

Smart 20 Award

Cooling Our City - An Equitable Guide To Tree Planting

The Smart 20 Awards

Annually recognize the top 20 projects from an international pool of applicants.

- Projects must:
 - Have a connection with a municipalities, and
 - Be innovative and influential.

Here was Forestry's submission...



The Smart 20 Awards

Cooling Our City - An Equitable Guide To Tree Planting

Innovative tool combining:

- census data,
- satellite imagery, and
- municipal tree data.

Goal: Help prioritize planting in underserved areas that need trees the most.



2025 Smart 20 Awards Recipient



Cooling Our City → Community Canopy

Piloted in 2024 and launched in 2025.

The program focuses on planting new trees in 16 planning communities:

- Targeting areas with tree equity scores <75.
- Providing better access to the benefits of trees.
- Each year, in 1-2 of these areas = Plant 150 large trees
 - 100 on public property, and
 - 50 on private property

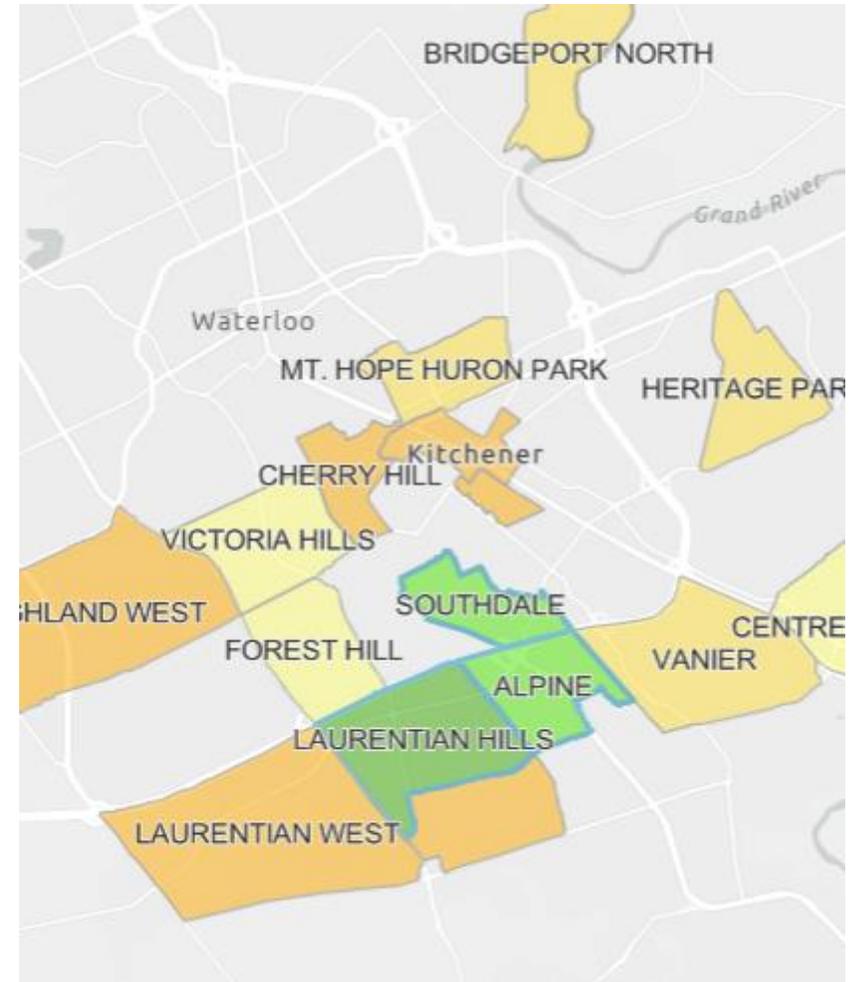
kitchener.ca/communitycanopy

In 2024

Of the ~1,200 trees planted, 150 were in **Laurentian Hills**:

- a) **100 trees:** Community Center, blvds, and parks
- b) **50 trees:** Backyards
 - 1st backyard tree is free in target areas through Reep's BYTP (funded by Forestry)

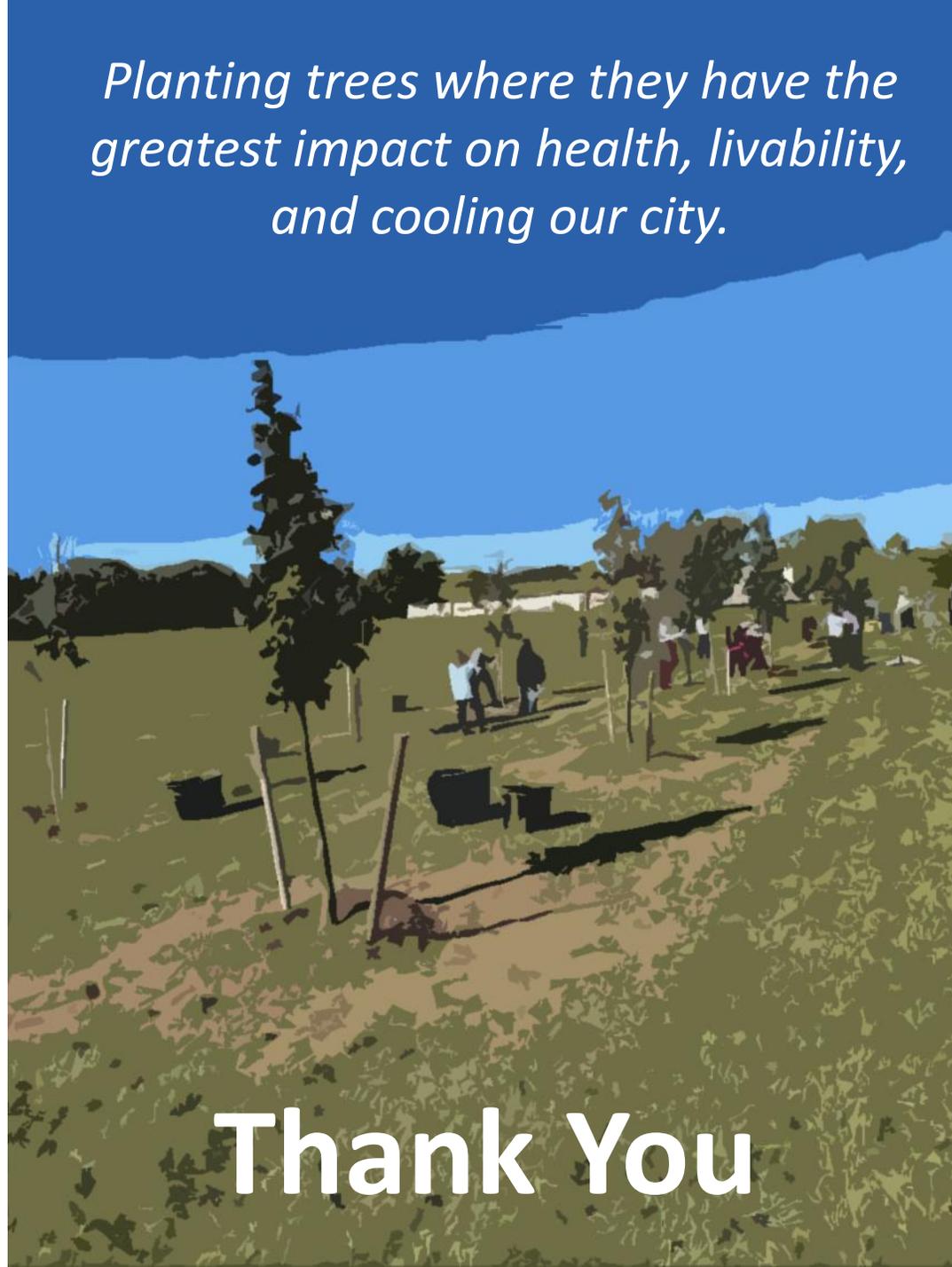
2025 → **Southdale & Alpine**



kitchener.ca/communitycanopy



Planting trees where they have the greatest impact on health, livability, and cooling our city.



Thank You



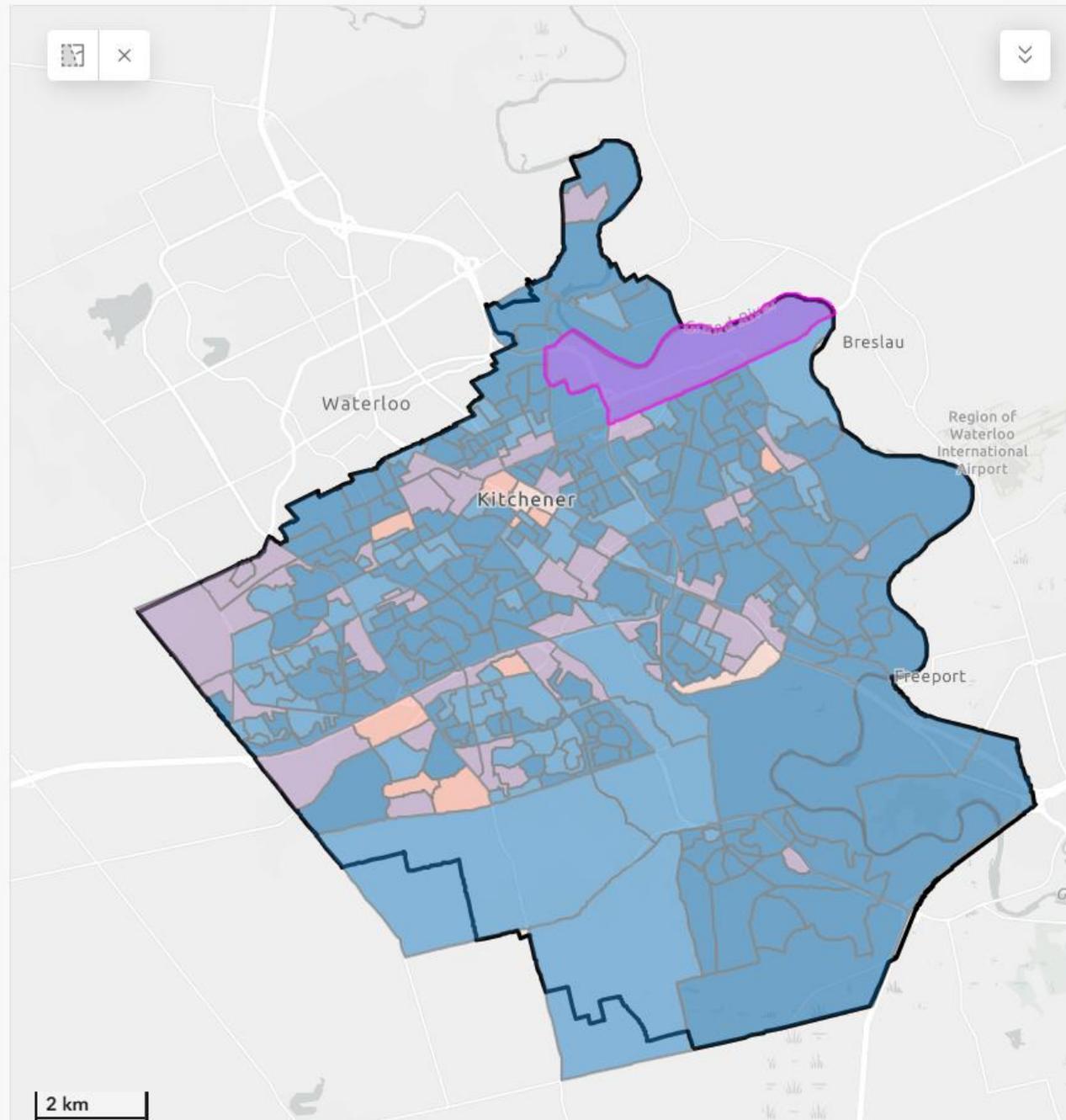
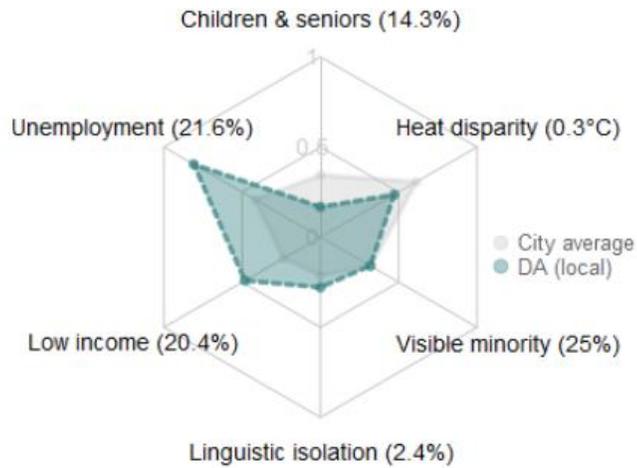
85/100

Tree Equity Score

22.1% Tree Canopy Coverage

Goal coverage of 30%

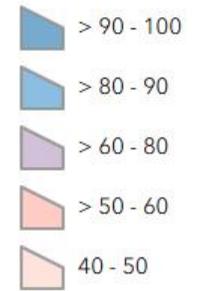
Priority Index 0.5



Tree Equity Analysis by Census DAs

Tree equity score

Tree Equity Score
(higher is better)



Urban boundary



2025 AWARD RECIPIENTS

- A Multi-Modal Cyber Traffic Infrastructure for Sustainable Mobility (Richardson, TX)
- **Aurora's Digital Twin (Aurora, Canada)**
- Central Texas Construction Partnership Program (Central Texas)
- Chatham Connect: Chatham Area Transit Electric Vehicle Micro Transit Project (Savannah, GA)
- City of Brownsville: Pioneering a Scalable and Citizen-Centric Smart City Vision (Brownsville, TX)
- City of Sarasota Smart City Initiative (Sarasota, FL)
- **Cooling Our City: An Equitable Guide to Tree Planting (Kitchener, Canada)**
- Genius 5.0 Smart City and Waste Management (Florence, Italy)
- GeoEngage Community Catalyst Initiative (Seguin, TX)
- Ghost Intersection Uses Real-World Data to Improve Driver and VRU Safety (Peachtree Corners, GA)
- Hilliard City Lab (Hilliard, OH)
- Homeless Outreach (Fort Lauderdale, FL)
- Integrated Real Time AI Traffic Signal Control Revolution (Taoyuan City, Taiwan)
- Limestone County Water and Sewer Authority Smart Utility Project (Limestone County, AL)
- Link US West Broad BRT Public Engagement Process (Columbus, OH)
- New Taipei Smart Poles: Building a New Paradigm for Future Cities (New Taipei City, Taiwan)
- San Antonio Smart City and Streetlight Operations Systems (San Antonio, TX)
- The Cleveland Metroparks: Leveraging IoT and LoRaWAN for Smart Environmental Management and Data Collection (Cleveland, OH)
- Thomasville Heights: Building Strategies for Energy Efficient Retrofits (Atlanta, GA)
- ZeroEyes AI Detection (Las Vegas, NV)



Our tool influential

- Trees go where they make the biggest impact = improved health, livability and heat reduction.
- Affordable & scalable.
- Encourages local support and engagement = open data
- Helps direct planting efforts = staff efficiency