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# **Adaptation in Action**

# **Community of Practice**

Terms of Reference

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# ABOUT LOCAL LEADERSHIP FOR CLIMATE ADAPTATION

On June 3, 2024, FCM's Green Municipal Fund (GMF) launched its newest initiative, Local Leadership for Climate Adaptation (LLCA). This \$530-million initiative represents one of the largest ever investments in building liveable and resilient communities in preparation for climate change in Canadian history and is a key initiative under Canada's National Adaptation Strategy. As part of this initiative, capacity development offerings will enable skill development and training to help local governments build more resilient communities and equip municipalities with the tools they need for proactive and equitable climate resilience planning and action.

Through funding and capacity development opportunities for local governments, the LLCA initiative will support in three areas of adaptation action; planning, implementation, and financing, to help municipalities and their partners build long-term community resilience. **Through LLCA, municipalities gain a vital opportunity to proactively enhance long-term climate resilience in an equitable and inclusive manner. By 2031, the initiative will have funded more than 1,400 municipal activities and enhanced the capacity of thousands of individuals.**

LLCA will ensure long-term climate resiliency by supporting:

- Climate-Ready Plans and Processes: integration of equitable and inclusive climate resilience into municipal plans, processes and management systems, such as asset management systems planning.
- Adaptation in Action: increased implementation of equitable climate adaptation action taken by Canadian municipalities.
- Financing Adaptation: increase in new financing models utilized/leveraged by Canadian municipalities to finance climate adaptation capital projects.

To support this work, GMF and its partners will provide capacity building activities such as facilitated peer learning, cohorts working on common adaptation issues, and technical assistance, training and coaching. Knowledge products from GMF, its partners and collaborators, including guides, courses and tools, will also be developed and disseminated to facilitate project implementation.

## ABOUT ADAPTATION IN ACTION

Adaptation in Action specifically extends grant funding and capacity building to promote *equitable* climate adaptation implementation.

Feasibility studies and implementation projects constitute the focal points of this funding initiative.

The overarching objective under Adaptation in Action is to support at least 500 municipalities over 8 years, 75% of which with a population of less than 100,000, in the improvement, piloting and scaling up of innovative and collaborative approaches to adapt to climate change. These projects will operationalize the planning and processes being supported under the Climate-Ready Plans and Processes portion of LLCA. Adaptation in Action will support small projects, as well as multi-sectoral and inter-jurisdictional collaborations, in areas where innovation for

municipal climate adaptation is most needed to address barriers to large-scale implementation. This support is provided in the form of grants, as well as capacity-building materials and opportunities. A specific emphasis will be placed on supporting novel project types with a view to testing and implementing the actions identified in adaptation plans, including:

- Regional-scale, multi-sectoral adaptation collaborations to implement adaptation projects, including with municipalities, Indigenous communities, and partners (e.g., not-for-profits and private sector) to more efficiently address common adaptation issues that span sectors and jurisdictional borders;
- Novel fiscal tools, policies and bylaws (a key municipal lever that is under-used as an adaptation policy tool) to enable adaptation measures at the local level;
- New implementation solutions for integrating nature-based and conventional grey infrastructure assets; and
- Pilot initiatives for the innovative use of existing assets towards adaptation benefits and their potential for larger-scale deployment.

## ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Centered on the goal of **creating opportunities for facilitated peer learning around the implementation adaptation actions that reduce a community's risk to climate impacts**, GMF's Capacity Development team will launch the LLCA Adaptation in Action Community of Practice (CoP) in November 2024. **The CoP provides a forum for municipal staff and elected officials who are leading or involved with these initiatives in their respective communities to connect with peers across Canada, discuss common challenges and best practices, and learn from one another and from experts in the field, with the goal of building the knowledge, skills and networks needed to successfully deliver their adaptation implementation actions.** Members commit to actively participating in the CoP, sharing their experiences and learnings with each other, and contributing to the development of emerging best practice on municipal climate adaptation in Canada.

### Scope of activities

This CoP's topics will focus on the implementation of adaptation projects. With this theme in mind, its purpose is to provide members with opportunities for:

- Exchanging knowledge, resources and best practices on the design, implementation, analysis, and scaling up of municipal adaptation initiatives
- Connecting with subject matter experts in the field of climate adaptation
- Accessing group training and professional development opportunities
- Gaining awareness of national resources and capacity development activities related to the LLCA initiative

The CoP will explore the following aspects of adaptation in action:

1. **Project identification and development.** Themes may include:
  - Identifying impacts of climate hazards to specific project asset or service, as well as the impacts on different individuals and groups

- Prioritizing actions (based on current opportunities, [risk mapping](#), funds, circumstances, expertise, multi-solving, short- and long-term needs, capacity, equitable distribution/opportunities, etc.)
- Assessing existing related local practices, plans, projects, policies
- Determining stakeholders and rights holders that should be engaged as well as when and how ([Inclusive engagement](#))
- Establishing the scope of a project
- Weaving knowledge systems together
- Collecting project-related data
- Managing uncertainty (e.g. climate trends, costs).
- Securing funding, including funding applications
- Procuring planning expertise and working with consultants
- Assessing project risks and planning for their mitigation
- Developing detailed project implementation plans

2. **Project implementation.** Themes may include:

- Engagement and collaboration plan during implementation & maintaining momentum
- Engaging diverse populations and inequalities
- Working with consultants and external experts
- Specific supports for small/rural/remote communities
- Working with limited space (large/urban municipalities)
- Specific project types, such as:
  - Nature-based/Biodiversity actions (e.g. wetland restoration, tree planting, FireSmart, shoreline rehabilitation)
  - Infrastructure/Built actions (e.g. stormwater system upgrades, relocation of municipal infrastructure, retrofits)
  - Social resilience actions (e.g. resilience hubs, wellness checks, early warning systems)
  - Economic actions (e.g. business case, incentives)
  - Preparing for climate refugees

3. **Project impact and analysis.** Themes may include:

- Evaluation and monitoring
- Project cost-analysis taking into consideration slow-onset and acute climate impacts
- Evaluation of how adaptation measures protect service delivery by reducing risks and damages.
- Project specific KPIs and impact measurement
- Collaboration enhancement and measuring its value
- Communication and outreach: Reporting/sharing/promoting action progress and completion
- Value of project and climate action
- Annual and strategic reporting
- Maintenance

## Eligibility and membership

## Members:

- Participation in this CoP is open to **municipal staff** and **elected officials** who are committed to implementation actions that equitably adapt their community to the impacts of climate change, ranging from those who have experience to those who are new to climate resilience field.
- To maintain an active and dynamic membership, GMF recommends **1-3 core members per municipality**. Core members may also designate **alternates** who will receive CoP communications and can opt-in to meetings on an ad-hoc basis.
- Core members commit to attending a minimum of 4 meetings in a calendar year.

## Guests:

GMF staff will invite guest speakers and facilitators to join CoP meetings based on the needs and interests of the group. Speakers may include practitioners, representatives of various organizations, and members of the CoP.

Members are encouraged to invite municipal colleagues to attend specific meetings on a case-by-case basis, where relevant. No approval is required, but their contact information (name, position, municipality, email address) must be emailed to [ecrenaud@fcm.ca](mailto:ecrenaud@fcm.ca) ahead of the meeting. These individuals will not receive ongoing communications related to the CoP.

## Format and frequency of meetings

- Meetings will be held **every two months for 1.5 hours via Zoom**. Additional meetings may be organized on an ad-hoc basis as needed.
- Meetings will typically consist of a short presentation, followed by significant time for peer learning, discussions, and workshopping.
- Priority topics will be identified in consultation with CoP members, and will be related to the effective design and delivery of adaptation initiatives.

## Pre-launch gathering

GMF will hold an in-person pre-launch event for both LLCA CoPs (Adaptation in Action and Climate Ready Plans and Processes) during ICLEI's 2024 Livable Cities Forum (October 23-25, 2024) in Vancouver. This side event will be intended for those who have applied or are interested in applying for LLCA funding (for both Climate Ready Plans and Processes, and Adaptation in Action), as well as those who wish to take part in this CoP. Attendance to this event is **not** a requirement for participation in the CoP. Pre-registration will be required. The pre-launch event will be an opportunity to build awareness and promotion, provide information on what the CoPs will be, and gather input on topics of interest.

## Regular meetings:

To accommodate the availability of participants across different time zones, meetings will generally be scheduled on the **third Tuesday** of the following months (exception: December meetings will be on the second Tuesday), at **1:00-2:30pm ET**:

- February 2025
- April 2025
- June 2025
- August 2025
- October 2025
- December 2025 (exceptionally on the second Tuesday)
- February 2026

When necessary, meetings may be rescheduled to avoid conflicts with other municipal adaptation and climate change events, holidays, or other opportunities that are relevant to CoP members.

This CoP will be bilingual, and members are welcome to participate in the official language of their choice. Sessions will be held in English with French language support. **Every fourth meeting, this will be inverted: the session will be in French, with English language support.** Slide decks, summaries, and agendas will always be available in both languages. Other core meeting documents will be translated as needed. Breakout rooms will accommodate language preferences.

The format of the CoP activities will be tailored to meet the needs of members and will be updated over time as those needs evolve.

## In-person opportunities

Recognizing the value of face-to-face gatherings for relationship building and peer-to-peer learning, FCM commits to holding the following in-person events for its Adaptation in Action CoP members:

- There will be an in-person CoP pre-launch event during ICLEI's 2024 Livable Cities Forum in Vancouver.
  - This will be a side event for those who have applied have or are interested in applying for LLCA funding as well as those interested in participating in the CoPs.
  - The purpose of the event is to:
    - present key info around what the 2 LLCA CoPs will be;
    - provide a platform for participants to share what project they intend to do;
    - collect topics that participants would like to see covered as part of their CoP.
- An in-person meeting of the CoP will be organized annually, in parallel with FCM's Sustainable Communities Conference or another relevant national conference or event.

Note that LLCA funding recipients may use a portion of their grant funding to pay for staff time and travel costs to participate in these meetings, and should therefore include a line for these expenses when preparing their proposal budget.

## Roles and responsibilities

## GMF Staff

GMF staff will manage the community and provide administrative support to ensure the group achieves its objectives, including:

- Coordinating meeting schedules, content, agenda, simultaneous interpretation, Zoom links, slide decks/resources and other logistics
- Coordinating in-person events and logistics
- Preparing and circulating meeting agendas, minutes, meeting recordings, upcoming opportunities, resources shared, presentations, and related materials
- Setting up the technology and translation support for meetings
- Post-event surveys
- Inviting guests and guest speakers
- Facilitating meetings
- Maintaining a shared document folder
- Maintaining the member list and onboarding new members
- Packaging and sharing materials and lessons learned with the group and with other interested municipalities and stakeholders, where relevant
- Coordinating periodic evaluations and adapting the format and activities to respond to members' needs and feedback.

## CoP members

Members of the Community of Practice commit to actively participate in group activities and to contribute to the achievement of its objectives, notably by:

- Attending meetings regularly, or designating an alternate where relevant, striving to attend at least 4 of the sessions listed above.
- Sharing experiences, knowledge, and resources with the group with the intent of overcoming challenges and improving the delivery of their own program and of supporting the effective design and delivery of other local adaptation initiatives.
- Sharing information to support the advancement of adaptation in Canada (e.g. program and policy developments, research, knowledge resources, events).
- Providing timely input and feedback on CoP activities.
- Contributing to annual evaluation of the CoP and its tools.
- Sharing resources and upcoming opportunities that would be of interest to the other CoP participants: members are encouraged to share information about other learning activities related to climate adaptation with the group and with GMF staff to avoid duplication of activities and to help promote these events more broadly.

## Group communications

Members will be invited to access an Adaptation in Action CoP Sharepoint folder hosted by FCM. This platform will allow members to access past meeting materials and share resources related to the CoP. FCM will provide

technical support to ensure members can access the platform. The use of Sharepoint will be evaluated periodically to ensure it meets the needs of the group.

## Code of conduct

The CoP has established the following group norms to help members work and collaborate effectively during meetings:

- **Support the group process** by respecting start and break times.
- **Commit to confidentiality** of others' personal stories.
- **Speak from the heart** by sharing our own direct experiences and avoid speaking on behalf of others.
- **Strive to stay present** and engaged during the session and avoid multi-tasking.
- **Stay open** by noticing judgements/assumptions about ourselves or others and try to suspend them if possible.
- **Be curious:** listen to learn, and seek first to understand, then to be understood. Leverage this space as one for exchange and learning.
- **Take space & make space** so that all voices can be heard.
- **Welcome and hold diversity** by recognizing that many perspectives and truths are real and can co-exist.
- **Accept and expect non-closure:** This work is complex – we may leave with some unanswered questions and that's ok and part of the learning process.
- **Assume good intentions, and remember that intentions don't negate impact.**

## Evaluation

Members will be invited to complete a short feedback survey at the end of each meeting, and to participate in an annual evaluation of the CoP activities. This feedback will help GMF staff adapt the CoP to ensure it is meeting members' needs and to report on the effectiveness of GMF's capacity development activities related to the LLCA initiative. These Terms of Reference will be updated periodically based on this feedback from members.

## Becoming a Member

To fully benefit from the peer learning and networking opportunities of this initiative, it is ideal to attend from its launch in February. Therefore, municipal staff and elected officials who are interested in joining the CoP are encouraged to submit their [registration form](#) **by 5:00 pm ET Friday, January 24, 2025**, in order to join in time to participate in the full year of gatherings. Nevertheless, registrations after this date will still be welcome, with the expectation that members attend a minimum of 4 meetings in the calendar year. For this reason, those applying after the June 2025 meeting will be invited to join in the following year.

Please note that members will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Selection may also consider geographic distribution of municipalities. CoPs will be managed with the principles of Reconciliation and Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion at their heart.



For any questions, please email Émilie Campbell-Renaud, Advisor, Capacity Development – Adaptation • Green Municipal Fund: [ecrenaud@fcm.ca](mailto:ecrenaud@fcm.ca).