

## Turning Plans into Policy

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### ABSTRACT

Building upon on the material I help teach at the Society of Municipal Arborist's (SMA) Municipal Forestry Institute (MFI), this presentation will focus on how to build a successful strategy to achieve the objective of turning a Plan from an i-Tree Project into municipal policy to advance the municipality's urban forestry Program.

Success begins with thinking strategically about the Project. Perform environmental scans to link the i-Tree Project results to current issues of importance to decision makers. Establish Performance Measures using i-Tree as a forecasting tool to model future outcomes. Cultivate diverse Stakeholders and keep them supportive. Create and nurture relations with key allies by demonstrating the benefits of trees for their Programs. Demonstrate a positive risk/return for the investment of undertaking an i-Tree Project. Effectively influence the decision-making process by applying tools: Advocacy, Coalition Building & Public Engagement and Political Capital.

Apply the key principles of leadership.

An i-Tree Eco study was conducted in partnership with the Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, the United States Forest Service and Tree Canada in 2005. The result ultimately was a major increase in investment through the town's first urban forest strategic management plan. This plan serves as a model for other communities. For its leadership, Oakville was recognized as the Forest Capital of Canada in 2007 by the Canadian Forestry Association.

### BIOGRAPHY

**John** led the Town of Oakville Ontario's Forestry Section through three decades of growth and development. The Town of Oakville was recognized by the Canadian Forestry Association as the 2007 Forest Capital of Canada. Oakville was one of the first municipalities in Ontario to undertake an i-Tree Eco Project and Strategic Forest Management Plan in 2005 and 2008 respectively. The town was the first municipality in the world to undertake its own i-Tree Eco change analysis Project in 2015. Under John's leadership, Oakville received wide recognition as a model urban forestry program and was the first in Canada to receive Accreditation by the Society of Municipal Arborists in 2015. His awards include: 2009 Ontario Professional Foresters Association (OPFA) Forester of the Year Award; 2013 OPFA John H. Sellers Award and 2014 Society of Municipal Arborist's Award of Merit.