



NEWS RELEASE

Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake Receives Funding to Support Urban Forestry Management Plan

For Immediate Release

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The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has received \$175,000 in funding through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Growing Canada's Community Canopies (GCCC) initiative to support the development of the Town's first Urban Forestry Management Plan.

The project was made possible through a \$175,000 grant funded by the Government of Canada through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Growing Canada's Community Canopies initiative.

"Our urban forest is one of Niagara-on-the-Lake's most valuable community assets, providing environmental, social, and economic benefits that contribute to the quality of life our residents enjoy," said Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa. "This funding from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and the Government of Canada will allow us to develop a comprehensive Urban Forestry Management Plan that supports informed decision-making, protects our existing tree canopy, and guides strategic investments to enhance it for future generations."

The Urban Forestry Management Plan will establish a long-term strategy to guide the protection, management, and enhancement of Niagara-on-the-Lake's urban forest. The Plan will help inform future decisions related to tree planting and canopy targets, forest health, maintenance and management practices, emergency response, monitoring and data collection, applicable bylaws and regulations, and the many environmental benefits provided by trees.

A key component of the project is a comprehensive inventory of municipally owned trees across the Town's five urban areas, including trees located along roads, in parks, and at municipal facilities. Information collected includes tree species, location, size, health and condition, and surrounding site characteristics.

The inventory is being completed through the combined efforts of seasonal staff and contracted professional arborists. In addition to reviewing inventory data, professional



arborists are conducting further assessments of trees requiring additional attention, including trees identified through service requests or those showing signs of poor condition.

The information collected through inventory and professional assessments will provide an important foundation for the Urban Forestry Management Plan and support data-informed decision-making regarding the Town's urban forest for years to come.

Community engagement has also played an important role in the project. Earlier this year, the Town launched a community survey and a Join the Conversation project page to gather feedback from residents and stakeholders. Input received through this process will help inform the Plan and support the development of a long-term approach to maintaining and enhancing the urban forest for future generations.

"The Urban Forestry Management Plan will provide the Town with the data, tools, and long-term direction needed to effectively manage and grow our urban forest," said CAO Nick Ruller. "Through detailed tree inventories, professional assessments, and community input, we are creating a strong foundation for sustainable asset management practices that will help ensure the health, resilience, and environmental benefits of our tree canopy for years to come."

Together, the tree inventory, professional assessments, and community feedback will establish a framework for the long-term management and enhancement of Niagara-on-the-Lake's urban forest, helping preserve and grow this important community asset for future generations.

About the Green Municipal Fund

The Green Municipal Fund (GMF) is a globally unique organization that empowers Canadian municipalities to drive transformative environmental change. Through a mix of training, resources and funding, GMF enables local leaders to create more sustainable, resilient, and prosperous communities. GMF is funded by the Government of Canada and delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

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