



Engineering & Property Management Sustainability Newsletter

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IN THIS ISSUE: Government Plaza Pollinator Gardens

Landscape Management and Housing & Neighborhood services, in partnership with the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, converted several planting areas on the grounds of Old City Hall and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center to native pollinator gardens. Previously, these areas had been planted with decorative annual plants that, while colorful, provided little ecological benefit.

Creating Urban Pollinator Habitats in Center City

The new native gardens at the Government Plaza help restore native habitats in the center city that will attract and support pollinators and other insects critical to a healthy ecosystem. This project complements other public and private-sector efforts in the center city, such as Mecklenburg County’s pollinator gardens at Romare Bearden and First Ward parks, the Federal Reserve’s green roof and Ritz-Carlton’s rooftop garden and honeybee hives. The project also supports Charlotte’s participation in the National Wildlife Federation’s Mayors’ Monarch Pledge (nwf.org) and the NC Wildlife Federation’s Butterfly Highway Project (ncwf.org).

Community Planting Day

On June 10, Landscape Management and Housing & Neighborhood Services staff, together with community volunteers from the NC Wildlife Federation (NCWF), participated in converting two gardens at Old City Hall as well as a third garden at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center to native perennial gardens. The plants, donated by the NCWF, include native species such as New England aster, butterfly weed, whorled tickseed, purple coneflower, black-eyed Susan and more. In keeping with the native pollinator theme, the City’s Landscape Management Division removed several non-native shrubs in an adjacent bed and planted native fothergilla and yaupon hollies.



Inspiration and Education

The new pollinator gardens provide an opportunity to inspire and educate the public about the diversity of pollinators and the benefit of using native plants. Due to the close proximity of the gardens to the street and public sidewalk in areas with high pedestrian activity, the public will be able to experience not only the beauty native plants can provide in an urban landscape, but also the increased pollinator activity the gardens will bring. Much of the public still thinks only of bees as pollinators, and many only know of the domesticated honey bee. As the new native gardens mature and attract a wider variety of insects, the public will have an opportunity to the experience greater pollinator diversity. To help move inspiration to action, the City’s Housing & Neighborhood Services Department offers Neighborhood Matching Grants to eligible communities for beautification projects including pollinator gardens (charlottenc.gov/nmg).



Winning Cities | Environment Focus Area

This project supports the 10 Traits of Winning Cities of Tomorrow – supporting creative, innovative new ideas to approach sustainable municipal landscape management. Not only does the diversion from the typical seasonal planting of annuals to a vibrant planting of native perennials play a role in protecting the environment, the project also complements LEED certification for the Old City Hall property. Recognizing that environmental stewardship is fundamentally important to quality of life, this project reflects the City’s commitment to lead by example with eco-friendly City operations. For more information on the City’s Environment Focus Area visit <http://charlottenc.gov/CityCouncil/focus-areas/Pages/EnvironmentFocusArea.aspx>.