



## Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 8, 2021

### City to continue Naturalizing Park land

ST. THOMAS, ON —

The Parks and Forestry division staff are currently preparing the following areas for tallgrass prairie plantings in 2022:

- 63 Elm Street – 1350m<sup>2</sup>
- 62 Elm Street – 3000m<sup>2</sup>
- 51 Sauve Ave – 4000 m<sup>2</sup>
- 275 Bill Martyn Parkway – 1200m<sup>2</sup>
- Orchard Park Trail – 1000m<sup>2</sup>

The continued expansion of the City's naturalized areas is beneficial for the following reasons:

- Pollinator Habitat:  
Native tallgrass prairie species provides habitat for key pollinating insects such as butterflies, bees, and ants. The importance of these pollinators cannot be understated. Over three-quarters of wild flowering plants and one-third of the food we eat depend on insect pollination. Although pollinators are a good indicator of an ecosystem's health, they're struggling against the use of neonicotinoid pesticides, habitat loss and climate change. The creation and maintenance of pollinator habitat can help bring these vital insects back from the brink.
- Reduced Maintenance:  
Tallgrass prairie species' deep root system will outcompete non-native and noxious weeds for water and soil nutrients. Once established, the need for costly mowing and spraying requirements is drastically reduced. Unlike non-native grasses, tallgrass prairie species' can live up to 30 years. Their extensive root systems can stabilize the soil, eliminating costly drain maintenance.
- Increased Aesthetic:  
Tallgrass prairies are unique ecosystems comprised of up to 12 native grasses and 200 flower species. Blooming from April to October, prairie wildflowers can provide a

constantly changing display of colour and patterns. The range of tallgrass prairie wildflower's blooming periods also provide an extended nectar source for pollinators – something that isn't found in the agricultural monoculture outside of the City.

For additional information, please contact:

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