Geography
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
MISSISSAUGA

Municipalities, Practitioners, and the Urban Forest
Results Synthesis, 2011-2016
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Funding provided by SSHRC

Project Overview
Between 2011 and 2016, written surveys and interviews were conducted with municipal urban forestry officials, landscape architects, and retail nurseries across southern Ontario. The surveys and interviews explored municipal policy and practice; knowledge about common urban forestry issues, including pest; and species selection decisions. Below are some of the results from the project to date.

Municipalities
- *All municipalities in Carolinian Canada with an urban forest management plan (UFMP) prioritize native species*. Six of the seven municipalities interviewed without an UFMP did not prioritize native species.
- Four of ten municipalities interviewed *did not feel their planning practice was addressing UFMP goals*.
- *Native species goals in UFMPs do not translated into planting a diversity of native species*. No municipalities had more than 57% of native species on their planting list, potentially leading to urban forests with low overall diversity, although a higher proportion of native species than today.
- *Four of the 16 study municipalities purposely practice assisted migration*, by planting trees from more southern parts of the Carolinian zone in preparation for climate change.

Landscape Architects and Retails Nurseries
- *Landscape architects regularly create residential yard plans that include tree planting*.
- Landscape architects typically *recommend species based on their aesthetic characteristics* and do not take into consideration species diversity or pest vulnerability.
- Retails nurseries stock trees they say their customers, mostly residents, ask for, but also acknowledge that *most residential customers do not know what type of tree they want when they go to the store*.
- Retail nursery participants in our study had *limited knowledge of native species and pest concerns*.

Recommendations
- *Conduct species suitability trials with native species* to ensure a more diverse selection of native tree species is planted by municipalities.
- Consider how to *balance native species goals with selecting species for future climates*.
- More *education about native species, overall diversity, and pest vulnerability* is needed for those advising and supply trees to residents.
- *Develop strategies to address limited tree species supply issues* that practitioners and residents experience when purchasing a tree.

More information: go to http://sites.utm.utoronto.ca/conway/content/human-environmental-interactions-urban-forest for contact information plus a full list of peer-reviewed articles and reports that have details on the specific study areas, data collection and analysis methods, and results outlined here.