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HOUSING SYMPOSIUM

RENTING IN CANADA:
A 2025 PERSPECTIVE

GREENING OUR
COMMUNITIES



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Fengate Asset Management (Fengate) has developed a thoughtful sustainability strategy that includes a firmwide approach to nature and biodiversity. As members of the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) and the Canadian TNFD Consultation Group, we recognize the importance of protecting our natural ecosystems. Not only is nature loss closely linked to climate change, the World Economic Forum's research also shows that \$44 trillion of economic value generation—over half of the world's total GDP—is moderately or highly dependent on nature and the ecosystem services that it provides.¹

At Fengate, we aim to consider and minimize the impact on local biodiversity for the assets we manage, including various measures such as:

- Installing anti-bird strike films to building windows
- Introducing drought-resistant and native species to minimize irrigation and promote natural habitats
- Creating a bees and pollinator program through rooftop bee hives and pollinator gardens
- Partnering with local organizations to install and maintain community gardens
- Conducting nature risk assessment aligned to TNFD recommendations

The impact of a community garden

As cities expand, community gardens play a powerful role in enhancing sustainability and positively impacting local biodiversity. These gardens provide ecosystem services that benefit residents and the surrounding environment.

Ecosystem services from community gardens include:

- 1. Providing fresh and nutritious food:** Community gardens help address food insecurity in local communities by providing fresh and nutritious produce.
- 2. Attracting pollinator species:** Gardens attract pollinators like bees and butterflies, which are essential for the reproduction of many plants.

- 3. Improving air quality:** Plants in community gardens absorb pollutants from the air and produce oxygen, contributing to better air quality.²

Community gardens offer numerous social benefits as well, including improvements in health and wellbeing, and learning opportunities. Whether someone is a gardening pro or a beginner, these spaces provide areas where people can come together, share knowledge, and foster a sense of community.

Project spotlight: 1140 Wellington

Located in the heart of Ottawa's Hintonburg neighbourhood, 1140 Wellington offers stunning views, modern apartments, and a resident-run community garden. LiUNA Pension Fund of Central and Eastern Canada (LPFCEC) is the lead investor in the project, along with Fengate and the Taggart-Parkes Family. The building is managed by Taggart Realty Management, part of the Taggart family of businesses.

The community garden is on the east side of the building and gets plenty of sunlight to help residents grow all the plants they want. Residents use the garden space to grow a variety of vegetables and herbs from May to October each year. Much of the harvested produce is donated to the Parkdale Food Centre that is steps away, with the remaining food being divided up among the residents.

“A group of 10 to 15 residents work to seed, sow, and harvest the garden that we have at the back enclosure. This garden is grown and used at the Parkdale Food Market for individuals without housing in our community. It's a self-sustaining herb and vegetable garden with a bountiful number of vegetables and herbs for the full season and plenty of leftovers that are shared and offered to residents for their cooking uses. I often hear how much the residents appreciate the extra touch, which goes a long way and makes them feel more like they are at home sweet home.” – Patti Merello, Superintendent at 1140 Wellington

¹ Ecosystem services are defined as the direct and indirect benefits to human wellbeing and have an impact on our quality of life.

² [What Are the Environmental Benefits of Community Gardens? - FarmingThing.com](https://www.farmingthing.com/what-are-the-environmental-benefits-of-community-gardens/)



Nature and biodiversity issues in urban environments

Incorporating nature and biodiversity into urban environments can be a challenging task, but it is crucial for creating sustainable and livable cities. Several municipalities across Canada have sustainable design standards that integrate requirements focused on increasing biodiversity and minimizing heat islands.

Local issues related to nature and biodiversity in Canadian urban cities include:

- **Bird collisions on windows:** Environment Canada estimates that as many as 42 million birds die from collisions with windows every year, which is from issues with reflective and transparent windows in the open air.³
- **Habitat loss and fragmentation:** City expansions contribute to biodiversity loss by fragmenting and harming natural habitats during development and construction of new buildings.⁴

- **Urban heat island effect:** Higher temperatures are experienced in cities compared to nearby rural areas that is an impact from urbanization.⁵

How the real estate sector can help

1. Protecting vegetation like forests, parks, and local greenspaces supports native species and mitigates heat island effects. Trees and greenery reflect solar energy, reducing heat absorption. Preserving or adding new greenspace enhances urban wildlife habitats, promoting biodiversity in urban and suburban areas.
2. Birds are crucial for ecosystems, providing pest control, pollination, and seed dispersal. Using visual markers on windows, such as decals or film, can help reduce bird collisions. Experts like FLAP Canada can help provide bird-friendly solutions.
3. Maximizing green spaces, from enhancing canopy cover in parks to establishing community gardens, is essential for promoting a more sustainable city and preserving nature and biodiversity.



³ [Flight risk](#)

⁴ [Urban Biodiversity | WWF.CA](#)

⁵ [Learn About Heat Islands | Heat Island Effect | US EPA](#)