



STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and Council

SUBMITTED BY: Wayne H. MacDonald, P.Eng. Chief Engineer

DATE: October 6, 2026

SUBJECT: Funding Authorization – Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Growing Canada's Community Canopies Initiative

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council authorize CBRM's support for the Roots of Renewal funding application, and adopt the resolution set out in this report to satisfy any municipal partnership or acknowledgement requirement of the funding program.

ORIGIN

New Dawn and ACAP Cape Breton submitted a request to the Cape Breton Regional Municipality seeking support for their Roots of Renewal: New Dawn Youth & Family Centre Urban Forest Restoration funding application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Growing Canada's Community Canopies initiative. In reviewing the request and the program information, municipal participation requires formal acknowledgement by the municipality.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES AND RELATED POLICIES

Council may consider participation in initiatives that advance municipal purposes, including environmental stewardship, community development and recreational or public green-space objectives, subject to the Municipal Government Act and applicable CBRM policies. Approval of

the recommended resolution does not authorize a municipal expenditure, transfer of municipal property, assumption of project assets, or an ongoing CBRM operating or maintenance obligation.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council authorization to support the Roots of Renewal project and the proponents' application to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Growing Canada's Community Canopies initiative. Staff are bringing the request to Council so that any municipal partnership or acknowledgement required for the funding application is expressly authorized by Council.

BACKGROUND

New Dawn and ACAP Cape Breton have developed the Roots of Renewal initiative for the grounds of the New Dawn Youth & Family Centre at the former Devco Central Shops property, 117 Union Street, Glace Bay. The proponents submitted a request to CBRM for a mayoral letter of support for their funding application.

The New Dawn Youth & Family Centre is a 25,000-square-foot community hub serving children, youth, families and the wider community. The proposed project would rehabilitate portions of the surrounding property through an urban forest and accessible community green space. Project activities include research and planning, youth engagement in the planting plan, site restoration and tree planting, with planting identified for 2027.

The proponents identify anticipated benefits including climate adaptation and mitigation, natural cooling and shelter, biodiversity and pollination support, stormwater management, restoration of a post-industrial site, accessible green space, youth leadership and skills development, and local economic activity associated with restoration and planting.

ANALYSIS / DISCUSSION

The proposed initiative offers an opportunity to restore an under-vegetated former industrial property in Glace Bay while expanding urban tree canopy and accessible green space. The

project also aligns with broader community objectives respecting climate resilience, environmental restoration, and youth participation.

The Growing Canada's Community Canopies program can support up to 50% of eligible tree-planting activity costs. The proponents have advised that the program establishes a lifetime maximum contribution of \$10 million for tree planting within a municipality, including a maximum \$1 million contribution for infrastructure activity costs. If approved, this project would count toward that municipal limit.

New Dawn and ACAP Cape Breton have indicated that, if funding is secured, they will undertake the project and monitor and maintain the planted trees over their lifetime. Although the proponents' request was a mayoral letter of support, staff recommend that Council formally authorize CBRM's support and any municipal partnership or acknowledgement required for the application.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Financial Considerations

Approval of the recommended resolution does not authorize a CBRM expenditure. The funding program may cover up to 50% of eligible tree-planting activity costs; responsibility for the remaining project costs rests with the proponents.

Environmental and Community Considerations

The project is intended to increase tree canopy and biodiversity, provide shade and microclimate benefits, support stormwater management, restore a former industrial site, and create accessible community green space. Youth participation in planning and planting is intended to build local skills, leadership, and experience in climate adaptation and ecosystem restoration.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

New Dawn and ACAP Cape Breton propose to engage local youth in project design and planting activities. The resulting urban forest is intended to provide a community green space for residents and visitors to gather, walk and enjoy the site as the tree canopy develops.

PROPOSED COUNCIL RESOLUTION

It is recommended that Cape Breton Regional Council acknowledges and supports the application by ACAP Cape Breton and New Dawn to the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' Growing Canada's Community Canopies initiative for the Roots of Renewal: New Dawn Youth & Family Centre Urban Forest Restoration.