



Blooming Boulevards

| www.bloomingboulevards.org

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1. What we do

Think community:
plants + wildlife + people in
harmony

What we do

we raise awareness

What we do

we provide help

we grow native plants

we teach skills



What we do

7.1

We create gardens

- ✓ Over 350 native habitat residential and boulevard gardens created citywide!

- ✓ Over 40,000 native plants grown from seed and distributed!

**Our gardens:
2019 - 2025**

What we do



Organizations



Corporations



Churches



BIAs



Schools



Parks

What we do



We connect
neighbourhoods to
nature

Photo: Jeanne McRight

Photo: Jeanne McRight

Sustainability is no longer about doing less harm. It's about doing more good.

Jochen Zeitz

Are we there yet?

7.1



2. Are we there yet?

Think community:
plants + wildlife + people in
harmony

Mississauga's Nuisance Weed and Tall Grass By-law 125-17, amended 2017:

It provides:

- ✓ greater control over grass height
- ✓ a longer list of prohibited plants

Its objective:

- ✓ to promote health and safety
- ✓ to align with nearby communities' by-laws

Good!

But lack of
clarity is causing
problems.

Are we there yet?

Not quite yet...

By-law height restrictions for non-native turfgrasses and native grasses are both 20 cm

Most NATIVE grasses are taller than 20 cm when mature

Mature size and seed production are important ecological functions of habitat garden plants

Mowing NATIVE grasses prevents this, with a negative impact on biodiversity.

20 cm



Native grasses in the garden



Dozens of butterflies are supported by native grasses, including grass skippers (*Hesperidae spp*) which use grasses as their larval host plants.

Photo:

<https://www.ontariobutterflies.ca/families/skippers/pecks-skipper>

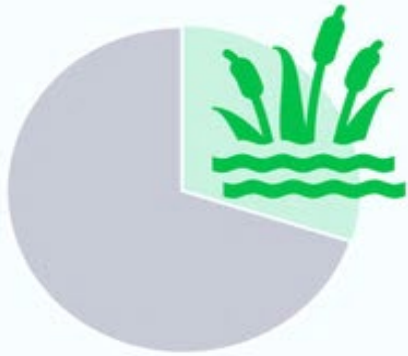


Overwintering birds such as these sparrows rely on native grasses to survive in winter.

Photo: Judith Pelley.

BIODIVERSITY IN ONTARIO IS AT RISK

Due to development and other human activities, Southern Ontario alone has lost more than:



-70%
wetlands



-80%
forests



-98%
grasslands



200+

plants and animal species
are now classified as at-risk
of becoming locally extinct,
including nearly all of
Ontario's turtle species.

Are we there yet?

Not quite yet...but we're on the way!

By-law Sections :

Definitions and Requirements

As it stands:

- “Tall Grass” defined as “any grasses which exceed 20cm in height.”
- Item 5: “Every Owner of Land shall cut and maintain tall grass to a height not exceeding 20 cm”

What's the problem?

- Lack of clarity. Includes all 12,000 species of grasses, including native grasses and other non-turfgrass species

Requested amendments:

1. Height restriction applies ONLY TO TURFGRASS (clearly defined) and to sightlines.
2. Explicitly-defined sightlines using a diagram with measurements and a narrative description.

Supporting Mississauga's Climate Action Plan

Mowed grass:

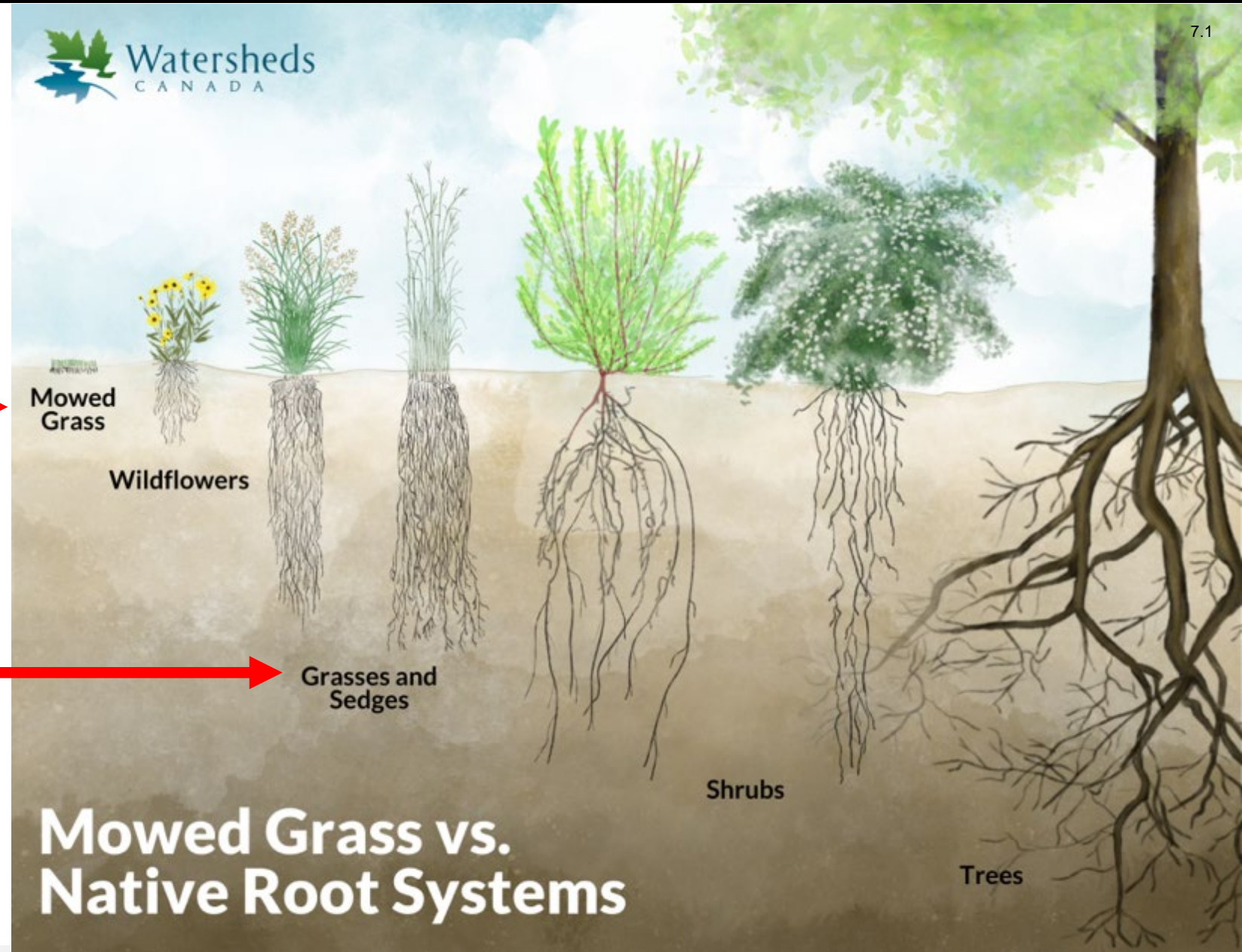
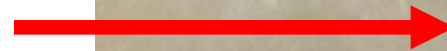
- Short mowing height leads to a shallow root system
- Susceptible to drought stress – needs frequent watering
- Vulnerable to weeds and pests – needs chemical controls

- ontario.ca



Unmowed native grass

- Deep root system develops
- Regenerates damaged soil
- Mitigates runoff
- Tolerates drought – conserves water
- Adapted to resist pests and disease



People + plants + wildlife in harmony

Think community

Value of native grass use in residential landscaping

- Provides food and shelter for beneficial insects
- Helps to balance the local ecology
- Supports biodiversity
- Lightens our hearts!

Fireflies need native grass for shelter, mating, and a larval food source

Photo: Fernando Gregory

Are we there yet?

Not quite yet...but we're on the way!

By-law Sections :

Enforcement

As it stands:

- The bylaw does not include an Appeals provision.

What's the problem?

- if a bylaw officer incorrectly identifies a plant, there is no avenue of recourse (short of initiating a lawsuit) for the resident.

Requested amendments:

3. Clear enforcement policies and procedures are included.
4. Appeals provision and procedures are clearly explained.
5. Implement complaint screening to “weed out” unconstitutional aesthetic and subjective complaints.
 - ✓ Idea: Use an online web portal with a drop-down menu of complaint categories, that are limited to matters of health and safety.

Are we there yet?

Not quite yet...but we're on the way!

By-law Sections :

Schedule "A" Table of Nuisance Weeds

As it stands:

- Included in the list: Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*), woolly cupgrass (*Eriochloa villosa*) and sow thistle (*Sonchus* spp.)

What's the problem?

- Some species are prohibited despite posing no health or safety concerns on non-agricultural lands or threats to natural areas.

Requested amendment:

6. Remove species on prohibited plants list that do not cause health or safety concerns on non-agricultural lands or threats to natural areas.

Toronto: from “Grass and Weeds” to “Turfgrass and Prohibited Plants”

TURFGRASS HEIGHT

- “The owner or occupant of private land shall cut the turfgrass on their land whenever the growth of turfgrass exceeds 20 centimetres in height or length.”

DEFINITION

TURFGRASS – “Ground cover of various perennial grasses grown for lawns, of a type that forms a dense, uniform turf if mown.”

FOCUS ON HEALTH & SAFETY:

- Manage the height of turfgrass.
- Keep properties free of prohibited plants listed in the bylaw.
- Ensure that sightlines are not obstructed.

Mississauga's Nuisance Weed and Tall Grass By-law 125-17, **when amended 2025:**

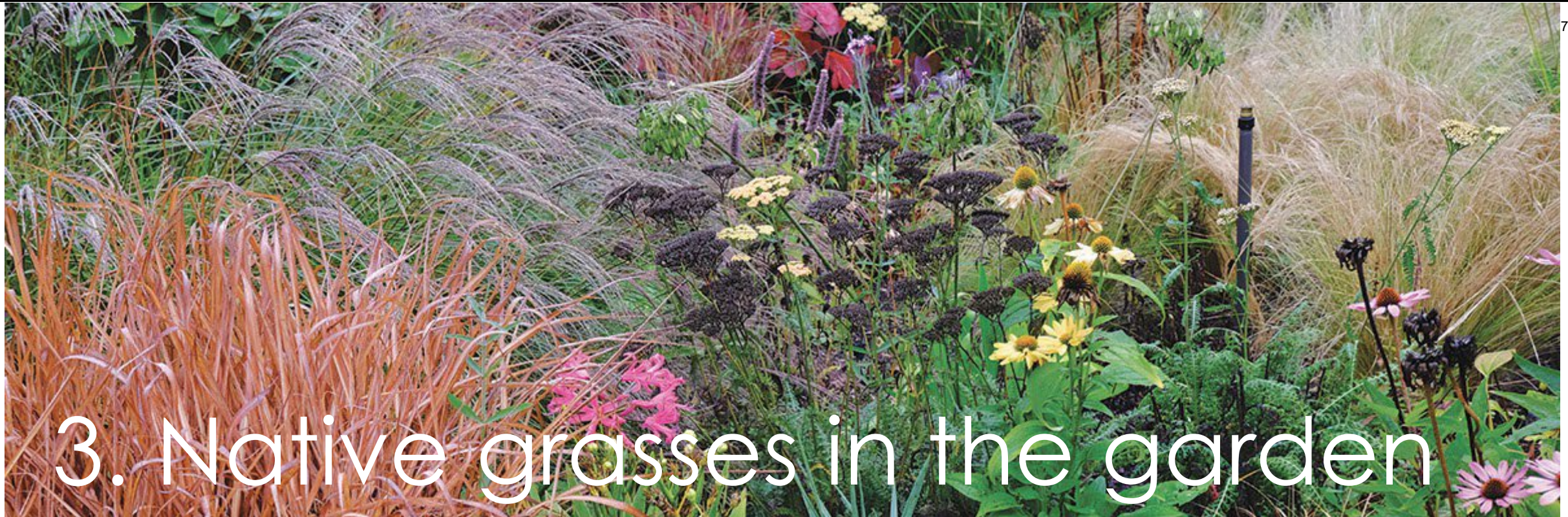
It provides:

- ✓ greater control over turfgrass height
- ✓ A list of prohibited local plants to support health and safety in Mississauga's urban environment

Its objective:

- ✓ to promote health and safety
- ✓ to align with nearby communities' by-laws
- ✓ to boost the city's biodiversity and foster its ecological wellbeing

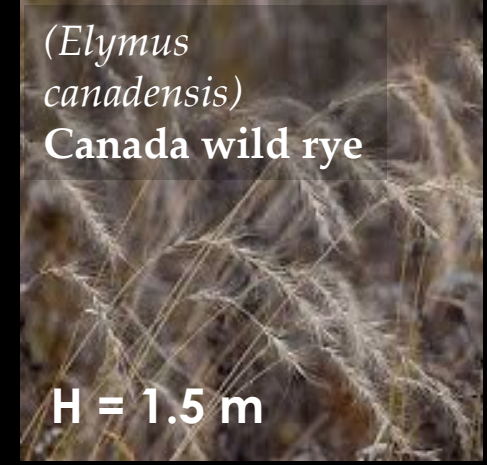
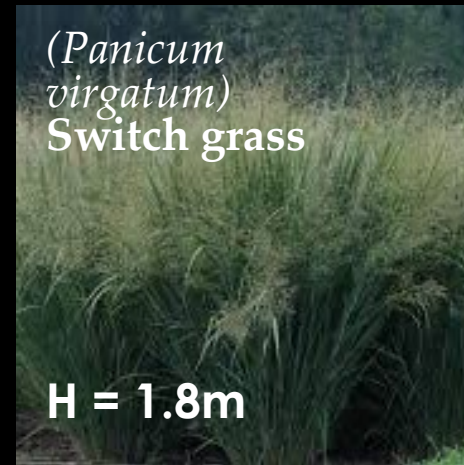
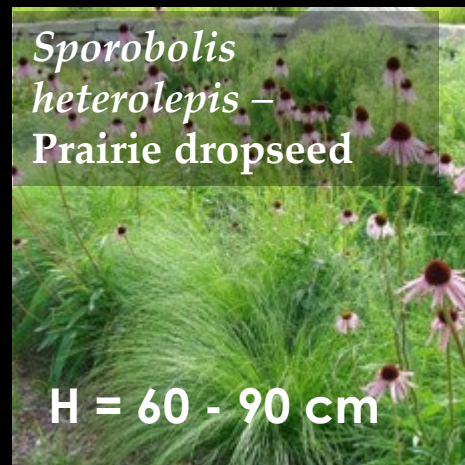




3. Native grasses in the garden

Think community:
plants + wildlife + people in
harmony

Gallery of Native Ontario Grasses





Urban meadowscape gardens

The High Line, New York - Designer: Piet Oudolf

- Worldwide influence – ex. The Meadoway in Toronto
- Extirpated species returned



Erosion control

- Grasses and flower mix
- Different plant heights
- Variety of root depths to hold soil



Runoff control

- Deep-rooted mix of native flowers and grasses
- Take up water
- Filter pollutants from our waterways



Cues to care: does it look Intentional?

- Mowed borders
- Pathways and edging
- Arbors and pergolas
- Hedges, walls, and fences



Designing with native grasses and sedges

- Deep-rooted bunch grasses
- Uniformity of size, texture and colour
- Knit the parts of the garden together without taking over





Connecting neighbourhoods to nature...

Photo: Jeanne. McRight



Blooming Boulevards

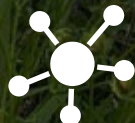
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