



a town for a lifetime
IRONDEQUOIT *New York*
ADAM J. BELLO *Town Supervisor*

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MEDIA RELEASE

Irondequoit Continues to Excel in Eco-Friendly Initiatives

Irondequoit, N.Y. – The Town of Irondequoit was recently awarded over \$87,000 for an exceptional program aimed at improving stormwater management, protecting water quality, and enhancing the community's urban forest.

"Irondequoit is surrounded by waterways with the Genesee River to the West, Lake Ontario in the North and Irondequoit Bay to the East; and we are also known for our beautiful tree-lined streets," said Supervisor Adam J. Bello. "It is imperative to our residents, visitors and businesses that our water remain accessible and uncontaminated. I am grateful that the Conservation Board, Town staff and our neighbors have come together with such an innovative plan for Irondequoit's future."

Grant funds totaling \$87,560 from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative will be used for Irondequoit's Run-Off Re-Leaf Program. This 2-year program will involve the surveying and planting of street trees in the right-of-way (ROW) to reduce stormwater run-off and protect the long-term quality of our waterways.

"As indicated by the name of our neighborhood, our street trees are significant assets to the environment, quality of life and the character of our community," said Bradley Huber, President of the Winona Woods Neighborhood Association. "As such, Winona Woods residents initiated a street tree inventory with the ultimate goal of preserving and reinforcing these assets for generations of residents to come."

According to the Winona Woods Neighborhood's inventory, 75% of the trees were comprised of only two varieties (Silver or Norway Maples), leaving the Town vulnerable to devastation from future pests or disease. Additionally, more than 25% of the trees are over 100-inches in circumference and nearing the end of their expected lifespan, threatening the Town with potential stormwater run-off issues in the future. On average, each street tree could be capable of absorbing nearly 3,000 gallons of stormwater run-off. Losing these trees would put immense strain on the Town's ecosystems and sewers.

With these results in mind and in collaboration with the Winona Woods Neighborhood Association, the Town of Irondequoit's Conservation Board determined that a town-wide urban forest inventory focused on street trees in the Town's ROWs, would be a priority.

The urban forest inventory will be conducted by volunteers whose efforts will be coordinated and informed by members of the Conservation Board, Town staff and a team of volunteer arborists, master gardeners and other professionals.

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“It is vital to inventory our street trees as the data collected will be the foundation of a more sustainable urban forest for our community,” said Kim Romeo, Irondequoit Conservation Board Member. “There is incredible interest town-wide from residents who want to participate in the Street Tree Inventory. We are grateful for their help as we seek solutions to preserve our valuable resources.”

Grant funds will be used to supplement the existing inventory program, plant 150 new street trees over a 2-year period, and coordinate public outreach efforts. To alleviate maintenance costs and enhance community partnerships, this project proposes a community-based approach with significant help from the Winona Woods Neighborhood Association. Once the trees are planted, nearby residents will volunteer to tend to the tree(s) near their homes for the first two years. Each tree planted as part of this program will have a weather resistant, break-away inventory tag that will include educational messaging about street trees and Irondequoit's "Run-Off Re-Leaf" program. These tags will have a blank space to specify the type of tree, date of installation and the name of the "tree tender" volunteering to provide care and monitoring.

“The Street Tree Inventory, Neighborhood Enhancement Program, Comprehensive Master Plan and the Neighborhood Park Renovations are all examples of ways in which our Town is moving forward and strengthening our community,” continued Supervisor Bello. “There is a renewed interest in, and excitement about, Irondequoit from our residents. I’m glad the Town is able to work collaboratively to harness that excitement by making these particular investments in Irondequoit’s future.”

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