

Bee City Renewal - Entry #25

Name of City, Town or Municipality City of Waterloo
Province Ontario
Applicant's Name Peggy Stevens
Applicant's Job Title Environmental Stewardship Coordinator
Organization or Department City of Waterloo, Community Services, Environment & Parks Services
Address P.O. Box 337 Station Waterloo Waterloo, ON N2J 4A8
Applicant's Phone
Applicant's Email
Are you the primary contact person? Yes
Briefly summarize your Bee City experience during the past year. Please include information about challenges, feedback, and media responses. <p>Waterloo is a proud partner in the Bee City initiative as a means to educate residents about native pollinators and to provide opportunities to reduce mown lawn and plant healthy pollinator patches.</p> <p>Waterloo's Pollinator Working Group, established in May 2018, consists of many "worker bees" that are eager to learn, educate and participate in local events and stewardship activities. Having a clear Terms of Reference and Volunteer Position Description provides clear expectations for being a volunteer on the Working Group, which assists in a smoothly running committee.</p> <p>In less than two years, they have created educational information (a poster on favorite flowers and spring</p>

newsletter), display and craft materials, giveaways (pencils, native wildflower/herb seeds), face painting designs, and promotional materials with the assistance of City Communications team.

The Pollinator Working Group began an online sign-up form for residents interested in learning more about pollinators and getting involved in community stewardship activities. This has generated interest from 30 residents to date, who have suggested areas of interest to explore in the future. We are making connections with our local universities to engage the student community in stewardship activities and to share information and learn from each other.

The Waterloo Chronicle featured an article titled “WHAT’S GOING ON HERE: Waterloo volunteers creating buzz with pollinator garden in University Downs Park” on September 30, 2019. This pollinator patch project was spearheaded by a local resident Les Misch, with support from the Pollinator Working Group and neighbouring residents.

Please tell us about your community’s efforts to reduce the use of pesticides.

Reducing or minimizing pesticide use:

- a. City of Waterloo’s pesticide application is permitted for public safety and involves the management of Giant hogweed, a noxious weed which grows along waterways and has been implicated as a cause of severe dermatitis in susceptible individuals
- b. City webpage education: Trees and yards
 - I. Invasive plants in private gardens are an increasing concern, especially where they grow adjacent to natural public greenspaces; reference to the Ontario Invasive Plant Council’s “Grow Me Instead Guide” encourages residents to grow species that are best suited to our environment
 - II. Pesticide use – reference to The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP or ministry) which regulates the use of pesticides in Ontario under the Pesticides Act; a cosmetic pesticide ban is in effect for lawns, gardens, schools, yards, city parks
 - III. Pest removal – we do not spray for insects because of the provincial pesticide ban. We do not remove insect nests within three metres of the ground unless they pose a safety issue. Bees, wasps and hornets generally do not cause a threat to human safety and play important roles in our environment as pollinators, predators, scavengers and prey.

Outline community initiatives focusing on habitat creation and restoration. If possible, include a plant list.

- City of Waterloo supports community vegetable gardens, as well as Partners in Parks projects on city parkland: flower garden beds and vegetated living fence buffers (native shrubs or wildflowers) adjacent to private properties
- City of Waterloo’s community planting program in 2019 involved six projects involving the creation of pollinator patches, pollinator fedges and planting wildflowers and shrubs within natural areas. The City of Waterloo gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Community Environmental Fund administered by the Regional Municipality of Waterloo.
- Invasive plant species management activities - Waterloo's Pollinator Working group hosted a buckthorn pull in Bechtel Park, Friends of Waterloo Park hosted a garlic mustard pull in Waterloo Park, the Laurel Creek Citizens working group carried out their annual Japanese knotweed harvesting activities in Westvale Park

How did your community promote being a Bee City?

The City of Waterloo promoted being a Bee City through the following avenues:

- webpage: <http://www.waterloo.ca/BeeCity>
- Waterloo's P&A Guide ad publications
- City of Waterloo social media – up-coming events
- Pollinator Working Group annual spring newsletter and online sign-up list
- Designed promotional items to use at local events: a banner “Proud to be a Bee City”, fabric tablecloth and Envirostik pencil giveaway
- Media release reached the Waterloo Chronicle who published an article on a pollinator patch created in a city park this year

Please tell us about your efforts aimed at educating your community, including residents, city employees, contractors, children and other groups.

Pollinator Working Group members also provided hands-on learning at local events listed below. Event participants learned about native pollinators through fun, hands-on activities including face-painting, a bee/flower craft and a display with insects and a large Bald-hornet nest.

- City of Waterloo's 27th annual Service Centre Open House (June 8)
- Bees in the City – Pollinator Film Night (June 18)
- Waterloo Public Library Pollinator Expo (July 17)
- The EcoMarket's Pollinator Panel at Waterloo Public Library (July 18)
- Cambridge Pollinator Preserve tour (July 24)
- Pollinator Festival (August 17)

Please tell us about your community's participation in National Pollinator Week celebrations and other events.

During International Pollinator Week (June 17-23, 2019), the City of Waterloo and City of Kitchener promoted a joint event “Bees in the City – Pollinator Film Night” on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 at the Kitchener Public Library. The evening featured a showing of three short films on pollinators with a facilitated discussion in between by local experts. Resource tables with information on pollinators was available for the public to browse before and after the event.

Local Bee City Working Groups of the City of Waterloo and City of Kitchener hosted their 1st annual Pollinator Festival at Huron Natural Area in Kitchener on Saturday, August 17, 2019 from 1 – 4 p.m. The festival had a wide variety of exhibitors with plenty of hands-on activities and educational materials to learn about our native pollinators. The City of Waterloo's Pollinator Working Group was in attendance offering crafts, an educational display and face painting activities.

Describe your plans for creating, improving and maintaining pollinator habitat during the next year.

Habitat creation in 2020:

- Invasive plant species management of Common Buckthorn, Japanese knotweed and garlic mustard; inventory Phragmites locations along waterways
- fall community planting events will focus on planting native flowering trees, shrub and wildflower species known to be beneficial for pollinators for projects including:
 - o up to five neighbourhood park tree plantings of 15 large 10 gallon trees per park

o Pollinator Working Group and Laurel Creek Citizens Working Group plantings of native shrubs and wildflowers around existing stormwater management ponds

Community education initiatives in 2020:

- Explore ideas with the new Region Bee City to bring local Bee City's together such as developing educational signage, developing toolkits for residents, compiling a list of native plants for our region, library speaker series, developing educational fun facts about pollinators for local publications
- Pollinator Working Group will continue to participate in annual community events such as Seedy Saturday at the Kitchener Public Library (Feb 2020) and 28th annual Waterloo Service Centre Open House (June)

Celebration plans in 2020: Local Bee City Working Group's will work together to offer a film fest at the Kitchener Public Library and 2nd annual Pollinator Festival at Huron Natural Area in Kitchener (June 2020).

Provide information about any events, activities or initiatives that you have organized and would like highlighted through our social media channels.

2nd annual Pollinator Festival on Sat June 20, 2020 from 1-4 p.m. at Huron Natural Area in Kitchener. Celebrate native pollinators with local Bee City Working Groups within Waterloo Region. Free family fun. Kids games, crafts and activities. For more information: knap@kitchener.ca / 519-741-2600 x4177

(an ad will be available soon)

File Uploads

[2019-Bee-City-achievements-Waterloo.pdf](#)

Has your City/Town/Municipality created a Bee City website or webpage?

Yes

If you answered "Yes", please provide the URL of your Bee City webpage.

<https://www.waterloo.ca/en/living/environment.aspx#Bee-City>

Bee City Renewal Fees

100,001 – 250,000 population - \$500

We welcome your comments and suggestions to help us improve Bee City Canada.

I understand with the Region of Waterloo becoming a "Bee Region" that they will cover the annual fee for the tri-cities and 4 townships in Waterloo Region.

[Bee City Canada](#)