

Toronto

City of Toronto Leads North America with New Green Roof Policy

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TORONTO, -- The Toronto City Council has adopted the first comprehensive set of green roof policies in North America. On Feb. 1 the council approved Making Green Roofs Happen, a green roofs program which includes commitments to install green roof infrastructure on new and existing buildings, and recommends the establishment of pilot programs of financial incentives for privately owned green roofs. City officials will be working with officials at Toronto Hydro and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund to develop programs that recognize the significant energy, air quality and climate change benefits of widespread green roof implementation.

“Torontonians have asked us to do more to promote green roofs,” said Deputy Mayor Joe Pantalone, chair of the city’s Environmental Round Table. “In response, the city has approved a comprehensive approach -- from establishing standards and building our capacity to support green roofs at the city level, to offering education, funding, expert advice, and promotion.”

Mayor David Miller said, “This is a perfect example of how we expect the new City of Toronto Act will help us govern in the best interest of Torontonians. Given the power to regulate green roofs in our city, we can work with residents to implement major initiatives that will make our city cleaner, healthier, and more beautiful.” Said Steven W. Peck, founder and president of Green Roofs for Healthy Cities, a Toronto-based nonprofit green roof industry association: “These policies set the stage for a public-private partnership that will result in significant improvements to the quality of life in Toronto, reduce energy consumption and smog.”

The city recently commissioned a multi-disciplinary green roof benefits study by Ryerson University. Researchers found that 8% coverage of existing rooftops with extensive green roofs, would generate over \$300 million in initial cost savings in areas such as stormwater management, combined sewer overflow reduction, building energy savings, and the urban heat island reductions. Operational cost savings for the city from this level of coverage were calculated at approximately \$40 million per year.