

# Circular Cities & Regions Initiative

Providing Canadian local governments with the knowledge and tools to accelerate circular economy solutions

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## The Circular Economy is Growing in Canadian Cities and Regions

Fifteen communities across Canada completed an immersive year of circular economy knowledge sharing and action planning as part of the inaugural year of the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) and now a new group of 10 communities will embark on a similar journey in the second year.

Founded through a partnership between the National Zero Waste Council, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, RECYC-QUÉBEC, the Recycling Council of Alberta, the CCRI is designed to support Canadian communities on their unique journey to circularity. Through the network, community leaders learn and share best practices for implementing circular economy strategies and policies, and have important access to mentorship and support from advisors representing leading Canadian and international circular economy educators and practitioners.

Local governments from across Canada that participated in the CCRI's inaugural Peer-to-Peer (P2P) Network in 2021/2022 include: Calgary (AB), Canmore (AB), Chapais (QC), Gatineau (QC), Mississauga (ON), Montréal (QC), Nanaimo (BC), New Glasgow (NS), York Region (ON), Richmond (BC), Saskatoon (SK), Sherbrooke (QC), St. John's (NL), Vancouver (BC), and Whitehorse (YK).

Representatives from these local governments met monthly to learn from leading experts in the field and to discuss common challenges and approaches with each other. Each community was also provided expert guidance and facilitation support to identify the next steps in their own action planning process. By the end of its first year, the program resulted in all 15 communities either developing their own circular economy roadmaps or embedding specific circular economy actions in their existing corporate plans and policies.

Following the success of the first year, the CCRI is pleased to welcome the following local governments to the P2P Network for 2022-2023:

Chibougamau (QC)	Guelph and Wellington (ON)	Kelowna (BC)	Haute-Yamaska and Granby (QC)	Outremont (QC)
Peel (ON)	Peterborough (ON)	Pinawa (MB)	Squamish (BC)	Yorkton (SK)

### About the circular economy

According to the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, the effects of our current 'take-make-waste' economy are largely being felt in our cities and regions. Currently, cities consume 75-percent of natural resources, produce over 50-percent of global waste, and emit between 60-80-percent of greenhouse gases. This provides a tremendous opportunity for local governments to lead the way in the transition to a circular

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economy, where waste is designed out, natural systems are regenerated, and products and materials are kept at their highest utility and value.

Accelerating the transition to a circular economy is recognized as an opportunity for new jobs and environmental sustainability — at a time when governments and communities are in critical need of both. The circular economy provides a framework for achieving climate action commitments and nurturing a prosperous and equitable future for residents and businesses.

## Partner Quotes:

“The circular economy transition is critical if we are to be successful in preventing waste, addressing climate change, and fostering thriving and resilient local economies. Local governments have an important role to play, and we are proud to be working alongside our partners in the CCRI to provide the tools and connections to help local governments lead the way in Canada’s circular economy transition”.

*Jack Froese, Chair of the National Zero Waste Council*

“The circular economy is largely rolled out and implemented at the regional and municipal levels. This is why supporting local actors who are involved and committed to deploying circular economy strategies on their territory — like these 15 communities that participated in the first phase of the CCRI and these 10 others that are joining the initiative — is essential for RECYC-QUÉBEC. Concrete projects such as those being undertaken by these cities and regions are at the forefront of solutions to conserve resources and reduce GHG emissions.”

*Sonia Gagné, CEO, RECYC-QUÉBEC.*

“As hubs of economic and social activity and resulting environmental impacts, cities and regions are in a unique position to advance the circular economy. The Recycling Council of Alberta is proud to be part of the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative that helps local governments create opportunities to design waste out of the system and conserve resources in their communities while working to regenerate nature. Local governments who transition to a circular economy will see economic benefits while creating a more sustainable future for all of us.”

*Christina Seidel, Executive Director of the Recycling Council of Alberta*

“Local communities have a unique role to play in accelerating the transition to a circular economy. Cities and regions are leading the way in this transition, acting as hubs for innovation and culture and engines of economic activity. The Circular Cities and Regions Initiative is instrumental in driving uptake of circular economy strategies for municipalities across Canada. It’s an important initiative driving sustainability for municipalities and that’s why FCM is a proud partner.”

*Taneen Rudyk, President of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities.*

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## Community Quotes:

"The timing for participating in CCRI was perfect. We were beginning to explore how to incorporate circular economy principles and practices into our strategies and programs. CCRI gave us the chance to connect with and learn from other communities, especially those that are further ahead on the circular economy journey. The workshop was very helpful in identifying potential areas that our community can advance circularity. Our goal is to use our learnings and work with Calgarians to define short, medium, and long term circular economy plans"

*Lee-Anne Bell, Leader, Strategic Planning & Policy – Waste & Recycling, City of Calgary*

"The CCRI provided us the opportunity to learn from leading experts and municipalities in this field and to consider how the circular economy could be more intentionally integrated into the implementation and future updates of town policies and strategies. Through the CCRI process, staff identified opportunities for growth in the sharing and reuse economy, the regenerative visitor economy and circularity in the built environment. The high cost of living and limited room for expansion in Canmore reinforces the need for reusing and sharing of goods and spaces. We can reduce waste while increasing inclusion and accessibility to affordable goods and services. Pursuing strategies in this area can create jobs, new and creative business opportunities, and connection between community members. We can also inspire action beyond Canmore's borders through visitor experience.

*Simon Robins, Solid Waste Services Supervisor, Town of Canmore*

"The presence of companies using industrial symbiosis in Chapais has prompted the municipality to make the ecological transition. It seems natural and necessary to equip ourselves with tools. The Circular Cities and Regions initiative was a welcome passage to continue this change."

*Mayor Isabelle Lessard, City of Chapais*

"We are pleased to have been selected to participate in this initiative and it is with enthusiasm that we will get to work in the coming weeks to identify innovative solutions adapted to the northern context in terms of circular economy."

*Mayor Manon Cyr, City of Chibougamau*

"The City of Guelph is honoured to be part of the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative, a cross Canada cohort aimed at facilitated learning, while accelerating the development of the broader circular economy at a local level. We need to take bold action if we want a greener, healthier environment. The updated Solid Waste Management Master Plan, including the implementation of circular economy recommendations, and participation in the CCRI, supports a future-ready Guelph by taking ambitious steps to care for the environment."

*Jayne Holmes, Deputy CAO, Infrastructure, Development & Enterprise, City of Guelph*

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“The Haute-Yamaska RCM and the Town of Granby are proud to be selected to participate in the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) Peer-to-Peer Network. The notion of a circular economy has been well established in our region for a few years and the arrival of Synergie Haute-Yamaska is concrete proof of this. Working with municipalities from across Canada will allow us to share our practices and to take the best of what is being done and apply it here. We are happy to join this great family.”

*Paul Sarrazin, Prefect of Haute-Yamaska Regional County Municipality*

“Participation in the Canadian Circular Cities and Regions Initiative’s Peer-to-Peer Network supports the City of Kelowna’s corporate and council priorities, as well as our transition to a circular economy. We are excited to learn and work alongside other local governments across Canada, and to apply circular strategies to build a more sustainable future.”

*Chris Ray, Champion of the Environment, City of Kelowna*

“The City of Mississauga is dedicated to tackling climate change. Through the city’s Climate Change Action Plan, circular economy is recognized as one of the methods to help us achieve our climate goals. Participating in the Peer-to-Peer Network and learning from peer municipalities has been a rewarding experience, helping us advance on the circular economy and building on existing City initiatives such as the Central Library renovation project that successfully diverted more than 120,000 kg of materials from landfill.”

*Jodi Robillos, Commissioner, Community Services, City of Mississauga*

“The circular economy is at the heart of the City of Montréal’s strategies. It is a concrete way to achieve our ecological transition objectives while ensuring the economic development of our metropolis. The collaboration with Circular Cities and Regions has allowed Montréal to reflect on these issues and to consult with stakeholders in order to develop a common vision. This draft, along with the results of the studies and consultations underway, will contribute to the final circular economy roadmap, which will give the city and its businesses the means to remain at the forefront of this transformation,”

*Mayor Valérie Plante, City of Montréal*

“The Regional District of Nanaimo found great value in participating in the pilot year of the Circular Cities and Region Initiative in partnership with the City of Nanaimo. Peer-to-peer networking, webinars, and workshops enabled staff to learn from communities across the country, to discuss Canadian-based examples and to explore how these learnings could be applied to our region. The knowledge and resources gained over the past year support our ongoing efforts to develop a more sustainable circular economy to the benefit of our region.”

*Tyler Brown, Chair, Regional District of Nanaimo*

“The Town of New Glasgow recognizes the importance of the circular economy to our climate and sustainability objectives. At the time of our acceptance to the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative, we

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were in the very early stages of understanding the benefits of this work. Through our participation in this initiative we have gained knowledge, resources, and a network to support our ongoing efforts to advance circularity in our community. With our Circular Economy Roadmap, we have a strong understanding of key opportunities areas to affect change, and to engage residents to take action on the circular economy. This is transformational work that can support community resilience, lower greenhouse gas emissions, reduce waste and pollution, and support new jobs and economic growth in our region.”

*Mayor Nancy Dicks, Town of New Glasgow*

“Transitioning to a circular economy is a collective effort. We are honoured to be part of the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative (CCRI) and welcome the chance to participate, learn and collaborate with municipal peers to help us in reaching our 75-percent waste diversion target by 2034 and vision of a thriving Community for Life that is integrated, safe, and complete. There is a growing interest in our region to reduce waste and reduce negative impacts of our environment. We are ready to evolve to ensure we are responsive to our community’s needs now and in the future, as we leverage this peer network to help us advance the circular economy, not only in Peel but across Ontario and Canada.”

*Norman Lee, Director, Waste Management, Region of Peel*

“We see the circular economy as a path towards a sustainable Peterborough & the Kawarthas region, moving us forward on our commitment to the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals, and driving economic development and innovation in our community. Being part of CCRI will be instrumental in moving us down that path.”

*Rhonda Keena, President and CEO, Peterborough and the Kawarthas Economic Development Corporation*

“The Council of the Local Government District of Pinawa supports the community participation in the CCRI P2P 2022/2023 program. The adoption of our Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan demonstrates our commitment to adopting the concepts of circularity in our projects and our community is strongly motivated to get involved in opportunities that will enhance our capacity to implement the strategy.”

*Mayor Blair Skinner, Town of Pinawa*

“Through a project like the Circular Cities and Regions Initiative, our administration has been able to structure itself in the circular economy and advance its thinking. The synergy between departments and partners has allowed our actions to accelerate the deployment of the circular economy on our territory.”

*Ingrid Dubuc, Director Environment Office, City of Sherbrooke*

“The County of Wellington is thrilled to be a participant in this year’s Circular Cities and Regions Initiative. Through our partnership with Guelph on the Our Food Future project, we have seen our

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external partners realize great value from shifting to circular models. Joining the CCRI cohort offers us expert coaching to foster these same practices internally, and to better understand where we have potential for even greater success.”

*Kelly Linton, Warden, County of Wellington*

“The District of Squamish is proud to be participating in the Circular Cities and Regions Peer-to-Peer Network Initiative as we recognize the urgency to apply a circular economy in our communities has never been greater. We look forward to participating in this program to not only learn more, but to have the opportunity to contribute to this important conversation. We hope the engagement and outcomes achieved through the CCRI will inspire other like-minded communities to also apply and adopt the principles of a circular economy.”

*Kate Mulligan, Economic Development Officer, District of Squamish*

“York Regional Council and The Regional Municipality of York is committed to building sustainable communities and protecting the environment. York Region’s new Circular Economy Roadmap will help reduce waste and further advance our vision of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. It will also help advance other key priorities, such as climate change mitigation, energy and water demand management, and economic vitality. In collaboration with partnering municipalities and industry partners, York Region looks forward to advancing the circular economy through policies and programs that will improve the quality of life for current and future residents.”

*Wayne Emmerson, Chairman and CEO, York Region*

“We view this as exciting opportunity for our city to learn more about innovative approaches to improve the sustainability of our community.”

*Lyndon Hicks, Solid Waste and Environmental Program Manager, City of Yorkton*

Learn more about the [partner organizations](#) and view the community [circular economy roadmaps](#) from the 2021/2022 P2P Network members.

## Media Contacts

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To speak to the participating local governments in the P2P Network, please reach out to the media contact at the NZWC.

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