



NEIGHBOURHOOD GREENING GUIDE

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The LoveMyHood vision

Residents take the lead and the City supports them along the way. It's a principle as simple as it is powerful. And it's the vision of LoveMyHood.

Here's how we can work together to make great things happen:



Residents Generate Ideas

Get together with your neighbours to brainstorm a project idea. Then, connect with the Neighbourhood Development Office, which will be your first point of contact for all LoveMyHood initiatives.



Idea Development and Review

Once you connect with the Neighbourhood Development Office, you'll be assigned a Single Point of Contact who can help you navigate city processes, provide additional resources, and develop your project plan. When your project plan is complete, you'll be ready to apply for a LoveMyHood grant or submit a project proposal.



Residents Take the Lead

Working together, staff and residents will plan, schedule and coordinate the project installation or event day. Residents will lead the project with city support and celebrate once it's completed.

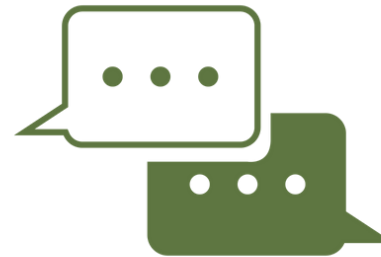


Turn the page to get started on a neighbourhood greening project today!

Step-by-Step Checklist

This quick checklist outlines a few steps your group may need to take while planning a greening project.

Whether you're leading a pollinator project or organizing a community clean-up, we know that every project is unique!



That's why we recommend that you connect with the Neighbourhood Development Office for more resources and information to help support your neighbourhood project.



Skip to page 16 of this booklet to get in touch with us.

- 1. Talk to your neighbours.
- 2. Generate project ideas.
- 3. Connect with City staff.
- 4. Gather community support.
- 5. Develop a design or project plan.
- 6. Apply for funding through a LoveMyHood grant.
- 7. Finalize your design or project plan.
- 8. Get things ready by confirming community support, gathering all necessary supplies and recruiting volunteers.
- 9. Plan your project installation or event.
- 10. Install or celebrate your project.

What is neighbourhood greening?

Neighbourhood greening projects harness the energy and creativity of residents in order to clean, protect and enhance green spaces in our city.

Neighbourhood greening projects may include:

- Pollinator projects
- Wildlife habitat creation
- Education programs
- Food forests
- Community clean-ups
- Stormwater management
- Tree planting and care



This guide offers residents ways to beautify, transform and celebrate green spaces in their neighbourhoods.



Photo by Vanessa Tignanelli

Depending on the neighbourhood greening project you choose, benefits may include:

- Creating a more sustainable neighbourhood
- Promoting biodiversity and improving air quality
- Improving the overall look and feel of green spaces
- An opportunity for residents to work together

Help bring your neighbourhood to life by planning one of the neighbourhood greening projects covered in this guide, or by developing your own idea to make your neighbourhood greener!

What can I do in my neighbourhood?

There are many ways to lead greening projects in your neighbourhood.

While we've identified a few ways you can enhance and care for green spaces in your neighbourhood, you may have an entirely different greening project in mind.

To get started, connect with City staff today for more resources, support and information.



Food Forests

Food forests feature edible plantings, such as berry bushes, fruit trees and herbs. Unlike community gardens, food forests do not require as much upkeep.

Some questions to consider when planning a pollinator project include:

- Where will the project be located?
- How much maintenance can your group commit to?
- How big is your project? The size of your project may depend on location and available space.

Connect with City staff for more information and assistance with planning your project.

Tree Planting and Care

A sustainable urban forest can only be achieved when residents, City staff and community organizations work together!

This year, LoveMyHood will support resident groups who are interested in making their community a little bit greener through a neighbourhood-wide tree planting pilot.

Connect with City staff to learn about opportunities to plant and care for trees on both public and private land.



Pollinator Projects

As a resident, you can create and maintain your very own pollinator patch, wildflower meadow or pollinator-friendly planter boxes in your neighbourhood with the help of City staff.

Pollinator projects can be a great, low-maintenance way to provide wildlife habitats and create a positive impact for pollinators in the city.

Some questions to consider when planning a pollinator project include:

- Where will the project be located?
- How much maintenance can your group commit to?
- How big is your project? The size of your project may depend on location and available space.

Did You Know?

We created a **Boulevard Beautification Guide** for residents interested in adding pollinator plants to their boulevards. Check out www.LoveMyHood.ca for more details.

When you connect with City staff, we can provide you with a full list recommended native plants for pollinators, including information on:

- Required sun
- Relative plant heights
- Required moisture
- Blooming periods
- Bloom colours



Flip the page for a sample list of native pollinator plants.

Before getting started on a pollinator project, connect with City Staff for more information and resources, including:


- A list of project steps.
- A list of recommended native plants.
- A list of tools and equipment that may be required to complete this project.
- Criteria for selecting an appropriate location.

What can I do in my neighbourhood?

Perennial Pollinator Plants - Sample List

Plant Name	Relative Height	Required Sun	Blooming Period
Lanceleaf Coreopsis	Short (30 cm - 60 cm)	Sun	May - July
Wild Strawberry	Very Short (Under 30 cm)	Sun - Part Shade	Late April - June
Sky Blue Aster	Medium (60 cm - 90 cm)	Sun	September - October

For a full list of pollinator-friendly, native plants connect with the Neighbourhood Development Office today:

 **Phone:** 519-741-2200 ext. HOOD (4663)

 **E-mail:** LoveMyHood@Kitchener.ca

 **Online:** www.LoveMyHood.ca

Wildlife Habitat Creations

Residents leading pollinator projects may also be interested in including habitat areas, too. Habitat areas may include bird and bat houses or bee boxes.

Similar to pollinator projects, there are a few things you should consider before planning a wildlife habitat project:

- Will where the project be located?
- How much maintenance can your group commit to?
- How big of a project do you want to undertake? Again, this may depend on the location and space.

Connect with City staff when planning a wildlife habitat project on city land for assistance with:

- Location assessment and initial site preparation.
- Habitat planning.
- Installation of the habitat.



What can I do in my neighbourhood?

Education Programs

Residents can enhance their pollinator or wildlife habitat projects through education programs, including:

- Nature walks
- Neighbourhood nature play
- Citizen Science activities, such as ecological monitoring

Education programs can be developed in response to the location of the project and with assistance from Kitchener's Natural Areas Program (KNAP).

Connect with City staff to learn more about existing KNAP programs or to develop your own nature project.

Community Clean-ups

Greening your neighbourhood can be as simple as organizing a clean-up with your neighbours.

To organize a clean-up in your neighbourhood, follow these steps:

- First, determine the date and location of clean-up, and estimate how many people will be participating.
- Register your clean-up online at kitchener.ca/earthday.
- While registering online, choose from one of our eleven Community Centre locations to pick up your supplies from.

- Pick up your supplies at the Community Centre of your choice. Be sure to bring a reusable box or bag to pack and transport your clean-up supplies.
- Prior to the day of your clean-up, download or ask City staff for a copy of our Community Clean-up Tip Sheet and Sharps Awareness form to share with your group.
- After your clean-up, call 519-741-2345 to request that your full bags be picked up.

Plus, with the help of a LoveMyHood grant, you could host a neighbourhood gathering to celebrate the work you've done to clean-up your community!



What can I do in my neighbourhood?

Stormwater Management

With the help of a LoveMyHood grant and consultation with city staff, neighbours can develop a number of projects that work to conserve and clean fresh water throughout our city, including:

- **Rain Gardens:**
Rain gardens are shallow, sunken gardens that can be planted with a combination of shrubs, grasses and flowers. While they may look like a regular garden, they have a loose, deep soil underneath that helps to absorb rainwater.
- **Soakaways:**
Soakaways are small underground reservoirs that collect rainwater run-off by slowly soaking it into the surrounding soil.

➤ **Naturalization:**

Create dynamic, natural landscapes with native plants to help absorb rain-water in grassy areas.

➤ **Rain Barrels:**

Rain barrels are installed at the bottom of a downspout in order to collect rainwater that flows off the roof of a building, storing it for later use. Rain barrels come in a variety of sizes and colours, and can easily be incorporated into an existing landscape.







How do I get started?

Connect with City Staff

We're here to help! It's our job to make sure you get the support you need to make great things happen in your neighbourhood.

Before you start a project, we recommend that you connect with the Neighbourhood Development Office:

 **Phone:** 519-741-2200 ext. HOOD (4663)

 **E-mail:** LoveMyHood@Kitchener.ca

 **Online:** www.LoveMyHood.ca

Some questions you'll want to consider before choosing your project include:

- How much space do you have?
- How much maintenance can your group commit to doing?
- How big of a project do you want to undertake? The size of your project may depend on location and space.

Before getting started, connect with City Staff for more tools and resources, including:

- Budget templates.
- Cost estimate worksheets.
- A list of tools, equipment and materials required.
- Grids to sketch your desired layout and design.
- A list of project steps.



The Neighbourhood Development Office is your first point of contact for all LoveMyHood initiatives and the driving force for the LoveMyHood strategy.

We will connect you with a Single Point of Contact who can help you get started on your neighbourhood project.



The Neighbourhood Development Office also takes the lead on:

- Creating new resources and tools to support your efforts.
- Working behind the scenes to cut red tape to make it easier for you to make things happen.
- Administering grants and distributing funds to approved applications.
- Completing all 18 action items in the LoveMyHood strategy.

What have others done?

Residents of Forest Heights Get Growing

An enthusiastic group of residents with a shared passion for making locally grown, organic food available to everyone turned the unused green space next to the Forest Heights Community Centre into Kitchener's first food forest.

Around 40 residents came prepared wearing gardening boots and with shovels in hand to help on planting day in 2015.



During that time, volunteers planted 10 berry bushes, three fruit trees, and a baby maple.

Now, the community can enjoy free fruit and other edible plants that they helped grow with their own hands. They know where their food comes from and they have the satisfaction of growing it themselves.

Best of all, they started a new local trend. The initiative has grown into a volunteer-driven organization called Grand River Food Forestry, with projects all across the region.



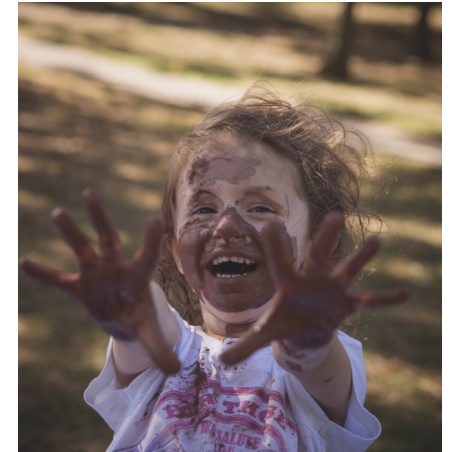


What have others done?

Nature Play in Gzowski and Kingsdale Parks

Kids visiting Gzowski and Kingsdale Parks are finding new ways to play. Playing in natural settings gives them the opportunity to use their surroundings – the bushes and trees found in our local parks – to play games and learn more about nature.

Evergreen, a Canadian charity that helps cities flourish, collaborated with the City of Kitchener to create a unique play space with natural elements. The playgrounds are designed to encourage children to create their own play experience by integrating nature and creativity.



Parks are staffed by program supervisors called nature play animators. Their job is to bring nature to life for the kids who come to play and learn. Engaging in play that sometimes involves touching worms, building forts and playing pretend, children are exposed to new opportunities for growth and learning. Children ask questions like “What do you think that bug is?” and record their findings in a nature journal.

Some kids come after school. Some come with parents and some come on their own. Everyone is welcome and they don't need to sign up in advance like some other programs. Throughout all the fun and play and learning, positive values are reinforced.

Everyone is taught to “respect nature, respect others and respect yourself.” The programs run all year round – rain or shine – summer and winter. Youth are invited to attend the program and experience this exciting learning opportunity!



What have others done?

Lakeside Park Recycling

Located beside St. Mary's Hospital, in the heart of our city, Lakeside Park could be described as an urban oasis. The park features many natural habitats, including wetlands, open water, forest and meadow, as well as amenities for active living, such as a playground, toboggan hill, winter skating rink and a paved asphalt pathway that runs from Queens Boulevard to Stirling Avenue.

Neighbourhood residents are passionate about Lakeside Park and proactive in their care for it. In 2018, a dedicated group of neighbours got to work on a Placemaking Challenge Grant application with the goal of creating a volunteer-based park recycling pro-



gram in the park. The “Love Your Lakeside” project introduced a number of improvements to the park, including three recycling bins, a green bin and a TerraCycle bin for cigarette butts. The resident group maintain these bins and uses them to promote sustainability in their neighbourhood.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much will a greening project cost?

Costs will vary significantly depending the scope of your idea for the project. It could range from a few hundred to several thousand dollars.

Is there funding available?

Yes! Funding for a greening project may be available through our [Neighbourhood Matching Grant](#), or a number of other sources. You can also seek donations from partners or businesses. Just ask City staff to help you explore your options.

How long will this take?

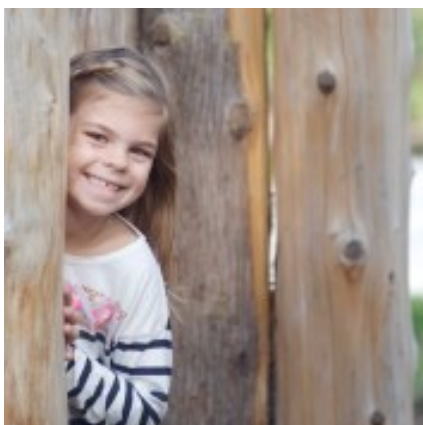
Overall, the entire project could take several months to complete depending on the project type. The most time-consuming part of a project may be working with your neighbours and city staff to plan larger-scale projects.

What approvals do I need?

When planning a project on City-owned land, consult with City staff to determine what permits and approvals may be required. This will vary depending on your project.

How much maintenance is needed?

Neighbourhood greening projects require different levels of maintenance. It's recommended to connect with City staff in the early stages of your project planning to find out if maintenance for your project is required.



We're here to help!

Connect with the Neighbourhood Development Office today to get started on your project:



Phone: 519-741-2200 ext. HOOD (4663)



E-mail: LoveMyHood@Kitchener.ca



Online: www.LoveMyHood.ca

This information is available in accessible formats upon request. Please call 519-741-2200 ext. 4663 or TTY 1-866-969-9994 for assistance.