



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

Senator Sean Ryan Announces State-Funded Urban And Community Forestry Grants For Tonawanda And Orchard Park

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ISSUE:

- [NYS Senate District 60](#)
- [NYS Senator Sean Ryan](#)
- [Urban and Community Forestry](#)
- [Department of Environmental Conservation](#)

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State Forestry Grants Will Fund Tree Planting And Inventory In Towns Of Tonawanda And Orchard Park

BUFFALO - Today, May 4, 2021, New York State Senator Sean Ryan announced that the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has awarded Urban and Community Forestry grants to the Town of Tonawanda and the Town of

Orchard Park. Tonawanda will receive \$74,719 to be used for tree planting and Orchard Park will receive \$33,038 for tree inventory and management planning.

The grants are part of the second phase of grants through the DEC's Division of Lands and Forests' Urban and Community Forestry Program. The program works to increase public awareness of the importance of trees and help communities develop and implement comprehensive tree management plans to create healthy forests while enhancing quality of life for urban residents.

In the last nine years, New York State has awarded more than \$12.6 million in urban forestry grants to support projects with a total value of more than \$20 million. With the current phases of grants, a total of \$2.6 million is being awarded to 64 projects across the state. The awarded projects were selected from 154 applications, ranked by cost effectiveness, lasting benefits, use of partnerships, inclusion of outreach and education, and support from local stakeholders.

The grants complement DEC's ongoing initiatives to address invasive species, climate change, environmental degradation, environmental justice, and urban sprawl.

Senator Sean Ryan said, "When people think of forestry, they usually think of sprawling swaths of wooded land, but the trees in our parks and on our streets are vital to our communities and should not be forgotten. They beautify our towns, improve air quality, and increase property values in our neighborhoods. The Department of Environmental Conservation's Urban and Community Forestry Program is a boon to urban planning in New York, and the funds provided by these grants will be well-spent here in Western New York."

Councilwoman Dr. Jill O'Malley, Chair, Town of Tonawanda Highway Department, said, "We are honored to be awarded this highly competitive NYS Urban and Community Forestry Grant through the DEC's Division of Lands and Forests in the amount of \$74,719. We are proud to have our own Forestry Department that works hard to plant over 250 trees each year to enhance the appearance of our community and improve quality of life for our residents. This allocation greatly supports our work and commitment to reinvesting in our town's natural resources."

Councilwoman Shannon Patch, Town of Tonawanda, said, "In the Town of Tonawanda, our residents love our trees! In addition to providing aesthetic beauty

and shade, trees give our neighborhoods a sense of place, and it's always sad when we lose one to disease. This grant will allow us to plant more trees in our neighborhoods, and I thank Senator Ryan for working to secure this important source of funding."

Councilman Conor Flynn, Town of Orchard Park, said, "The Town of Orchard Park is thrilled that the DEC has chosen to support the Town of Orchard Park's tree management plan with this funding. Tree coverage greatly improves the quality of life for our residents by increasing the beauty of our community while also improving the water and air quality of our great Town. Thank you to our Tree Committee, our Conservation Board, and Town Clerk Remy Orffeo for their support of this effort."

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