

# Partners in Parks program

## Community planting in neighbourhood parks



The City of Waterloo works with the City's two environmental working groups (Laurel Creek Citizens, Pollinator WG) and neighbourhood groups to co-ordinate small community planting events within city parks in September and October, depending on funding and the current year's program.

These plantings help to increase the urban forest, provide shade and enhance natural areas like waterways, woodlands and meadows.

### OPTIONS

#### A. Community planting within existing natural areas

The City's two environmental working groups coordinate small community plantings within neighbourhood parks around stormwater management ponds, creeks, woodland edges, linkages or meadows, based on priority areas.

These events are appropriate for all ages since small manageable plant material and hands tools are used. These events are open to public participation and are geared to the surrounding neighbourhood.

#### B. Sponsored planting of shade trees in parks

Neighbourhood Associations or non-affiliated neighbourhood groups may consider hosting their own community planting event in their neighbourhood park. This involves planting shade trees (10-15 gallon) near public trails, playgrounds, seating areas or 3m around the park perimeter. A list of approved native deciduous tree species will be provided.

Priority areas include parks that have had significant tree removal (i.e. due to Emerald Ash Borer) or low tree canopy cover. Parks must have a nearby watering source such as an ice rink tap since Group leaders must commit to on-going maintenance (regular watering every two weeks from May to September) for a minimum of 1-2 years after planting.

Project costs provided by the City of Waterloo include wood chip mulch, water bags and tree stakes, as well as staff, equipment and hand tools on the day of the event. The neighbourhood group will cover the cost of the vegetation, refreshments, volunteer time required for hosting the event and future maintenance (watering).

Depending on funding and the current year's program, **up to five** community planting events per year will be considered. This opportunity will be promoted via Waterloo Neighbourhood e-news and directly to all Neighbourhood Associations early May. Submission of the Partners in Parks application form (long-term projects) is required by May 31<sup>st</sup> to express interest in hosting a community planting event.

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### Responsibilities

City of Waterloo and project coordinators work together to determine scope, site selection and timing of community planting events involving large shade trees in parks.

We encourage community involvement and input during this phase to ensure the community is in support of the project. After City staff have provided initial feedback, project coordinators:

- share project details, determine a planting plan and obtain input from neighbours surrounding the park and those living within the neighbourhood association
- obtain commitment from residents who will help water the trees for minimum 1-2 years
- complete and submit the community support list

### Event preparation:

- City of Waterloo orders and delivers the vegetation/supplies, obtains utility locate clearance and assists with promotion
- Project coordinators engage and coordinate community involvement and commitment

### Day of event:

- City of Waterloo supplies the required Forestry staff, equipment, planting trailer with hand tools; provides instruction and a tool safety talk, and monitors the activity
- Project coordinators greet participants and ensure participants have signed the Informed Consent, are wearing personal protective equipment (closed-toe footwear, cloth gloves and other, as required) and are directly supervised with suitable project tasks

### Group participants

- Project coordinators (18 years of age or older) and group participants live within the neighbourhood surrounding the park
- moderate physical activity is required such as digging, bending, pushing wheelbarrows of mulch, lifting up to 20 lbs, may involve walking in natural areas or on uneven terrain

### Time and place

- neighbourhood parks within Waterloo, based on criteria and priority areas
- a two hour event during September – October (consider [National Forest Week](#))
- Saturday morning (9 a.m. - 11 a.m.) / Saturday afternoon (1 p.m. - 3 p.m.)
- transportation to the activity site is the sole responsibility of the participants

