

Tree Planting on **Private Land**

With 60% of all trees in Toronto located on private property, support for tree planting on private land is vital to growing our canopy and in supporting a healthy urban forest. We will encourage, educate, and enable tree planting on private land, and ensure that we work with residents, businesses, and stakeholders. Broad community engagement is essential to successful tree planting on private land and major industrial, commercial, and institutional landowners have an important role to play.



PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE LANDS

For the purposes of this strategy “public” refers to the city road allowances or right of way, parks, ravines and natural areas under management by the City of Toronto. “Private” refers to lands that are not covered under the definition of public land, including lands owned by City agencies or corporations, or other government entities

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1 TO 2 YEARS

- Provide technical expertise, tools and resources to residents and businesses on best management practices for tree planting and establishment
- Dedicate funding for community-based tree planting initiatives on private land
- Continue existing partnerships with the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board
- Continue existing partnerships with LEAF on the backyard tree planting program
- Monitor and evaluate the success of partnerships against program deliverables and alignment with the Tree Planting Strategy and Urban Forestry's goals and objectives.
- Continue to engage and consult with community groups, experts, academia, stakeholders, and other municipalities to advance best practice and collaboration.
- Continue to regulate the removal and replacement of trees on private land
- Encourage best practices around tree species selection to support biodiversity
- Expand donation, partnership and sponsorship opportunities for private land planting
- Encourage successful and effective tree planting on private land that would include regular watering, and necessary maintenance.
- Explore opportunities to build new partnerships to increase organizational resilience and capacity

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS

3 TO 4 YEARS

- Develop appropriate tree planting targets that are realistic and achievable
- Explore possible partnerships with the Conseil scolaire

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- Explore new partnership opportunities with organization such as the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority to expand offering of private land tree planting services
- Explore new partnership opportunities with large landowners to increase tree planting in publicly-accessible spaces and capitalize on private investments and funding.
- Identify opportunities to increase tree planting on industrial, commercial, and institutional lands
- Identify opportunities for collaboration with other closely-aligned City strategies and objectives to support biodiversity
- Use the results of a tree planting prioritization tool to inform priority planting areas on private land and equitable distribution of canopy
- Explore opportunities to engage commercial retailers around tree planting on private land
- Explore opportunities to leverage planned investment in infrastructure and utilities to increase tree planting on private land
- Explore the feasibility and viability of incentives to encourage tree planting

LONG TERM ACTIONS

5+ YEARS

- Explore opportunities for the use of innovative financing tools and mechanisms, such as crowdfunding, to support private land tree planting initiatives
- Explore opportunities to improve the maintenance cycle in natural areas to maintain and expand tree canopy cover

Stewardship and Education

Stewardship and education is fundamental to a healthy urban forest. When people are aware of the importance trees and the urban forest and are inspired and empowered in taking an active role in its care, they understand the connection between the urban forest and their well-being. We will champion stewardship and education on public and private land as necessary for the long-term success and sustainability of our investments in tree planting.



SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1 TO 2 YEARS

- Dedicate funding for community-based stewardship and education programs and services on private land
- Expand current stewardship and education initiatives with the school boards
- Continue to increase the availability and accessibility of stewardship and education programs to residents across the city.
- Strengthen alignment of partner communications and education with City priorities and key messaging
- Support and participate in local community events that promote the importance and benefits of trees and tree planting, to achieve 40% canopy coverage
- Enhance and increase public awareness of tree planting and stewardship programs and services on public and private land
- Undertake market research and analytics to better understand public attitudes and behaviours
- Continue to educate homeowners, developers and builders on how to best plant, protect and maintain trees to increase canopy cover
- Strengthen community granting to incorporate best practices and lessons learned

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS

3 TO 4 YEARS

- Expand current stewardship and volunteer opportunities on public land, including programs such as the Park Naturalization Program, Community Stewardship Program, Tree Planting Captain, and Don Valley Brick Works Ambassador
- Investigate opportunities to develop online tools and resources to support awareness and education
- Engage youth in stewardship and education initiatives on public and private land
- Improve marketing and communication tactics across different social media platforms to support greater awareness and education of trees and their benefits
- Explore opportunities for partnerships with academic institutions to support stewardship and education
- Explore opportunities to integrate youth engagement into stewardship and education initiatives
- Enhance volunteer experience where possible to sustain long term engagement
- Enable community-led tree planting and stewardship initiatives on private land
- Ensure staff have the necessary resources for managing volunteers in accordance with the Parks, Forestry & Recreation Division's Volunteer and Placement Policy
- Use the results from a tree planting prioritization tool to enhance stewardship and education programming and initiatives
- Develop a stewardship strategy for public lands that is consistent with the Strategic Forest Management Plan, the Ravine Strategy and the Tree Planting Strategy, to manage the use of public lands for stewardship purposes

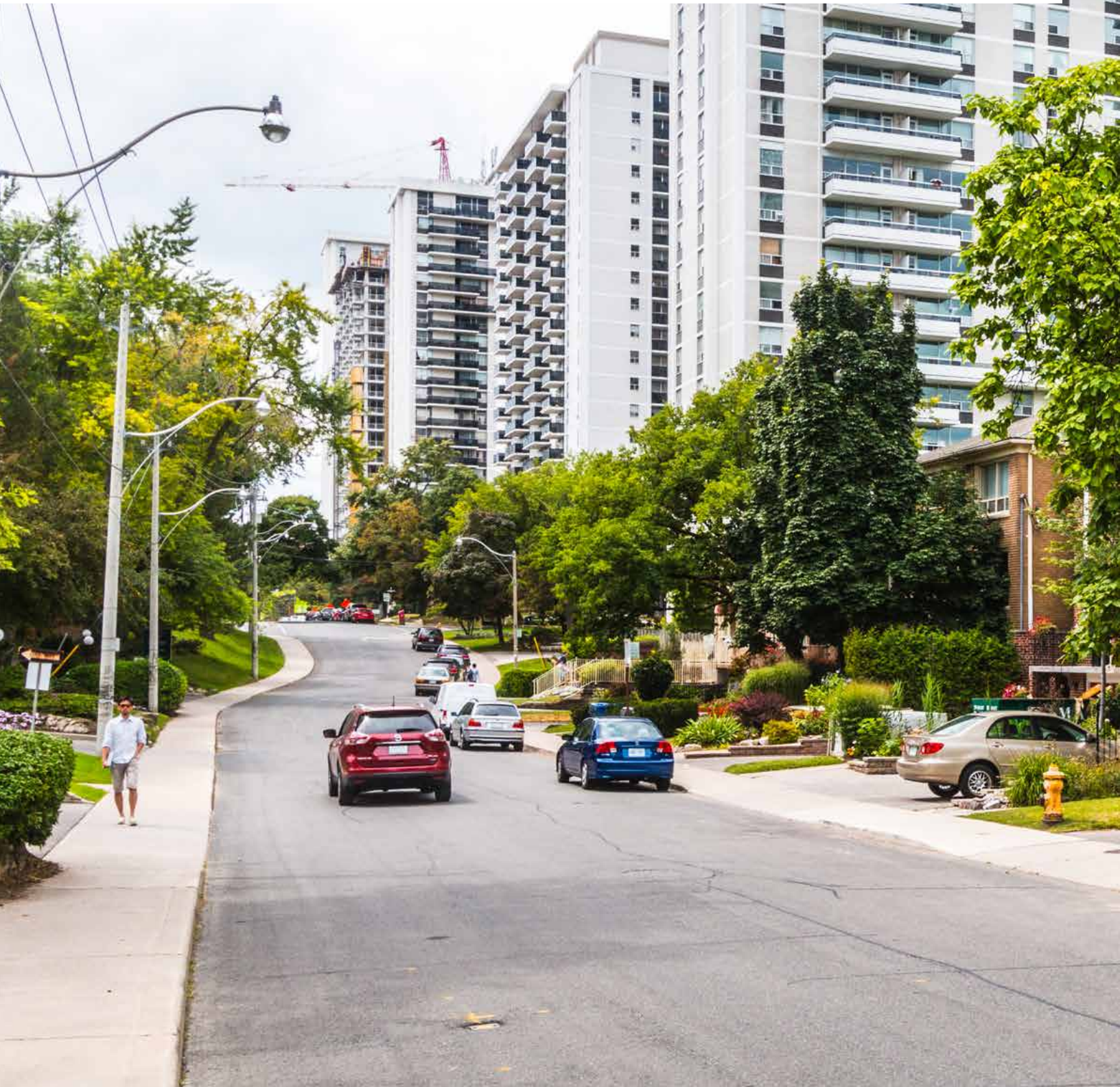
LONG TERM ACTIONS

5+ YEARS

- Implement an integrated communications strategy that delivers key messaging around tree planting and stewardship on public and private land through a variety of mediums and social media channels
- Accelerate the participation of residents and businesses across multiple sectors in stewardship and education initiatives
- Explore the possibility to increase availability of open data
- Provide access to Urban Forestry subject matter experts (SME) on a range of key urban forestry issues
- Create a mechanism or platform to share and pool resources amongst community organizations
- Provide greater opportunities for community organizations to partner with the City
- Explore potential models for community groups to undertake stewardship and outreach activities on public lands through licensing/ stewardship agreements that makes protecting the natural environment a guiding principle
- Expand the demographic and geographic reach of stewardship and education programs
- Explore opportunities for collaboration with First Nation partners

Leadership and Innovation

The City must lead by example and we must inspire and empower our staff, community, and partners to deliver on action. We will demonstrate leadership in tree planting and stewardship through our actions, policies, programs and partnerships. We will foster excellence and innovation as we encourage new ideas and approaches. We will seek continuous improvement and actively gather and share knowledge.



SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1 TO 2 YEARS

- Set priorities and develop a periodic report on achievements and progress
- Undertake an assessment of the City's tree canopy to determine progress towards 40% canopy cover
- Actively collaborate with other municipalities, agencies, and partners to exchange ideas, and to share information and best practices around tree planting and stewardship
- Work in partnership with the community, the TRCA, neighbouring municipalities, other levels of government, property owners, utility providers and other stakeholders to create more opportunities for individuals and organizations to contribute to the forest canopy through tree planting and stewardship.
- Integrate the various private land tree planting and stewardship partnerships, programs and services into a dedicated program.
- Allocate funding for the establishment of a dedicated unit within Urban Forestry with staffing resources to lead the delivery and implementation of the Tree Planting Strategy, private land programs, partnerships and related programs and initiatives.
- Invest in professional development and training opportunities for staff
- Provide staff with opportunities to contribute to the direction and implementation of the Tree Planting Strategy

- Continue to advocate for policies, regulation and innovative approaches supporting the value and importance of tree planting and green infrastructure through participation in organizations such as the Green Infrastructure Ontario Coalition

- Keep current with best practices, industry standards, emerging trends, ideas and new research through attending and presenting at conferences, workshops and seminars

MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS

3 TO 4 YEARS

- Develop a tree planting prioritization tool to identify opportunities for tree planting and stewardship on public and private land
- Develop an award and recognition program to enable the City to recognize excellence in urban forestry, to acknowledge the contributions of individual staff, residents, community groups, and businesses, and to demonstrate its importance to the general public.
- Continue to identify and invest in technology to increase operational efficiency and monitoring data
- Explore opportunities to support tree planting through provincial and federal funding and partnerships
- Develop tools and innovative approaches to leverage external funding in support of Urban Forestry's priorities and objectives

LONG TERM ACTIONS

5+ YEARS

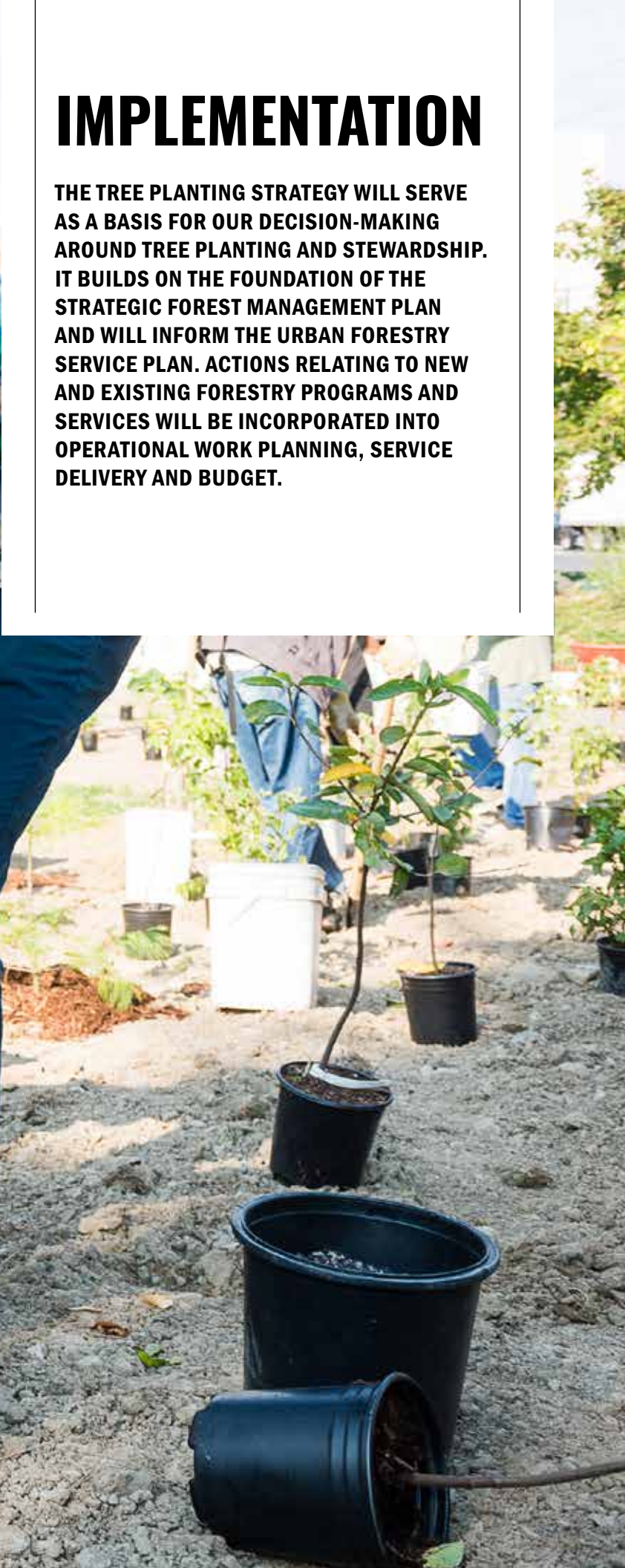
- Explore the opportunities to advance asset management of green infrastructure and better understand the life-cycle costs for trees and vegetation managed by the City.
- Lead or participate in joint applied research ventures with academia, research institutions, provincial and federal agencies or non-governmental organizations to expand scientific knowledge to support science-based decision-making and to help identify research priorities
- Explore opportunities to attract and retain staff, particularly in hard-to-recruit positions to strengthen workforce capacity with adaptable and high performing employees to meet future tree planting and stewardship needs





IMPLEMENTATION

THE TREE PLANTING STRATEGY WILL SERVE AS A BASIS FOR OUR DECISION-MAKING AROUND TREE PLANTING AND STEWARDSHIP. IT BUILDS ON THE FOUNDATION OF THE STRATEGIC FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN AND WILL INFORM THE URBAN FORESTRY SERVICE PLAN. ACTIONS RELATING TO NEW AND EXISTING FORESTRY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO OPERATIONAL WORK PLANNING, SERVICE DELIVERY AND BUDGET.





Urban Forestry will actively champion the Tree Planting Strategy in collaboration with internal and external partners. Successful implementation depends on the participation of all segments and sectors of the City. This includes other city divisions, residents and businesses, local communities, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and local community groups and non-governmental organizations.

APPROACHES TO IMPLEMENTATION

A variety of tools, mechanisms, and approaches are needed to ensure the successful implementation of the Tree Planting Strategy. Partnerships and agreements with not-for-profit organizations (NFPs) and external partners is one way of delivering on private land forestry programs. On public land, the City may deliver on action through the work of in-house staff, contractors, or consultants.

Community engagement and collective action is critical to the success of the Tree Planting Strategy. Urban Forestry and its partners will work on-the ground with communities to provide meaningful opportunities to engage with trees and the urban forest in support of the objectives of the Tree Planting Strategy.

Public-private partnerships between the City and not-for-profit organizations and the private sector is an important tool for collective action and can help sustain active community engagement and marshal private sector resources and additional funds in support of the Tree Planting Strategy. What is more, financial leveraging can amplify the original City investment and maximize impact and value for money.

Just as there is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to community engagement and collective action, no one partner can do it all and no one model is suitable for all circumstances. To that end, the successful implementation of the Tree Planting Strategy will rely on multi-partner collaborations that is firmly rooted in collective impact. Collective Impact uses an evidence-based approach where wide-ranging individuals and groups commit to a common agenda to solve a specific social or environmental problem. It is used in TO Prosperity: Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy and is used in other cities around the world. Collective impact and the five conditions of collective impact will drive and guide the implementation of our Tree Planting Strategy, particularly as it relates to partnerships around private land planting and stewardship.

MEASURING AND REPORTING ON SUCCESS

Urban Forestry will track and measure our progress in the implementation of the Tree Planting Strategy, developing program deliverables and key performance indicators. The Tree Planting Strategy will be reviewed every five-years and as required to ensure that we are on the right track and to make refinements and adjustments as needed.

THE FIVE CONDITIONS OF COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Common Agenda

All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

Shared Measurement

Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.

Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.

Continuous Communication

Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.

Backbone Support

Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies.

Source: Hanleybrown, Kania and Kramer (Winter 2011). "Collective Impact." Stanford Social Innovation Review



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