

Sunnyacres Canopy Project
c/o Tom Ewart

November 14, 2020

Mayor Cam Guthrie & Councillors of the City of Guelph
Guelph City Hall, 1 Carden Street,
Guelph, ON N1H 3A1

RE: LET'S TAKE A MOMENT TO CELEBRATE OUR TREES

Dear Mr. Mayor and Esteemed Councillors,

We wanted to invite you to take a moment to celebrate our trees--and all they do for our economy and health and safety.

Guelph was recently named one of the Tree Cities of the World, in part for the rigour and ambition in its Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP). What an accomplishment to be recognized by a United Nations agency and large American foundation!

We, Guelphites, take pride in this recognition and what it means. As you know, 95% of respondents to a City survey were supportive of long-term investment in our urban forests, and over 300 signed a [petition](#) this Fall asking that the UFMP be fully funded.

Clearly, this pride and commitment extend to you, our elected representatives. On September 28th, you unanimously approved staff's UFMP update and second phase plan. City staff seem eager to put the plan's second phase into action and have requested the budget needed to do so. We have no doubt that you will accept staff's recommendation before you now, and fully fund the UFMP this year and going forward. We thank you in advance for that.

Our economy and household finances also thank you. As you know, our tree canopy provides an estimated \$9.7 million in environmental benefits **each year**, including \$1.9 million in home energy savings. We want those annual dividends to continue being paid to us, which requires properly maintaining our trees--like one needs to maintain a home to hold its value and livability. (Speaking of which, research has shown that [trees support property values](#) too.)

Finally, let us not forget the positive health benefits we all get from our trees. Research shows:

- trees [clean the air we breathe](#) and [provide free air conditioning](#),
- trees [make streets safer](#), and may even [reduce crime](#),
- having more trees [reduces prevalence of asthma in children](#), and that
- 'doses of nature' [enhance attention](#) including among those with attention deficit disorder, and have [restorative influences on health](#).

In summary, we have a lot to be thankful for: thanks to our trees, thanks to City staff for developing a plan to care for them, and thank you for enabling that plan with appropriate funding.

Sincerely,

The Members of the Sunnyacres Canopy Project