



Habitat creation and management in municipalities

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Talk Outline:

- 1) Municipalities creating habitat
- 2) Municipal habitat management considerations
- 3) Municipalities enabling residents to create habitat
- 4) How to get involved



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Municipalities creating habitat



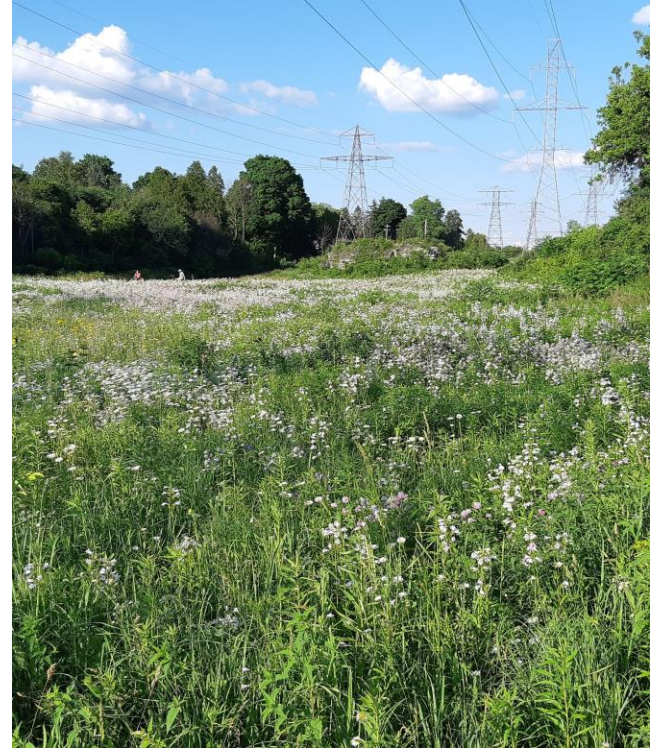
Native plant pollinator gardens

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Edible gardens, orchards, and food forests

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Larger-scale naturalized areas

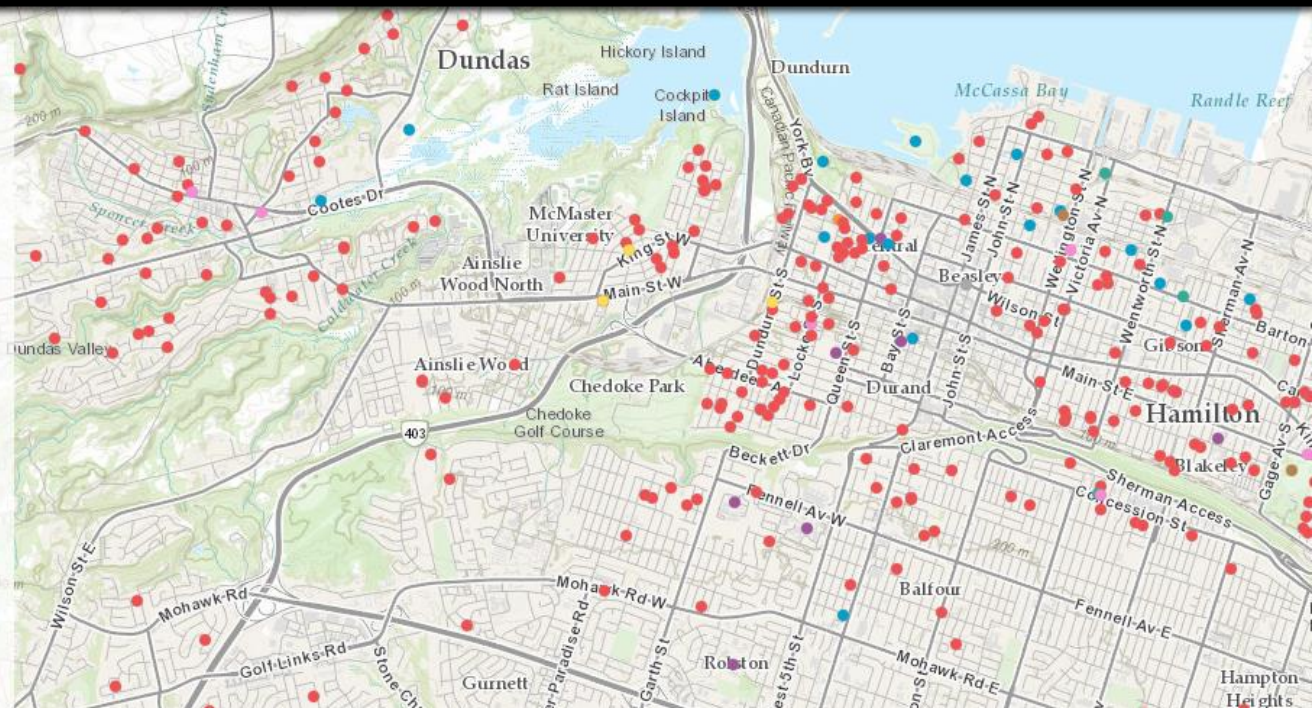
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Who can have a pollinator garden? **Anyone!**

We work with Hamilton residents, businesses, schools, community spaces, religious groups, and more!

Use the **legend below** to see all the "types" of gardens we have!

- Residential Pollinator Gardens
- Community Gardens
- Native Plantings / Broader sites
- Schools
- Local Native Plant Nursery Locations
- Faith Organizations
- Corporate Partners
- Adopt-A-Park / Extreme Park



Habitat networks

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Dedicating resources to native plant propagation

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Municipal habitat management considerations



Integrated vegetation management (IVM)

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Urban development habitat standards

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Minimize impacts of artificial nighttime light

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Delay yard waste collection

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Municipalities
enabling residents
to create habitat



Update lawn by-laws to support habitat creation

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Open Letter to Canadian Municipalities



4455 SIGNATURES OF 50,000 SIGNATURES

To: Your Municipal councillors and Mayor

Your letter *

Dear [recipient name and position will go here],

It has never been more urgent for people to contribute to community and planetary health. One simple way they can do this is to install and care for a habitat garden.

This type of garden contains native plants and natural features such as fallen leaves and dry stems that support insects and birds at all life stages. It also provides both the gardener and neighbours with meaningful nature interactions and essential ecological services

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Ecological Design Lab's Resources



URBAN BIODIVERSITY: CULTIVATING SUPPORT THROUGH MUNICIPAL CODES

FINAL REPORT

Prepared for the Biophilic Cities Network, Winter 2021.

Prepared by Alexander Adams, Anne Benaroya, Julia Bevacqua, Lane Marcy, Danielle Liao, Cameron McCoy



Bylaws for Biodiversity: Collaborative Toolkit for Municipalities

PL8110 Advanced Graduate Planning Studio
Winter 2024

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Enable and encourage sidewalk strip plantings

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Applications now open!
PollinateTO Grants
Apply now: toronto.ca/PollinateTO



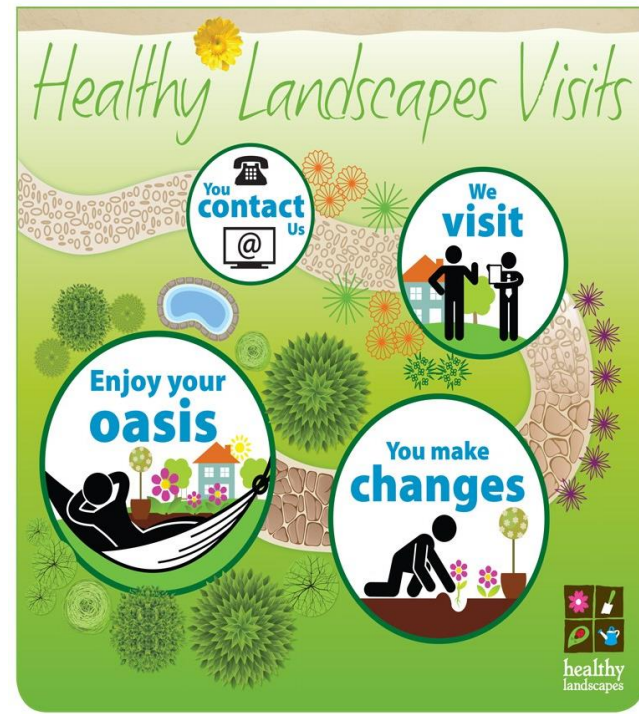
Provide pollinator habitat grants and rebates

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Offer native plant giveaways and subsidized sales

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Provide pollinator garden consultations

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How to get involved



AN OPEN LETTER TO CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES

Imagine a future where community well-being and the environment thrive together, supported by forward-thinking municipal policies

Across Canada, people are learning about the many benefits of habitat gardens, spaces where traditional turfgrass lawns have been transformed into vibrant ecosystems. These gardens are carefully cultivated with plants that attract and support a diversity of wildlife including birds, bees, and butterflies. Habitat gardens demonstrate a proactive local response to the global challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. However, municipal property standards, practices, and bylaws can limit the potential of these personal and community initiatives.

In response, the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA), the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF), the David Suzuki Foundation (DSF), the Ecological Design Lab located at Toronto Metropolitan University, and renowned author and environmental advocate Lorraine Johnson have joined forces. Together, we are advocating for the reform of municipal bylaws to better support the development of habitat gardens that enrich our communities, improve quality of life, and contribute to ecological stewardship.

We acknowledge and celebrate the efforts of municipalities to-date and offer our encouragement and support to further advance essential bylaw reform and enforcement policies and procedures. Through this open letter we aim to bolster the efforts of residents and organizations advocating for municipal bylaw reform and to encourage municipalities to be leaders in ecological stewardship. To make a real difference, we must act decisively and collaboratively. Municipalities must lead by example, support their local champions, and take steps to inform the wider community. Through this approach, municipalities can create a powerful momentum for transforming our landscape practices and policies.

WE CALL ON CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES TO:

- 1. Reform municipal bylaws:** Revise existing property standard bylaws that discourage or prohibit habitat gardens, ensuring that new versions support biodiversity and ecological health.
- 2. Initiate bylaw enforcement training:** Bylaw enforcement policies and procedures must include training for bylaw enforcement officers on native and prohibited plant identification, essential and permitted habitat features, community relations, and the legal rights of gardeners to express their environmental ethics.
- 3. Lead by example:** Invest on a high level of ecological gardening awareness and practice among city employees tending to public gardens, green infrastructure, natural areas and other lands.
- 4. Commit to community outreach and education:** Effective outreach programs are crucial for shifting public perceptions and fostering a deeper understanding of sustainable practices. Municipalities should partner with community leaders and committed organizations to deliver habitat garden resources and events, and install and maintain habitat gardens on public land.

Approach municipal staff and council with ideas

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Learn about opportunities within your municipality

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Join or establish a local pollinator-focused NGO

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Thank you

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