

Pickering Blooms to Help Build Community

Pickering, ON, May 7, 2009 – Building upon its success in the Communities in Bloom initiative, the City of Pickering is launching Pickering Blooms as a more comprehensive and meaningful community building program.

Pickering Blooms is a multi-faceted program that focuses on beautification, environmental stewardship and sustainability. Some of the exciting and innovative initiatives within the program include:

- *Adopt-a-park* - groups adopt a park and pledge to keep it clean and beautiful
- *Pitch-In-Parties* - groups clear a green space of debris and receive assistance from the City in the form of equipment and supplies
- *Community Garden Maintenance* - residents or groups participate in a horticultural or community vegetable garden project
- *Environmental Stewardship for Environmental Business* – businesses learn stewardship and conservation tips and strategies to better their properties
- *Eco-Schools Program* - implementing sustainable development education in schools by encouraging youth to take an active role in how their school can better serve the environment.

In addition, the *Garden Showcase* will offer local gardeners the opportunity to register and showcase their garden. Participants can also upload their garden photos to an online gallery. There is also a mentorship program where volunteer gardening experts visit registrants and provide them with useful advice and feedback. All participants will receive a commemorative garden ornament designed exclusively for Pickering Blooms.

“I am pleased that Pickering Blooms will help make our community more beautiful and even stronger,” said Bill McLean, Regional Councillor, Ward 2 and Pickering Blooms Co-Chair. “I commend groups such as the Pickering Horticultural Society, Bloomers & Britches - Heritage Gardening Group, Claremont Garden Club, Valley Plentiful Community Garden and Altona Forest Environmental Stewardship for partnering with the City on this wonderful initiative.”

“Pickering Blooms and its various programs will be a key part of our sustainability journey,” said Mayor Dave Ryan, Pickering Blooms Co-Chair. “It is only through partnerships and the collective efforts of our residents and community groups that Pickering can become one of the most sustainable municipalities in Ontario.”

For more information about any of the Pickering Blooms programs or to register for the *Garden Showcase*, visit cityofpickering.com and select the Pickering Blooms logo, or contact the Customer Care Centre at 905.683.7575.



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

As the gateway city to the east GTA, Pickering (population 94,000) is strategically located where Toronto, York and Durham Regions meet. Pickering is an affluent community that is steeped in history, natural beauty and small town charm with all the amenities and services that a big city has to offer. The City of Pickering is considered a municipal leader in fiscal management, service delivery, sustainability and the environment; and offers a wealth of sports, leisure and recreation opportunities to its residents. Pickering has been recognized by Profit magazine as one of the ten best cities in Canada for growth companies and received the 2008 FCM-CH2M Hill Sustainable Community Planning Award.

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