



MEDIA RELEASE

New Report Creates a Vision and Economic Analysis for Green Infrastructure in Three Ontario Communities

March 14th, 2018 – Toronto. The Ontario Parks Association (OPA) and the Green Infrastructure Foundation (GIF) are pleased to present the results of the *Green Infrastructure Engagement, Valuation, and Training Program* in Ontario. This program engaged municipal staff and private sector organizations in one-day design charrettes to reimagine what their communities would look like with intensive green infrastructure. The program was made possible by Seed Grant Funding provided by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The design charrettes were held in Mississauga, Toronto and Richmond Hill, where groups of interdisciplinary stakeholders were brought together to visualize real sites with green infrastructure. Following the charrette, the redesigns were subjected to an aggregate economic analysis. The visuals and narratives created by the participants established a compelling vision for the value of green infrastructure in their communities.

“This project is a necessary initial stage in the valuing, conceptualizing and implementing of green infrastructure not just in Mississauga, Toronto and Richmond Hill, but in municipalities across Ontario and the rest of Canada,” said Paul Ronan, Executive Director of the Ontario Parks Association.

“The Charrette was a well-organized, rewarding interaction that allowed participants to network, share real conversations about this important common interest and devise solutions for the development industry and municipalities to consider,” said Stefan Szczepanski, Manager, Park Development at the City of Mississauga.

Municipal governments have identified a lack of capacity to envision, create policy for, value, and implement green infrastructure. This program was created to overcome these obstacles and build capacity in the municipal and private sectors to recognize and take advantage of the myriad of benefits provided by green infrastructure.

“It was a great opportunity for staff of different departments and various disciplines to connect and work together to determine ways that green infrastructure could be incorporated into Richmond Hill sites,” said Tracey Steele, Manager of Park and Natural Heritage Planning for the Town of Richmond Hill.

Living green architecture such as green roofs, living walls, and rain gardens not only aid in stormwater management, but provide a multitude of other benefits, including improved air and water quality, a reduction in the urban heat island effect, and improved human health and well-being.

To read the *Green Infrastructure in Mississauga, Richmond Hill, and Toronto: A Visualization and Cost-Benefit Analysis* report, visit greeninfrastructurefoundation.org/resources

The Ontario Parks Association is committed to civic beautification, the advancement, protection and conservation of parks, open space and the environment as we practice *“Protecting Tomorrow Today”* in the province of Ontario. ontarioparksassociation.ca. The Green Infrastructure Foundation is a charitable organization that partners with communities to shape healthy, resilient, and sustainable places using living green infrastructure. greeninfrastructurefoundation.org. The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada’s largest granting foundations. With a budget of over \$136 million, OTF awards grants to some 1,000 projects every year to build healthy and vibrant Ontario communities. otf.ca

OPA and GIF are partnering with six Ontario communities in 2018 and 2019 to further build capacity around green infrastructure. For more information, contact Rohan Lilauwala, Program Manager, Green Infrastructure Foundation at rlilauwala@greenroofs.org