

Community & School Pollinator Friendly Practices Program

Goal: Increase number of pollinator friendly practices in community gardens, public spaces, and school grounds and the visibility of pollinator practices.

Who is eligible: Schools, neighborhood associations for their public spaces, community centers, libraries, municipalities, etc. with existing pollinator gardens.

What is a pollinator garden?

Pollinator gardens use plants that provide a source of nectar, pollen, and water. They should be situated in areas with at least 4 hours of sunlight, somewhat protected from strong winds, and strive have continuous blooms throughout the growing season. They should not have invasive plant species or pesticides applied.



Figure 1. Example of a pollinator garden.

How does the Environmental Council work with partners to grow a garden?

Council will raise the visibility of an existing garden and guide partner through the process of diversifying garden species and improving garden design and pollinator habitat.

How does a pollinator garden improve the greater community/planet?

Birds, bats, bees, butterflies, beetles, and other small mammals that pollinate plants are responsible for bringing us one out of every three bites of food. They also sustain our ecosystems and produce our natural resources by helping plants reproduce. This ecosystem service is a precious resource that requires attention and support. Several factors have led to a recent decline in pollinator populations. We know that more nectar and pollen sources provided by more flowering plants and trees will help improve their health and numbers.

Increasing the number of gardens and pollinator- friendly landscapes will help revive the health of pollinators.

What do participants receive?

Council provides a beautiful pollinator sign, up to \$250 for plants, and resource books, and public acknowledgement your work.

Program Description:

The goal of the program is to increase the number of pollinator friendly practices in public spaces. Schools, neighborhood associations, community centers, libraries, municipalities, are eligible to apply for this program.

The program requires participants to answer some questions and engage their community to develop a garden. In order to qualify:

- The pollinator garden has over 60% plant coverage
- The pollinator garden should be at least 25 square feet
- Flowers (trees and shrubs) blooming from April through October
- Eliminate use of pesticide on pollinator garden
- Use 50% or more perennials
- Provide overwintering/nesting sites such as undisturbed ground, leaf litter, dead wood, dead grass and perennial stalks
- Provide a source of water for pollinators or plants that catch water
- Provide public access to the garden site

Program Details:

- Once you complete the application and its is accepted by the Environmental Council, then the Council will provide you with a pollinator sign (see samples below), up to \$250 for pollinator plants, a pollinator resource book, and publically acknowledge your work.
- All awarded recipients are required to electronically submit a summary report of the project that includes at least one photograph taken each month during the growing season showing plants in bloom by November 1st of the year the application was accepted. The report should be submitted to: Habecker@countyofdane.com as a PDF file (no larger than 5 MB in size). It will be posted on the Council's website.
- The awarded recipient must also make acknowledgement of the role of the Environmental Council in the project. The acknowledgement can be on the recipient's website, press release, newsletter, printed literature for project or other venues as appropriate for the applicant.

Expectations of Program Partner:

- Public welcomed to site and public accessibility provided to garden area
- Value inclusion and support diversity
- Ensure the garden is incorporated into curriculum or public events
- Prepare garden site for planting
- Help with labor and tools/supplies to establish and maintain the garden
- Commit to long-term upkeep and maintenance of the pollinator garden site (weeding, watering if needed, etc. as needed to keep garden site healthy)
- Sign a partnership agreement with Dane County for the project

Expectations of Dane County Environmental Council:

- Develop a project timeline with partner
- Help partner estimate time and other demands for participation
- Provide coaching and counsel on garden establishment, design and planting
- Will order and pay for garden plants as per garden size and jointly agreed design plan. Plants to be delivered in mid May
- Provide a 9" diameter metal sign of one of three designs (see below)
- Provide periodic progress checks
- Sign a partnership agreement for project commitment
- Develop educational support pieces that can be used by partner



Dane County Environmental Council Mission:

The council's mission is to assist public and private groups in recognizing and protecting natural areas in Dane County; to assume an educational role in the protection of the environment and natural resources; and in general to promote awareness, conservation and preservation of Dane County's natural resources.