

## Reduce the Susceptibility of the Urban Forest to Invasive Species & Climate Change

### Steps to Take Action

- Conduct a Tree Species and Tree Health Inventory
- Identify Invasive Species That Threaten Inventoried Trees
- Determine the Presence of Invasive Forest Pests
- Implement Best Management Practices For Infested Trees
- Choose to Grow Native Trees
- Transform Vacant Lots into Pocket Parks
- Engage Community Members to Help Monitor for Invasive Forest Pests

***SLELO PRISM***  
*is available to provide guidance on these suggested actions.*

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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**SLELO PRISM**  
St. Lawrence Eastern Lake Ontario Partnership for Invasive Species Management

## Urban Forest Sustainability



*Sustaining healthy street trees in the wake of invasive species and climate change.*

*Pledge to Protect Your Urban Forests*

## What is an Urban Forest

Urban forests are a collection of trees and other woody vegetation growing along streets, yards, parks, cemeteries, school grounds and undeveloped green spaces.



## Importance of Urban Forests

Urban forests provide green spaces in otherwise concrete jungles and have numerous environmental, social and economic benefits, such as shade and shelter, water filtration, air purification, enhanced property values and positive health benefits for people.

Notably, urban forests store carbon which helps reduce green house gas emissions influencing climate change.

## Invasive Species Threaten the Health of Urban Forests

Invasive forest pests can decimate urban forests. Species such as the emerald ash borer kill ash tree species, and the spotted lanternfly can kill over 70 different plant species including maple trees.



## Climate Change Threatens the Health of Urban Forests

The health of urban forests rely on the availability of water, sunlight, and nutrients. The availability of these resources are influenced by our climate.

Our climate is changing, summers are becoming hotter, winters are becoming shorter, precipitation is becoming more unpredictable and seasonal storms are becoming more intense. These changes impact the health of our urban forests in many ways, and often intensify the impacts of forest pests.

## Ways to Enhance Urban Forest Health

**Diversify:** Planting a wide variety of trees in the urban forest increases resilience against invasive pests, pathogens and climate change.

**Choose Native:** Growing native tree species supports native wildlife and eliminates the possibility of planting a tree that later becomes invasive.



**Create a Plan:** Knowing the tree composition, health, and pest/pathogen risks of your urban forest is crucial for minimizing tree removal, replacement costs and retention of ecosystem services.

**Create Pocket Parks:** Transforming open unused spaces into small parks with a variety of native trees improves not only the beauty of an area but enhances the resiliency of the urban forest in the wake of climate change and invasive species.

**Engage Community Members:** Training community members to monitor tree health and check for the presence of invasive forest pests will help support efforts.

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