DIG DEEPER
NEIGHBOURHOOD TREES

Where do our neighbourhood trees come from and what is their role?

Shade trees are an important part of Surrey's urban forest. They grow in the open (as opposed to in a forest) along streets, in front of schools and in parks. Where do they come from? What do they do for our neighbourhoods?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What kinds of shade trees are growing along your street or near your school?
- Why do you think trees were planted here? (Hint: for beauty, to reduce noise, for habitat)
- What are other benefits of having trees here?
- How do your neighbourhood shade trees change through the seasons? When do they bloom?
- What features help these species of trees grow well here?
- Are any of the trees "hybrid" trees? Why are these good choices for urban areas?
- Why do you think shade trees along streets live shorter lives than those in forests? (Hint: consider environmental stressors.)
- How much do you think a shade tree is worth over its lifetime? Why?
- When considering climate change and planning for the future, what types of shade trees should we be planting now?
- How does the City of Surrey take care of shade trees?
- How can you help care for your neighbourhood shade trees? (Hint: consider hot summer months, ways to avoid causing damage, pruning bylaws.)
- What are some nuisances people may associate with shade trees?
- How can we encourage people to value shade trees?

BACKGROUND

Surrey's shade trees contribute to the livability of our city. Our Shade Tree Management Plan provides a blueprint for the planning, design, development and maintenance of these important community assets, protecting them for the health and enjoyment of generations to come.

The four goals of the Shade Tree Management Plan are to:

1. protect, enhance and increase the number of the City's shade trees,
2. manage the City's shade trees to meet conservation goals,
3. develop and maintain strong community engagement, stewardship and education programs, and
4. carry out best management practices for shade tree health and risk management in the interest of public safety and public health benefits.

The management plan also spells out the benefits of shade trees: they provide shade, increase tree canopy cover in our neighbourhoods, clean our air, and more.

Shade trees along streets are particularly vulnerable; young trees are monitored and watered on a regular basis to help ensure their survival.

The City of Surrey's mapping online system (COSMOS) is a great resource to find information about the species, location, planting date and estimated age of specific shade trees.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Content for students to explore:

Kindergarten: basic needs of plants, seasonal changes and adaptations

Grade 1: names of local plants, classification of living and non-living things

Grade 2: water cycle (connection to trees)

Grade 3: biodiversity in the local environment, observable changes in the environment

Grade 6: urbanization

Grade 7: climate change (urban forestry, mitigation, adaptation)

Secondary: climate change, urban forestry

Curricular competencies for students to develop:

- Experience, interpret, and make observations about the local environment
- Identify some of the social, ethical, and environment implications
- Communicate ideas, explanations, and processes in a variety of ways
- Social responsibility to the environment
- Express and reflect on personal or shared experiences of place

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

City of Surrey *Shade Tree Management Plan*
City of Surrey's Mapping Online System (COSMOS) at *cosmos.surrey.ca*
iCoolKit presented by UBC at *icoolkit.net*
Tree of All Trades video
Urban Tree List for Metro Vancouver in a Changing Climate

Surrey Parks works together with the community to celebrate nature and protect the environment.

Visit us online to plan your park visits, connect with nearby nature and help your students become stewards of our urban forest.