



NEWS RELEASE

A 400-Year-Old Niagara-on-the-Lake White Oak Tree Named 2025 Ontario Tree Pageant Winner

For Immediate Release

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A 400-year-old White Oak tree on Lakeshore Road in Niagara-on-the-Lake has been awarded the 2025 Ontario Tree Pageant Winner, chosen from among 80 nominations submitted across Ontario. The Ontario Tree Pageant invited Ontarians to share photos and stories of beloved trees, with judges selecting this White Oak for its unique blend of natural, cultural, and historic value.

Standing nearly 100 feet tall, the White Oak is not only an extraordinary natural landmark but also a living piece of Canadian history. The tree was first documented in 2012 during research for the bicentennial of the War of 1812. Beyond its impressive age and size, the White Oak holds cultural significance as the official boundary marker in the first land deed signed in Upper Canada in 1781 between the Chippawa and Mississauga Nations and the English Crown.

This recognition highlights the importance of protecting mature trees, which provide unmatched environmental benefits, including carbon storage, shade, biodiversity, and resilience against climate change. Tree Trust, the charitable organization that nominated the White Oak, is dedicated to preserving legacy trees across Ontario. Unlike groups focused primarily on planting, Tree Trust works to maintain existing trees, which store as much as 10 tonnes of carbon and provide a lifetime of ecological and community benefits.

The Town continues to prioritize environmental sustainability through its Strategic Plan and partnerships with organizations like Tree Trust, ensuring that natural landmarks such as the White Oak are protected, celebrated, and enjoyed.

The White Oak is featured in the [Town's Witness Trees Program Interactive Map \(Tree #5\)](#), where users can explore its story and photo along with 24 other historic and culturally significant trees across Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Quotes:

"The White Oak has stood for centuries and continues to be part of our story. Recognition like this helps highlight why protecting natural landmarks matters to the community. Congratulations to the property owners!" – **Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa**

"Preserving established trees is practical, long-term work that benefits the whole community. The White Oak is an example of how the care we take today can leave lasting impacts for generations to come." - **CAO Nick Ruller**

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