



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Sean M. Ryan

Senator Sean Ryan Secures \$20,000 For Community Tree Nursery In Town Of Tonawanda

SEAN M. RYAN June 21, 2024

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Senator Ryan presents a check for \$20,000 to Brian Fittry, Ted Rymarczyk, and other members of the Town of Tonawanda Highway Department, June 12, 2024

TONAWANDA, N.Y. – Today, June 21, 2024, New York State Senator Sean Ryan announced he has secured a \$20,000 state grant to establish a community tree nursery in the Town of Tonawanda that will add hundreds of new trees to the community and promote proper tree maintenance.

The nursery, located at the Town of Tonawanda Highway Department on Woodward Avenue, contains 200 trees comprising eight different species, as well as a drip irrigation system that draws some of its water from an on-site cistern. The nursery was designed with a focus on sustainability – its mulch is made of repurposed wood chips from trees that have been removed by the Highway Department, and the pathways surrounding the nursery are recycled road milling from Tonawanda streets.

Each year, 50 trees from the nursery will be transplanted throughout Tonawanda in locations targeted for community development and environmental justice, and 50 new young trees will be planted in their place. The new trees will have four years to grow before themselves being transplanted in the designated public areas.

The Highway Department will also work with various local community groups to schedule community education classes for all ages in which participants will learn the value of trees in our communities, as well as proper techniques for pruning, mulching, and general tree care.

Senator Sean Ryan said, “It’s easy to take them for granted, but trees play a huge role in creating and maintaining healthy and attractive communities. They beautify our towns, improve air quality, and increase property values in our neighborhoods. When Ted Rymarczyk from the Highway Department came to me with the idea for a community tree nursery, I knew I wanted to be part of making it a reality. Thanks to Ted, Brian Fittry, and the rest of the Town of Tonawanda Highway Department for their vision, and for their hard work to get the nursery up and running.”

Town of Tonawanda Supervisor Joseph H. Emminger said, “The Town of Tonawanda is grateful to Senator Ryan for securing this important funding for the tree farm. Our town was at the epicenter of the 2006 October Surprise Storm, and we are still recovering from it. Close to 27,000 of the 31,000 trees located in town rights-of-ways were damaged. 2,000 could not be

saved. The tree farm will allow us to grow and maintain a healthy stock of trees that will be planted to replace trees that had to be removed.”

Brian E. Fittry, Town of Tonawanda Deputy Superintendent of Highways, said, “The community tree nursery began as a fun idea and has grown into a program that we think will have a real impact on the Town of Tonawanda. We are grateful to Senator Ryan for securing the grant that has made this project possible.”