

Neighbourhood Action Grant – Application Summary

Name of Project: *Butterflies and Benches on the Pipeline Trail – A Pollinator Paradise Project Initiative in the Crown Point Neighbourhood*

Name of Organization: Hamilton Naturalists' Club and Environment Hamilton

Contact Information: Jen Baker, 905-524-3339, land@hamiltonnature.org

Are you currently working with an Action Team on this project? **Yes / No**

Are you an active member of the Planning Team? **Yes / No**

How is this project reflected in the Neighbourhood Action Plan?

This project is reflected in Goal B of the Neighbourhood Action Plan as it aims to beautify the Pipeline Trail and create a sustainable habitat for monarch butterflies in existing and underutilized green space. This project is Phase 1 of the Pipeline Trail Garden Project.

Please briefly answer the following questions – 2 pages max

Please describe the project and its objectives.

There is a great deal of coverage in the media these days about declining numbers of monarch butterflies and pollinator loss in North America. Scientific studies point to a variety of potential causes with habitat loss being a major factor contributing to the demise of monarch and pollinator populations. Links are also being made to a class of chemical pesticides called neonicotinoids; exposure to these chemicals appears to compromise the immune system of bees specifically, thereby increasing their vulnerability to a virus that healthy bees are normally able to fight off.

There is growing public concern about the decline in our monarch and pollinator populations and the challenges that might be faced by native plant and agricultural crops as important pollinators are lost. Our organizations are fielding more calls and emails from community members and neighbourhood associations distraught over what they are observing in their own gardens and local natural areas, and by what they are seeing in the media. They want to know what our organizations are doing to address the problem and how they can help. This situation has compelled us to develop a project designed to raise public awareness about the important role that monarchs and pollinators play in our local ecosystems, and to create meaningful, hands-on opportunities for people to participate in activities designed to address the habitat loss and minimize the chemical exposures that appear to be threatening these pollinator populations.

The *Butterflies and Benches on the Pipeline Trail – A Pollinator Paradise Project Initiative in the Crown Point Neighbourhood* will create a butterfly corridor along three sections of the Pipeline Trail that stretches from Ottawa Street to Kenilworth Avenue. The naturalized corridor will be planted with native species that will attract Monarch butterflies and other important pollinating insects. Benches will be placed in each section of the trail to give trail-users an opportunity to stop and rest, as there are currently few places to sit. Interpretive signage will describe the planting, the importance of creating pollinator habitat, and how residents can help by planting native wildflowers in their yards.

Neighbourhood volunteers will be provided with basic instruction on how to collect seeds and propagate new plant stock so that they can then work to expand the pollinator corridor to the remaining sections of the trail.

The project objectives are to:

- Involve residents in the design and implementation of Monarch and pollinator habitat, allowing each section of the trail to be unique
- Empower neighbourhood volunteers to maintain and expand the pollinator corridor along the Pipeline Trail
- Help to increase the habitat available for Monarchs and pollinators across the City

What is the duration of the project?

The duration of the project is 1 year. Planning will happen over the winter, followed by planting in the spring and early summer. The remainder of the summer will involve creating and installing interpretive signs and benches, as well as training volunteers to maintain the sites. The fall will involve ongoing maintenance and helping the volunteers to collect seed to be broadcast over new sections of trail the following spring. Time in the fall will also be used to ensure the volunteers are comfortable with planning and designing the remaining sections of the trail.

How will this project benefit this community?

The project will provide many benefits to the community, from education and skill building, to increasing pollinator populations to help local gardens, to giving trail-users much needed places to sit and appreciate the special corridor that the Pipeline Trail is for both humans and nature.

We believe the cumulative effect of creating a Monarch and pollinator habitat corridor can have a significant positive impact on local pollinator populations by increasing the amount of critically needed habitat. In turn, having nearby pollinators should also benefit the private household gardens in the neighbourhood.

But habitat creation and enhanced pollination are not the only benefits we hope to realize through the project. Neighbourhood volunteers will be provided with opportunities to develop hands on skills, to engage in community building and benefit from the social support and connections to community that result. Residents will benefit from enhanced natural areas right in their community and all of the additional benefits that come with that.

Please describe how the project utilizes or builds on the strengths of the neighbourhood.

The project builds on the neighbourhood asset of the Pipeline Trail by creating much needed Monarch and pollinator habitat, and installing interpretive signage that describes how residents can create their own Monarch habitat. This is a current concern to scientists, conservationists and the community. The Pipeline Trail is a good location for this type of habitat as the native plants are drought-resistant, tolerant of poor soils and grow best in an open area under full sun. This includes the milkweed plant which the Monarch caterpillar depends on as a food source. The project will physically improve the space, as the addition of the benches will invite trail-users to linger and observe and experience the butterflies and other pollinator insects.

How does the project create engagement?

Community members will be coming together and working cooperatively to realize a shared outcome. And the effort is very likely to bring together individuals who might not otherwise get involved, hands on, in the creation of natural habitat. Further, the product of the collective effort requires on-going maintenance and nurturing, creating the potential for long-lived neighbourhood volunteers. The project will inspire the neighbours along the trail to become involved in the planning and design of the Pipeline Trail through incremental and tangible changes while improving the trail’s level of interest and comfort to its users.

The project also connects the neighbours with local environmental organizations which will help to increase the knowledge and expertise of habitat creation along the Pipeline corridor.

Please provide a basic budget including costs and other revenue possibilities.

Expense	Details	HCF Contribution	Additional Contributions	Total
Project Coordinator		7,000	2200	9,200
Native seeds	\$250/section x 3 sections	750		750
Native plants	\$1,000/section x 3 setions	3,000		3,000
Benches	3 benches (ex. City of Hamilton’s Commemorative Bench Program)	1,500	3,000	4,500
Expert volunteers	(5experts x \$40/hr)		200	200
Site Prep	(clearing sod, topsoil, rototilling, soil amendment) (\$200/section)		600	600
Planting supplies	gloves, shovels, rakes, watering jugs		500	500
Training for volunteers	seed collection, germination, selecting site appropriate plants, coordinating volunteer planting days	500		500
Public information sessions about the project, the importance of pollinators and the contribution the neighbourhood is making to help pollinator populations.	refreshments, honorarium for guest speakers (\$700/session)	400	300	700
Interpretive signs creation, printing and installation	(\$100/section)	300		300

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Communications	(factsheets about the importance of pollinators and native plants, plant lists and sources, event promotion, etc.)	100	400	500
Refreshments for volunteers	\$50/event x 3 events	150		150
Administration	15%	1,400	1,570	2,970
TOTAL		15,100	8,770	23,870

The Hamilton Naturalists' Club and Environment Hamilton have some resources to contribute to the project and anticipate that additional in-kind support can be found in the community, such as meeting space.

Neighbourhood Action Grant – Assessment Tool

Name of Project: Benches & Butterflies on the Pipeline Trail

Name of Organization: Hamilton Naturalists' Club and Environment Hamilton

Preliminary Criteria	Yes / No	Comments
Is this project currently working with an Action Team?		
Are you are an active member of the Planning Team?		
Does this project align with the Goals and Objectives of the Neighbourhood Action Plan?		

Assessment of Core Requirements	Score: 1(low)-5 (high)	Comments
Realistic Plan: proposal demonstrates that objectives can be met within available resources and reasonable time frame		
Participation: increases resident participation, evidence of significant investment of resources and time by residents and/or organizations.		
Project is Asset-based: project builds on existing neighbourhood assets, for example; community members,		

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organizations, infrastructure, environment.		
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Benefits to Community	Score: 1(low)-5 (high)	Comments
Builds a sense of community or increases feelings of belonging		
Increases leadership opportunities/skills for residents		
Strengthens networks, for example; inter-neighbourhood, linkages with outside organizations		
Increases resources within community, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment or physical resources • Volunteers • In-kind contributions • Additional financial resources • Physical improvements to space • New social activities/programs • Safety initiatives 		

Total assessed strength of project: /35

Comments: _____

Recommendation: _____

