

Pollinator meadow project

July 2025

Purpose

To establish a network of native wildflower meadows along utility corridors, in parks, and on other appropriate City-owned public lands to enhance pollinator biodiversity, improve the sustainability of urban ecosystems, and provide accessible and healthy environments to Ottawa communities.

Approach

- Create a group of local stakeholders committed to working collaboratively and in support of City needs to build a network of meadows that will enhance urban sustainability through the stewardship of native flowering plants, strengthening biodiversity of pollinating species.
- Develop design standards, implementation techniques, required resources, and stewardship plans.
- Submit a proposal to the City emphasizing the purpose, shared goals, benefits, and advantages of a coordinated approach to developing and caring for multiple sites.

Methods

- Establish a scalable model for wildflower meadows along municipal public utility corridors, parks, and other appropriate public landscapes.
- Ensure that standards for the development, implementation, and ongoing care of each meadow align with City requirements and expectations.
- Minimize long-term maintenance requirements.
- Enhance urban biodiversity, focusing on native flowering plants, insects, and other pollinating fauna.
- Prepare the foundation for a streamlined and sustainable approach for community groups to work cooperatively under an approved volunteer City program.
- Identify resources and skills needed for long-term stewardship of the wildflower meadows.
- Promote careful, competent, and cooperative actions by volunteers consistent with City priorities and encourage community engagement.

- Build common values for the sustainable care of urban biodiversity consistent with the City's Official Plan and other relevant policies.
- Provide a stable and supportive network that can assist and implement City expectations for maintaining healthy, functional, and diverse landscapes for its urban citizens.
- Support City planning by working with councillors, City staff, the private sector, and volunteers to expand the meadow network across the City, increasing and strengthening urban biodiversity.
- Develop a standard model for the creation of future wildflower meadow projects that is flexible, easily reproducible, and adaptable to meet the needs and values of the local community.

Model

- A flexible approach that encourages volunteer participation and leadership in implementation. Community engagement is essential as are stewards who will make a long-term commitment to monitoring the site and mobilize volunteers when needed.
- A mechanism for communicating and defining realistic resource needs and opportunities.
- A simple, adaptable design with easy implementation that showcases long-term community-based stewardship.
- A plan that respects hydro's setbacks and maintenance needs, parks policies, and maintenance guidelines, but also considers best practices for sustaining these meadows. Example: regular mowing schedule needs to be modified. Presence of invasives may require unusual maintenance.

Risks

- Uncertainty in the City agreement process.
- Potential compliance challenges with HydroOne criteria.
- Complications relating to the cooperation and coordination of multiple stakeholders (e.g., skill sharing, mutual support, capacity building).
- Budget estimates and cost management.
- Developing links with other community activities (e.g., community gardens, playgrounds, public access areas).
- Building trust and confidence with City staff regarding maintenance and stewardship of multiple sites.
- Clearly identifying infrastructure and maintenance needs (e.g., equipment and storage, water access).
- Training and supporting volunteers for managing invasive and toxic species (e.g., wild

parsnip, poison ivy).

- Accounting for, and mitigating, future risks to prevent concerns over potential unforeseen costs.

Roles

Ottawa Stewardship Council (OSC)

- * Organize and coordinate the project and partner groups.
- * Communicate with City and relevant Councillors on behalf of stakeholders.
- * Develop proposal drafts and include community inputs.
- * Design and develop the model.
- * Lead in the development of educational and interpretive information and resources.

City Agreement

- * Provide guidance on feasibility of approaches, site requirements, etc.
- * Assist WPP in building capacity among local groups.
- * Offer stewardship training and development.
- * Potential insurance considerations?

Wild Pollinator Partnership (WPP)

- * Identify and coordinate interested community groups.
- * Develop on-site plans and approaches with local groups.
- * Provide expertise on species mixes, site preparation, identification, and maintenance.
- * Assist OSC with the planning and development of the project.
- * Work with OSC to define the approach for the model.
- * Oversee the development of a budget, accounting for the costs and resource needs with local groups.
- * Work with OSC in developing communication plans and educational and interpretive materials.

Community Groups

- * Propose local sites and identify participants.
- * Inform local Councillor with OSC support.
- * Work with WPP to identify plant species and planting protocols.
- * Assist OSC in proposing and installing interpretive points and distributing educational materials.
- * Participate in on-site stewardship.