

The background of the slide is a stylized, layered illustration of a mountain range. The mountains are depicted in various shades of blue and teal, with sharp, angular peaks. In the foreground, there are rolling green hills and a small cluster of dark green evergreen trees on the right side. The overall style is modern and graphic.

Village Stroll Tree Strategy

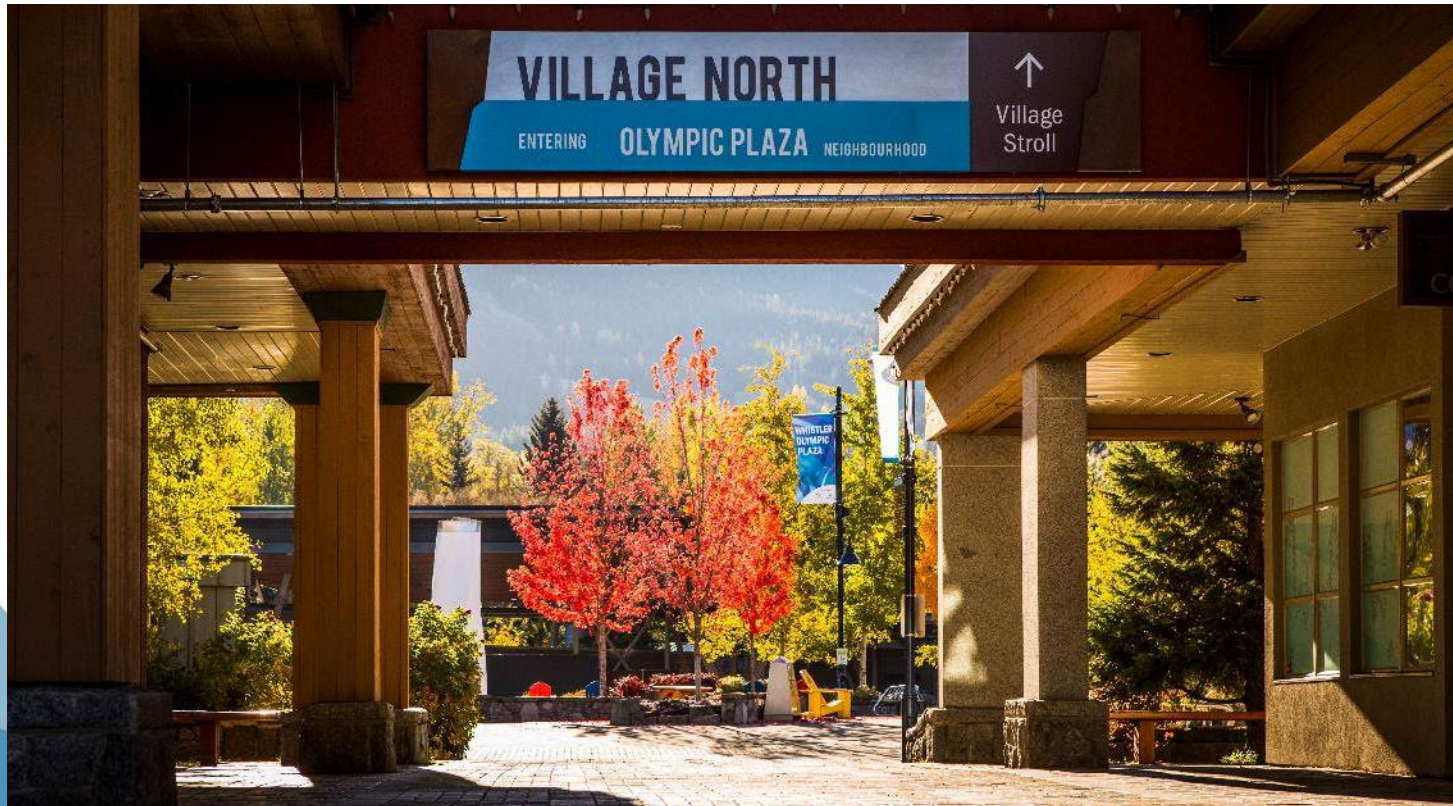
February 24, 2026

Brought to you by the Parks Planning Department
*We balance environment, recreation, community, and tourism to create
innovative outdoor spaces and policies that deliver memorable experiences.*



Village Stroll Tree Strategy

- Protecting and enhancing the Village's defining urban forest
- Framework for resilience and identity



Today's Presentation

- Introduce the Tree Strategy and its key findings
- Present opportunities, challenges, and long-term direction
- Outline next steps for implementation



Why This Strategy Matters

- Trees are central to Whistler's identity and resort experience
- Provide environmental, social, and economic value
- Facing growing pressures requiring coordinated action



Strategy Vision



- Trees as defining public-realm assets
- Adaptation to climate and development pressures
- Enhanced experience for residents and visitors

Key Objectives

- Support long-term tree health and climate adaptation
- Expand canopy cover where feasible
- Improve species and structural diversity
- Enhance pedestrian comfort and Village character

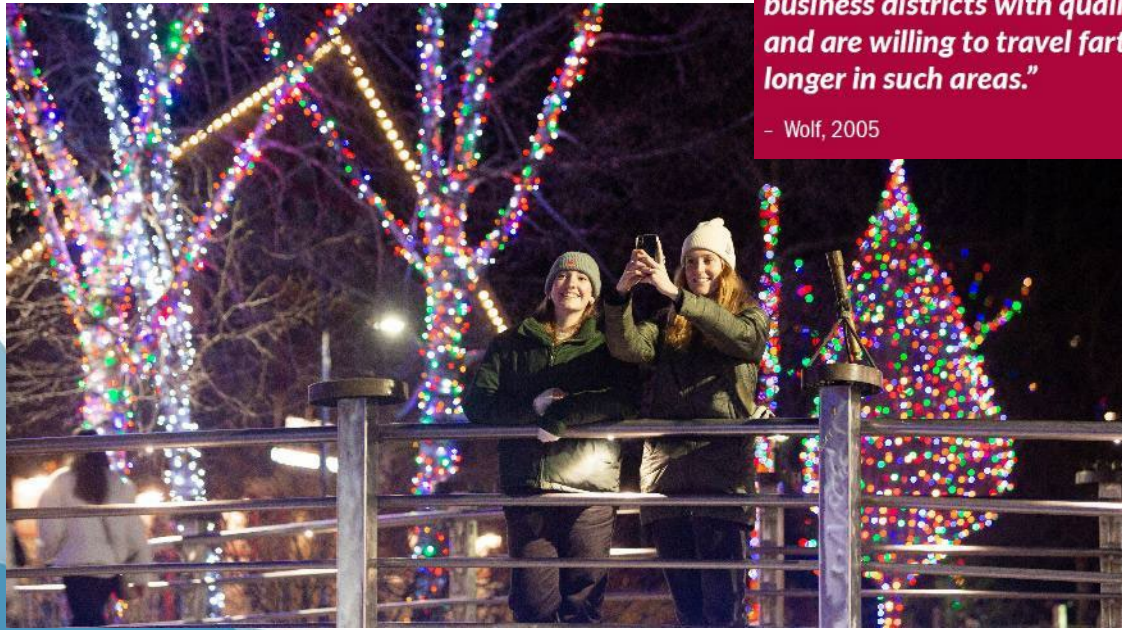


Ecological & Community Benefits

- Carbon storage and air-quality improvements
- Cooling, shade, and microclimate regulation
- Biodiversity support and pedestrian comfort
- Contributes to Whistler's tourism and economic vitality

"Studies show people spend 9–12% more in business districts with quality tree canopy and are willing to travel farther and stay longer in such areas."

– Wolf, 2005



Trees sequester
approximately
1.6 t/year
of carbon and store
51.44 t



Shade areas of
the Stroll are
typically 5-8°C
cooler than
unshaded areas

Historical Context



- Builds on vision of a “Village in the Forest”
- Legacy of Landscape Architect Eldon Beck
- Responds to today’s climate-driven and urban development realities

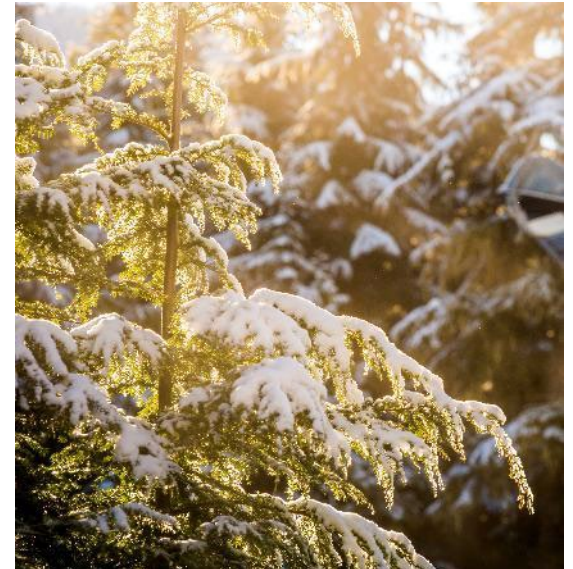
Strategy Overview

- Comprehensive framework for tree protection and enhancement
- Supports planning, development, operations, and long-term management
- Aligns with municipal policy and climate objectives



Alignment With Existing Policies

- Supports Official Community Plan objectives
- Advances Big Moves Climate Action Implementation Plan
- Reinforces bylaws
- Enhances public-realm and placemaking goals



Regulatory Complexity

- Strategy must navigate multiple Development Permit Areas
- Overlaps with tree protection, environmental, water conservation and wildfire bylaws
- Importance of consistent application and cross-departmental alignment
 - Parks Planning
 - Climate & Environment
 - Planning
 - Resort Operations
 - Utilities
 - FireSmart
 - Whistler Fire Rescue Services



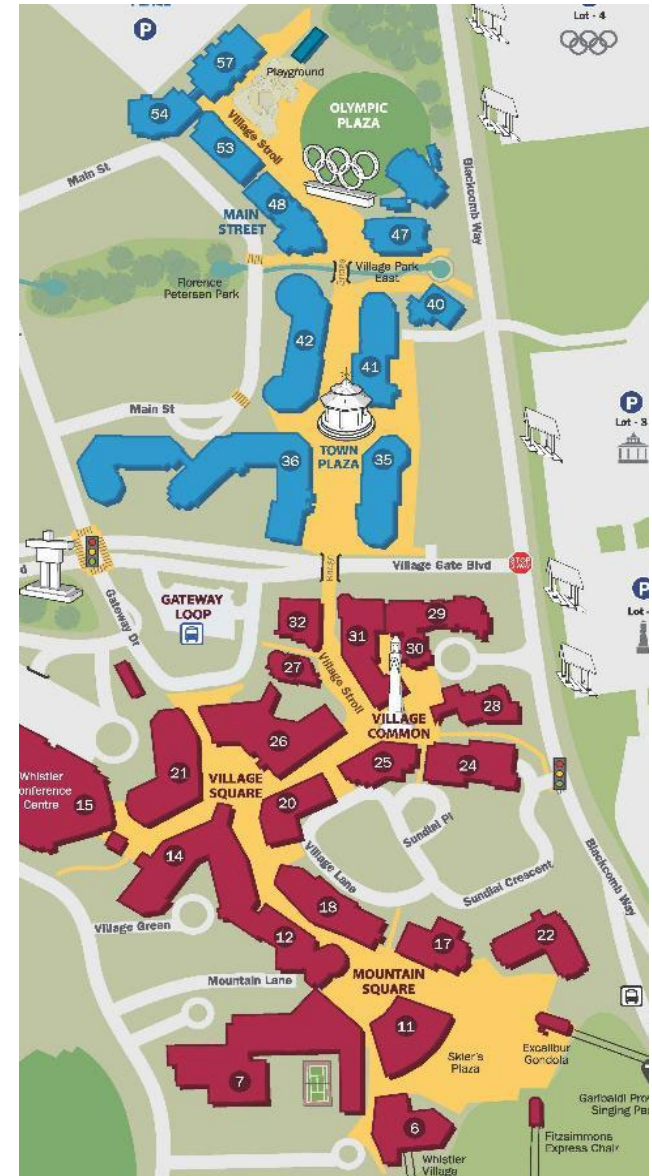
Engagement

- Most businesses feel tree quantity along the Stroll is appropriate
- Trees support shade, character, and positive visitor experience
- Landscapers report generally healthy trees with suitable species mix
- Soil volume and infrastructure constraints limit long-term tree performance



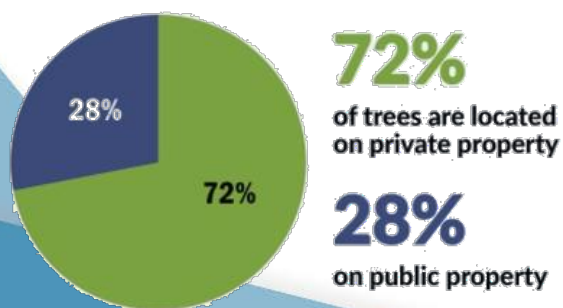
Study Area

- Village Stroll corridor
- Extends from the base of Whistler Mountain to Whistler Olympic Plaza
- Findings apply broadly to Whistler's wider urban forest



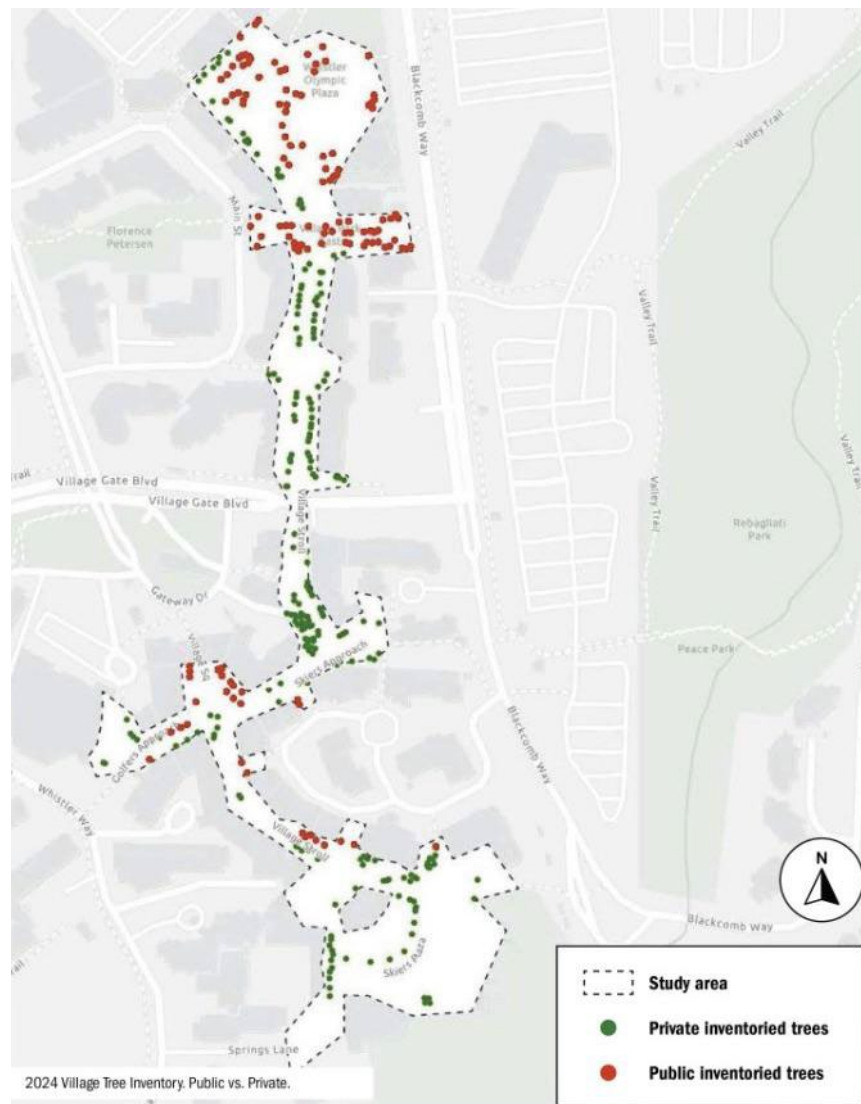
Tree Inventory Summary

- 354 trees assessed across public and private lands
- Evaluated health, species, lifespan, soil conditions, and climate suitability
- Provides baseline for monitoring and decision-making



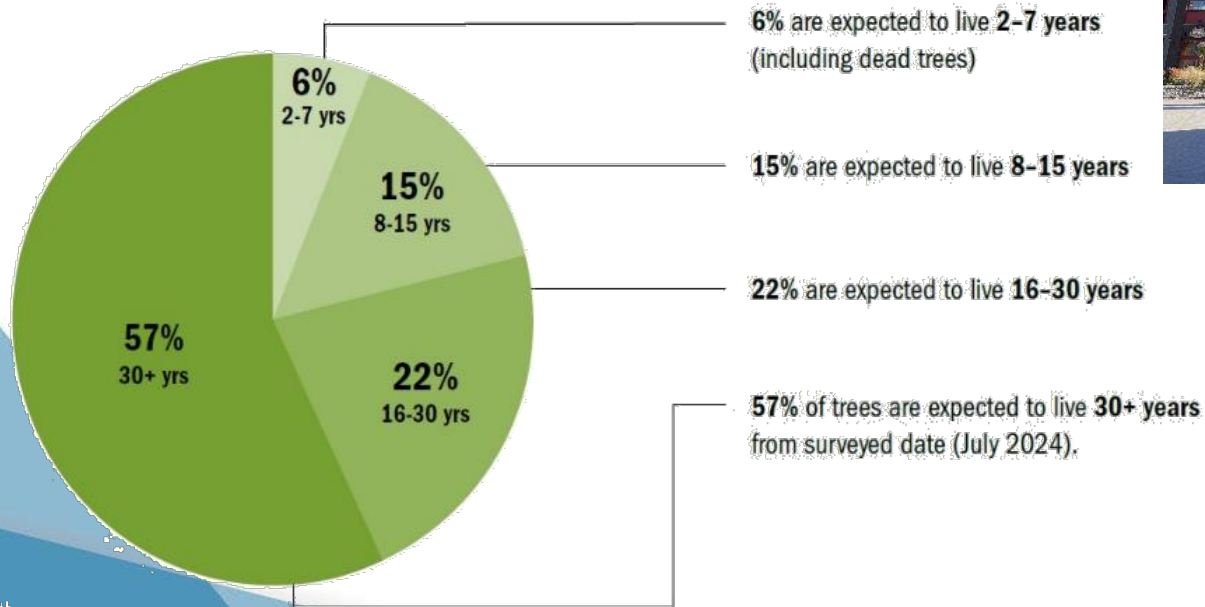
72%
of trees are located
on private property

28%
on public property



Current Tree Condition

- Most trees in **fair to good** condition
- Strong environmental and public-realm benefits
- Many rely heavily on irrigation and active management



Only 22%
OF TREES ARE
IN 'GOOD'
CONDITION

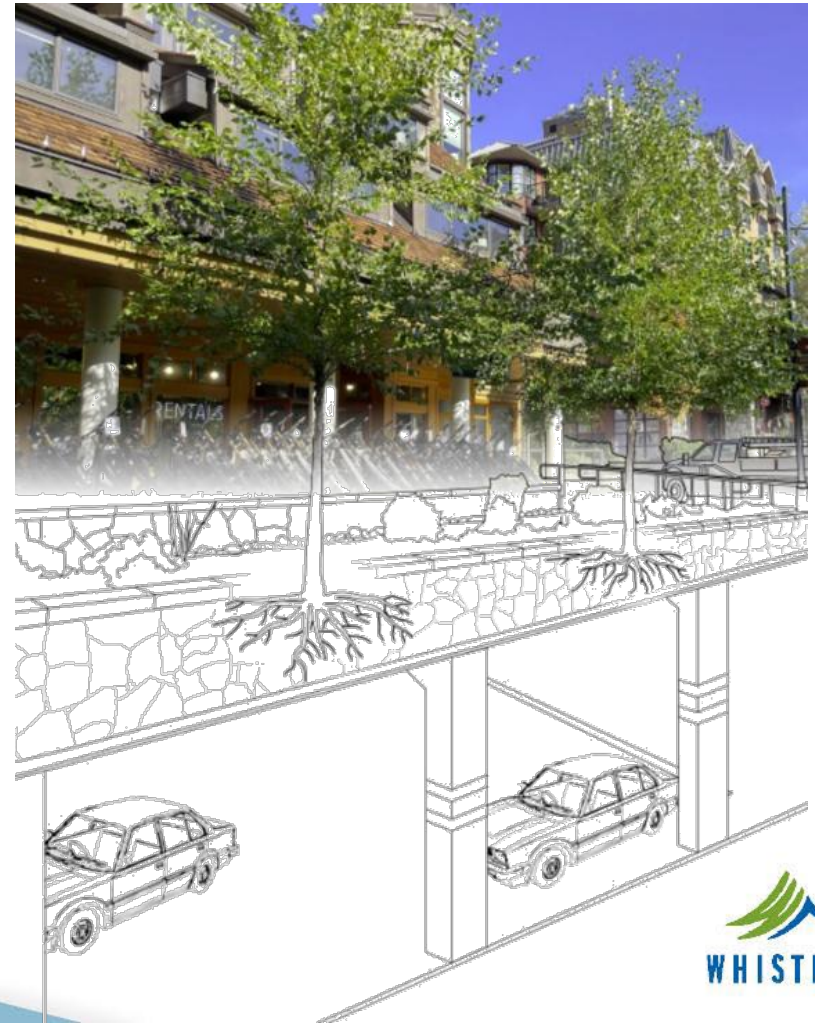


Growing Constraints

- Soil volumes far below contemporary best practices
- Limited rooting space across most sites
- Long-term canopy retention at risk without intervention



Average rooting volume is ~ 33% of recommended arboriculture best practices



Climate Change Pressures

- Hotter, drier summers and wetter winters expected
- More extreme weather events impacting tree stability
- Heightened wildfire risk in and around Village areas



The **average annual temperature** is projected to increase by

3°C ↑



The **hottest day of the year** may rise by

4°C ↑



Summer precipitation is expected to **decrease** by

13°C ↓

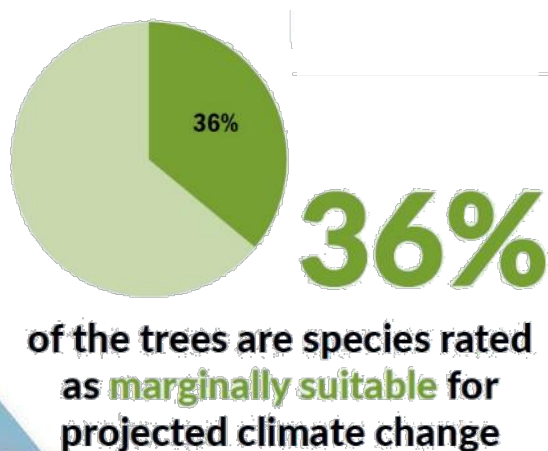


Winter precipitation is expected to **increase** by

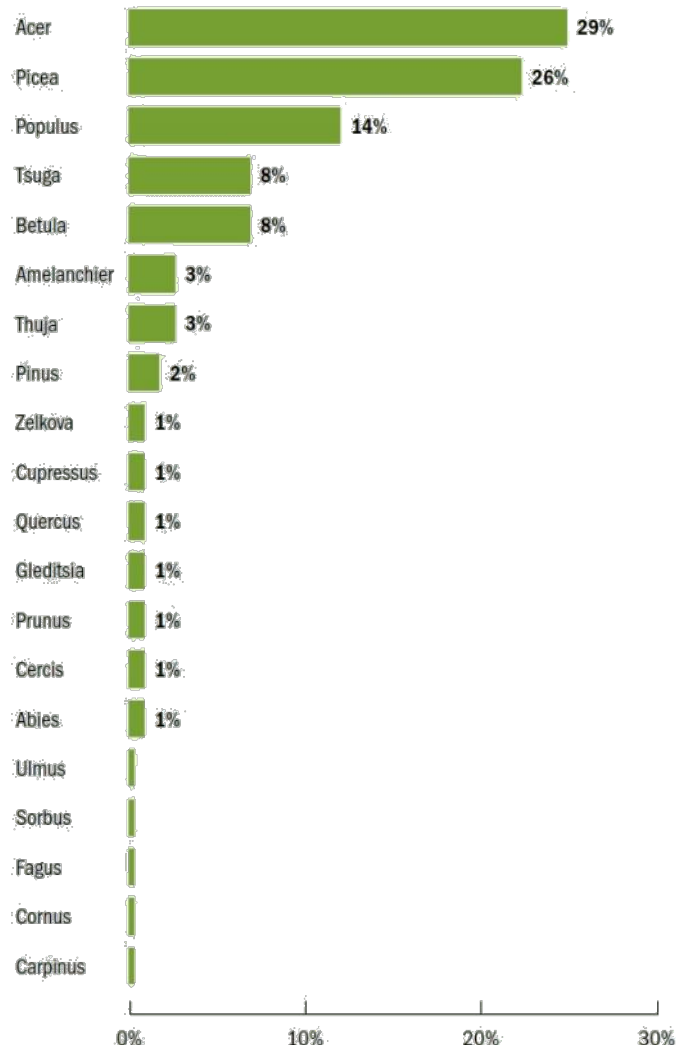
12°C ↑

Species Vulnerability

- Some common species poorly suited to future climate conditions
- Current population lacks adequate species diversity
- Limited structural diversity reduces long-term resilience



Genus diversity proportion



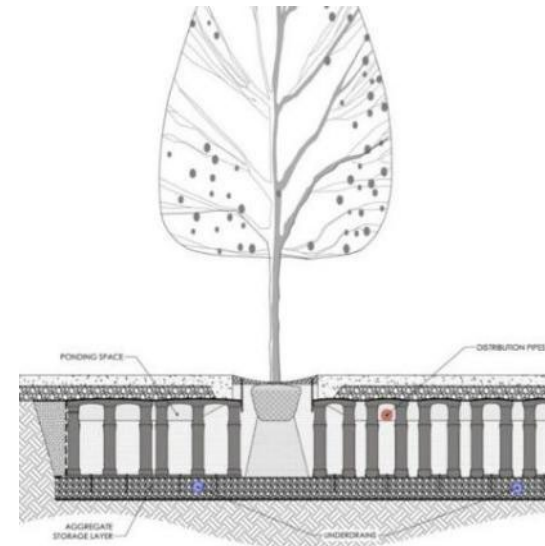
Additional Stressors

- Redevelopment activity and land-use competition
- Underground utilities and storefront visibility concerns
- Snow loading, salt exposure, and wildlife impacts



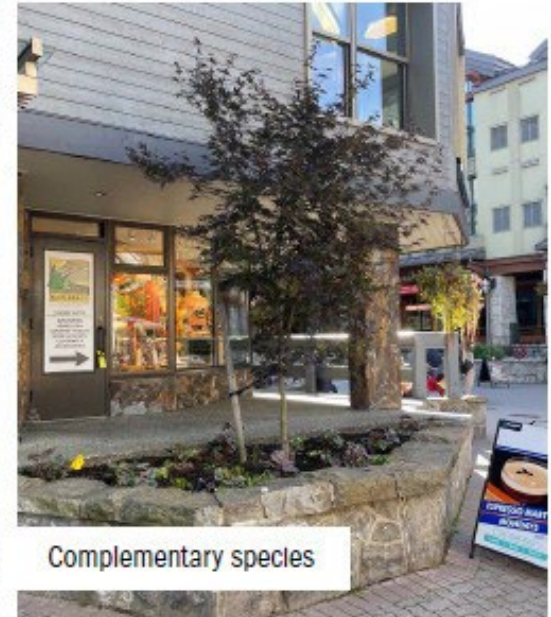
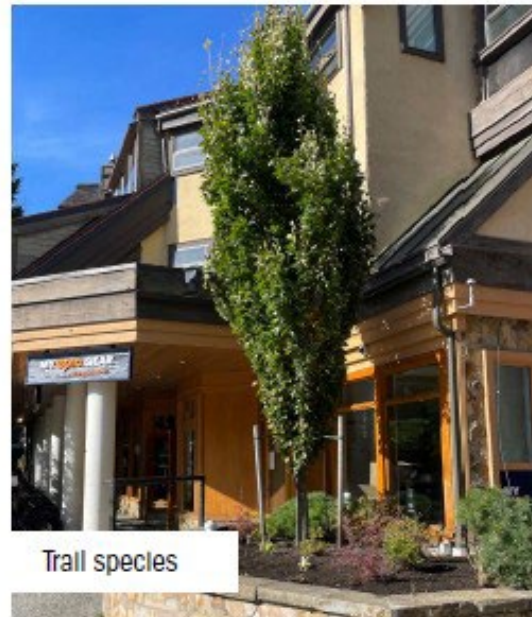
Improving Growing Conditions

- Increase soil volumes and rooting opportunities
- Integrate soil cells and engineered growing systems
- Ensure consistent irrigation and maintenance practices



Irrigation is critical to survival given the limited rooting volumes

Enhancing Species Diversity

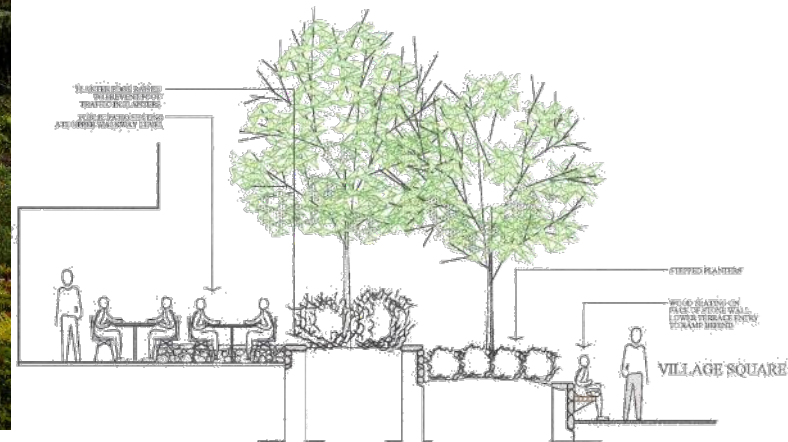


- Select climate-ready species suited to future conditions
- Reduce reliance on a narrow species palette
- Maintain Whistler's distinct mountain aesthetic

Maple trees
are the most common
tree, representing
 **29%**
of all trees

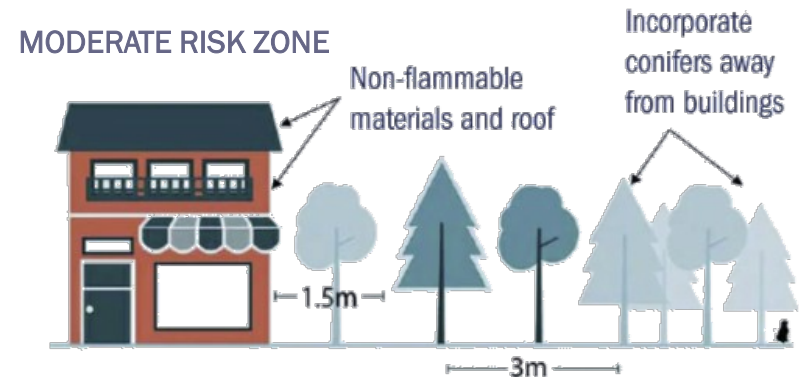
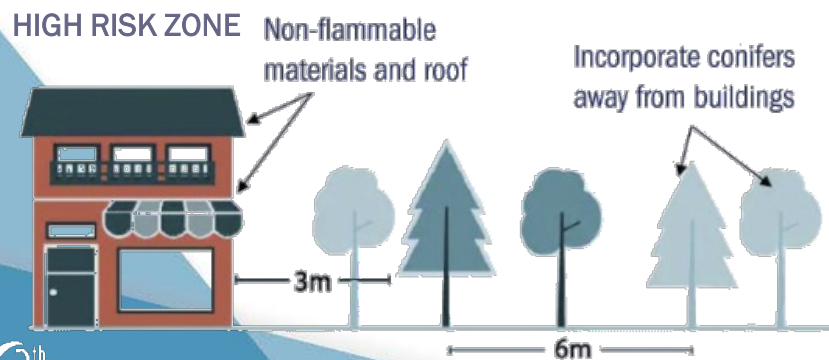
Strengthening Coordination

- Clear guidance for planning and development processes
- Engagement with private property owners
- Shared stewardship



Climate Adaptation & Wildfire Mitigation

- Aligns with FireSmart principles where applicable
- Supports water-wise and drought-tolerant tree choices
- Maintains safety while preserving benefits and reinforcing mountain character

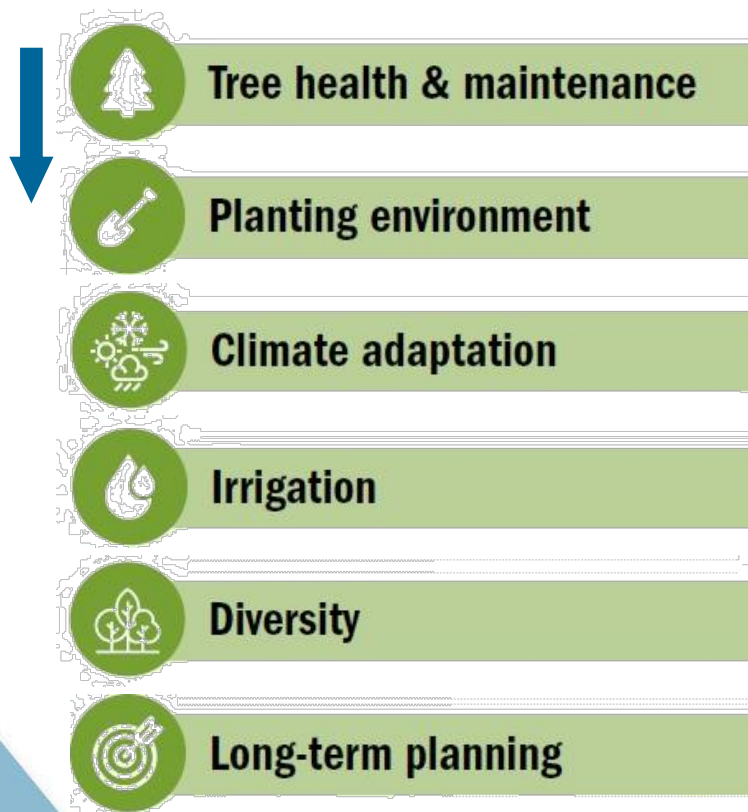


Implementation Framework

- Detailed analysis supporting near- and long-term actions
- Structured approach to replacement, planting, and maintenance
- Integration with capital planning and redevelopment timelines



Summary of Recommendations



Key Takeaways

- Trees are incredibly important
- Irrigation is essential
- Soil volumes are inadequate
- Species diversity is lacking
- Collaboration is necessary for urban forest success



Looking Ahead

- Ensures trees continue to thrive for decades to come
- Protects the Village's character and visitor experience
- Supports a resilient, welcoming, and memorable resort community



Recommendations

That Committee of the Whole (COTW) recommend to Council that the Village Stroll Tree Strategy (Strategy), attached as Appendix A to COTW Report No. W26-003, be endorsed as a guiding framework to protect, enhance, and adapt Whistler's Village Urban Forest; and

That COTW recommend to Council that staff reflect the Strategy's principles and recommendations in future updates to relevant guidelines, policies, and standards, including the Whistler Village Design Guidelines, where appropriate; and further

That COTW recommend to Council that the Strategy be used as a reference document when reviewing development permits, tree removal and replacement proposals, and public realm projects along Whistler's Village Stroll.



Questions?