**Subject: Support appropriate water conservation measures in our region**

To Mayor [Last Name] and Council,

I, [First and Last Name], am writing to you as a Certified Landscape Professional and business owner in your community about concerns over water conservation measures. I appreciate the City’s intent to mitigate the potential drought this year with early conservation measures. However, these measures need to consider regionality since each regional micro-climate has different soil, plant, water resources, and climatic conditions. In addition, water conservation must be done in collaboration with and include all businesses, government and residents working together in the community to use and reuse water resources efficiently while maintaining soil and plant health.

Landscape Professionals are trained and certified through the Canadian Landscape Standards and industry associations. These standards ensure plants are planted and irrigation is installed properly, and that professional maintenance of the landscape reduces water usage. Certified landscape professionals can be a local resource to decision-makers on technologies, processes and measures that can not only address short-term needs but support longer term solutions.

Water restrictions and curtailment orders can have debilitating effects on soil and plant health, affecting food production, fire prevention and population health as well as the environmental health of landscapes. This is especially the case where restrictions are imposed year after year. To prevent this damage, when determining water use trade-offs, living things should be prioritized over inanimate water use (other than for health and safety reasons). Healthy plants increase resilience and reduce the risk of wildfires, reduce C02 in the atmosphere and provide improved air quality, food, cooling, pollinator food, soil support, and feed for domestic and wild animals as well as providing wellness benefits for people.

Water restrictions can also have unintended consequences such as limiting the use of organic fertilizers and pest management products which often require water to apply, inadvertently encouraging either chemical use or significantly increasing risks to plant health.

Keeping soil healthy is also important. Soil health and biomes are essential for nutrient cycling, carbon storage, and the mitigation of greenhouse gases. Maintaining a healthy moisture level not only protects this biome but also retains and uses less water than soil that is allowed to dry out.

Landscape professionals can identify the best technologies and practices which governments can incentivize or mandate to reduce water use such as incentivizing or mandating rain sensors on all new irrigation installations, ensure all new builds have water saving appliances, etc. We would be more than willing to provide further suggestions and request the city consult with landscape professionals when planning and implementing water conservation measures. Two of the most effective ways cities can extend water resources is to install grey water and water metering systems.

We support smart watering and water management while ensuring we keep our plants and environment healthy. Please also refer to BC Landscape and Nursery Association and CNLA program [HERE.](https://cnla.ca/plantsloveyou)

Sincerely,

Signature