

## Town set to distribute \$50,000 in Climate Action Fund grants

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Local community groups and schools looking to complete environmental projects will be receiving a boost from the Town of Caledon.

At Caledon Council's February 11 Planning and Development Committee meeting, Councillors approved the distribution of nearly \$50,000 in Climate Action Fund grants to be split between 10 successful grant applicants.

The decision to approve the grants will be recommended for final approval at Caledon Council's February 25 meeting.

Each year, the Town supports local champions of the environment through its Climate Action Fund.

Potential grant recipients must submit detailed plans of an environmental project they hope to undertake to the town, and an evaluation committee then reviews whether the project should receive full, partial, or no funding. The projects must align with Caledon's ?Resilient Caledon Community Climate Change Action Plan.?

In Caledon's 2025 budget, the Climate Action Fund increased to \$50,000 from \$35,000 in order to meet growing demand. The maximum a single applicant can request is \$8,000.

This year, four projects were selected to receive full funding (100 per cent of requested project cost) and six were chosen for partial funding (75 per cent of requested project cost). Five projects did not meet the minimum threshold to be recommended for funding.

Local non-profit ecoCaledon will receive \$7,956 to undertake a community waste reduction initiative.

?The project aims to increase waste diversion across Caledon by encouraging residents and businesses to adopt sustainable practices, reducing contamination in recycling, and minimizing food waste,? reads a project summary.

Project summaries were shared for each project through a staff report at the February 11 meeting.

Through its initiative, ecoCaledon plans to engage over 500 residents, host three community cleanups, two repair cafes, and one webinar for Caledon businesses.

The Village of Inglewood Association will be getting \$3,745 for its ?Greening Our Village? tree planting initiative.

?This project involves native tree plantings throughout key areas of the village, with the goal of providing shade, reducing Caledon's carbon footprint, and providing educational opportunities that empower the community and help shape a sustainable future,? reads the project summary.

The association plans to plant over 150 trees and has 60 volunteers ready to participate. It also plans to host workshops and events, and create educational materials.

Ontario Streams will receive a full \$8,000 for its ?Caledon Headwaters Rehabilitation Initiative?. The project will see Ontario streams enhance stream habitats by removing invasive species and introducing native species.

Ontario Streams plans to stock 10,000 Atlantic Salmon eggs, plant 1,000 trees and shrubs, remove 500 square metres of invasive

species, and conduct eight Brook Trout spawning surveys.

Ellwood Memorial Public School will be receiving \$4,455 for its 'Empowering Eagles: Inspiring Climate Leadership at Ellwood Memorial P.S.' initiative.

The project is described as 'a multi-phase, integrated learning approach developed to deliver the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's 'Area's Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow' program to inspire climate change leadership and action for Grade 5 students.'

The above four projects were the ones selected for full funding. The below six projects are the ones selected for partial funding.

Trout Unlimited Canada's Greg Clark chapter will receive \$3,522 to restore the Credit River at Highway 24. The group will host two tree plantings, planting 300 trees total.

'The shade provided by the trees reduces stream temperatures and helps create a sustainable habitat for Brook Trout to thrive,' reads the project summary.

Caledon East Public School will receive \$6,000 for its 'Caledon East Stewardship Project.'

In the project summary, it's described as 'a multi-phase project combining education and action, where students learn to meaningfully observe the ecosystem and collect key data during field trips to Albion Hills. Students will apply their knowledge in the schoolyard through activities such as planting a pollinator garden, conducting stream studies, bird monitoring, building bee houses, and tracking invasive species. Collected data will contribute to 'Citizen Science' databases, expanding knowledge beyond the school population.'

Southfields Village Public School will receive \$4,336 for its 'World Wellness at SFV' initiative.

According to the project summary, it will 'integrate Climate Justice Education and Indigenous knowledge to foster connection with the land among students. Key projects include hydroponic growing towers and the 'Moccasin Identifier Project' to provide education on Indigenous land connections, promote responsible consumption, and waste management through a student-led community event.'

Robert F. Hall Catholic Secondary School will be the recipient of \$2,588 for a waste management initiative. The school will be diverting waste from landfills using an industrial composter.

'Composted waste will be converted into nutrient rich soil for use in a greenhouse and pollinator/food gardens on school grounds,' reads the project summary.

Services and Housing in the Province will be getting \$3,000 to construct an 'Indigenous Learning Garden'.

'The garden will provide a space where the community can learn about the benefits of Indigenous medicinal plant species and how garden spaces can aid in sustainable climate adaptation opportunities,' reads the project summary.

Finally, Mayfield Secondary School will receive \$6,000 for its 'Educational Garden Spaces' initiative.

According to the project summary, 'this project focuses on education and greenhouse gas emission reductions through the installation of renewable energy systems and various garden projects. To bolster the existing curriculum, a greenhouse will be constructed on school grounds and used throughout the year by staff and students.'