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Growing Canada's Community Canopies – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies

Application Guide

For applications received from October 2025 to April 2026

A program of

FCM

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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Green Municipal Fund's (GMF) Growing Canada's Community Canopies (GCCC) is a \$291M initiative that drives climate action by funding projects that plant and manage trees in communities across the country. GCCC will support the planting of at least 1.2M new trees by March 31, 2031. The GCCC initiative is a part of GMF's broader approach to nature-based climate solutions focused on achieving significant carbon sequestration and increasing forest and community resilience to climate change.

GCCC offers funding to support communities in developing comprehensive plans and studies to strengthen the planning, management and stewardship of their trees and forests. This includes projects that enable informed decision-making in urban forest management, and ensuring that forests in communities are resilient, equitably distributed and contribute long-term environmental, social and economic benefits. GCCC supports the development of [urban forestry](#) plans and studies that enhance municipal capacity for future tree planting, and provide essential tools, strategies and data to guide effective and long-term tree planting efforts.

For more information on GCCC, please visit our [initiative webpage](#).

GCCC is funded by the Government of Canada and delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. FCM has partnered with Tree Canada to enable capacity development.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide outlines everything you need to know about applying for funding under GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies. It contains application instructions, information about how your project will be evaluated and tips for completing a great application.

Follow the directions in this guide as you complete your pre-application and full application, to help ensure your responses are comprehensive and provide enough detail so that someone who is unfamiliar with your project would fully understand it.

The appendices at the end of the guide contain additional information:

- [Appendix A: Funding details](#)
- [Appendix B: Required supporting documents](#)
- [Appendix C: Evaluation of applications](#)
- [Appendix D: Reporting requirements](#)
- [Appendix E: Municipal council resolution template](#)
- [Appendix F: Glossary of key terms](#)

IMPORTANT: Please visit the GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies [funding webpage](#) prior to reading this application guide. The webpage has essential information about funding amounts; project eligibility, including a quick “readiness check” that we recommend you complete to determine whether your project is a good fit; and required project outcomes.

GMF respects the principles of ownership, control, access and possession, more commonly known as OCAP®. These principles assert that Indigenous communities have control over data-collection processes, and that they own and control how this information can be used. Any product, data or information that may include Indigenous knowledge may be submitted at the discretion of the applicant.

If you have questions or would like help as you complete your application, please email us at gmfinfo@fcm.ca, call 1-877-417-0550 or [book a meeting with a GMF representative](#).

APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

To apply for GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies funding, you will need to submit:

- A pre-application form
- A full application form
- An Excel project workbook
- All [required supporting documents](#)

Below is an overview of the steps in the application process.

Step 1: Readiness check

Before applying, please complete the “readiness check” on our [funding webpage](#) to help you determine if your project is eligible for GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies funding and to learn about the application process.

Step 2: Pre-application completion and submission

After you have completed the readiness check and determined that your project may be eligible, you will need to obtain a pre-application form through [FCM's funding portal](#). Once you have completed this form, you will submit it through the portal as well. To do this, create a client profile in the portal and follow the instructions listed there.

Supporting documents are not required at the pre-application stage. They will need to be submitted with your full application.

IMPORTANT: If you are a municipality or municipal corporation from Quebec, pre-applications must be submitted and approved by Ministère des Affaires municipales et de l'Habitation (MAMH). Please review the steps on how to apply on our [funding webpage](#).

Step 3: Eligibility determination

A GMF representative will review your pre-application and determine whether your organization and project are eligible to proceed to the next step of the application process. You should receive a response within five business days of the date we receive your pre-application.

IMPORTANT: Even if your organization and project are deemed eligible to move forward with a full application, it does not guarantee that your project will be approved for funding.

Step 4: Full application completion and submission

If your organization and project are deemed eligible to proceed, your GMF representative will inform you that the full application form is available through [FCM's funding portal](#). They will also provide you with a project workbook to complete.

As you complete the application and the workbook, contact your GMF representative if you have questions or need help. Once you've filled out the application form and project workbook and attached the [required supporting documents](#), submit all of this information through [FCM's funding portal](#).

Step 5: GMF project officer review

Once your full application is submitted, a GMF project officer will be assigned to your file and will review your application for accuracy and completeness. They will work with you to resolve any questions and be your point of contact throughout the rest of the application and funding decision process.

Step 6: Peer and internal review

Following an external peer review and an internal analysis of your full application, a funding recommendation is made by GMF to FCM's Board of Directors.

Step 7: Funding decision

FCM's Board of Directors approves projects funded under GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies.

Note: Access urban forestry coaching

You can access free coaching support from urban forestry professionals to improve the quality of your application and receive answers to technical questions about your project. If you are interested in speaking with a coach to support your application, please ask your GMF representative to refer you.

Coaches can help you with:

- Scoping your project and reviewing methodology
- Maximizing project benefits
- Ensuring your project is informed by best practices in urban forestry

Your GMF representative may recommend coaching at different phases of the application process, including after eligibility determination (step 3) and peer and internal review (step 6). If your application is successful, coaching is also available as a resource to support you throughout the implementation of your project.

Please refer to our [coaching webpage](#) for more information on this service.

HOW TO COMPLETE A PRE-APPLICATION

Before you complete a pre-application form, please fill out the “**readiness check**” on our [funding webpage](#). This will give you a good indication of whether your project may be eligible for GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies funding.

If you’re not sure whether your project aligns with the funding requirements, or if you have questions about how to apply, please email us at gmfinfo@fcm.ca, call 1-877-417-0550, or [book a meeting with a GMF representative](#).

After you have completed the readiness check and determined that your project may be eligible, please obtain the pre-application form through [FCM’s funding portal](#) and follow the instructions in this guide to complete it.

GMF uses the information in your pre-application to evaluate whether your project aligns with GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies funding requirements and is eligible to proceed to the full application step. It also helps us determine if you might benefit from coaching during the application process.

Quebec municipal applicants

Quebec municipalities that are interested in applying should refer to our [funding webpage](#) for more details or contact us as outlined above.

Part A: Applicant information

In part A, please describe who you are, where you are from and who your main partners are, if any.

Participating organizations

In the participating organizations section, please provide the name and role of each participating organization. Use the guidance in the following table to help you complete this section.

IMPORTANT: If your organization is *not* a municipal government, your project must be delivered in partnership with one. You will be required to provide the name of the main project contact for your lead municipality on the project team. You will also be required to submit a municipal council resolution showing the municipal partnership.

Please see [Appendix B: Required supporting documents](#) for requirements of non-municipal applicants and [Appendix E: Municipal council resolution template](#) for an example of a council resolution.

Participating organizations	Required supporting information
Organization name [type to select from list in the portal]	Use the full legal name of the organization.
Organization role [select one]	<p>Select from the following four options (in a drop-down menu):</p> <p>Lead applicant: the entity (e.g., not-for-profit, municipal services corporation, Indigenous community) championing the project in partnership with the lead municipality. The lead applicant signs the funding agreement with FCM, oversees the project (even if a third party completes the work), incurs the costs for the project and submits the required reporting to FCM.</p> <p>Lead municipality: the primary municipal partner to a non-municipal lead applicant; usually the municipality where the project is taking place or that will benefit from the project.</p> <p>Lead applicant and municipality: select this option if the lead applicant is a municipality.</p> <p>Partner: select this option if the organization is not the lead applicant or the lead municipality (e.g., projects with multiple municipal partners, non-municipal funders, etc.).</p>

Project contacts

In the project contacts section, please provide details for the lead project contact(s). Be sure to include their primary role(s) in the project and their affiliated organization(s). Use the guidance in the table below to help you complete this section.

IMPORTANT: Contacts listed in this section will have access to view the application, but the form can only be submitted by the **application contact**, who is the primary contact for the application and the person who is permitted to submit the application. We recommend that you designate only one application contact who

will be responsible for completing the application process and receiving all related correspondence.

You may include additional contacts other than the application contact here, but it is not required at this stage. You will have to provide contact details for all project contacts at the full application stage, including a secondary contact from the lead applicant organization. If your organization is not a municipal government, you will also need to include a municipal contact from the municipality with which you are collaborating.

Project contacts	Required supporting information
Organization name [select from list in the portal]	You will only be permitted to select the names of the organizations you listed as participating organizations in the participating organizations section.
Contact name [open text]	Enter first and last name.
Contact role [select one]	<p>One of the contacts you provide must be the application contact.</p> <p>If you wish to provide additional contacts, select them from the following list:</p> <p>Secondary contact: the secondary point of contact with the lead applicant organization supporting the submission of the application</p> <p>Municipal contact: contacts representing the municipality if not already identified as an application contact or a secondary contact</p> <p>Consultant: the primary contact representing the consulting team, if applicable</p> <p>Read-only: a contact who is permitted to view the application, but is not permitted to make changes to the application</p>

Lead applicant community type

In the lead applicant community type section, please indicate if you belong to the listed community types.

Municipalities with populations of fewer than 10,000 as well as [Indigenous, northern](#) or [remote](#) communities are eligible to receive a higher cost share. See [Appendix A: Funding details](#).

Question: Is the lead applicant an Indigenous community or a municipality partnering with an Indigenous community? [select one]

- Yes
- No

Question: Is the lead applicant a municipality with a population of fewer than 10,000, or a remote or northern community? [select one]

- Yes
- No

Part B: Project information

In part B, please provide an overview of your project, including the project category, title and description.

Project category

In the project category section, please select one of five project types, as listed below, to categorize your project. Review the categories and examples and then select the category that best fits your project from the drop-down list in the table.

Urban forest strategy or plan

These are long-term strategies or plans to manage, enhance and protect the entire urban forest.

Examples:

- [Urban forest management plan](#) or strategy (or update)
- [Urban forest operational plan](#) (e.g., implementation, long-term maintenance, monitoring)
- [Urban forest asset management plan](#)

Tree planting strategy or plan

These are strategies or plans specifically aimed at guiding community-wide or regional tree planting efforts, with a focus on achieving strategic tree planting goals and priorities, such as increasing tree abundance.

Examples:

- [Tree planting strategy](#) or framework
- [Tree planting master plan](#)

Urban forestry policy or guideline

These are projects that can help shape effective urban forestry policies, such as those that govern tree preservation, planting and maintenance.

Examples:

- Tree or urban forest bylaws
- Technical guidelines, manuals, standards and specifications
- Urban forestry best practices and operational design standards

Urban forestry community engagement strategy or plan

These are plans to involve community members in urban forest management and education.

Examples:

- Urban forest collaboration and partnership plans (e.g., [stakeholder](#) or [rightsholder](#) engagement plans)
- Community education and engagement strategy
- Capacity-building strategy for tree planting and maintenance

Urban forest assessment and analysis

These are projects that involve gathering, analyzing and assessing data and information to better understand and manage urban forests.

Examples:

- Tree inventory
- Land cover analysis (e.g., [canopy cover](#), plantable area)
- Planting site inventory
- Canopy growth modelling
- Planting prioritization study (e.g., urban heat, equity)
- Forest structure and function study (e.g., [biodiversity](#), [connectivity](#), [ecosystem services](#))
- Urban forest climate vulnerability assessment
- Urban forest current conditions assessment/baseline analysis (e.g., criteria and indicators assessment)
- Urban tree risk assessment (e.g., environmental, financial)

IMPORTANT: Your project may fall into one or more of the above categories, as these are not mutually exclusive. However, please select the category that best describes your project. For example, the development of an urban forest strategy could require the creation of a community engagement strategy and the completion of urban forest assessments and analyses. In this case, while your project includes the development of an engagement strategy and urban forest assessments, you would select “urban forest strategy or plan” as the application project type, as this will be the final deliverable for your project.

Question: Please indicate the category that best describes your project. [select one]

- Urban forest strategy or plan
- Tree planting strategy or plan
- Urban forestry policy or guideline
- Urban forestry community engagement strategy or plan
- Urban forest assessment and analysis

Project title

In the project title section, please indicate your project's working title. This title will be used to publicly identify the project. Use the guidance in the following table to help you complete this section.

Project title	Required supporting information
Project working title [open text]	The title should include, at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the name of the municipality or, in the case of multiple municipalities, the region• a description of the project, with at least one keyword based on the project deliverable

Project description

In the project description section, please provide a short description of your project, including the objectives. Your project description should provide GMF staff with a reasonable understanding of what you plan to accomplish with the funding.

Details to include in your project description
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who: Provide an overview of who will lead, partner on and help deliver (e.g., consultants) your project.• What/when: Describe the scope of your project. Include key activities, interim and final deliverables and an overall timeline.• Where: Describe the community or region where your project will take place. Highlight any unique characteristics or needs that your project will address.• Why: Describe the objectives of your project, and the specific outcomes you hope to achieve.

- **How:** Describe the methodology that will be used to implement your plan or study. Explain how the methodology aligns with the project's objectives, addresses all aspects of the project, specifies appropriate data collection methods and incorporates innovative strategies to achieve urban forestry goals and outcomes.

Part C: Project eligibility

In part C, please provide more information to help us evaluate your project's eligibility, including information about previous GCCC funding, the primary focus of the project, contributions to tree planting initiatives and a plan for measurable results.

Each lead municipality is only eligible to apply for one GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies grant. Please indicate if the lead municipality has already received funding for a GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies application.

If you respond yes to the question below, your project is not eligible for funding.

Question: Has the lead municipality already received funding for a GCCC – Urban Forestry Plan or Study? [select one]

- Yes
- No

Only projects where the primary focus is on forests or trees within your community are eligible for funding.

Examples of ineligible projects include plans or studies that focus on broader environmental or ecosystem issues rather than urban forests or trees within the community. This includes projects like biodiversity plans that address multiple ecosystems, natural asset management plans that cover natural assets beyond urban forestry, and general sustainability or green infrastructure plans where the focus is broader than trees or urban forests.

If you respond no to the question below, your project is not eligible for funding.

Question: Is the primary focus of the project on the forests/trees in your community? [select one]

- Yes
- No

Your urban forestry plan or study must contribute to building your community's capacity to prioritize, plan for or undertake future tree planting initiatives. This could include actions such as developing strategies, assessing tree planting needs or identifying key locations for future tree planting. While your plan or study does not need to be directly linked to a specific tree planting project, it should help lay the groundwork for future planting efforts.

If you respond no to the question below, your project is not eligible for funding.

Question: Will your project contribute to future tree planting initiatives in your community? [select one]

- Yes
- No

GCCC supports urban forestry projects that drive tangible, positive change in local communities. Only projects that include a clear, actionable plan to implement the results of the plan or study and lead to measurable changes and impacts will be considered for funding.

Examples of ineligible projects include plans or studies that focus solely on research without a clear path to implementation, theoretical plans without specific actions, or projects that do not have a strategy to achieve measurable, long-term outcomes.

If you respond no to the question below, your project is not eligible for funding.

Question: Does your project include a clear plan to implement the results to make measurable changes in your community? [select one]

- Yes
- No

Budget

In the budget section, please indicate your project's anticipated start and end dates, the amount of funding being requested and the anticipated total project cost.

IMPORTANT: The project must be completed within two years of receiving funding approval.

Budget	Required supporting information
Project start and end dates (yyyy-mm-dd) [date fields]	Indicate the anticipated start and end dates for your project.
Funding request (\$) [currency field]	Indicate the amount of funding you are requesting for your project.
Anticipated total project cost (\$) [currency field]	Provide the anticipated total cost of your project.

Part D: Declaration and signature

In the declaration and signature section, type the information of the person with signing authority from the lead applicant organization.

IMPORTANT: Only the application contact from the lead applicant organization can submit the pre-application form. This person must ensure they have permission to submit on behalf of their organization. Consultants working with a lead applicant to prepare the pre-application cannot sign the declaration or submit the pre-application.

Ready to submit your pre-application?

Submit your pre-application to GMF in [FCM's funding portal](#). To do this, create a client profile in the portal and follow the steps listed there to fill out and submit your pre-application form.

If you have challenges submitting your pre-application, please email us at gmfinfo@fcm.ca, call 1-877-417-0550 or [book a meeting with a GMF representative](#).

HOW TO COMPLETE A FULL APPLICATION

If your project is deemed eligible, based on the information you provided in your pre-application, your GMF representative will inform you that the full application form is available through [FCM's funding portal](#). They will also provide you with a project workbook to complete and submit.

IMPORTANT: As part of your full application, you will be required to submit applicable supporting documents through [FCM's funding portal](#). Supporting documents relevant to each part of the application are listed below and summarized in [Appendix B: Required supporting documents](#).

As you complete the full application form and project workbook, please contact your GMF representative if you have any questions.

Part A: Applicant information

Instructions on how to provide information about the project applicants can be found in the pre-application [Applicant information](#) section.

Note: Please include contact details for additional project contact(s), if any, who were not identified at the pre-application stage.

Supporting document(s)

Required supporting documents for Part A, Applicant information:

The required supporting documents will differ depending on the type of lead applicant. See [Appendix B: Required supporting documents](#) for details, including templates where relevant.

All applicants:

- Evidence of municipal support

Non-municipal applicants:

- A municipal council resolution showing the municipal partnership
- Confirmation of organizational support from CEO or CFO
- Articles of incorporation
- Last three consecutive audited financial statements, if applicable.

Indigenous communities:

- If eligible through a partnership with a municipality:
 - A municipal council resolution showing the municipal partnership
- If eligible through a shared service agreement:
 - A shared service agreement with a Canadian municipality related to municipal infrastructure, climate change or adaptation.

Part B: Project information

In part B, please provide the project category, title and description for your project.

Note: When possible, please refer to specific page numbers or sections in your supporting documents when you are completing your full application, to make it easier for staff and peer reviewers to evaluate your application accurately.

Project category

Instructions on how to indicate your project category can be found in the pre-application [Project information](#) section.

Project title

Instructions on how to indicate your project title can be found in the pre-application [Project information](#) section.

Project description

Instructions on how to describe your project can be found in the pre-application [Project information](#) section.

In your full application, please expand on the project description from the pre-application by describing your overall project approach and methodology.

Part C: Project approach

In part C, please provide more information about your project's approach and methodology, including the project team, the engagement strategy, the connection to community and sustainability objectives, the implementation plan, measurement and monitoring activities and project challenges and mitigation strategies.

Project team

In the project team section, please identify the members of the team (including project partners, if any) and their roles in the project.

Your application should include at least one member of the lead applicant's project management team as well as anyone responsible for training and capacity building who will contribute to successful completion of your project. If your project is sponsored or championed by a municipal elected official, include them as well.

If you have not yet hired one or more key team members, please indicate this in your application (e.g., "consultant TBD") and detail their *anticipated* roles and responsibilities along with their *required* level of experience and expertise (i.e., as defined in your request for proposals to hire the consultant).

Project teams will be evaluated based on the composition of the team and its ability to lead the project to completion and deliver the expected benefits, and whether there is strong municipal staff participation throughout the project.

Question: Please describe in the table below the roles and responsibilities of the project team and partners.

[fillable table]

Name	Title	Organization	Scope of responsibilities	Years of experience
[open text]	[open text]	[open text]	[open text]	[numerical]

Engagement strategy

In the engagement strategy section, please provide information about your project's plan for engagement and inclusive engagement practices. When describing your engagement strategy, please indicate the extent to which you have identified and engaged and/or plan to engage relevant rightsholders and stakeholders for project planning, design, execution and operations. These might include operations staff, staff from other relevant departments, council members, regulators, agencies, Indigenous groups from the traditional territories the municipality is situated upon, citizens' groups and not-for-profit organizations.

IMPORTANT: If an engagement strategy has already been created for the project, please include it as a supporting document with your submission.

Where appropriate, GMF strongly encourages project applicants to build broad public support with the community, as well as inclusive, accessible and authentic engagement with and representation of equity-deserving groups.

For each group identified, indicate the level of engagement from the following five categories, taken from [IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation](#):

- **Inform:** You will provide or have provided the group with balanced and objective information to assist the group to understand the problem, alternatives and/or solutions.
- **Consult:** You will provide or have provided opportunities for the group to share feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.
- **Involve:** You will work or have worked directly with the group throughout the process to ensure their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.
- **Collaborate:** You will partner or have partnered with the group in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.
- **Empower:** This group will have or has had final decision-making power.

Question: Please describe in the table below the project's engagement plan.

[fillable table]

Stakeholder or rightsholder, including equity-deserving groups	Level of engagement	Description
Group A	[select one]* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform • Consult • Involve • Collaborate • Empower 	[open text]
Group B	[select one]* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform • Consult • Involve • Collaborate • Empower 	[open text]
* In cases where one activity serves several purposes, select the <i>highest</i> degree of engagement the activity serves (e.g., "consult" rather than "inform")		

In the engagement strategy section, please describe any inclusive engagement practices that were or will be implemented for your project, or how you plan to develop these practices with stakeholders and rightsholders.

Inclusive community engagement entails identifying and engaging with equity-deserving groups that have an interest in the project, reducing barriers to participation, empowering diverse groups with decision-making, and building relationships and connections through [meaningful engagement](#).

Examples of inclusive engagement practices include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Identifying and addressing potential barriers to participation by equity-deserving groups (e.g., personal resources, motivation and attitude, cultural factors)
- Making changes to the project based on feedback received from community engagement activities
- Using multiple methods of communication to help reach diverse groups in the community
- Reviewing communication materials for improved [accessibility](#) (e.g., written clearly in a plain language style; translated into the languages spoken in the community; formatted with high-contrast colours, accessible fonts, alt text for visuals)

Question: Please describe any inclusive engagement practices that will be part of the project.

[open text]

Connection to community and sustainability objectives

In the connection to community and sustainability objectives section, please describe how your plan or study is linked to, or supported by, the municipality's broader urban forest management priorities or sustainability objectives, as outlined in existing municipal policies, plans, programs or guidelines (e.g., climate action plans, biodiversity strategies, natural asset management plans, municipal council priorities, etc.). Please explain how your plan or study advances or complements these objectives and discuss any trade-offs between different sustainability goals, if relevant.

When describing the community or sustainability objectives in your response, please provide brief descriptions and web links (if available) to the documents you reference, including relevant page numbers or sections that demonstrate alignment. In your description of how the plan or study supports each objective, also comment on how your project fits the size, scale, and capacity of your municipality, and how it advances local priorities.

Question: Please describe in the table below how this plan or study is aligned with your community's urban forest management priorities or broader sustainability objectives.

[fillable table]

Community or sustainability objective(s)	Description of how the plan or study supports the objective(s)
[open text]	[open text]

Project implementation

In the project implementation section, please explain how you plan to implement your plan or study. Your plan or study should have a clear, actionable strategy to ensure that the actions and recommendations that are developed in your plan or study will be effectively carried out and sustained.

Describe how you will manage the transition from planning to execution, including the steps you will take to ensure you have the necessary resources to implement the actions or recommendations, the timelines for implementation and who will be responsible. You can also highlight any existing collaborations or new partnerships that will support the long-term implementation of the project.

Question: Please describe how you will ensure that the actions and recommendations developed in your plan or study will be carried out after the plan or study is completed and how they will continue to be supported over time.

[open text]

Measuring and monitoring

GCCC funds urban forestry plans and studies that present a comprehensive, actionable and realistic plan to measure results and make adjustments based on outcomes.

Please describe how you will measure success and the outcomes of your plan or study, including your plan for collecting performance data, and the methods and indicators that will be used to monitor progress toward the specified environmental, social and economic benefits.

Question: Please describe how you will measure and monitor the implementation of your plan or study.

[open text]

Project challenges and mitigation strategies

In the project challenge and mitigation strategies section, please describe the key risks and challenges you may face in developing and implementing your project, and how you will manage and mitigate them. Risks and challenges may be environmental, technical, operational, planning, and time- and cost-related.

Your response should show an understanding and adoption of risk management strategies with appropriate mitigation of potential risks to the project.

Question: Please identify in the table below the potential risks and challenges in executing and implementing this project and provide your proposed mitigation strategy for each risk or challenge.

[fillable table]

Risk/challenge description	Mitigation strategy
[open text]	[open text]

Supporting document(s)

Required supporting documents for Part C, Project approach:

- Project team members' resumés or documents listing their professional qualifications and experience as they relate to this project.
- Letters of support from project partners, if applicable

Note: Please provide detailed resumés or descriptions of the experience of the lead members of the project team. Short descriptions of experience are sufficient for other team members.

Optional supporting documents for Part C, Project approach:

- Engagement strategy
- Risk register document (in addition to the [project challenges and mitigation strategies](#) table)
- Documentation indicating your community or sustainability objectives

Part D: Project benefits

In part D, we want to better understand your project's anticipated benefits and outcomes.

In the benefits section, please answer questions a) through e) to explain how your project will identify and prioritize different benefits.

Please describe how your project will identify and prioritize socio-economic benefits in your community:

- **social benefits**, which could include increased access to new and improved shared spaces and green spaces, improved air quality, improved public health, improved safety or security, and reduced noise.
- **economic benefits**, which could include creating quality jobs, applying social and local procurement of goods and services criteria, or building community wealth.

Question a) Please describe how your plan or study will consider socio-economic benefits.

[open text]

Please describe how your plan or study will incorporate a climate lens into the planning process, to ultimately improve community climate change resilience. This could include urban forest planning to reduce the effects of urban heat islands, manage stormwater or prioritize planting in areas with low canopy cover.

Question b) Please describe how your plan or study will consider community climate change resilience.

[open text]

Please describe how your plan or study will consider biodiversity and ecosystem health outcomes or benefits that your project could generate. Examples of benefits may include habitat restoration, support for species at risk and other species of interest, planting to increase ecosystem connectivity, and restoring or enhancing the ecological value of sites.

Question c) Please describe how your plan or study will consider biodiversity and ecosystem health.

[open text]

GCCC funds urban forestry plans or studies that help communities overcome barriers to planting trees, build the skills and resources necessary for the successful implementation of planting projects and strengthen the community's capacity to maintain and expand the tree canopy cover over time.

While your urban forestry plan or study does not need to be directly linked to a specific tree planting project, it should lay the groundwork for future planting efforts. This can include creating strategies, policies or frameworks that support tree planting and canopy expansion, such as regulations or strategies that ensure tree replacement and long-term urban forest sustainability.

Please describe how your project will contribute to future tree planting initiatives in your community, including increases to the community's capacity to undertake future tree planting initiatives, whether through policy development, planning strategies or other actions that support long-term tree canopy maintenance and growth.

Question d) Please describe how your plan or study will contribute to future tree planting initiatives in your community.

[open text]

GCCC supports urban forestry plans or studies that address Reconciliation, anti-racism, equity and inclusion. Please describe how your project ensures that the benefits of urban forests (e.g., improved air quality, access to green spaces, community climate resilience) are accessible to all members of your community, especially racialized persons, Indigenous peoples and other equity-deserving groups.

Here is some guidance on how to integrate Reconciliation, anti-racism, equity and inclusion into your project:

- **Advancing Reconciliation with Indigenous communities:** Engage Indigenous communities to ensure their knowledge, rights and cultural values are incorporated into urban forest planning. Consider and prioritize Indigenous ecological practices and perspectives in decision making about urban forest management.
- **Integrating an equity lens:** Identify equity-deserving groups and communities and rightsholders that may be affected by your project. Assess tree canopy cover to identify areas of greatest need for these communities. Ensure the inclusive engagement and active involvement of equity-deserving groups in the decision-making and planning process.
- **Ensuring equitable access to benefits:** Ensure all community members, especially equity-deserving groups, have equitable access to the benefits of tree canopy and urban forestry initiatives. This includes improving equitable access to green spaces with tree cover, promoting tree planting in areas of

greatest need, and providing resources and education to communities with limited access to trees and the benefits of urban forests.

- **Building capacity for long-term equity and inclusion:** Provide training for staff and community members to help them understand and address the needs of equity-deserving groups. Establish clear mechanisms to monitor, report and adjust strategies to ensure equitable benefits for all, especially those in greatest need. Leverage partnerships to achieve equity goals.
- **Addressing historical disparities and environmental justice:** Acknowledge historical inequities in access to trees and green spaces, to ensure your project addresses some of these disparities, promotes anti-racism and provides long-term solutions to improve green space access for equity-deserving groups.

Question e) Please describe how you plan on integrating Reconciliation, anti-racism, equity and inclusion into your plan or study to ensure equitable access to benefits, especially in communities of greatest need.

[open text]

Supporting document(s)

Optional supporting documents for Part D, Project benefits:

- You may provide additional documentation that provides further details about your project's benefits.

Part E: Budget and workplan

Before completing part E, please complete the project workbook provided to you by your GMF representative.

Be sure to consult [Appendix A: Funding details](#) to determine what cost share you are eligible for, and [Appendix D: Reporting requirements](#) to ensure that your project's budget includes sufficient resources to meet the reporting requirements.

Budgets should be realistic and reflect the proposed workplan, which should have concrete deliverables tied to established project milestones. The workplan should also have realistic timelines and consider elements such as data collection, project monitoring and performance verification.

Budgets and workplans will be evaluated based on industry standards for projects of similar size, scope and location.

In the budget table, please review the budget information about your project that was provided at the pre-application stage and update it if necessary. Please ensure

that the values for the funding request and the anticipated total project costs are the same as those in your project workbook.

Budget	Required supporting information
Project start and end date (yyyy-mm-dd) [date-time field]	Indicate the start and end dates for your project
Funding request (\$) [currency field]	Indicate the amount of funding you are requesting for your project
Anticipated total project cost (\$) [currency field]	Provide the total costs of your project

Supporting document(s)

Required supporting documents for Part E, Budget and workplan:

See [Appendix B: Required supporting documents](#) for details, including templates where relevant.

- GCCC – Urban Forest Plans and Studies project workbook
- Letters from each confirmed source of funding

IMPORTANT: Your project workbook is a critical supporting document for your funding application. It will be used to create the funding agreement for approved projects and for project monitoring. *Please be sure to carefully read and follow the instructions provided in the project workbook.*

Optional supporting documents for Part E, Budget and workplan:

- You may attach additional documentation that provides further details about your project budget and workplan.

Part F: Declaration and signature

In the declaration and signature section, type the information of the person with signing authority from the lead applicant organization (i.e., the person who will sign the funding agreement if your application is successful). There is no need to physically sign the application.

IMPORTANT: Only the application contact from the lead applicant organization can submit the full application form. This person must ensure they have permission to submit the application on behalf of their organization. Consultants working with a lead applicant to prepare the application cannot sign the declaration or submit the application.

Ready to submit your full application?

Once you have verified that the information in your full application form and project workbook is complete, and that you have gathered all required supporting documents, submit your completed application in [FCM's funding portal](#).

Your completed application should include:

- Your full application form as a PDF file
- Your project workbook as an Excel file
- All required supporting documents listed in [Appendix B](#), uploaded in the “supporting documents” section

Ensuring that your submission is complete will shorten processing time, so take a little extra time to check that you have provided all the information requested in the application form, and that your project workbook is complete.

Please refer to our [guidelines](#) for attachments to find out which file formats are accepted, the limits on file size and what to do if your files are too large.

After you have submitted your application, a GMF project officer will review it for accuracy and completeness. They will work with you to resolve any questions and be your point of contact throughout the rest of the application and funding decision process.

NEED HELP, OR HAVE SUGGESTIONS?

If you are having trouble completing or submitting your application or uploading files, or if you have suggestions to improve this guide, we want to hear from you.

Please email us at gmfinfo@fcm.ca or give us a call at 1-877-417-0550.

APPENDIX A: FUNDING DETAILS

The table below presents a funding overview of the GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies initiative. Funding amounts are based on total eligible costs for each stage.

Further details on eligible costs are provided on our [funding webpage](#).

Funding details

GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies will contribute up to 80 percent of eligible costs, up to a maximum grant amount of \$175,000.

- Municipalities with populations of fewer than 10,000, [northern](#) and [remote](#) communities will receive a cost share of 90 percent.
- [Indigenous communities](#), or local governments applying in partnership with an Indigenous community, will receive a cost share of 100 percent.

APPENDIX B: REQUIRED SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Along with your submission of the full application form and the project workbook, you will need to include supporting documents with information about your organization and details of your project. Required supporting documents differ depending on the type of project and whether your organization is a municipal government or a partner of a municipal government.

The table below lists the required documents along with the conditions your organization must fulfil before you can apply to the GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies initiative.

Additional supporting documents may be requested. You are also welcome to provide further evidence as it becomes available.

Note: When possible, please refer to specific page numbers or sections in your supporting documents when you are completing your full application, to make it easier for staff and peer reviewers to evaluate your application accurately.

Applicant category	Required documents
All applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed application form• Completed project workbook, including budget and workplan• Letters from each confirmed source of funding specifying the amount of cash and/or the value of any staff time or in-kind contributions to the project Note: You are not required to have all sources of funding confirmed prior to submitting your application. However, funding that is confirmed must be supported with a letter using this template.• Evidence of municipal support (e.g., council resolution or letter of support using the template) signed by the mayor, CAO or designated authority on behalf of council, describing the municipality's commitment to the project and funding application)• Project team resumés• Letters of support from project partners, if applicable

Non-municipal applicants

- [Municipal council resolution](#) confirming municipal partnership on the project
- Confirmation of organizational support from CEO or CFO (using the [template](#))
- Articles of incorporation, including all supporting documentation
- Last three consecutive audited financial statements, if applicable. If you don't have audited financial statements, please provide any of the following documents: review engagements, annual reports to CRA or published financial reports.

Eligible Indigenous communities

- If eligible through partnership with a municipality:
 - [municipal council resolution](#) stating municipal partnership
- If eligible through a shared service agreement:
 - shared service agreement with a Canadian municipality related to municipal infrastructure, climate change or adaptation

APPENDIX C: EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

External peer reviewers will evaluate all funding applications. There will also be an internal analysis to provide a funding recommendation to FCM's Board of Directors.

GMF will evaluate your project using the following criteria:

Evaluation criteria (weight %)	Performance expectation
Project approach	
Overall project approach and methodology (20%)	The project methodology is effective, relevant, comprehensive, well aligned with project objectives and urban forestry goals. Data collection methods are appropriate.
Engagement strategy (15%)	The project's rightsholder and stakeholder engagement processes will show a commitment to building broad and ongoing internal and external support from the beginning. Inclusive engagement practices will be used to identify and engage relevant rightsholders and stakeholders for planning (e.g., operations staff, staff from other departments, council, regulators, agencies, Indigenous groups, citizen groups, not-for-profit organizations). There is an emphasis on building broad public support with the community (e.g., promoting an understanding of reasons for project selection, trade-offs and long-term benefits, collecting feedback on project design) as well as ensuring inclusive, accessible, and authentic engagement and representation of equity-deserving groups.
Connection to community and sustainability objectives (10%)	The project is aligned with broader community and sustainability objectives and with broader municipal or regional environmental policy and governance considerations. It advances the lead municipality's priorities; is appropriate for the size and scale of the municipality; and is supported by existing plans, policies, programs, guidelines, or council priorities.
Project benefits	
Socio-economic benefits (10%)	The project will consider how to generate social and economic benefits for the community. There is a clearly articulated rationale and intent to consider socio-economic benefits in the planning process.

Community resilience to climate change (10%)	The project will consider how to improve community resilience to climate change. There is a clearly articulated rationale and intent to incorporate a climate lens into the planning process.
Biodiversity and ecosystem health (10%)	The project will consider how to increase biodiversity and improve ecosystem health. There is a clearly articulated rationale and intent to incorporate a biodiversity lens into the planning process.
Increasing capacity for future tree planting (15%)	The project will significantly enhance the community's ability to prioritize and undertake future tree planting initiatives.
Reconciliation, anti-racism, equity and inclusion (10%)	The project clearly integrates principles of Reconciliation, anti-racism, equity, and inclusion throughout the planning process, with detailed strategies to prioritize equity-deserving groups; involve them in decision-making; and address systemic inequities in tree planting, resource distribution and access to benefits.
Project implementation	
Team and partners (pass/fail)	The project team has the appropriate capability and expertise to successfully carry out the proposed project, with experience managing complex projects. There is strong municipal staff participation throughout the project that will enable municipal staff and, where applicable, rightsholders and stakeholders, to build and retain the skills and knowledge needed to undertake the project.
Likelihood of implementation (pass/fail)	The project has a detailed, realistic plan for implementation after completion, with defined timelines, responsibilities, secured resources, partnerships and strategies for long-term implementation. It is feasible for the actions and recommendations generated by the project to be successfully carried out and sustained over time.
Measuring and monitoring (pass/fail)	The project has a comprehensive, actionable, and realistic plan for measuring and monitoring performance data. It has defined clear objectives, success criteria and key performance indicators and has a strategy for measuring progress towards achieving benefits at the implementation stage and adjusting based on outcomes.
Risk management (pass/fail)	The project identifies and assesses all relevant risks, including environmental, technical, operational,

	planning, time and cost-related risks. It has developed suitable risk management plans and mitigation strategies that are appropriate for the size of the project.
Workplan (pass/fail)	The project workplan is specific and measurable. All activities are explained in appropriate detail, and the workplan identifies concrete deliverables. Timelines are realistic and the project is likely to be completed on time.
Budget (pass/fail)	The budget is detailed, realistic and reflects the proposed workplan, with a clear breakdown of amounts. It represents good value, and all costs contribute to achieving the project outcomes.

APPENDIX D: REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

If your project is approved for funding, you will be required to submit project reports to GMF. The purpose of these reports is to confirm that your project is progressing as planned or to inform GMF of changes. The reports are also a means of sharing your community's experience in undertaking the project with others seeking to address similar issues in their communities.

Project reports ask you to provide information related to project outcomes, key stakeholders involved in the project, methodology and approach used, your findings and recommendations, next steps in the project and lessons learned from the project. The reports are typically in the range of five to ten pages but may be longer depending on the complexity of the project.

Before submitting your application, it is important to consider all required reporting documents for project completion and disbursement. Please ensure that your project workbook includes sufficient budgetary accommodations for final reporting needs. This includes, but is not limited to, sufficient staff time.

The following reporting documents will be required:

- Final plan or study deliverable
- Project completion report
- Updated project workbook that includes:
 - An expense claim
 - All confirmed sources of funding
- Request for disbursement

APPENDIX E: MUNICIPAL COUNCIL RESOLUTION TEMPLATE

Instructions

To be eligible for GCCC – Urban Forestry Plans and Studies funding, non-municipal applicants must provide a resolution drafted and adopted by the municipal council partnering on the project.

When submitting your application, please include proof that the resolution was adopted by submitting *one* of the following:

- a formal copy of the resolution (on letterhead with a seal or signature and date)
- a signed and dated copy of the minutes at which the motion was adopted, including the text of the resolution
- a signed and dated copy of the text of the resolution, with confirmation that the text is identical to that adopted by council

A resolution is not required for municipal lead applicants. However, a resolution may be used to show evidence of municipal support, which is an application submission requirement.

Council resolution requirements

If you choose to draft your own resolution, it must acknowledge that the partner organization is submitting the application in partnership with the municipality.

Sample council resolution text

Whereas, <name of municipality> has the following interest: (list the main reasons for the municipal interest in the project)

Whereas, <name of partner organization> is undertaking <project title>

Be it resolved that <official name of council> acknowledges that <name of partner organization> is applying for a funding opportunity from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Growing Canada's Community Canopies initiative for <project title>, in partnership with <name of municipality>.

APPENDIX F: GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

2SLGBTQI+: Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and others. The symbol "+" represents people who identify as being part of various sexual and gender communities and use additional terminologies.

Accessibility: In the context of GMF-funded projects, accessibility is centred on both tangible and intangible improvements. Tangible improvements to accessibility could mean creating physical spaces to aid [people living with disabilities](#) or mobility issues. Intangible improvements could mean implementing measures for greater access to services for people living with disabilities, such as sensory-friendly quiet hours or flexible scheduling and service delivery.

Biodiversity: Short for biological diversity, biodiversity refers to the variability among living organisms, including diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems. Biodiversity is crucial for maintaining ecological balance, sustaining ecosystems and providing numerous benefits through ecosystem services (e.g., pollination, purification of water and air).

Canopy cover: The layer of leaves, branches and trunks of trees that cover the ground when viewed from above. "Planting in urban areas with disproportionately low canopy cover" refers to areas within cities or towns where the amount of tree cover is significantly lower compared to other parts of the urban environment.

Carbon sequestration: The process of capturing and storing atmospheric carbon dioxide. It is one method of reducing the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere with the goal of reducing global climate change. This process can occur naturally, such as through plant growth, or can be facilitated by certain technologies.

Community climate change resilience: The ability of a community to endure or recover from the impacts of extreme weather and other events worsened by climate change.

Connectivity: The physical and functional links between and within ecosystems that allow wildlife to move freely and that support ecological processes.

Ecosystem health: The condition or state of an ecosystem. It is a measure of the stability and sustainability of an ecosystem, its ability to maintain its structure and functions, and its capacity to withstand stress and disturbances.

Ecosystem services: The benefits that humans receive from ecosystems, including food and water (provisioning), climate and flood regulation (regulating), recreational and cultural value (cultural), and the natural processes that support these functions (supporting).

Equity-deserving group: A group of people who, because of systemic discrimination, face barriers that prevent them from having the same access to the resources and opportunities available to other members of society, and that are

necessary for them to attain just outcomes. This phrase can refer to [Indigenous peoples](#), [newcomers to Canada](#), [non-binary persons](#), people who are part of [2SLGBTQI+](#) communities, [religious minority groups](#), [people living with disabilities](#), [racialized persons](#) and [women](#).

Equitable access to the benefits of tree canopy: Planting in neighborhoods where social and economic factors can amplify climate hazards — such as in communities with lower income levels and/or with varied employment statuses, racial or ethnic backgrounds, health statuses, and age groups.

Improved shared spaces: Improvements to shared spaces can include physical elements (e.g., new or renovated parks), intangible elements (e.g., cultural, educational and recreational opportunities), and improved safety and security (e.g., road and pedestrian safety and food security). The additional shade that trees provide can be incorporated as part of outdoor shared spaces, allowing for more cooling to reduce the [urban heat island](#) effect. Trees and natural spaces can also reduce stress and increase feelings of well-being. They can also act as a sound barrier, reducing noise pollution in shared spaces.

Indigenous community: In the context of GMF funding, an Indigenous community (which includes First Nations, Métis and Inuit) is eligible to apply if a province or territory has passed an act or a regulation that affords a community the status of a municipality, if the Indigenous community is undertaking an eligible project in partnership with a municipal government, or if the Indigenous community has a shared service agreement for any purpose with a municipal government related to municipal infrastructure, climate change or adaptation.

Indigenous peoples: First Nations, Métis and Inuit people and communities, including urban Indigenous communities.

Meaningful engagement: An intentional process undertaken with the purpose of working in inclusive and respectful ways with all [stakeholders](#) and [rightsholders](#) to shape decisions, actions, impacts or change.

Newcomers to Canada: A self-identified group that may include people who have obtained landed immigrant status, refugee status or permanent resident status up to five years prior to a given census year.

Non-binary persons: Persons whose gender identity does not align with a binary understanding of gender such as “man” or “woman.”

Northern community: A community located in the North, which in the context of GMF funding is defined as the three territories and the northern portion of the following seven provinces, as defined by Statistics Canada codes: Newfoundland and Labrador (10), Québec (24), Ontario (35), Manitoba (46), Saskatchewan (47), Alberta (48) and British Columbia (59).

People living with disabilities: People who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, psychiatric, intellectual or sensory impairment that, in interaction with various attitudinal and environmental barriers, hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. This is a self-identified status and does not require an external or formal recognition of disability.

Racialized persons: A person or group of people categorized according to ethnic or racial characteristics and subjected to discrimination on that basis.

Religious minority groups: A group of people who share religious characteristics that differ from those of the majority or dominant population, and who often experience discrimination or exclusion as a result.

Remote community: In the context of GMF funding, this refers to communities listed on the Canada Revenue Agency [list of places located in prescribed zones](#) (formerly referred to as “Northern communities”).

Rightsholders: In Canada, [Indigenous peoples](#) have constitutionally protected rights. This means there is a duty to consult Indigenous peoples, as rightsholders, in Canada (e.g., in resource development projects).

Species at risk: An extirpated, endangered or threatened species or a species of special concern, including any species of animals, birds, fish, plants or other organisms that are at risk of extinction due to habitat loss, climate change, overexploitation and other factors.

Stakeholders: An individual or group that is concerned about a particular issue and/or that holds legal or de facto rights to manage or make decisions about it.

Tree planting strategy: A high-level plan that outlines strategic goals and guiding principles for tree planting in a community or region.

Tree planting master plan: A detailed, prioritized plan that defines specific actions, sites, species, budgets and schedules to implement tree planting efforts.

Urban heat island: Urbanized areas that experience higher temperatures than outlying areas. Buildings, roads and other infrastructure absorb and re-emit the sun’s heat more than natural landscapes, such as forests and water bodies. Urban areas where these structures are highly concentrated and greenery is limited become “islands” of higher temperatures relative to outlying areas. Communities in these areas often face heightened risks of heat-related illnesses, reduced air quality and higher energy consumption.

Urban forest asset management plan: A planning document that sets out activities and costs for managing urban forest assets to achieve an expected level of service.

Urban forest management plan: A comprehensive, long-term plan or strategy focused on managing, enhancing and sustaining urban forests.

Urban forest operational plan: A short to medium-term action plan that translates the vision of goals of an urban forest management plan into specific, measurable activities (e.g. long-term monitoring or maintenance).

Urban forestry: The sustained planning, planting, protection, maintenance and care of trees, forests, greenspace and related resources in and around communities to create economic, environmental, social and public health benefits. Urban forestry practices are relevant to communities of any size.

Women: All people who identify as women, whether they are cisgender or transgender.