



**BLOOMING BOULEVARDS  
2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 21 2024, 7 p.m. via Zoom**

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**BLOOMING BOULEVARDS  
2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 21 2024, 7 p.m. via Zoom**

**1. Call to order and declaration of quorum, Land Recognition:**

Jeanne McRight, President and Chairperson of the Board of Directors

The normal business of the AGM is before the Membership.

**2. Motion to approve Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting.**

Moved: Jeanne McRight  
Seconded: Andrew Birse  
Carried

**3. President's Report:** Jeanne McRight

See Appendix A, attached.

**4. Treasurer's Report:** Mary Jean Kucerak

See Appendix B, attached.

**Motion to approve the December 31, 2023 Audited Financial Statements**

Moved: Mary Jean Kucerak  
Seconded: Ellen Warling  
Carried

**Motion to appoint Claire St. Pierre as Blooming Boulevards' 2025 Auditor**

Moved: Mary Jean Kucerak  
Seconded: Catherine Cowan  
Carried

**5. Operation Reports**

**A. Gardens Report:** Jeanne McRight

See Appendix C, attached.

**B. Education Report:** Jeanne McRight

See Appendix D, attached.

**C. Outreach Report:** Wayne Cardinalli

See Appendix E, attached.

**D. Communications Report:** Pamela Sleightholm

See Appendix F, attached.

6. **Special Resolutions:**

**A. Tributes to outgoing board members Sheila Cressman, Pamela Sleightholm:** Jeanne McRight

**B. Board Members:**

**A. Board members Introductions by Sheila Cressman**

**B. Greetings by newly appointed board members**

**C. Motions**

**Motion to elect Victor Anyanwu, Pooja Arora, Angela De Palma, Karen Ho James, to serve a first term as a Blooming Boulevards director.**

Moved: Sheila Cressman

Seconded: Sadia Butt

Carried

7. **Thinking ahead - goals for 2025:** written by Jeanne McRight, presented by MJ Kucerak  
See Appendix G, attached.

8. **Recognition**

**Outstanding Volunteers of the Year.** Congratulations and gratitude to Catherine and Neil Fleming.

**Outstanding Garden Stewards of the Year.** Congratulations and thanks to Patty Duquette and Dora Velkovska.

**Heartfelt thanks to the City of Mississauga for the grant received this year.**

9. **Motion to adjourn:** Jeanne McRight

**Seconded:** Catherine Cowan

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.**

**The meeting was followed by a Question and Answer session.**

## APPENDIX A

### President's Report

#### 2024 overview

##### **Staying true to our mission:**

Blooming Boulevards started a pilot program five years ago with a mission: to create a network of gardens across the city of Mississauga, to educate people about why this is important, and to work our hardest to engage the public to take action. We wanted to see how well people in Mississauga would respond to this, and happily, the response has been wonderful.

##### **Our strategic action plan's focus on growth:**

Now in our 6th year, we are focused on strengthening our volunteer base, moving into new program development, and ensuring more accessible services for youth, seniors, and people from underserved communities.

##### **People & programs:**

We expanded the number of projects within our programs to thirteen in 2024. Work on projects is distributed in several ways: Our supportive membership and healthy base of volunteer helpers are the people collecting seeds, propagating the plants, stewarding the gardens, greeting people at event booths, helping with our plant sale - to list a few! As well, volunteer leads contribute their time as project planners and supervisors whose work focuses on developing and managing communications, marketing and outreach activities. Our board members have a primary focus on governance and fundraising, but also roll up their sleeves and get involved hands-on with our many projects.

##### **Look to the Future**

We continue to work toward making our dream of a community greenhouse facility a reality. Such a facility will allow us to grow more plants, develop our programs, and strengthen community connections.

Consultants' concluding comments in our Community Greenhouse Feasibility Study state: "The combined efforts of Blooming Boulevards, community stakeholders, and strategic partnerships will contribute to the realization of a vibrant community greenhouse that not only supports local biodiversity but also creates a lasting positive impact on the Mississauga community. Through careful planning, effective implementation, and ongoing evaluation, Blooming Boulevards can establish itself as a leader in promoting sustainable practices and environmental stewardship."

##### **Sustainability**

We're looking toward financial sustainability and the health of our organization by becoming a registered charity and hiring one or two staff. A solid fundraising program will be necessary. More information on our work in those areas will follow after our Financial and Operations reports.

## APPENDIX B

### Treasurer's Report

#### 2023 Audited Financial Statements

The audited financial statements were distributed to members as part of the AGM materials.

In reviewing the statement of operations for the year found on page 4 of the audited financial statements, the primary source of revenue in 2023 was identified as grants in the amount of \$44,530. This included a City of Mississauga community grant of \$10,000, just over \$32,500 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) and a \$2,000 grant from Parks & Recreation. The Ontario Trillium Foundation grant covered the period from June 2022 to June 2023 and the unspent funds at fiscal year-end 2022 were carried over into 2023. The Ontario Trillium Foundation grant was for the greenhouse feasibility study, while the City of Mississauga grant helps the organization cover its operating expenses. The \$2,000 grant from Parks and recreation was used to purchase supplies for the expansion of the raised beds at Spruce Park.

The plant sale continues to be a popular event and fundraiser bringing in revenue of over \$10,800. Garden installations in community locations such as schools, condominiums and churches saw an increase in demand and resulted in \$4,300 in revenue.

On the expense side, the primary expenses were related to consulting fees associated with the greenhouse feasibility study and the propagation of native plants for garden stewards and community installations. All grant monies received were spent in the year and all requiring reporting to the funding entities was completed.

The year ended with a surplus of \$18,613 which when added to previous years' financial results, left the organization with total cash assets of \$41,884.

#### 2024 Fiscal Year

Blooming Boulevards continues to operate in 2024 with the assistance of a grant from the City of Mississauga and of course all our amazing volunteers donating time and energy on our fund-raising activities. It is anticipated that a year-end surplus will be achieved.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Jean Kucerak

## APPENDIX C

### Gardens Report

Written by Jeanne McRight and presented by Murray Moore.

New and ongoing garden program activities this year included:

- New native plant habitat garden facilitation: 36 in boulevards, 3 in churches, 4 in corporate properties, 6 in public schools., and 1 garden for our community partner Ecosource.
- New outreach program development to increase inclusiveness: native plant container gardening for seniors, condo, and apartment-dwellers.
- Data collection to evaluate the program via garden stewards' Facebook group posts, garden steward survey responses, and participant feedback.
- Habitat garden maintenance at Spruce Park, Eden United Church and the condo complex at 350 Rathburn Road

Program highlights:

- Our annual garden program started early with volunteer training activities involving local native seed collection and preparation, then moving on to plant production. The 16-week native plant propagation project met our seedling production goal of 10,000 plants.
- We used the plants to bring our 5-year total to 310 gardens, extending forage and nesting corridors linking to larger green spaces.
- The new gardens replaced turf grass on municipal boulevards and were donated to Peel Board schools or sold at cost for use by our community partners such as Ecosource, ACER, and other local charitable organizations' naturalization projects citywide. These meaningful activities will result in long-term benefits by a) supporting native insect populations by increasing and connecting forage and nesting sites and b) providing rewarding, direct experiences for stewards and their communities.
- Residents who wished to be prospective boulevard gardeners were accepted as garden stewards, provided with free native plants, supported by ongoing advice on their care, and supplied with our brochures to pass along to neighbours and friends. We ensured that the boulevard gardens were highly visible and installed along public walkways and roads so that people of all ages, abilities, ethnicities and cultural backgrounds who live and work near the gardens benefit physically, mentally, and socially from the experience.
- We have expanded our seed program into an online seasonal fundraising activity, thanks to the initiative of volunteer Sandra Hewitt. Other major fundraising initiatives include our Annual Plant Sale and local garden installations on properties owned by corporations, institutions, and other groups.

## APPENDIX D

### Education Report

Written and presented by Jeanne McRight.

In 2024 we presented 31 virtual and in-person educational workshops and webinars, and 24 volunteer training sessions. The emphasis of our educational program is always on variety, relevance and participant engagement with science-based content. We also provide accessible handouts and follow-up support.

Hands-on new and ongoing educational programs developed in 2024, to be extended in 2025:

- 2020 - 2024: Volunteer training: seeds, plant propagation indoors and outdoors
- 2023 - 2024: Workplace Lunch and Learn presentations
- 2024: Container gardening demonstration at the Central Library as part of Mississauga's Pollinator Week program
- 2024: Garden design workshop at the Art Gallery of Mississauga, in conjunction with its Sara Angelucci Undergrowth exhibition
- 2024: Provided seeds, plants, learning materials, presentations, and/or advice to 7 schools to raise awareness and enable the installation of pollinator gardens on their grounds: Bristol Road PS, Tecumseh PS, Kenolie PS, Cooksville Creek PS, Settler's Green PS, Trelawney PS, and Port Credit Secondary SS.

We are continuing to develop the content and expand the reach of our educational program to encourage active engagement not only by all Mississauga residents but also by those beyond our city eager to learn how to provide native plant habitats that support pollinating insects.

## APPENDIX E

### Outreach Report

Written by Wayne Cardinalli and Murray Moore, presented by Wayne Cardinalli.

From February to October, Blooming Boulevards participated in 13 outreach events in Mississauga. To attend one event, we drove to Guelph to participate in the Pollination Guelph Symposium.

Our Mississauga events included Seedy Saturday at the Unitarian Church of South Mississauga, the Mississauga Seed Library Relaunch at the Small Arms Inspection Building, Earth Day with Parks & Recreation at Mississauga Central Library, a Garden Design Workshop at the Art Gallery of Mississauga, Invasive Species Day with Parks & Recreation at Erindale Park, the Spring Fair at Trelawney Public School, Garden Day with Parks & Recreation at Hancock Woodlands Park, the Seniors Fair at the Cawthra Seniors Centre, and the Pawpaw Parade collaboration with Carolinian Canada.

During these events, board members and other dedicated volunteers connected with Mississaugans, sharing our mission and encouraging support for birds and native pollinators. Our outreach activities encourage individuals to get involved in our programs by volunteering, becoming members, or applying for a boulevard garden. We often provide items to purchase and a hands-on experience. For example, at Bradley Museum, we offered native seeds and plants for sale, and at the Seedy Saturday event we had a crafts table for making pollinator headbands.

Explaining Blooming Boulevards' mission is enjoyable; however, some people find it hard to believe we give valuable and rare plants for free to every qualified Mississauga resident who applies. "There must be a catch," they often say. But no, it is a win-win for all. BB outreach events are of significant importance to us, as a way to increase our scope and reach to in person audiences as well as to engage with the community and provide education and awareness as to what is being done for pollinators and the greater environment.

BB would not be able to do this important work without the support from our amazing and dedicated volunteers, all of whom took time out of their busy schedules to spend hours spreading the word and attending community events. Some of the main events that BB had a presence were Seedy Saturday, the Mississauga Seed Library at Small Arms Inspection Building, Eco Day, earth Day, the Seniors Fair, Blooms and Berries as well as being a host for the Pawpaw Parade!

This year, BB was the Mississauga host site for Carolinian Canada's Pawpaw Parade, which entailed an incredible volunteer to drive to London, to pick up pawpaw trees and drive them back for us to distribute the trees to those who signed up for them. This was so important not just because it allowed people in Mississauga access to pawpaw trees, but it is an example of the commitment and collaboration that BB has working with other agencies in order to support the environmental sector as a whole.

This speaks to BB's larger commitment as a whole - we understand that individually, our impact is small, but that when we come together as individuals, communities and agencies, then we can accomplish so much more.

In all of our outreach events, there were approximately 665 volunteer hours with at least 100 unique volunteers giving their time. This demonstrates that all of our volunteers understand and believe the same thing we do. For that, we are grateful.



## APPENDIX F

### Communications Report

Written and presented by Pamela Sleightholm.

Social media continues to be an important way for us to reach out to members, stewards, volunteers and the general public. Our Facebook page is approaching 2000 followers while Instagram just passed 1000 followers.

Our social media volunteers, Sandra Hewitt and Heather Doyle, have done extraordinary work this year. Their incredibly engaging, fun and informative content has put on miles – being shared widely online and creating some very meaningful interactions within our network. You can see the impact they've had on the charts on this page.

Heather's posts about invasive species – what harm they cause and what to do about them – have been very popular, reaching thousands of people. And Sandra spearheaded our online seed sales through social media this year, which was very well received.

Our members-only Facebook group also continues to grow. It's a supportive group that shares native garden joys and challenges. Anyone here is welcome to join that group on Facebook!

In addition to the great content on social media, our communications volunteers have also been creating longer form content for the blog, newsletter and website. There are many people who don't use social media, and these works are important for reaching them and building on Blooming Boulevards' online resources.

While most non-profits have an e-newsletter open rate of less than 30%, Blooming Boulevards consistently has more than 50% of recipients reading the content.

As a result of the great content our volunteers create, visits to our website have gone up about 30% since last year, with much of the traffic coming directly from social media.

And finally, here's one of our favourite website metrics – where in the world people are visiting the Blooming Boulevards website. Again this year, we're getting visitors from all over the world who are curious about native plant gardening.

If it isn't obvious, I'm very grateful for the communications volunteers who put so much time, energy and enthusiasm into Blooming Boulevards this year. If you want to contribute in the year ahead there are small and large ways that you can get involved: join the Facebook members group; send us a quick picture of your garden, whether in full bloom or in winter-interest mode; contribute a blog post or newsletter article. Every contribution helps us expand our audience!

## **APPENDIX G**

### **Thinking ahead - goals for 2025**

Written by Jeanne McRight, presented by MJ Kucerak.

#### **Charitable application status**

Following last year's AGM, the changes to our by-laws and articles of incorporation approved by the members were filed with the CRA. This allowed us to move forward with our application to the CRA for charity status. The application process, while challenging at times, was completed in July and submitted. The CRA has indicated that it could take up to six months to learn the results of our application. This takes us to the December/January timeframe, so the Board is anxiously waiting to hear if our first application attempt has been successful.

#### **Fundraising**

In the interim, while we wait on our application for charitable status, the Board has participated in a series of fundraising workshops. The goal of these workshops is to help the Board better understand how to fundraise, the different types of fundraising, such as grant applications, corporate sponsorship and individual donations, set fundraising goals, and develop an overall fundraising plan. These workshops are led by a volunteer from Management Advice Services (MAS) who provide pro-bono experts in various fields to assist not-for-profit organizations.

#### **Giving Tuesday**

Blooming Boulevards has been fortunate and thankful to receive a number of donations from individual members and others throughout the year. If you are looking to participate in Giving Tuesday on December 3, we hope that you will keep Blooming Boulevards in mind. All funds raised go back into supporting our propagation activities, educational workshops and outreach programs. THANK YOU!