



## **EcoSuperior's BEAN Project: An Introduction**

*EcoSuperior's BEAN Project – Building Eco-Active Neighbourhoods – is about neighbours working together to respond to climate change.*

### **Purpose**

At EcoSuperior, we recognize that human-caused climate change is an urgent matter requiring real solutions. Already, we are seeing the impacts of climate change in Thunder Bay. For example, the increase in severe weather events (flooding, ice storms) affects the health, safety, and economy of local residents. Other impacts, like the appearance of deer ticks (carrying lyme disease) and warming waters are affecting our recreation and lifestyle.

EcoSuperior's BEAN Project aims to build healthier neighbourhoods around Thunder Bay by helping neighbours build stronger relationships with each other and by facilitating collaborative neighbourhood actions to strengthen ecological resilience – the ability of the natural ecosystem to withstand a changing climate.

### **Process**

We are recruiting interested individuals to form a 'Neighbourhood BEAN Team' in your neighbourhood. Over the next few months, EcoSuperior will work alongside interested neighbours a few hours each month to identify neighbourhood strengths and opportunities related to environmental health and to determine areas of concern and select priorities. Action projects will be chosen by the team and implemented with the support of EcoSuperior in spring/summer 2019.

**Do you wish you knew your neighbours better? Are you interested in caring for the environment? If YES, then please attend the upcoming neighbourhood meeting or contact [Aynsley@ecosuperior.org](mailto:Aynsley@ecosuperior.org) (624-2143). No prior knowledge is needed – only a keen interest in building a stronger neighbourhood!**

### **Projects**

Once priority actions are agreed upon by the Neighbourhood Planning Team, EcoSuperior will support the team through project management and funding. While each action plan will be unique to the neighbourhood, actions will likely relate to stormwater management, biodiversity, waste minimization, or active transportation. Below is a list of potential climate action projects that may be considered - real climate solutions that help to build stronger, more resilient neighbourhoods.

<b>Stormwater Management</b>	<b>Increase Biodiversity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De-pave projects</li> <li>• Rain gardens</li> <li>• Rain barrel distribution &amp; installation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree planting</li> <li>• Pollinator gardens</li> <li>• Urban agriculture opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Waste Minimization</b>	<b>Active Transportation Initiatives</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compost &amp; recycling education</li> <li>• Compost bin distribution</li> <li>• 1-bag garbage challenge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike rodeos, bike repair clinics</li> <li>• Helmet &amp; light distribution</li> <li>• Walking school bus</li> </ul>

For example, if flooding or water quality is identified as a neighbourhood concern, the Planning Team may wish to install a series of residential rain gardens in an area. Rain gardens help to capture, filter, and slowly infiltrate stormwater thus reducing the load on municipal infrastructure and preventing pollutants from entering nearby waterways.

Alternatively, a different Planning Team might identify the need to promote active transportation to reduce the carbon emissions in their neighbourhood. Action projects might include hosting a bike repair clinic in a nearby parkette, distributing bike helmets and lights to neighbours without, or holding a ‘bike rodeo’ where Safe Cycling Instructors teach safety and skills to interested neighbours.

Finally, some neighbourhoods are slated to lose a significant number of trees as Emerald Ash Borer, an invasive beetle that kills ash trees, spreads throughout the city. Since trees help to reduce the impacts of climate change by slowing the path of stormwater, providing shade and purifying the air, re-planting trees, establishing a naturalized area containing native species of shrubs and flowers, or creating a pollinator garden might be selected as priority actions.

There are many possibilities of how the BEAN Project might look in your neighbourhood – all depending on what the Neighbourhood Planning Team determine as interests and priority actions. This project is about working together to build a stronger neighbourhood. Together, we can make a difference!

### Timeline

2019	Jan / Feb	Initial neighbourhood meetings
	March / April	Asset/opportunities inventory. Visioning process. Select priority actions.
	May / June July / August	Implement action projects!
	September	Celebrate & Evaluate

Visit [www.ecosuperior.org/bean](http://www.ecosuperior.org/bean)

Contact [Aynsley@ecosuperior.org](mailto:Aynsley@ecosuperior.org) or 624-2143 for more information or to get involved.