foot of Bear Mountain (46 locations). Places that need improvements were also concentrated around highly impervious areas of Langford like the mixed-use employment centre. Invasive species concerns were concentrated in the Westhills neighbourhood surrounding Glen Lake (22 locations).

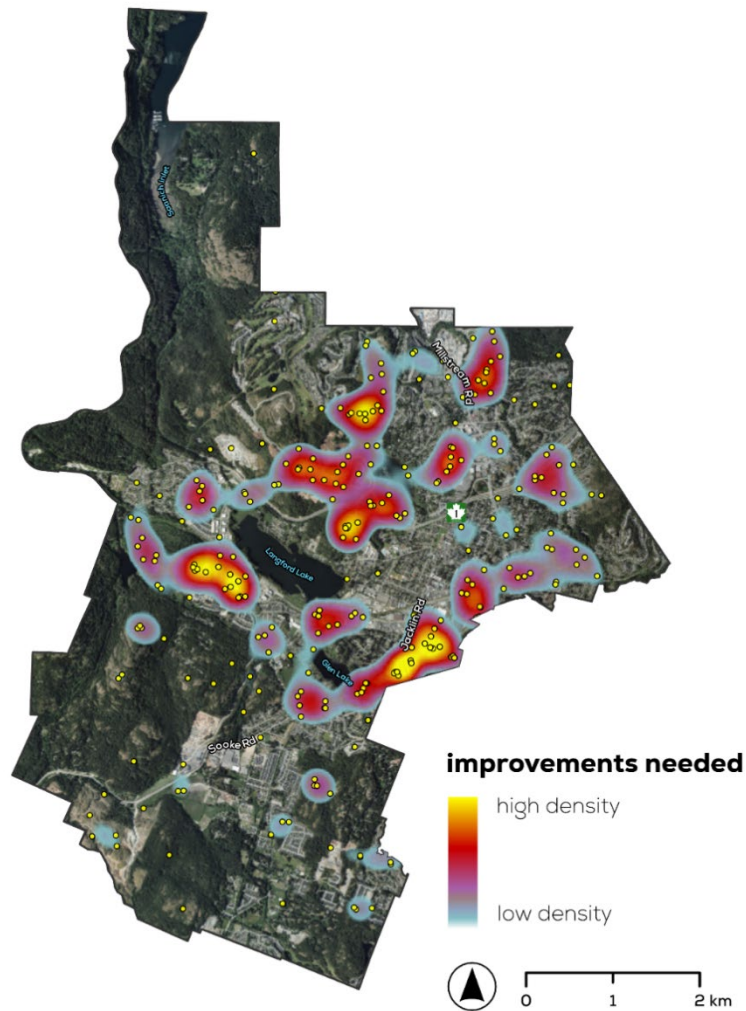


Figure 7. Place needing improvement identified in urban forest using the online mapping tool (279 submissions)

Survey respondents were asked how they would like canopy cover to change in Langford. In total, 72% of respondents were supportive of increasing canopy cover (**Figure 8**) and 18% of respondents wanted to maintain canopy cover at the current level, while 10% of respondents supported decreasing canopy cover in Langford.

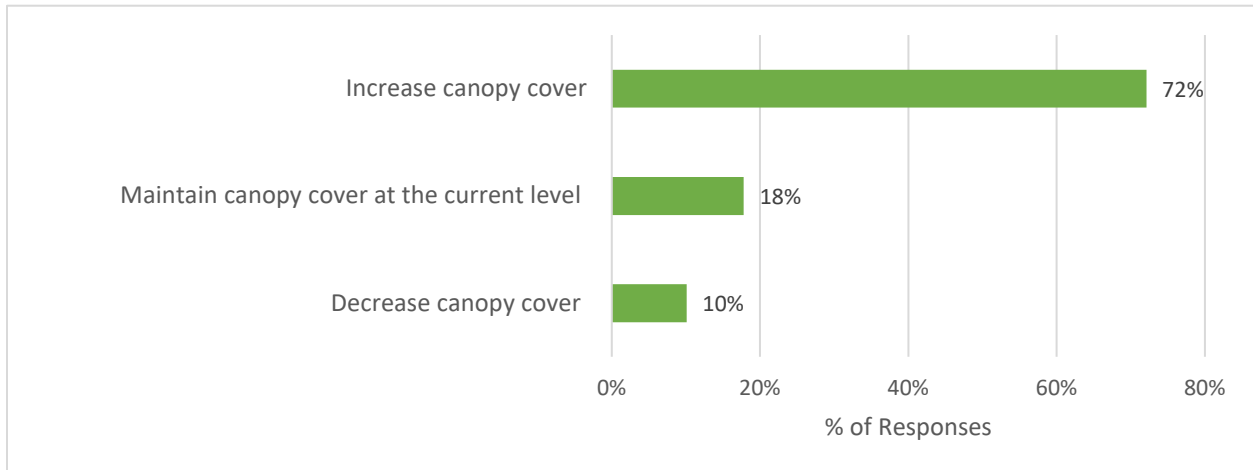


Figure 8. Respondents' preference for canopy cover change (total respondents = 337)

### The urban forest on your street

Survey respondents were asked to identify the photo that most resembled their street and a preference for what they would like their street to resemble (**Figure 9**). Most respondents currently live on a street resembling **Option D – mixed spacing and sizes of trees** (30%), **Option B – Regularly spaced, small trees** (25%), and **Option A – Few or no trees** (19%). Only 18% of respondents live on a street with large trees present (option E or F): 15% of respondents live on a street with mixed spacing, large-sized trees (Option F) and 3% of respondents live on a street with regularly spaced, large trees (Option E).



A. Few or no trees



B. Regularly spaced small trees



C. Regularly spaced, medium-sized trees



D. Mixed spacing and size of trees



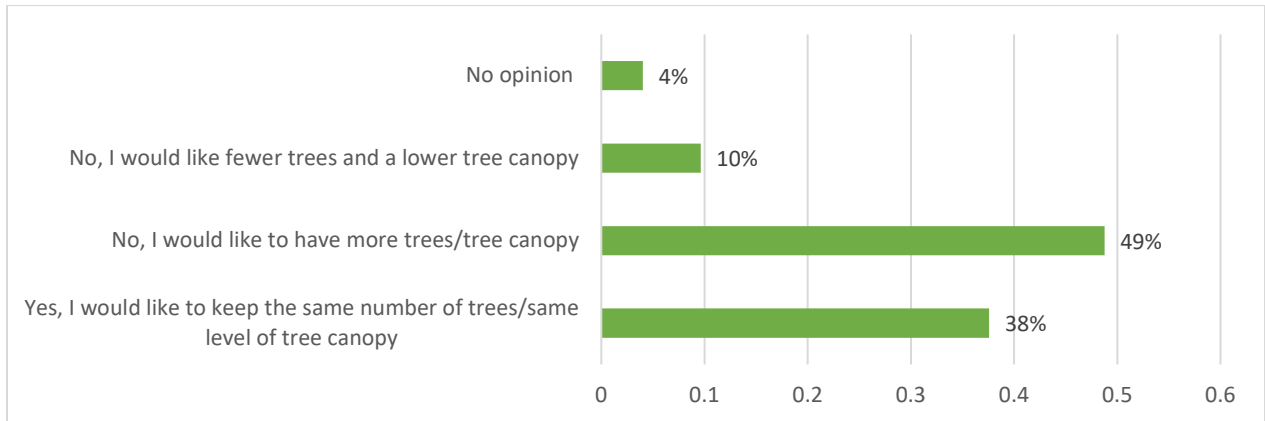
E. Regularly spaced, large trees



F. Mixed spacing, large trees

Figure 9. Types of street tree planting presented to survey respondents (total respondents = 329)

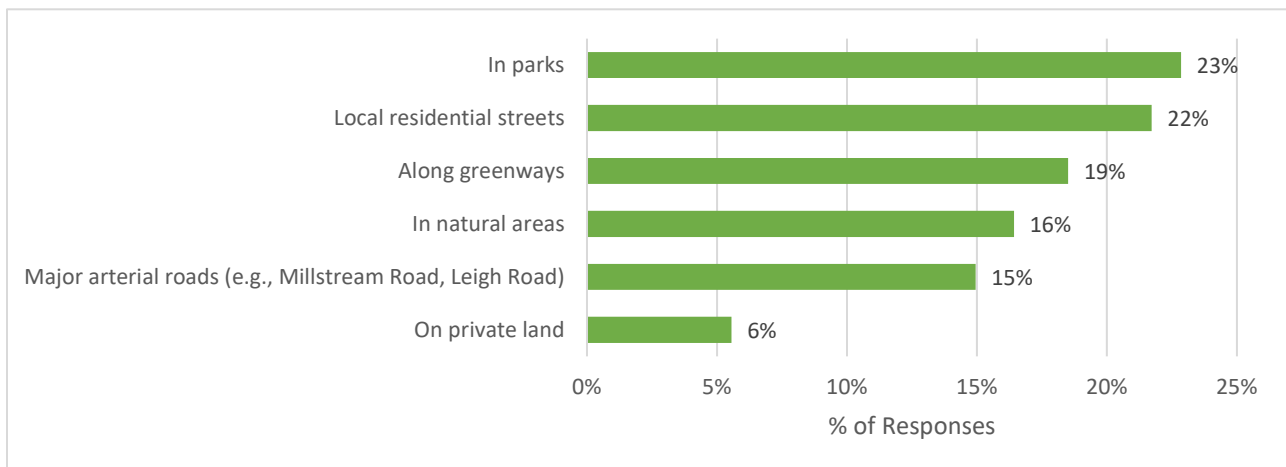
When asked if they were satisfied with the current canopy and number of trees in their neighborhood, 49% of respondents indicated that they would like to have more trees and tree canopy (**Figure 10**). 38% of respondents indicated that they would like to keep the same number of trees and the same level of tree canopy. Only 10% of respondents indicated that they would like fewer trees and a lower tree canopy.



**Figure 10. Respondents’ opinions on whether they were satisfied with the number of trees in their neighbourhood (total respondents = 322)**

### 3.1.3 Priorities for urban forest management

Survey respondents were asked to select up to four of the highest priority areas to plant trees in Langford (**Figure 11**). The most selected locations were parks (23%), local residential streets (22%), greenways (19%), natural areas (16%), and major arterial roads (e.g. Millstream Road or Leigh Road). Private land was the least selected area for tree planting (6%).



**Figure 11. Highest priority areas for tree planting (1151 responses)**

### Concerns with tree loss in the city

Respondents were asked about their level of concern for tree loss in Langford (**Figure 12**). In total, 63% of survey respondents were extremely concerned about tree loss, 18% of respondents were somewhat concerned, and 18% were not concerned at all.

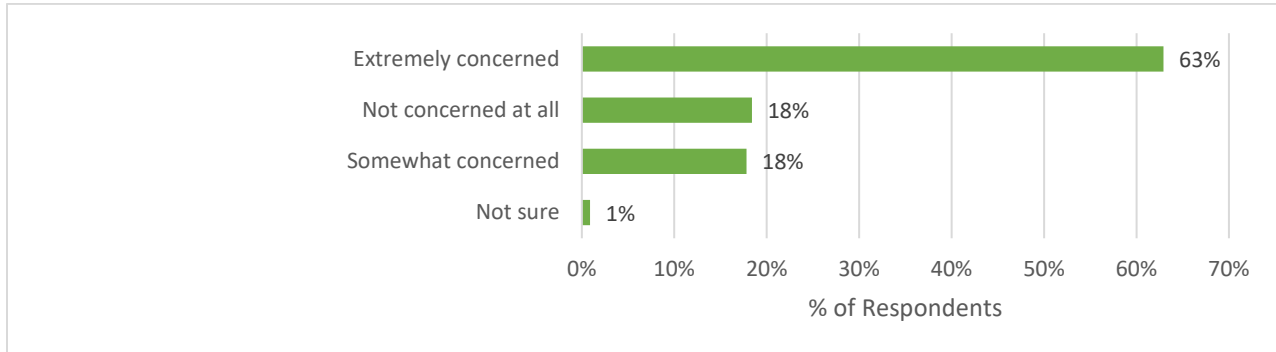


Figure 12. Respondents’ concerns with respect to tree loss in the city (total respondents = 337)

### Priorities for tree regulation in Langford

Survey respondents were asked to select all the objectives they believed should be the top priority of the Langford UFMP (**Figure 13**). There was a fairly even number of responses for each objective that was listed in the survey (all ranging from 7 – 12%). The most selected objectives were providing benefits like shade, slope stabilization, and climate mitigate and adaptation (12%) as well as protecting native trees, habitats, and biodiversity (12%). The third most selected objective was ensuring that new trees are planted to replace those that are removed (11%). Minimizing clearcutting, maintaining a treed or forested community character, planting more trees with development, protecting old or large trees, and increasing tree protection with development were each selected by 10% of survey respondents.

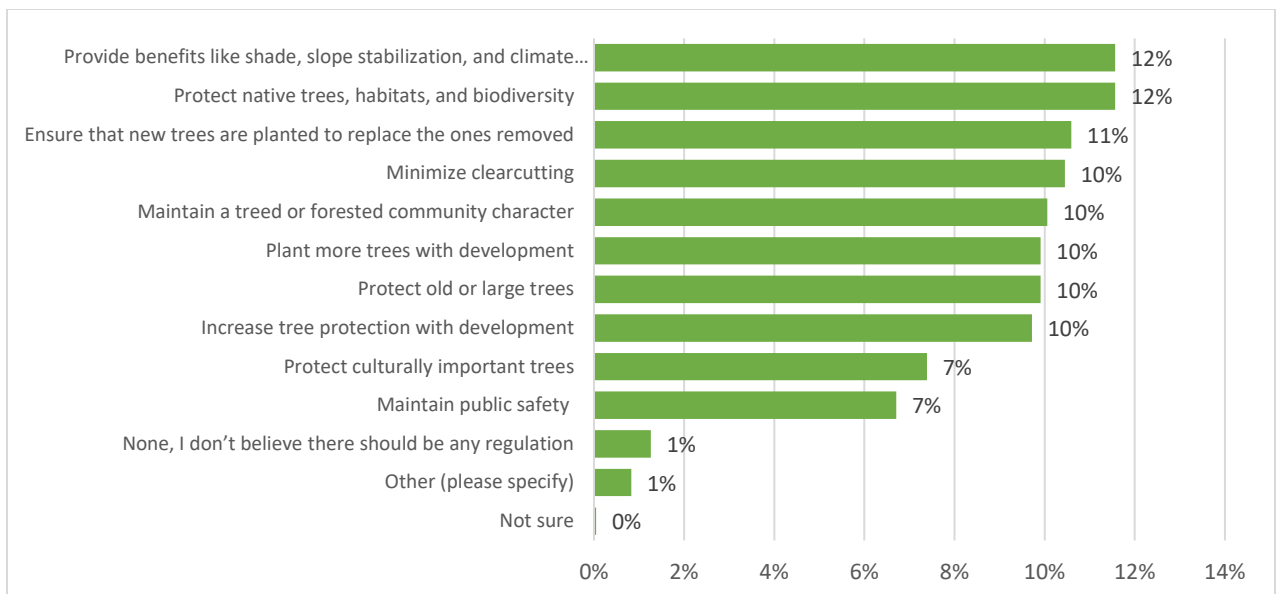


Figure 13. The primary objectives for the UFMP in Langford, according to survey respondents (2058 responses)

Survey respondents also selected what they believed to be the single most important outcome for tree regulation in Langford to achieve (Figure 14). A total of 48% of respondents believe that retaining as many of the existing trees as possible within the city is the most important objective, followed by allowing tree removals but replacing them with new trees (27%), and not regulating trees on private property at all (16%). Of the 9% of survey respondents that listed other objectives, 33 provided open-ended comments that addressed themes of balancing development and tree retention (16 comments), differentiated regulations for private and developer-owned lands (10 comments) and the importance of community engagement and education for managing trees in Langford (7 comments).

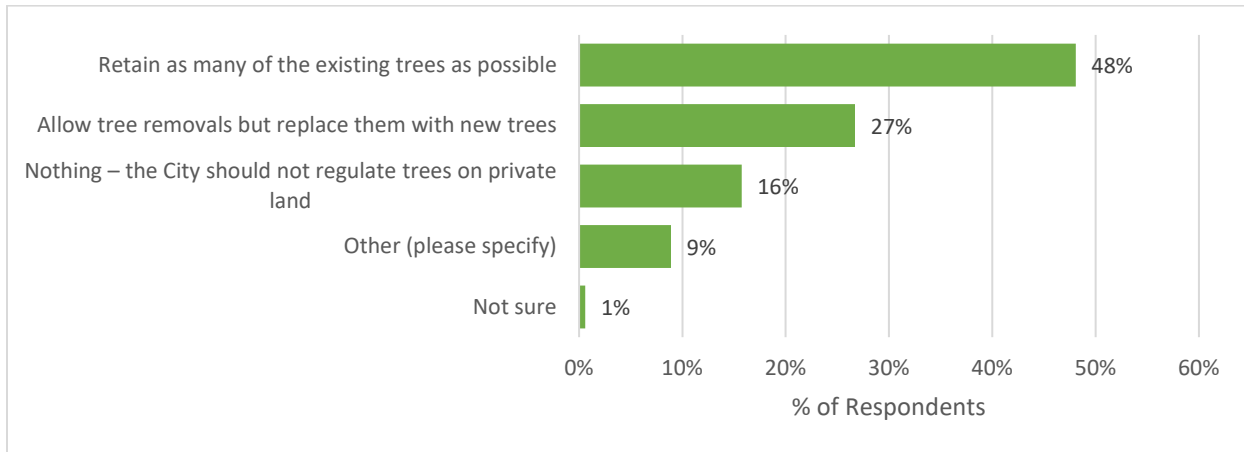


Figure 14. The most important outcomes for tree regulation to achieve (total respondents = 337)

### Priority actions on private property

Langford residents were asked what they believe are the main reasons for the removal of trees on private property (**Figure 15**):

- 46% of respondents answered that the main reason trees are removed is to make room for development.
- 25% selected safety reasons.
- 11% selected limited space on site.
- 9% selected that trees were removed because they are too expensive to maintain.
- 9% say other reasons are the main factors, including aesthetic and practical considerations such as unwanted shade and concerns about views, and conflicts with underground services and overall safety and liability.

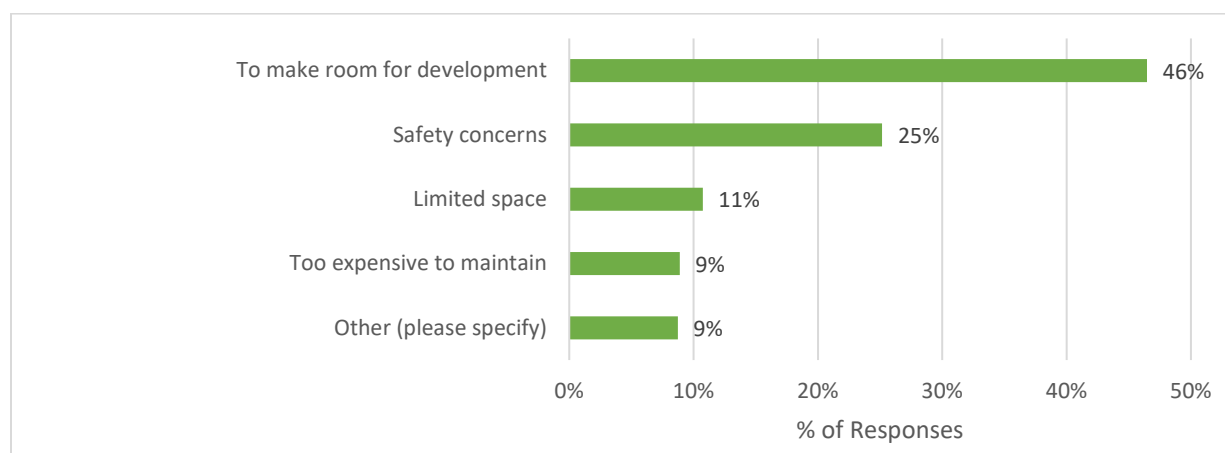


Figure 15. Respondents’ opinions on the main reasons why trees on private property are removed in Langford (596 responses)

Survey respondents were asked how well they think private trees are currently protected in Langford (**Figure 16**). In total, 53% of respondents think that private tree protection is currently insufficient. Other perspectives were similar in terms of their level of representation – 13% think private trees are adequately protected, 12% are unsure or have no opinion, 11% do not think private trees should be regulated, and 10% think current regulations are too restrictive.

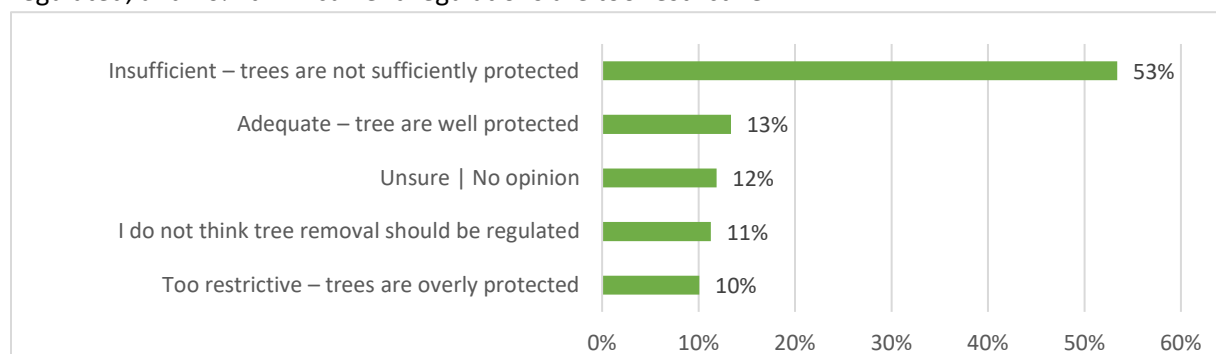


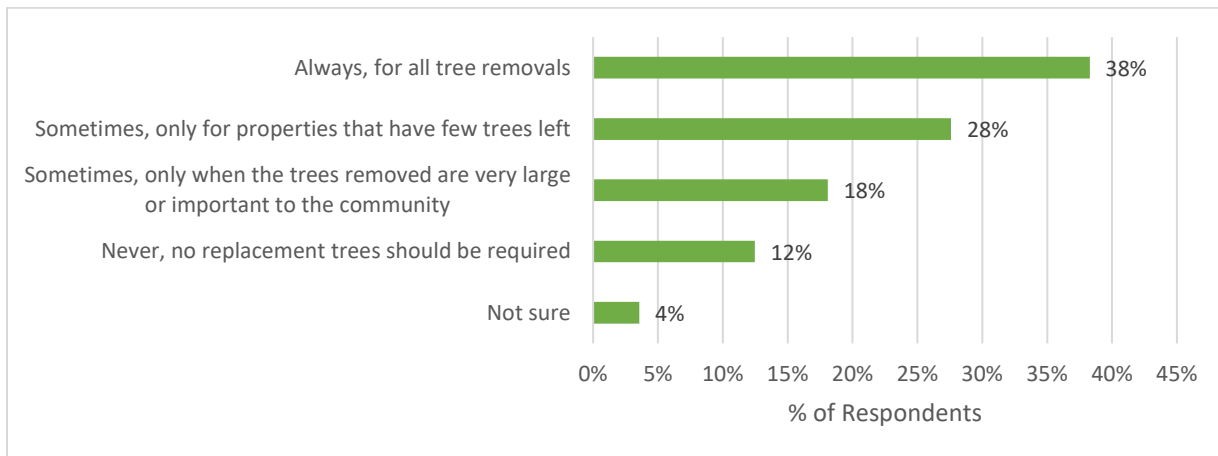
Figure 16. Respondents’ opinions on the level of tree protection on private property (total respondents = 337)



### Regulating private tree removals

Survey respondents were asked whether they think replacement trees should be required for every tree removed from private property (**Figure 17**):

- 38% of respondents answered that replacement trees be required for all removals.
- 28% say they should be required only for properties that have few trees left.
- 18% of respondents say replacement trees should be required when very large trees or those important to the community are removed.
- 12% of respondents don't believe any replacement trees should be required on private property.
- 4% of respondents are unsure.



**Figure 17. Respondents' opinions on requiring a replacement tree for every tree removed from private property (total respondents = 337)**

Survey respondents were asked how many replacement trees should be required for every tree removed from private property (**Figure 18**). In total, 55% of respondents answered that trees should be replaced 1:1, 27% answered that trees should be replaced at a ratio of 2:1, 9% answered that they should be replaced at a ratio greater than 2:1, and 9% don't think any replacement trees should be required.

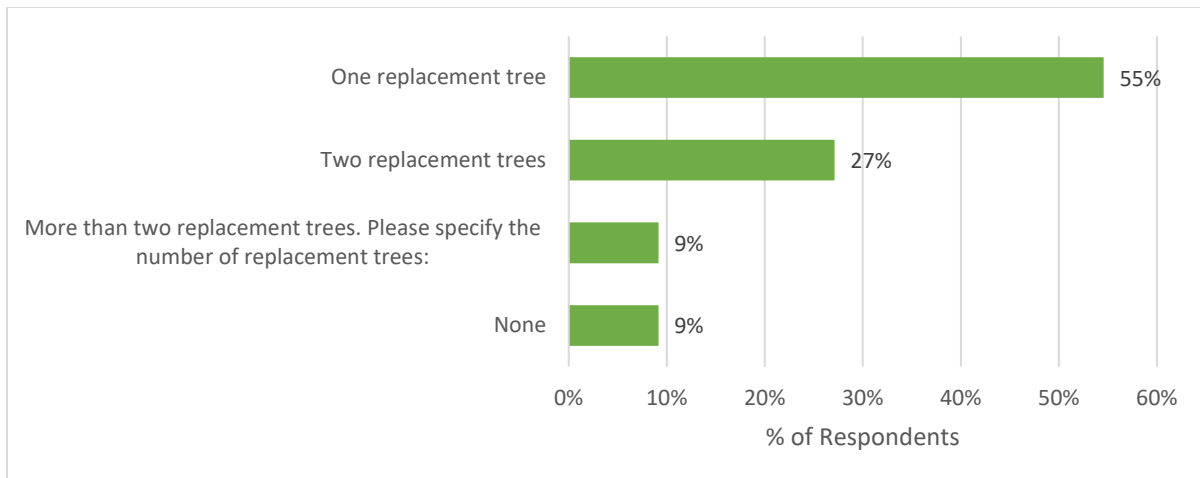


Figure 18. Respondents’ opinions on the number of replacement trees that should be planted for every tree removed from private property (total respondents = 295)

Survey respondents were asked how they think tree regulation and protection should be funded in Langford (Figure 19). Of the 337 respondents, 44% believe this should be funded through a combination of both permit fees and through general revenue, 25% of respondents believe protection should only be funded through permit fees, and 5% believe this funding should come from general revenue. A total of 23% respondents don’t think private trees should be regulated and therefore shouldn’t require funding. Another 3% of respondents to this question are unsure of how the regulation of private trees should be funded.

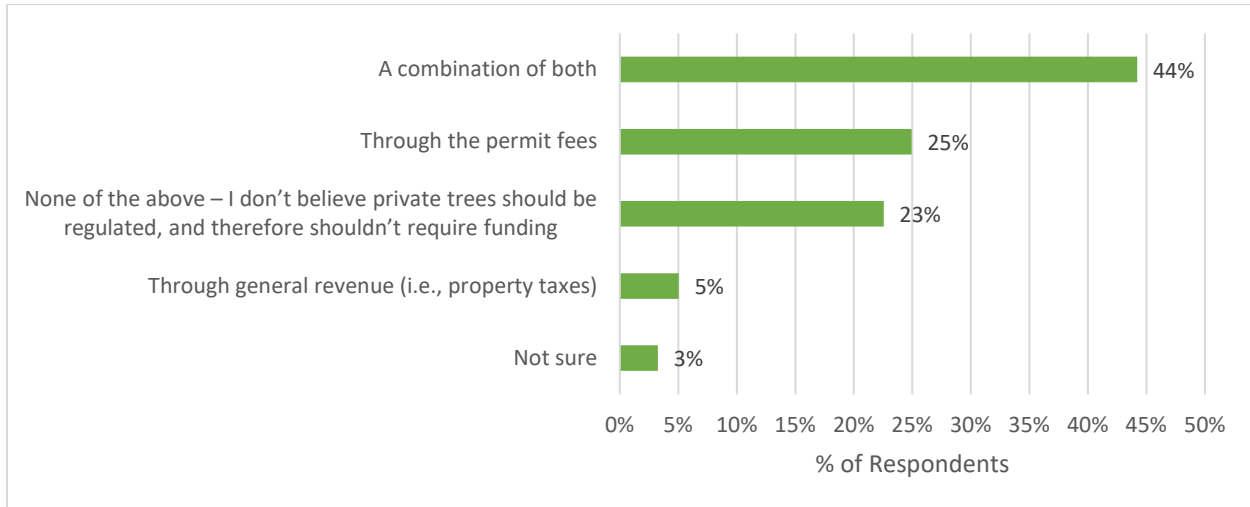


Figure 19. Responses to how tree regulation and protections should be funded in Langford (total respondents = 337)

### Tree regulations on private property

When asked about potential private tree regulations on private property (Figure 20), the largest proportion of respondents (36%) preferred regulations that require property owners to keep most trees on their land. The next most preferred alternatives were regulations requiring property owners to retain certain trees to uphold the community’s character (24%) followed by the option for property owners to

remove trees but replace any larger trees they removed (22%). Only 18% of respondents favored complete freedom without constraints on tree cutting and management decisions.

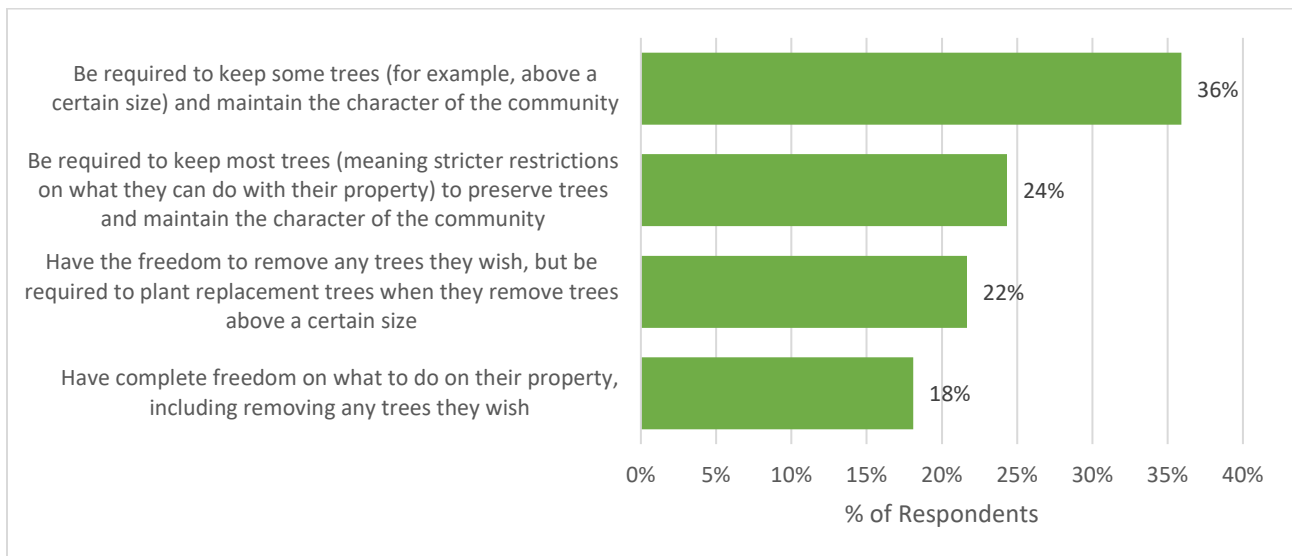


Figure 20. Respondents' preferences for tree management regulations on private property for property owners (total respondents = 158)

Respondents were asked how large a tree should be before it is regulated on private property (Figure 21). Of the 337 respondents, 38% think trees greater than 20 cm in diameter should be regulated, while 31% think this should be increased to trees above 60 cm in diameter. A total of 24% of respondents don't think any private trees should be regulated.

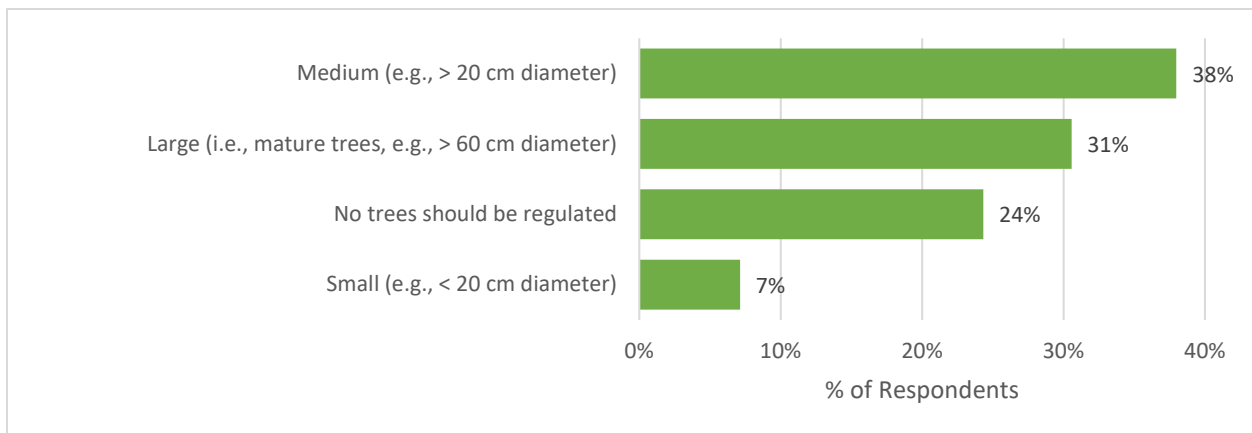
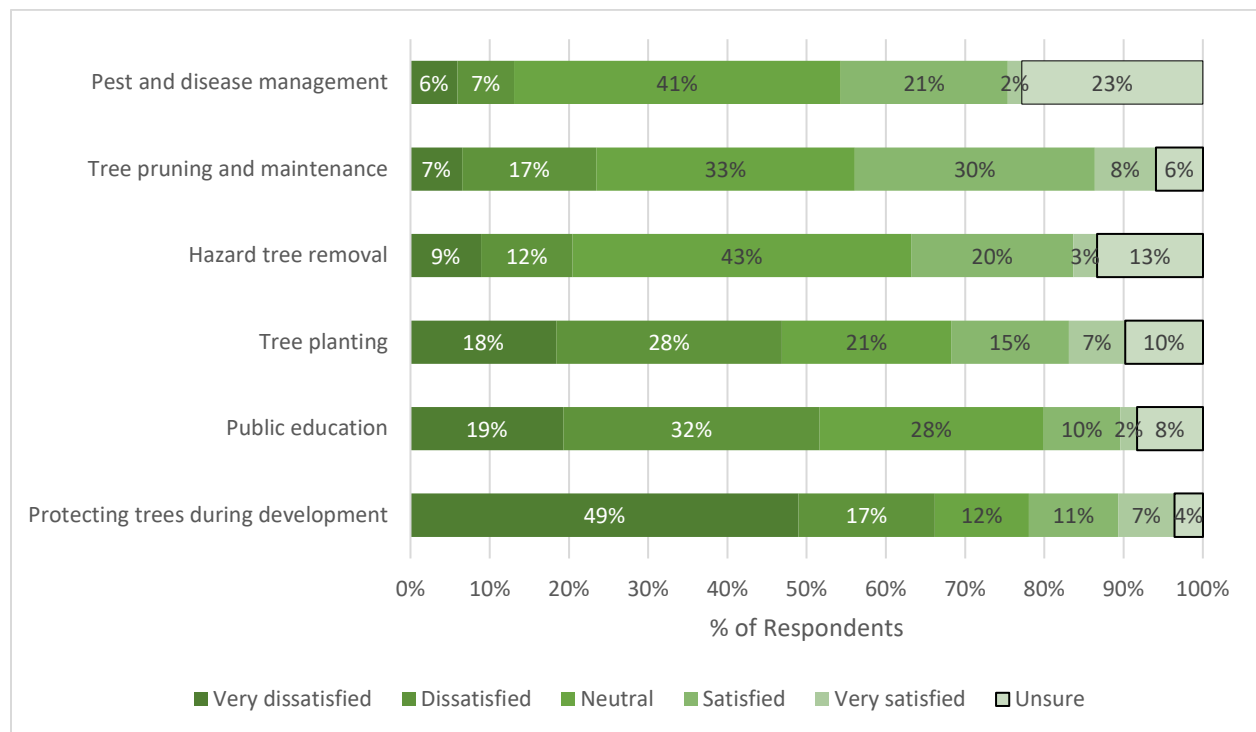


Figure 21. Responses to how large a tree should be before it is regulated on private property (total respondents = 337)

### 3.1.4 Urban forest service levels

Service levels describe how the City of Langford maintains City-owned tree assets. Survey respondents were asked to rank satisfaction levels with current service levels for trees in parks and along streets. Overall, respondents had mixed levels of satisfaction with the urban forest services provided by the City (**Figure 22**). The urban forest service respondents were most satisfied with was tree pruning and maintenance (38%), while both pest and disease management and hazard tree removal saw 23% satisfaction each. Satisfaction with tree planting is just behind at 22%.

Residents were most dissatisfied with the protection of City-owned trees during development, with 66% expressing dissatisfaction. In total, 52% of respondents were dissatisfied with the level of public education about City-owned tree assets, and 46% were dissatisfied with tree planting.



**Figure 22. Satisfaction levels with current urban forest management service levels in Langford (total respondents = 337)**

Most respondents were supportive of increasing the amount of funding for the management of the urban forest on City lands (**Figure 23**). In total, 62% of respondents think the City should increase the amount of funding to these services, 19% think there should be no change the current amount of funding, 8% say there should be a decrease, and 11% are not sure.

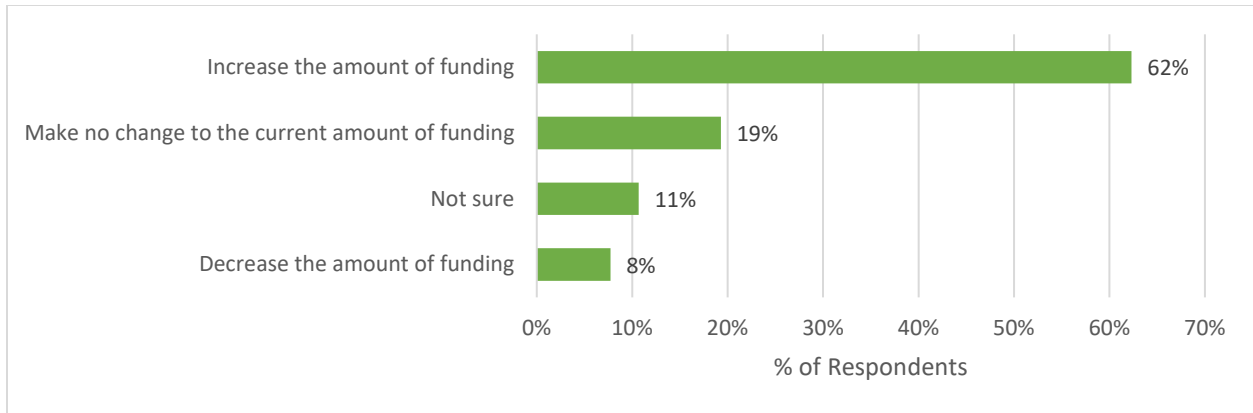


Figure 23. Respondents’ opinions on increasing funding for services related to management of the urban forest on City lands (total respondents = 337)

### 3.1.5 Community stewardship

Community stewardship refers to activities that the community participates in to care for or contribute to urban forestry on public and private land. A total of 95% of respondents had participated in at least one urban forest stewardship activity (Figure 24). A total of 31% had maintained trees on their property, 21% had planted trees on personal property, 12% had assisted others, and 11% had removed hazardous or sick trees on their properties. Other activities that respondents have participated in include watering a boulevard or park tree (8%), planting trees in a park as part of a volunteer program (5%), reporting a tree for inspection (2%), and removing invasive species in a park (1%).

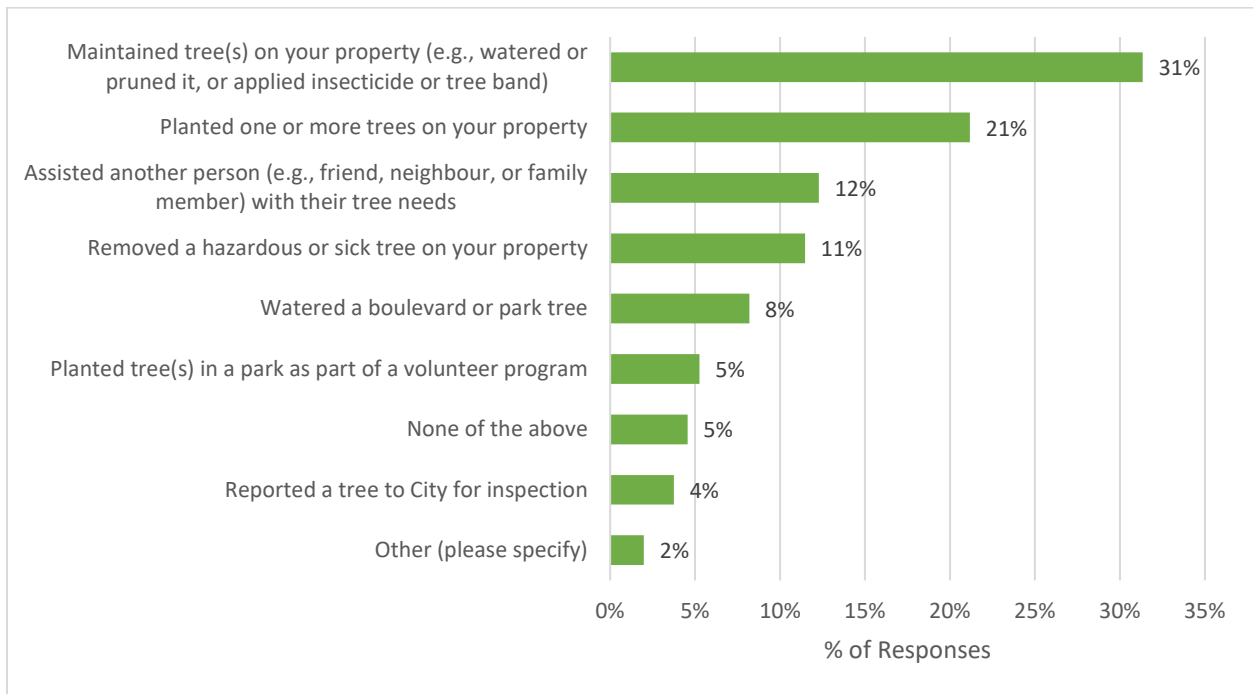
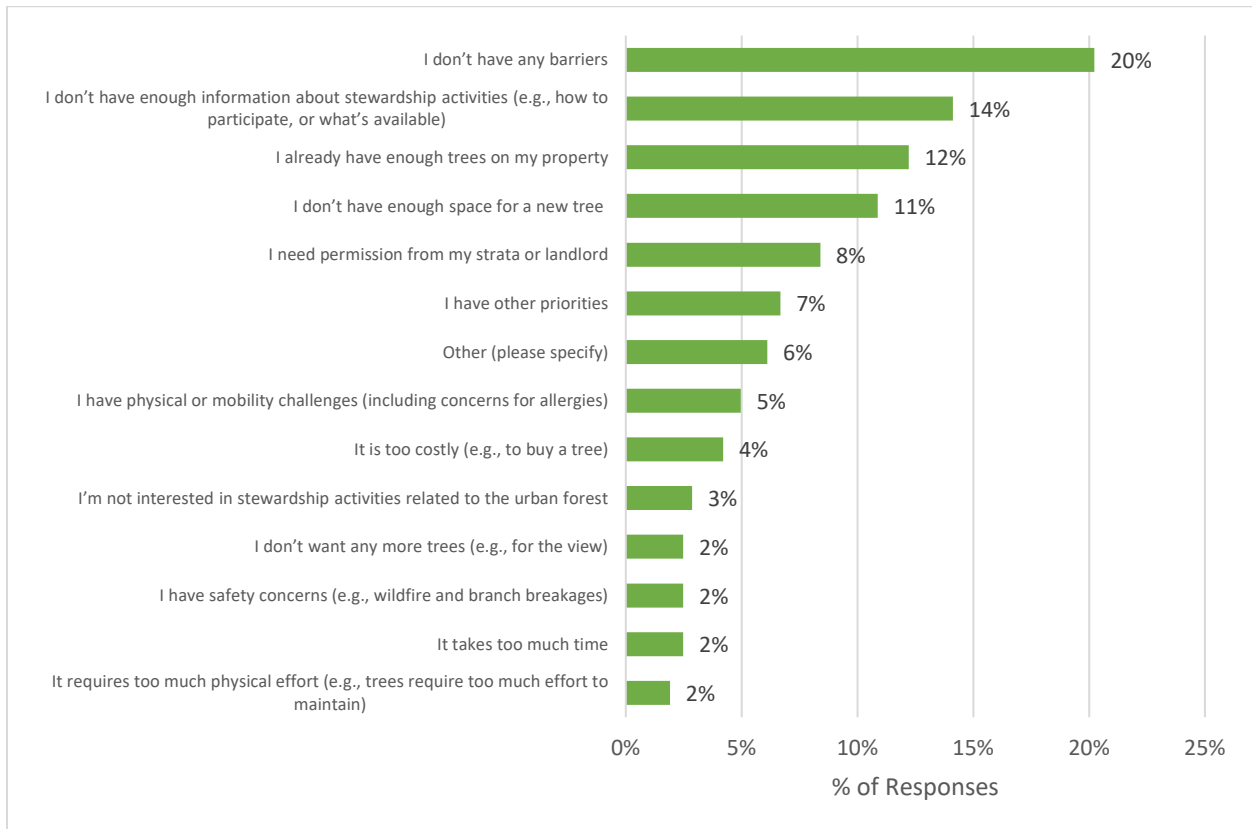


Figure 24. Stewardship activities that respondents have participated in the past 5 years (total responses = 855)

**Barriers to participating in stewardship activities**

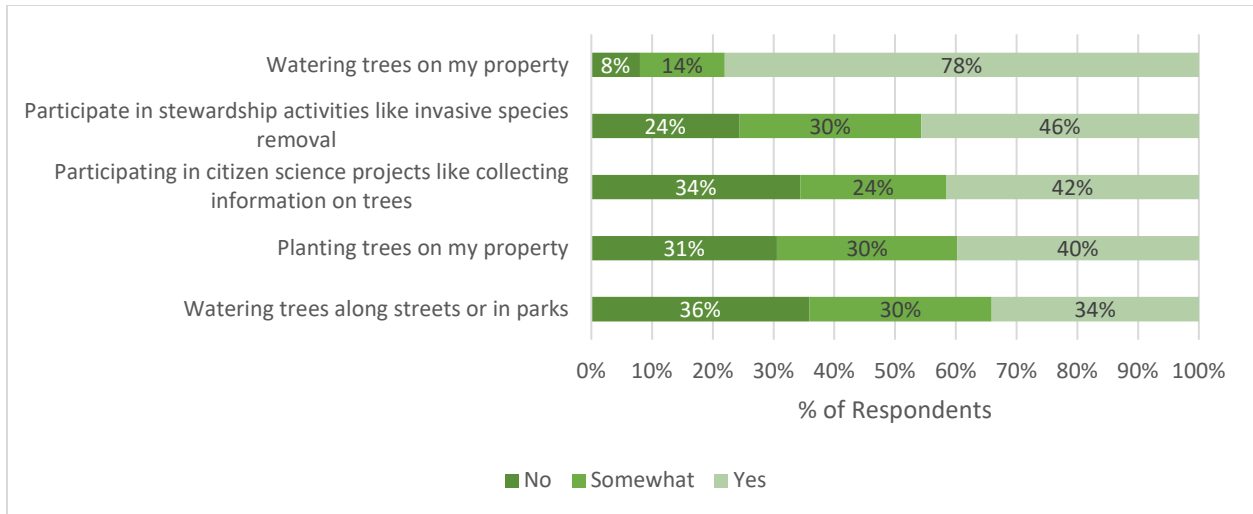
Respondents cited a range of barriers to participating in stewardship activities (**Figure 25**). While 20% noted they did not have any barrier, 80% had a reason why they would not participate. Barriers that residents face included not having enough information about stewardship activities (14%), already having enough trees on their property (12%), not having any space for more trees (11%) and needing permission from their strata or landlord (8%), among others.



**Figure 25. Barriers preventing respondents from participating in stewardship activities (total respondents = 524)**

Survey respondents were asked about their willingness to support the urban forest in a variety of ways (**Figure 26**), and 92% of residents are willing to water trees on their property, followed by 76% who indicated they would be willing to participate in stewardship activities like removing invasive species. There is also a high level of support for tree planting on their own property (70%) and participating in citizen science projects like collecting information on trees (66%). Finally, 64% of respondents said they would be at least somewhat willing to water trees along streets or parks.

**City of Langford Urban Forest Management Plan – Phase 1 Engagement Summary**



**Figure 26. Willingness to perform certain activities to support the urban forest (total respondents = 337)**

## 4.0 Synthesis of feedback

The feedback received from the survey, mapping tool, and Committee presentation has been synthesized into key statements in the tables below. Each key statement (“What we heard”) is followed by a statement on how the feedback will be considered in relation to the ongoing development of the UFMP for the following urban forest themes:

- Planning and vision
- Protecting
- Managing
- Growing
- Stewarding

### Summary of feedback for the urban forest planning and long-term vision

What we heard	How it will be considered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey respondents highly valued ecological, climate change-related, and environmental benefits provided by the urban forest.</li> <li>• Respondents envisioned the City of Langford’s 2050 urban forest as expanding, with equal access to healthy trees of diverse native species that are climate suitable.</li> <li>• Respondents valued responsible development patterns that protect existing mature forested areas.</li> <li>• People want to see lush and larger tree-lined streets, pathways, and trails connecting different parts of the city.</li> </ul>	<p>The project team will incorporate this input when drafting the UFMP vision and goals to emphasize the benefits most valued by the community.</p>

### Key themes for protecting the urban forest

What we heard	How it will be considered
<p>More respondents were concerned about tree loss in the city and dissatisfied by the current urban forest service levels for tree protection and preservation. On private properties, most survey respondents were in favor of prioritizing tree retention, while some respondents valued the freedom to remove trees on their property.</p>	<p>The draft UFMP will consider strategies aimed at enhancing tree protection and preservation.</p>
<p>Tree loss concerns in the city are closely linked to the removal of big mature trees in areas under development, both on private properties and City land, to make space for the city's expansion.</p>	<p>The draft UFMP will explore strategies aimed at retaining existing mature trees during development and, when that is not possible, ensuring replacement or compensation for the loss of trees.</p>



Key themes for managing the urban forest

What we heard	How it will be considered
<p>Respondents had mixed levels of satisfaction with current urban forest service levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents were satisfied with tree pruning and pest and disease management.</li> <li>• Respondents expressed dissatisfaction with tree protection, public education, and tree planting.</li> <li>• Respondents were mostly neutral about hazard tree removal.</li> </ul>	<p>The draft UFMP will share information about services provided by the City and consider recommendations to improve service levels with the greatest dissatisfaction levels.</p>

Key themes for growing the urban forest

What we heard	How it will be considered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey respondents were mostly in favor of increasing canopy cover and number of trees in their neighbourhoods.</li> <li>• Survey respondents prioritized tree planting in parks, along residential streets, along greenways, in natural areas, and along major arterial roads.</li> </ul>	<p>The draft UFMP will make recommendations about tree planting based on the respondents’ value and preferences.</p>

Key themes for engaging with the urban forest

What we heard	How it will be considered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Up to 265 respondents have maintained trees on private property and 180 respondents had planted at least one tree on their property in the past five years.</li> <li>• The largest barriers to participating in stewardship activities was not having enough information about the activities. Most respondents were willing to water trees on their property and participate in invasive species removal activities.</li> </ul>	<p>The draft UFMP will consider ways for the City to encourage urban forest stewardship, including education and volunteer activities.</p>

## 5.0 Next Steps

The findings from the first phase of community engagement will inform the development of the draft UFMP, including a long-term vision and priorities for implementation. Phase 2 of public engagement is expected to occur in the spring of 2024 to gather feedback on the draft UFMP.

## Appendix 1 Belmont Secondary School Posters



# City of Langford Urban Forest Management Plan – Phase 1 Engagement Summary

The image shows a large aerial photograph of an urban area, likely in Langford, British Columbia, used as a base for a planning session. Handwritten annotations in blue ink are scattered across the map, including circles, lines, and text. The annotations include:

- A large circle on the left labeled "good trees".
- A circle in the upper middle labeled "need trees".
- A circle in the middle right labeled "Make it a local market".
- A circle in the lower middle labeled "less parking".
- A circle on the right labeled "lot of trees good".
- Other smaller circles and lines with labels like "bus", "car", and "local trees".

Four yellow sticky notes are attached to the top right of the map:

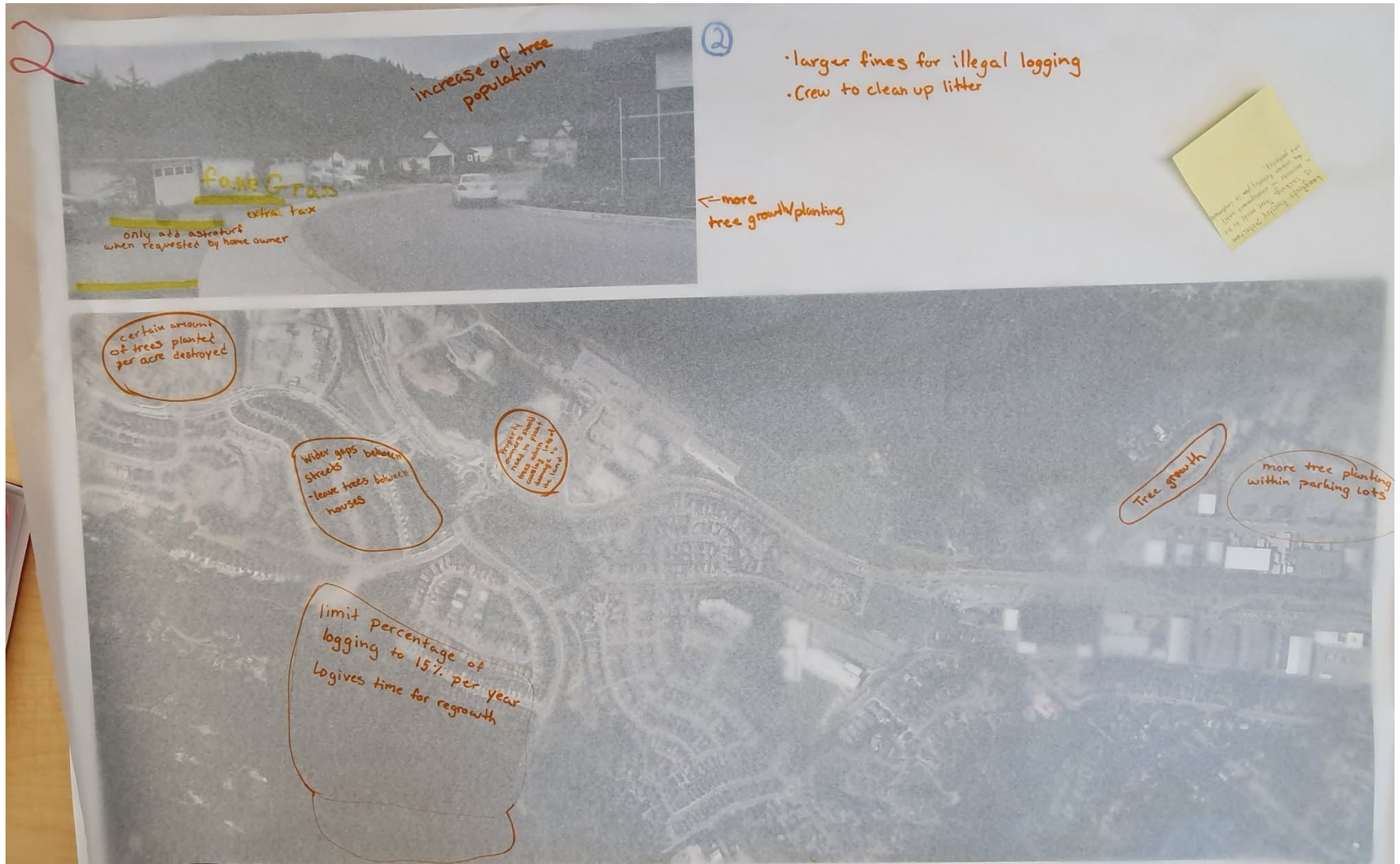
- Sticky Note 1: "No water runoff and trees help to absorb the rain. Local trees are better for the local economy." (Note: The text is partially obscured and difficult to read precisely.)
- Sticky Note 2: "Tree of 1000 uses the space on top of them (green roofs)".
- Sticky Note 3: "As you should be to develop a healthy business landscape with very positive areas for nature wildlife".
- Sticky Note 4: "Tree trees trees are better than trees. Local trees are better. More trees are better. More trees are better." (Note: The text is partially obscured and difficult to read precisely.)

Legend for the map:

- == trees
- == bad

The map also features a dashed blue line representing a boundary or path, and a blue 'X' in the top left corner labeled "local trees". A blue circle with a cross is also visible in the top left corner.

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