

Terms of Reference: Owner Education Manual for Green Development Standards

Purpose:

To outline the requirements of the Homeowner Education Manual submissions for low-rise residential and multi-unit residential buildings in alignment with Caledon's Green Development Standards (GDS).

Prepared By:

A Registered Professional Planner (RPP) or other qualified professional.

Required in Support of:

The Homeowner Education Manual is a submission requirement for the Town of Caledon's Green Development Standards (GDS) for Site Plan and Draft Plan of Subdivision applications, intended to demonstrate compliance with metric 3.7: Owner Education. The Homeowner Education Manual provides education to owners, and occupants on sustainable building and site features, emphasizing proper operation and maintenance, as well as how residents can support environmental stewardship in Caledon.

Design:

Instructions to applicant are highlighted in yellow. The Homeowner Education Manual should be designed in a user-friendly format, incorporating pictures and graphics where appropriate to enhance impact. It is encouraged that the Manual be printed on Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified and/or recycled paper.

Content:

Overview

The Homeowner Education Manual shall be distributed to all new building owners/tenants, outlining sustainability features (e.g., green building materials, energy efficiency, resilience, transit stop locations) and promoting other activities (e.g., low-water gardening, green cleaning materials, alternate pest control measures, purchasing green power). The manual shall also contain an itemized list of all "green" technologies and programs the applicant has committed to under this GDS, accompanied by references and attachments outlining ongoing maintenance requirements or standards. Additionally, it should provide guidance for building owners and tenants on installing sustainable features in the future (e.g. solar photovoltaic (PV) systems).

To satisfy metric 3.7: Owner Education in the Town of Caledon's Green Development Standards (GDS), the following information should be part of the Homeowner Education Manual submission to the Town:



1. Waste collection and disposal services;
2. Resident role as a steward of the natural environment including natural landscaping, public spaces, wildlife, litter and illegal dumping, and responsible pet ownership;
3. Access to sustainable transportation options; and
4. Energy and water conservation measures and other sustainable features specific to the project that impact, or could be of interest to the resident, as determined by the applicant.

In addition to the above requirements, the Homeowner Education Manual should include all relevant information required as per the conditions of the draft approval.

Although not required, the applicant may wish to include information pertaining to nearby parks, greenspaces, and trails, and contact information for key agencies such as the Town of Caledon, Region of Peel, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, and Credit Valley Conservation. Where appropriate, and as approved by the Town, the applicant should post permanent signage and other educational materials onsite, following the [Town's Encroachment By-law](#), to educate residents and visitors about sustainability features.

Homeowner Education Manual Requirements

1. Waste collection and disposal services

[Note to Applicant: The applicant is advised to contact the Region of Peel (until December 31, 2025) to confirm whether curbside waste collection services will be provided for the proposed development. Certain multi-residential buildings fronting private roadways may require private waste collection services.]

If a development is not an eligible property for waste collection under the Region of Peel Waste By-law, and waste collection and disposal services are provided by a private waste hauler/company, the applicant should provide a commitment letter on how waste will be collected, in accordance with best practice with all applicable statutes, by-laws and regulations respecting the environment and health and safety.

If the Region of Peel provides waste collection and disposal services for the proposed development, the following information can be incorporated into the Homeowner Education Manual.

Please note, effective January 1, 2026, waste collection services will be transferred to the Town of Caledon. The Town will update this Terms of Reference as more information becomes available.]

Curbside Collection of Garbage/Yard Waste & Green Bin

Until December 31, 2025, the Region of Peel is responsible for the collection and disposal of residential waste in Caledon, including garbage, yard waste, green bin, and large items. Visit peelregion.ca/waste to find your pickup schedule and seasonal collection dates. Follow the links below for more information on waste diversion, collection dates and disposal facilities *[applicant should verify links]*.

- [How to sort your waste](#)
- [Residential Waste Collection Calendar](#)
- [Community Recycling Centres](#)

Residents are encouraged to minimize household waste and divert waste into recycling and composting as much as possible.



2. Resident role as steward of the natural environment

Environmental conservation and stewardship is a cooperative effort involving residents and the municipality. Below are suggestions and tips on how to be a good neighbour to the natural environment.

Nature-Friendly Yards

- Native Plants: Residents are encouraged to plant native trees, shrubs, and plants in their yards, as native vegetation conserves water, is more resilient, and requires less maintenance while supporting local pollinators (bees, birds, and butterflies). For a list of native plants that support pollinators, [click here](#).
 - To purchase native trees or shrubs, consider the Town's [Tree Seedling Program](#), which offers an affordable way to enhance native green space on your property. The program opens each year in January.
 - Avoid planting invasive species that can degrade local natural habitats. For a list of invasive species to avoid and alternatives, please visit [Grow Me Instead](#).
- Soft Landscaping: Limit the use of conventional turf by incorporating drought-tolerant plants, natural ground covers and rainwater harvesting systems, such as rain barrels. These methods conserve water and create a more sustainable and low-maintenance landscape around your home. Avoid the use of artificial turf entirely. Understand Town restrictions on replacing soft landscaping with paved areas, which can increase stormwater runoff and urban flood risk. Ecological Yard Management: Consider using environmentally friendly products when caring for your lawn and garden.
- Natural Areas: Do not alter naturalized areas such as forests, stormwater ponds, or open space corridors by mowing, pruning, or planting, as these spaces are critical for preserving natural vegetation and wildlife habitat. Do not dump yard waste clippings or release unwanted pets into natural areas. For more information, visit [Don't Let It Loose](#).
- Light Pollution: *[Applicant to indicate any measures taken to reduce light pollution]* Reduce light pollution by minimizing the number of outdoor lights on your home, ensuring they are cast downwards, and consider time- and motion-sensor lighting to minimize unnecessary illumination. For more information about reducing light pollution, visit the [International Dark Sky Association](#).
- Bird-Friendly Windows: *[Applicant to indicate if any bird-friendly window treatments have been installed]* Make your home bird friendly! Consider adding bird-friendly stickers to windows or glass railings to prevent bird collisions and keep any bird feeders within 1 meter of windows. Visit [FLAP Canada](#) and [Feather Friendly](#) for more information.
- De-icing: Consider using alternatives to salt for de-icing. For more information, visit the [Smart About Salt Council](#).

Visiting public park areas, public open spaces, and trails

Residents are encouraged to visit the [Trails & Cycling Routes interactive map](#) to find trails, parks, and open space areas in Caledon. Residents living near natural areas can visit the [Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's Guide for Homeowners Living Next to Woodlands, Wetlands, and Natural Areas](#) to learn how to coexist with nature while protecting the environment. Learn about Conservation Areas near you that offer hiking, biking, picnic areas, and summer camps! Visit [TRCA](#) and [CVC](#) to learn more.

Helpful Tips:

- Littering, vandalism, and graffiti is illegal.
- Always obey park signage and follow the posted rules in parks and recreational trails.



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www.caledon.ca
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- Take pictures rather than removing plants, wood, or rocks, as these actions can disrupt habitats for animals, aquatic life, and insects.
- Residents walking their pets are reminded to stay on the designated trail and keep them on a leash, so vegetation is not trampled or damaged.

Living with wildlife in your community

Wild animals are part of our urban landscape. Residents are encouraged to learn about local wildlife to ensure a safe and enjoyable coexistence. Wild animals generally do not need human intervention or food, as such actions can be harmful. For more information, visit the [Town's Wildlife webpage](#).

Helpful Tips:

- Avoid approaching wild animals, as well as their nesting areas and dens.
- Keep dogs on leash and away from wild animals.
- The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) is responsible for addressing wildlife-related issues within Ontario. For more information, visit the [Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry](#)

Litter and illegal dumping in your community – take action!

All residents and businesses are responsible for the proper disposal of waste. Waste that is intentionally abandoned on public or private property constitutes illegal dumping. To mitigate and prevent illegal dumping, residents are encouraged to take proactive steps to maintain a clean and safe community. Below are a few ways you can make a difference:

- Residents are reminded to adhere to the Town's [Clean Yards and Property Standards By-law](#), which establishes regulations for maintaining the cleanliness and attractiveness of the Town. The standards described in these by-laws are intended to outline the reasonable maintenance and upkeep of yards, buildings, and properties.
- Adhere to all proper waste collection and diversion protocols and utilize the Region's [How to sort your waste](#) page.
- Do not dump household waste or construction materials in parks or natural areas, as such activities can harm plants and wildlife, in addition to degrading the water quality.
- Do not dump garden waste or grass clippings into natural areas, as this can damage native vegetation and introduce invasive species throughout the ecosystem.
- Do not dump cleansers, chemicals, or prescription drugs down drains, as they may ultimately enter local water systems, posing a threat to wildlife and contaminating drinking water supplies.
- Use proper swimming pool management techniques. Do not empty pool water into natural areas, as this can destroy vegetation and contaminate water bodies.
- Take all household hazardous waste to one of Peel's Community Recycling Centres. For a list of local facilities, visit the [Region of Peel Community Recycling Centres](#) page.

The natural environment is an integral part of your community, providing both recreational opportunities and essential ecological functions. Together, we can contribute to the protection and preservation of these spaces.

Responsible Pet Ownership



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The Town promotes responsible pet ownership by educating the public on animal-related issues and enforcing related by-laws. Information can be found on the [Town's Animal Care and Control By-law webpage](#). Below are a few reminders to new residents:

- The Town of Caledon is recognized as a pet-friendly municipality by Better Cities for Pets™. For more information and a list of pet-friendly businesses, visit the [Pet-Friendly Caledon page](#).
- Get identification for your pet. If you want to improve your pet's chances of getting home quickly and safely if they go missing, make sure your pet has an ID tag and/or microchip with your contact information. Visit the [Animal Care and Control By-law page](#) for more information.
- As per the [Animal Care and Control By-law](#), no pets are allowed to be at large. At large means a pet is not restrained by a capable person outside of the owner's property.
- Pets are an important part of the community, but nuisance behaviours like excessive barking can negatively impact your neighbours (and other dogs). As a pet owner, you are responsible for controlling your dog's barking and preventing it from disturbing others.

3. Access to sustainable transportation options

Residents are encouraged to explore their community through sustainable transportation options. Active transportation such as walking, cycling, and running is a sustainable and healthy option to travel.

Residents can save money and help the environment through the following activities:

- Residents are encouraged to walk or cycle to work or school. For more information, visit the [Town of Caledon Active Transportation Master Plan](#) and the [Town's Trails and Cycling map](#).
- Consider carpooling to work.
- Explore transit options – visit the [Town of Caledon Transit page](#) for information.
- Consider going electric for your next vehicle purchase. The Town has a robust and growing electric vehicle (EV) charging network and incentives are in place for new EV purchases. Visit the Town's [Sustainable Transportation](#) page for more information.

4. Your Home's Sustainability Features

[Note to applicant: the sustainability features listed below will need to be refined based on the specific features that are installed in the home. At minimum, the manual should include information about the feature(s), why they were included in terms of sustainability, energy/cost saving, emissions reduction, etc., regular maintenance requirements, and any next steps for the homeowner to consider (e.g. installing solar panels or EV charging station)]

- Energy Efficiency and conservation opportunities
- HVAC Equipment
- Controls (e.g. smart thermostats) and ideal setpoints
- EV Ready infrastructure
- Solar Ready/Cool Roof
- Water Efficiency

Want to learn more about energy efficiency at home? Check out the following resources:

- [Centre for Community Energy Transformation](#).



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- [SaveONenergy 'For Your Home' page](#)
- [Enbridge Gas 'Residential resources'](#)
- [Hydro One](#)

For more information about the Town of Caledon's environment initiatives, visit the [Energy and Environment](#) webpage, or email us at Environment@caledon.ca.



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