

Adapting to climate change: How greening our cities can save lives

*Making communities more resilient is part of our purpose. One way we do that is by helping Canadians adapt to climate change by partnering with charities that are implementing practical solutions to help protect people from extreme weather. This is the fourth in a series about how our **Intact Adaptation Action Grant partners** are helping people. Did you miss the third story? [Read it here](#).*

Victoriaville, Que., is recognized as the [birthplace of sustainable development](#). But the Pierre-Laporte parking lot in the city's centre lacked any greenery, and the large amount of asphalt was trapping and amplifying heat in the summer.

This is known as an urban heat island and it can have deadly consequences. In 2018, more than 90 people died in Quebec during a heat wave. Those most at risk from extreme heat are people who live in urban heat islands – parts of a city where the temperature is 5-12 degrees warmer than surrounding areas.

[Nature Quebec](#) saw the Pierre-Laporte parking lot as the perfect opportunity to show the value of green infrastructure in helping reduce the effects of urban heat islands. Through its program *Milieux de vie en santé*, the environmental charity is working with the city and other stakeholders to install permeable pavement, mature trees, a rain garden and other vegetated spaces that will cool the area while filtering water and improving air quality. The project will be completed in 2020.

Intact has partnered with Nature Quebec, and its program *Milieux de vie en santé*, to support their work with Victoriaville and four other Quebec municipalities. They're identifying neighbourhoods where people are the most vulnerable to the effects of urban heat islands and implementing greening projects to help them.

Green spaces bring communities together

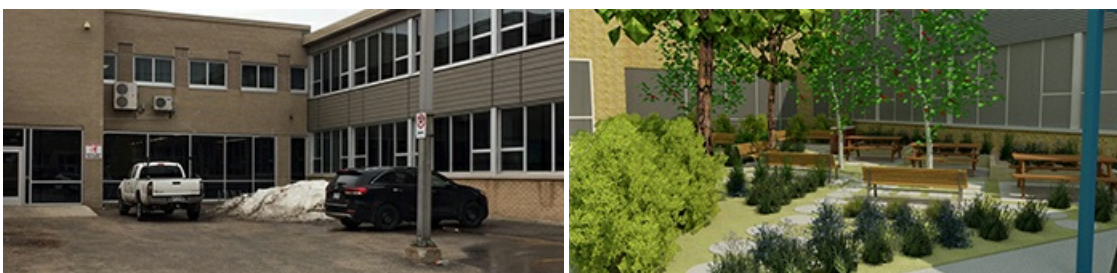
In addition to helping cool urban neighbourhoods, these projects create communal spaces where people can gather and connect with nature in cities.

The neighbourhood of Saint-Élie in Sherbrooke is transforming into a commercial-residential mix as more young families move into the area. To help make the neighbourhood safer and more welcoming, the city and Nature Quebec are transforming a plot of land near a local school.

There will be a small vegetable garden and perennial edible plants, and a play area and a shaded area with tables near the school for workshops and outdoor classes. The new plants will help improve air quality and the trees will provide shade on hot summer days. The photos below show the work that has begun and the final design.



In Trois-Rivières, Nature Quebec is greening the outdoor spaces of a local school and community centre. At the school, students in Grades 4 and 5 took part in designing the new space that will include five new trees, a vegetable garden and a green wall. The photos below show the current space and the final design.



At the community centre, located in the heart of the city, Nature Quebec will create a living environment that puts people first. This includes planting 27 mature trees and maximizing vegetated surfaces with shrubs, a community garden and a green roof. They'll also install bicycle racks, a bicycle repair station and an electrical vehicle charging station to encourage sustainable transportation.

Selecting our new partners

Over the past few weeks, we've highlighted several projects from our Adaptation Action Grant partners that are helping protect Canadians from natural disasters like floods, wildfires and extreme heat. We're accepting applications for new projects until November 30. In Spring 2020, we'll announce the new grant recipients, who will join our current partners in helping us build a more climate-resilient country.

<https://newsroom.intactfc.com/2019-11-26-Adapting-to-climate-change-How-greening-our-cities-can-save-lives>