



# 2021 Sustainable Pickering Year-in-Review



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I am proud to present the City's key sustainability highlights and accomplishments from 2021.

It has been truly inspiring to witness staff and the community come together in their commitment to the long-term social, environmental, economic, and cultural health of our City.

Despite the lasting effects of the pandemic, we were able to reimagine opportunities for collaboration and engagement to accomplish a number of our goals.

The Farmers' Market, Litter & Plastics Challenge, virtual workshops and webinars, and the development of new Integrated Sustainable Design Standards are just some of the initiatives I invite you to learn more about.

As a nationally recognized leader in sustainability, the City of Pickering continues to explore innovative ways to advance its sustainability journey.

Visit [pickering.ca/sustainable](https://pickering.ca/sustainable) to learn how you can be a part of it.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Marisa Carpino'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Marisa Carpino  
Chief Administrative Officer

## Park Stewardship Program

The Adopt-a-Park program has been re-branded to the Park Stewardship program, and will continue to encourage families, businesses, and community groups to become actively involved in keeping their local parks clean. As of 2021, 19 groups have become Park Stewards in Pickering by making a commitment to do litter cleanups, and promote a positive image in their neighbourhood park.

## Duncannon Ravine

The City continued its efforts to restore the Duncannon Ravine in 2021 by planting an additional 75 trees and 400 shrubs to help target canopy gaps from the impacts of Emerald Ash Borer and the European Gypsy Moth. Since the restoration efforts began in 2019, the area has shown an increased improvement in tree canopy growth.



31st Pickering Brownies litter cleanup



## Enhancing Parks and Boulevards

As part of the City's annual tree planting program, over 400 trees were planted across City boulevards and parks including: Forestbrook Park, Glendale Park, Lynn Heights Park, Claremont Memorial Park, Major Oaks Park, Bonita Park and Lydia Parkette. These efforts were completed to help restore areas lost to invasive species, and to help increase tree canopy and shade opportunities around play-units and walkways.

## Partnering with Toronto and Region Conservation Youth Corps

The City partnered with volunteers from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) Youth Corps to plant 80 native shrubs to help enhance the naturalized area within Pinegrove Park.

TRCA Youth Corps  
volunteer



## Restoring Pine Creek

In 2020, an increase in beaver activity along Pine Creek resulted in damage to native, mature trees. To prevent further damage to the urban forest canopy, the City worked with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to wrap 300 trees along the creek and plant 67 trees for erosion control.

In addition, to help restore the natural area, the City planted 100 native shrubs along the creek with funding support and volunteers from Canada Bread Ltd., a local Pickering-based company. To assist with the planting, Canada Bread was joined by Members of Council and Pay-it-Forward City staff volunteers.

As well, the City partnered with Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF), a non-profit organization, to plant 183 shrubs and 67 trees through funding support from the Ontario Power Generation Biodiversity Program and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.



Shrub planting with Canada Bread Ltd., Members of Council and Pay-it-Forward City staff volunteers at Pine Creek



LEAF volunteers planting trees at Pine Creek



LEAF staff planting trees in resident's backyard



## Backyard Tree Planting Program

In partnership with Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF) and the Region of Durham, the City successfully completed year one of the Backyard Tree Planting Program. This program provides residents the opportunity to add native trees or shrubs to their property at a discounted rate. This includes on-site consultation, free delivery and tree planting, as well as follow-up tree assessments. In year one of the program, 50 trees and 38 shrubs were planted in Pickering residents' properties. Some benefits from these plantings include enhancement of the urban forest, increased property value and aesthetics, energy savings and comfort from shade, carbon sequestration, reduced urban heat island effect, and habitat improvement.

## Mayors' Monarch Pledge

Pollinators, such as butterflies, birds, bats and bees, play a vital role in maintaining a healthy environment and sustainable food system. As part of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge - Leadership Circle, the City committed to completing 12 actions in 2021 to support pollinator populations. This included pollinator plantings, organized garden assessments from an expert horticulturalist, and educational campaigns to increase pollinator awareness throughout the community.



## Enhancing Community Gardens

The City partnered with Canada Bread Ltd., a local Pickering-based company, to gift 6 groups who committed to maintaining community pollinator gardens with 500 native, nectar producing plants. The plants were provided to each group to help pollinators in the gardens. In addition, through a partnership with TRCA 47 Youth Corps participants each volunteered over 10 hours to plant and maintain gardens throughout the year.



Volunteer planting pollinator-friendly plants at Autumn Crescent garden



## Pickering Butterflyway Project

The City partnered with Pickering - Ajax Butterflyway Rangers on the David Suzuki Foundation Butterflyway Project. This initiative is a volunteer-led movement that is focused on creating habitat for pollinators, such as bees, butterflies, and birds, in neighbourhoods throughout Canada. To help the Rangers with this goal, the City donated 250 Butterflyway signs for residents to display on their lawns to encourage others to plant more pollinator-friendly gardens.

## Pollinator Week

The City celebrated National Pollinator Week from June 21<sup>st</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> by hosting a Gardening for Pollinators webinar to help attendees of all ages understand the importance of adding specific plants such as Cup Plant, Wild Bergamot, Butterfly Milkweed and other native plants to their garden to help pollinators.



Residents showcasing their sign for the Butterflyway Project

## Ontario Parks Association (OPA) Award

The City of Pickering was honoured by the OPA with the 2021 *Protecting Tomorrow Today*® Community Engagement Award for its efforts in sustainability. This award recognized the City's work to raise awareness of parks, open spaces and environment through the development and implementation of community engagement activities.



City honoured with OPA award



Composting at Home webinar

## Earth Month

In celebration of Earth Month, the City offered free, educational, virtual workshops with expert speakers from Durham Master Gardeners, TRCA, and the Toronto Zoo. Over 350 individuals participated in the webinars to learn about a variety of topics, including How to Plan a Successful Garden, Composting at Home, Decreasing Litter in the Community and Sustainable Gardening.

## Slow Down for Wildlife Campaign

Animal Services, Sustainable Pickering and Parks Canada launched a promotional campaign to remind the public to slow down for wildlife near Amos Pond to address the high wildlife mortality rates in the area. This included innovative messaging and signage that speaks directly to drivers. The campaign also included a turtle webinar with the Pickering Public Library, and the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre, for children to learn about turtles and turtle conservation efforts in Ontario.



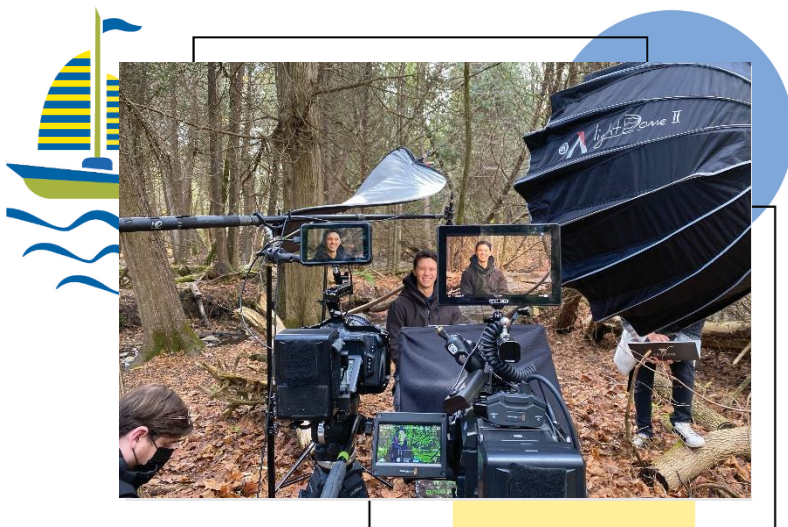
Slow Down for Wildlife campaign message

## Litter & Plastics Challenge: Every Piece Counts

With \$15,000 financial support from the Great Lakes Local Action Fund, the City partnered with PickWaste, a local community group, to deliver the Litter & Plastics Challenge: Every Piece Counts campaign. The challenge encouraged 77 groups consisting of residents, community groups and school based eco-clubs to complete litter cleanups throughout the community. Over 5,950 kilograms of litter were collected through the challenge.



Volunteers joining in the Litter & Plastics Challenge



Creating the Litter & Plastics Challenge educational video

## Educational Tools

As part of the Litter & Plastics Challenge, the City created two educational videos focused on the effects of litter to our environment and the impacts of plastics in our waterways. The videos were published through the City's social channels with over 19,000 viewers. The City also hosted a webinar about the environmental, societal, and economic impacts of litter.

## Civic Awards Program

Civic Awards is a recognition program to acknowledge members of the Pickering community that have made a significant contribution to the city. In 2021, Alexander Petrogiani and Jaime Carney were awarded the Sustainability Award for distributing \$50,000 worth of clothing donations to support both Pickering residents and an orphanage in Peru. The Environment Award was given to Ontario Power Generation - Pickering Nuclear for their efforts to reduce carbon emissions in operations and their ongoing commitment to the environment through their Regional Biodiversity Program, restoration efforts, and partnerships with schools, businesses and the community.



Civic Awards virtual ceremony



## Take Pride in Pickering

As part of Take Pride in Pickering Day, Environmental Stewardship Pickering (a partnership with the City, Ontario Power Generation, and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority) hosted a free native plant giveaway by handing out 300 Serviceberry shrubs for residents to plant in their backyard. The species provide a useful early nectar and pollen resource in the spring for early-emerging pollinators.



Giving away free shrubs at Take Pride in Pickering Day



Planting a pollinator garden at St. Monica Catholic School

## Environmental Schools Grant

The Environmental Schools Grant supports Pickering school-based activities and programs that benefit the community and contribute to a healthy environment. By accessing the grant, six schools in Pickering were able to undertake exciting projects, including creating pollinator gardens, planting trees and shrubs for erosion control, purchasing an indoor aeroponic growing tower, hosting virtual workshops with Scientists in the School, and installing bird feeders.

## Pickering City Centre Farmers' Market

The City successfully launched year 2 of the Virtual Farmers' Market to help residents connect online with local farmers, bakers, and artisans, as well as arrange for contact-free curbside delivery, until the in-person market reopened in the summer. The Virtual Market was very successful with 9,874 website visits. The in-person market ran for 16 weeks, with approximately 4,800 visitors, supporting upwards of 25 vendors. The Market won "Best Farm Market" in the Durham Region Readers' Choice Awards for the third consecutive year thanks to community support.



Visitors enjoying the Pickering City Centre Farmers' Market

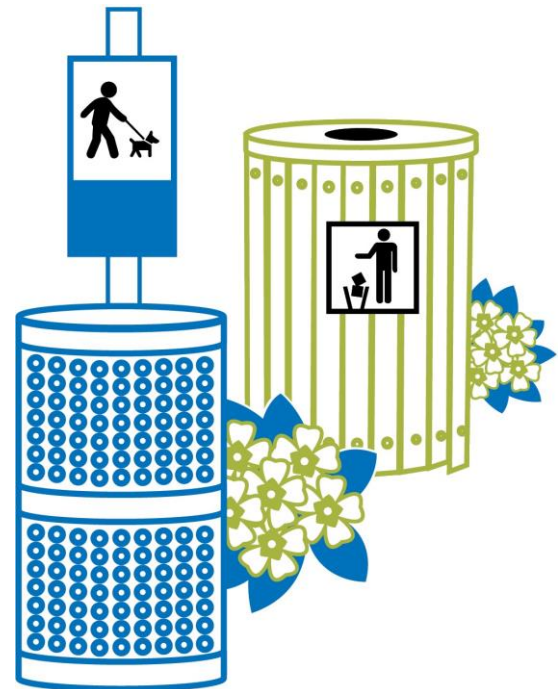
## Waste Reduction Week and Education

The City celebrated Waste Reduction Week by focusing on the principles of a circular economy, resource efficiency, and waste reduction. A virtual educational campaign was delivered from October 18<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> to teach residents new ways to reduce textiles, electronics, plastics, food waste and promote a shared economy. In an effort to improve corporate waste diversion, educational waste diversion training was delivered to all staff and waste diversion banners installed in City facilities.

In addition, through automating City services staff have decreased paper use by approximately 600,000 pages per year over the last two years.

## Dog Waste

The Dog Waste Diversion Program is available in 17 parks across Pickering. In 2021, approximately 9 tonnes of dog waste was collected and delivered to a facility that converted it into electricity.



Collecting food donations at Diversion Day



Electronic waste dropped off at Diversion Day

## Diversion Day

In partnership with the Region of Durham, the City hosted a drive thru Diversion Day at Don Beer Arena. Over 500 residents came out to drop-off electronic waste, household hazardous waste and reusable items. The free event was also paired with a food drive, where residents were encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item, to be donated to St Paul's on-the-Hill Community Food Bank. Thanks to participant's support, the City filled its electric vehicle with goods for the food bank.

## Battery Recycling Program

The Battery Recycling program allows residents to drop-off batteries to Chestnut Hill Developments Recreation Complex, Pickering Central Library, Pickering Museum Village, George Ashe and East Shore community centres. In 2021, 372 kilograms of batteries were recycled responsibly.

## Plug'n Drive E-Mission Road Show

The Region of Durham, Elexicon Energy and Oshawa PUC, in collaboration with Plug'n Drive launched the E-Mission campaign. E-Mission was a region-wide zero emission vehicle education and awareness initiative. The City of Pickering was a host community for the popular three day event. Residents were given the opportunity to test drive different electric vehicles, and learn more about the benefits of electric vehicles on the environment and economy.



Plug'n Drive E-Mission Road Show event

## Electric Equipment

To date, the City has purchased a variety of environmentally friendly equipment, including electric snow blowers, wheelbarrows, chainsaws, pruners, and zero-turn mowers. The new electric equipment has many positive features:

- does not use fuel or produce exhaust fumes
- more ergonomically friendly for the user
- less noisy for residents enjoying the park space



## Energy Retrofit Projects

The City installed hydronic heating on its underground parking ramp. This mechanism consists of a loop in slab PEX piping with a circulating glycol-water mixture. This heating method has lower operational costs, and improved energy efficiency, when compared to traditional electric heating.

In addition to improve efficiency, air quality and reduce energy consumption, the City installed VFDs (variable frequency drives) in all new air handling units, chilled water pumps, and condenser water pumps at various City facilities. Furthermore, the City incorporated new mechanical equipment into its energy management system.



Glycol loop in underground parking ramp

## Sustainable Development Standards

In 2021, sustainability staff provided comments on 58 development proposal/application circulations. However, the City is developing new Integrated Sustainable Design Standards for all new development in the city to replace the 2007 Sustainable Development Guidelines.

Developing a new set of standards will allow the City to review development through a lens that includes modern green best practices and technology.

These standards will also reflect the work being done by both the City and Region of Durham to address climate change, support urban forests, pollinators, waste reduction, water conservation, energy efficiency, and improve access to local food and greenspaces. Through successful grant applications this work is being funded by \$86,000 from The Atmospheric Fund and \$10,000 from the Region of Durham. This work is occurring in 2022, visit [LetsTalkPickering.ca/standards](https://LetsTalkPickering.ca/standards) to learn more and get involved.



Sustainable Development in Pickering

## Accessible Pedestrian Connections

The City enhanced park pathways by increasing accessible pedestrian connections between neighbourhoods. This includes connecting Lynn Heights Park to Alanbury Crescent, Sherman Crescent and Lynn Heights Drive. As well, an accessible pedestrian walkway was installed from Lydia Crescent to Finch Avenue.



Accessible Pedestrian Connections at Lynn Heights Park

## Advancing Adaptation to Climate Change

The City of Pickering was 1 of 40 municipalities selected to participate in ICLEI Canada's Advancing Adaptation project. This program utilizes their BARC framework (Building Adaptive and Resilient Communities), which is a milestone-based approach to help prepare the community for the impacts resulting from climate change, such as more extreme heat days, greater instances of flooding, infrastructure damage, etc. The end result will be a climate change adaptation plan outlining actions to assist in the City's preparations for these and other local impacts. This work began in 2021 and will continue throughout 2022.

In 2022, the City of Pickering will continue its longstanding commitment to create a more sustainable community. Join us on the journey to become one of the most sustainable cities in Canada. There are many fun and inspiring ways to make Pickering a better place socially, environmentally, and economically. To learn how you can get involved, visit: [pickering.ca/sustainable](https://pickering.ca/sustainable).

We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions. Please contact the City's Sustainability staff at [sustainability@pickering.ca](mailto:sustainability@pickering.ca)

Alternate formats available upon request at 905.683.7575 or [customercare@pickering.ca](mailto:customercare@pickering.ca)