

## **Terry Fox Trail naturalization plan, spring 2022**

Presented by Fitzgerald Neighbours

The Terry Fox Trail is a popular walkway through the heart of our neighbourhood, connecting three city parks from Carlton St. to Geneva St. This corridor contains abundant mature trees, native plants and wildlife, and other natural features integral to the health and well-being of our community. Looking forward, these natural assets will be foundational to our efforts to adapt to and mitigate the local effects of the climate crisis. This plan seeks to protect and support those resources while devoting additional space to long-term naturalization and restoration planting of additional native tree and plant species along the trail.

### **Benefits of Naturalization:**

- Supporting biodiversity and habitat resilience
- Increased tree canopy, providing shade for park users and surrounding homes; cleaner cooler summer air; carbon sequestration
- Decreased CO2 emissions, particulate air pollution and noise pollution
- Lower ground temperatures in summer, less soil compaction, slower stormwater runoff
- Increased availability of public access to natural spaces

### **Goals and Plan**

We submit this proposal with goals of increasing the tree canopy along the trail with a native tree planting project; preserving and enhancing the natural features already on the trail; and developing new naturalized areas, all in partnership with the City of St. Catharines. Our plan for Spring 2022 includes the following four components:

#### **1. Tree Planting**

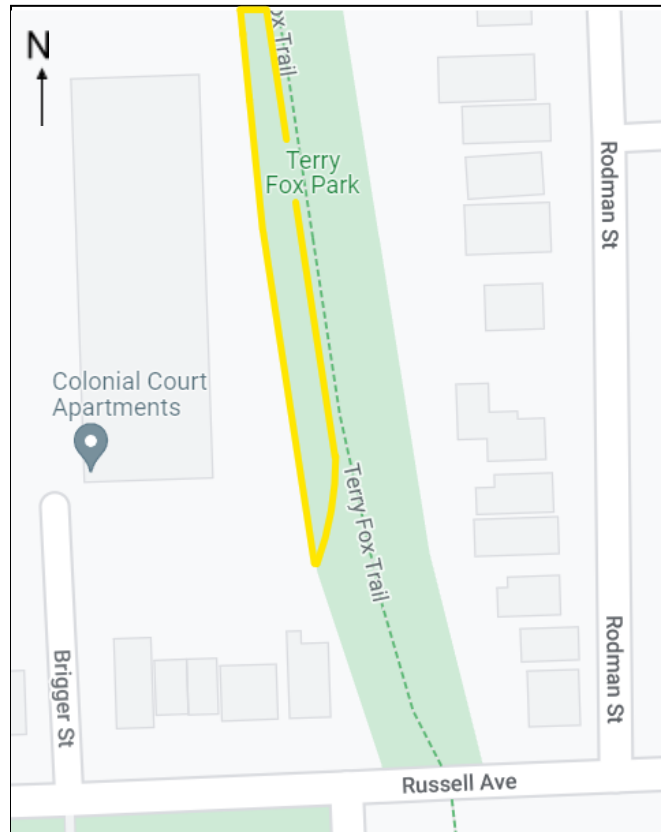
With generous support from the City of St. Catharines, 27 native trees will be planted along the length of the trail, including Hackberry, Bur Oak, Black Gum, Sugar Maple, and Basswood. Eastern Redbuds will be planted near the trailhead at Russell Avenue, and where the trail meets the corner of Woodland Avenue and Maple St. In addition to expanding the tree canopy and providing shade along the trail, all of these species provide excellent ecological benefits for native pollinators, nesting and migrating birds, and other wildlife, supporting local biodiversity. Please refer to attached tree planting location map.

## 2. Woodland garden in Terry Fox Park



The area pictured is highlighted in yellow on the map. Manitoba Maples and Silver Maples grow along the fenceline and shade the west side of the trail. A mowed strip would be maintained along the walking path, and mowing would be discontinued in the rest of the highlighted area.

This spring, we will plant clusters of native wildflowers, ferns, and understory shrubs and trees in this area. The planting will include ecologically valuable species such as spicebush, pawpaw, purple flowering raspberry, serviceberry, woodland strawberry, canada anemone, wild geranium, canada columbine, among others.

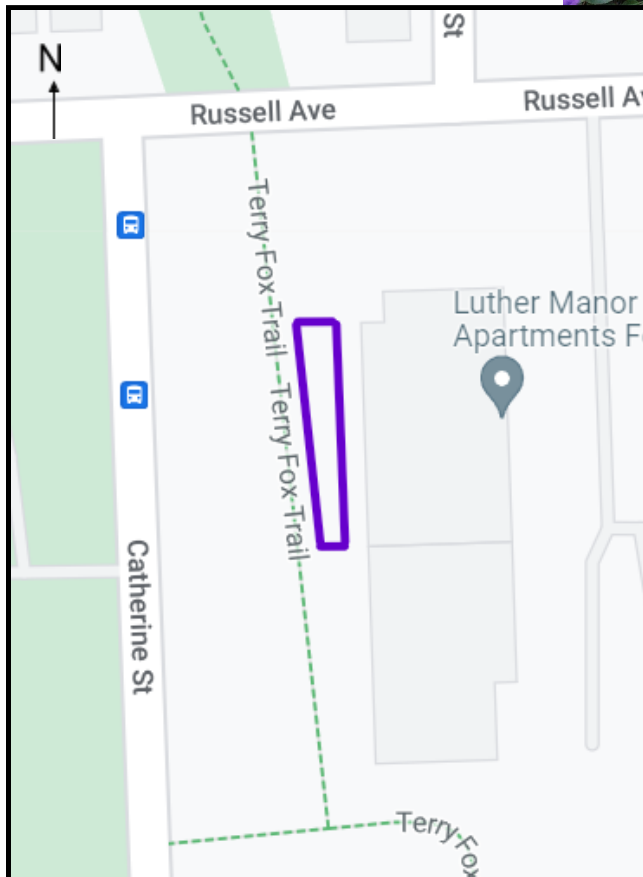


### 3. Violets

A colony of native violets grows along the trail next to Luther Manor (128 Russell Ave). Blooming in early spring, violets are an important nectar source for bumblebees as they emerge from hibernation. The leaves serve as host plant for caterpillars of the Great Spangled Fritillary butterfly, among others. In order to preserve pollinator habitat, mowing would be discontinued in this area.



*Above: Common violets in bloom along the Terry Fox Trail, spring 2021.*

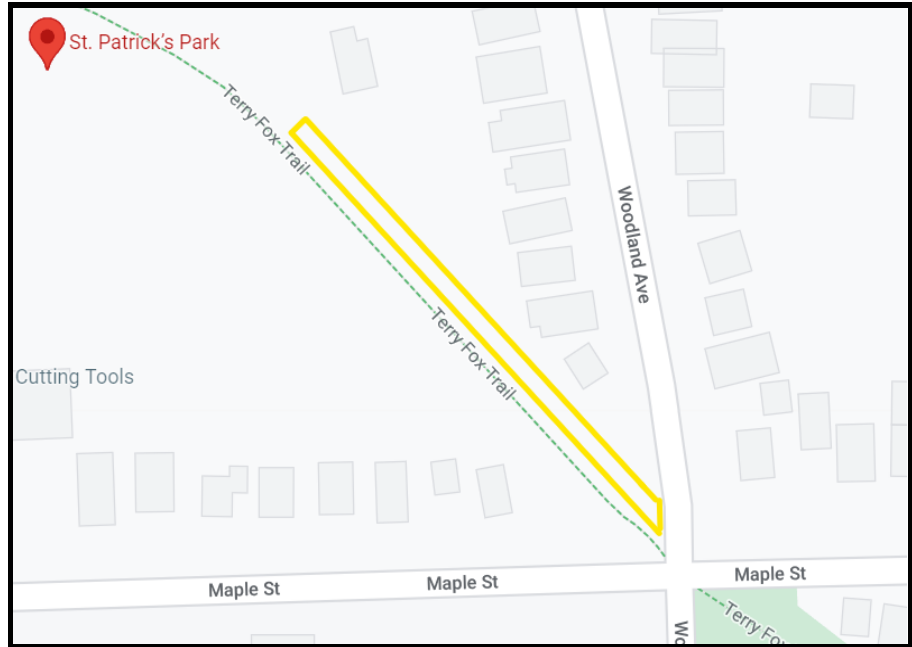


*Below: Great Spangled Fritillary at Short Hills Provincial Park, June 2021.*



#### 4. St. Patrick's Park / Woodland Avenue

A six foot unmowed strip will be left in St. Patrick's Park along a section of fenceline behind homes on Woodland Avenue, creating additional habitat for native plants, bees, moths, fireflies, and butterflies, among others. Pictured below are native species that already grow along the trail, and would readily colonize new naturalized areas.



*Clockwise from top left: 1) American goldfinch feeding on Evening Primrose seed heads; 2) Pokeweed & Canada Goldenrod; 3) Trumpet Vine flowers; and 4) White-Panicked Asters.*