



Greening the Halifax Waterfront

(Scenario for Nova Scotia Envirothon, May 2015)

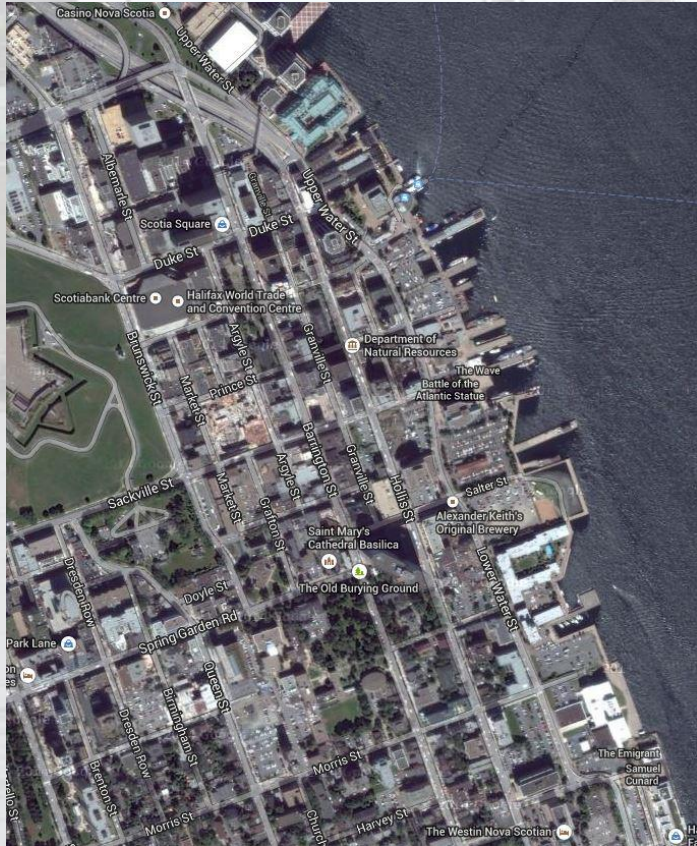
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Introduction

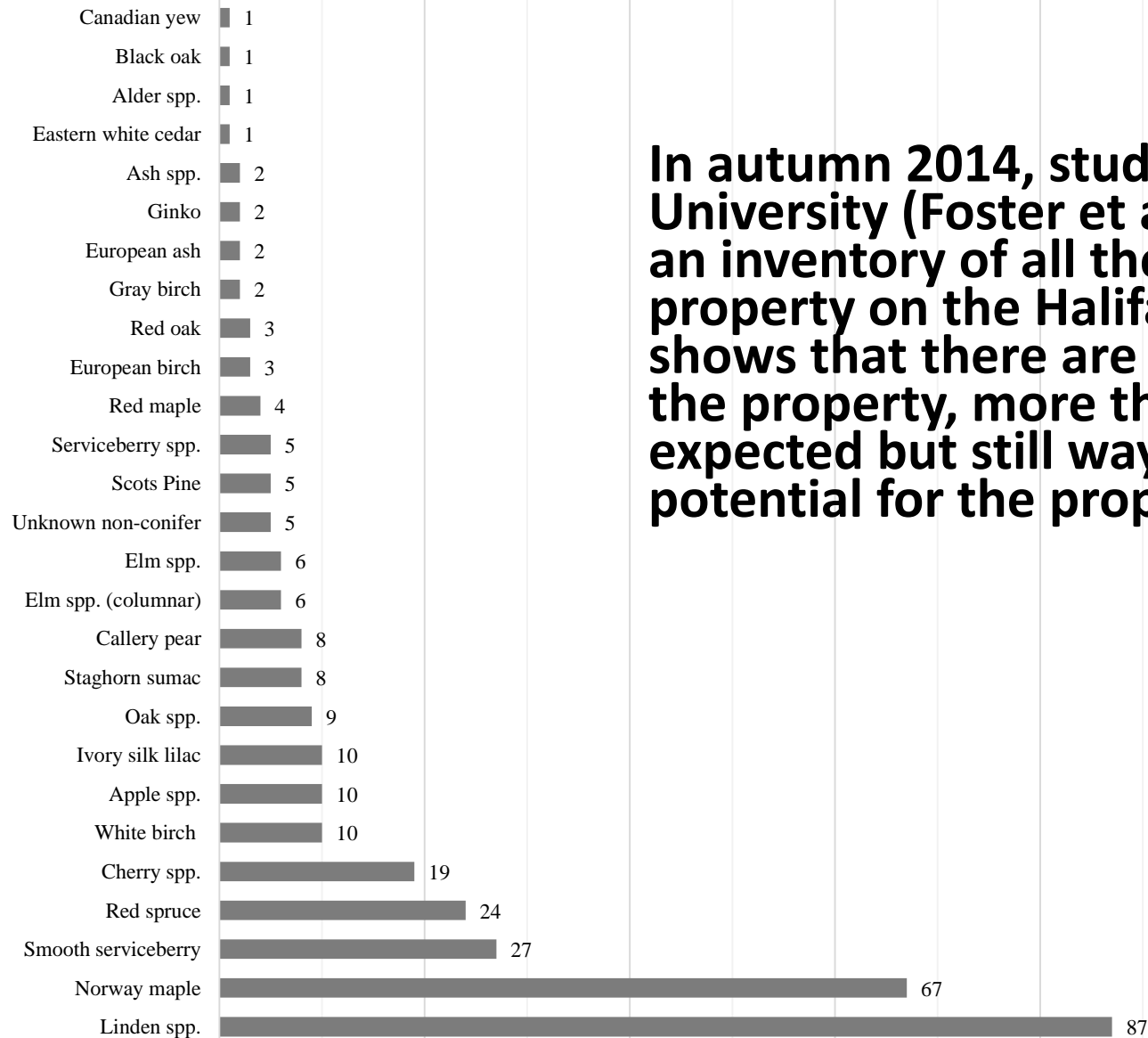
Halifax Regional Municipality adopted a detailed Urban Forest Master Plan (UFMP) in September 2012 (available in full and in digest form at <http://www.halifax.ca/Property/UFMP/index.php>). The Halifax urban core is divided into 111 neighbourhoods, each with a unique description, some forest and other data, a list of challenges and opportunities, and a set of canopy targets and treatments. One neighbourhood that has a particularly poor tree population is called Harbour-Windsor - it stretches all along the harbour shoreline from the Halterm Container Terminal in the south to the Fairfax Container Terminal in the north (plus some commercial lands in the north end - see the map and description on pages 304-305 of the UFMP).

The Halifax Waterfront

Waterfront Development Corporation (WDC) (www.my-waterfront.ca) owns the part of the waterfront that experiences the most tourist visitation and foot traffic - approximately from the Nova Scotia Power headquarters in the south to Casino Nova Scotia in the north (between the red arrows on the image to the right).



Trees on the Waterfront



In autumn 2014, students at Dalhousie University (Foster et al. 2014) undertook an inventory of all the trees on WDC's property on the Halifax waterfront. It shows that there are about 460 trees on the property, more than WDC staff expected but still way below the potential for the property.



More about the trees on the Halifax Waterfront



● Conifer ● Non-conifer

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An Opportunity!

- **Suppose that WDC is keen to develop a plan to make significant improvements to the tree population on its Halifax waterfront property. Suppose further that WDC will run a competition (as was done for the Point Pleasant Park Comprehensive Plan – www.pointpleasantpark.ca) by inviting concept proposals from consulting firms across Nova Scotia to improve the urban forest on the Halifax waterfront.**
- **Your team, as an environmental consulting firm, REALLY wants to win the competition and get the job to build the plan. You need to prepare a winning concept proposal.**
- **(by the way, what is a concept proposal? It is the answer to this question: if you were to develop the Halifax Waterfront Urban-Forest Plan, what would you put in it?)**

What does WDC want in the concept proposal?

- **WCD wants a presentation, assisted by poster-board visual aids, containing the following:**
 - Summary of the **current situation** with the trees on the waterfront
 - **Justification and rationale** for an improved tree canopy on the waterfront
 - **Challenges** to improving the waterfront tree canopy and how to overcome them
 - **Key principles** that would guide urban-forest management on the waterfront
 - The main **objectives** to be included in the plan
 - A list of **actions** required for meeting the objectives
 - Description of the kinds of **citizen engagement** to be implemented in the planning process
 - A **map or diagram** to show the expected tree population by 2030

Some of WDC issue questions that should be addressed in the concept proposal are:

- How could/should the poor soils of the waterfront be improved for a healthier and expanded tree canopy?
- How could the tree canopy be managed for better populations of people-friendly wildlife?
- Are there ways to use trees to help manage stormwater and runoff on the waterfront?
- Should WDC find out what improvements in the waterfront tree canopy the tourists might want? If so, how?
- How should the WDC waterfront urban-forest plan support and be supported by the HRM UFMP?
- What balance of native vs. non-native tree species would make sense on the waterfront lands?
- Who should WDC partner with to achieve a spectacular waterfront forest?

Tips on preparing a concept proposal

- **Remember, this is a concept proposal, not a detailed proposal – strong ideas are sought, not necessarily specific fine-tuned plan elements.**
- **WDC is looking for innovative thinking, not just a carbon copy of everybody else's tree development plan.**
- **The Halifax waterfront is a very special ecosystem with a rich history, a vibrant economy, a huge number of visitors (both local people and tourists) each year, and a dynamic ecotone between the ocean and the urbanized land – focus the proposal on overcoming the difficulties and harnessing the opportunities that the site presents.**

References and Resources

- Charles, J. and P.N. Duinker (editors). 2014. Urban Forest Master Plan Digest. Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax, NS. 42 pp. (available at: <http://www.halifax.ca/property/UFMP/index.php>)
- HRM Urban Forest Planning Team. 2013. Halifax Regional Municipality Urban Forest Master Plan. Halifax Regional Municipality, Halifax, NS. 441 pp. (available at: <http://www.halifax.ca/property/UFMP/index.php>)
- Foster, D., W. Margetts, and S. Saunders. 2014. At the Water's Edge: An Inventory of Trees on the Halifax Waterfront. School for Resource and Environmental Studies, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS. 34 pp. (available from peter.duinker@dal.ca)
- Waterfront Development Corporation website: www.my-waterfront.ca/halifax