

City of London - Application for Appointment to City of London Community Advisory Committees

Application

Committee you are interested in serving on: **Ecological Community Advisory Committee**

Contact Information

Name: **Manuel Spiller**

City: **Sarnia**

Province: **ON**

Postal Code: **N7V3Z5**

Experience and Qualifications

If you have experience on a London Advisory Committee, please provide dates and details. (max. 250 characters): **none**

What do you hope to contribute or learn as part of a Community Advisory Committee? (max. 250 characters):

I hope to contribute a unique, different perspective based on my experiences as both, a resident of various rural and urban environments in Canada and Germany, and a former employee within fields concerned with ecology and municipal development. I believe that working in a diverse team of experts with varying backgrounds targeting ecological issues can help me broaden my knowledge and thought approaches. I am also interested in municipal decision making and curious in how work done by committees will be used.

How will you support the work of a Community Advisory Committee? (max. 250 characters):

I aim to be an active member of the committee, providing my services where possible. With experience in data collection for, and creation of EIAs, municipal, and ecological work assignments in my past, as well as my current research interest in Political Ecology as a PhD student at the Western department of Geography and Environment, I believe that I can offer strong contributions to the Committee.

We value the contributions of Londoners with diverse experiences and welcome applications from individuals who share our commitment. Please describe how your work, community or lived experience will enhance these efforts through Community Advisory Committee work. (max. 3000 characters):

I can provide knowledge based on my experiences stated above, contributing insights based on my Masters degree in Landscape Architecture and my current studies for a PhD in Geography. My studies focus on the intersection between nature and humans, enhancing community life through maintaining and restoring healthy ecosystems within reasonable distance for everyone. Further, I have worked for a conservation authority, an environmental planning firm, a landscape architecture firm, and two municipalities. Through these experiences and my education, I became knowledgeable specifically about LID, stream health initiatives including dam removal and daylighting, and terrestrial ecosystem challenges in urban environments. I spearheaded invasive species removal and grassland restoration projects for the city of Sarnia while educating staff about ecological issues. I am former chair of the Willow Park Ecology Centre in Georgetown, and co-founder, as well as current chair of the One Bench One Tree initiative (1bench1tree.ca) which donated two rest sites to hospitals in London (a 3rd coming this spring). I am also an expert for Sportainable, a thinktank advancing sustainable practices in sport, and work as independent consultant for health care facilities greening ambitions under the trees for health initiative umbrella.

Please describe additional experience, training, or community involvement that will help you in your role as a Community Advisory Committee Member. (max. 250 characters):

I'm a recurring participant of Green Drinks Sarnia, and their first presenter since the pandemic. While working for the Town of Renfrew, and the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, I managed and ran community events, including planting and invasive species removal initiatives. I was formerly trained as a Leave no Trace Master Educator, a trainer of educators about how to responsibly travel through ecosystems, but have since downgraded to a sole Educator certification. I'm not London centric, but as a part of the Western University community and potential future resident, I would be grateful for an opportunity to represent ecological interests to better life within the city.

Attach resume or other document here, if needed: **SpillerM_London Community 2024.pdf**

Attach more files here, if needed:

Confirmations

I declare the following: **I am at least 18 years old.; I am not a City employee or Council member.; I understand that the commitment may be up to 4 hours per month to attend meetings and prepare.; I understand that my application and any attachments will be included on a public agenda that is published on the City website.**

To help inform our outreach activities, please tell us how you heard about this opportunity: (optional): **Word of mouth**

If you selected 'Other', please specify:

Submitted on: **3/28/2024 9:11:28 AM**

Manuel Spiller, MLA, PhD Student
Department of Geography & Environment
University of Western Ontario
1151 Richmond Street, SSC 2310
London, ON, N6A 5C2

RECENT & RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE:

Teaching assistantships & Mentoring

- 2023-2024 The Fundamentals of Geography (GEOG 1100), King's University College
2024 Intro to the Human Environment (GEOG 1400), Department of Geography and Environment, Western University
2023 Geography of Tourism (GEOG 2144), Department of Geography and Environment, Western University
2021-2022 Site Engineering (LARC 2410), School of Environmental Design and Rural Development, University of Guelph

Employment

- 2024- Trees for Health, Consultant for Naturescapes, Canada
2022 Landscape Architecture Intern, NAK Design Strategies, Ottawa, Canada
2021 Environmental Planner, Baader Konzept GmbH, Gunzenhausen, Germany
2018-2020 Staff Accountant, Terry Burrell CA, Sarnia, Canada
2019 Parks Staff, City of Sarnia, Sarnia, Canada
2016-2017 Crew Leader - Conservation Youth Corps, Credit Valley Conservation, Mississauga, Canada
2016-2017 Education Assistant, Credit Valley Conservation, Mississauga, Canada
2015 Program Instructor & Event Leader, Town of Renfrew, Renfrew, Canada
2013-2014 Habitat Restoration Technician, Credit Valley Conservation, Caledon, Canada

SERVICE:

Academic service, beyond university

- 2024- Expert - Nature Encounter, Infrastructure, & Sports Tourism, Sportainable

University service, Western University

- 2023- Social committee lead representative, Geography Graduate Student Society

University service, University of Guelph

2023 Student representative, Landscape Architecture Accreditation Review, Canadian Society of Landscape Architects

2022 Student representative, Landscape Architecture Program Assessment Committee

College service, Algonquin College

2014-2015 Program representative, Outdoor Adventure Naturalist Program, Outdoor Adventure Programs Committee

2014-2015 JEDI New student mentor

2014 & 2015 Outdoor Adventure Naturalist representative, Waterfront Campus Open House

Community service

2021- Chair, Board of Directors, One Bench One Tree

2023 Fundraiser, Camino for a Cause, Camino de Santiago Pilgrimage, Inn of the Good Shepherd

2022-2023 Board of Directions, Trees for Health

2016-2018 Chair, Board of Directors, Willow Park Ecology Centre, Norval, Canada

2011-2012 Skiing Assistant, Canadian Association of Disabled Skiers, Ottawa, Canada

2011 Animal Husbandry Assistant, Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) rehabilitation program, Wildlife Preservation Canada, Dyer's Bay, Canada

EDUCATION:

2023-2027 Ph. D. in progress (Geography) Western University, Canada.

2023 M.L.A. (Landscape Architecture) University of Guelph, Canada.

2015 College Diploma (Outdoor Adventure Naturalism) Algonquin College, Canada.

Spring & summer schools

2024 Political Ecologies of Conservation: extinction struggles, neoliberal natures and convivial alternatives. PhD Spring school, Wageningen University, Netherlands.

2016 Outdoor Wilderness Leadership Symposium, Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario, Caledon, Canada

PUBLICATIONS:

Thesis

2023 Spiller, M. (2023). *A Case Study Analysis of the Barefoot Path Spalt as Linear Playscape* (Master's Thesis). University of Guelph.
<https://hdl.handle.net/10214/27523>

Work in progress

Under review Spiller, M. *Designing for Human-Nature Connectedness: A Case Study of the Barefoot Path Spalt, Germany*. Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism.

AWARDS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND SOCIETIES:

Awards

- 2018 Photography contest winner, ODAWG Oshawa. (Frontpage publication)
- 2017 Award of Merit to Willow Park Ecology Centre, Credit Valley Conservation.
- 2015 Award for Academic Achievement and Leadership, Algonquin College.
- 2012 Our Canada photography contest winner, Readers Digest.
- 2008 FOCUS Media award for the production of the educational film *Termination* to the FOS/BOS Ansbach Film group, FOCUS magazine & the German Federal Ministry of the Environment.

Scholarships

- 2023 Kenneth W. Knox Graduate Leadership Travel Grant, University of Guelph.
- 2023 Landscape Architecture Access Scholarship, University of Guelph.
- 2022-2023 SSHRC – Canada Graduate Scholarship Master’s Award, Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada.
- 2022-2023 Dean’s Tri-Council Scholarship, University of Guelph.
- 2022 Queen Elizabeth II Scholarship in Science and Technology, Ontario Graduate Scholarship.
- 2022 Paving the Future Scholarship, Unilock.
- 2022 Ontario Association of Landscape Architects Graduate Scholarship.
- 2022 Tony DiGiovanni Scholarship, Ontario Horticultural Trades Foundation.
- 2022 University Graduate Scholarship, University of Guelph.
- 2022 John E. (Jack) Irving Scholarship, University of Guelph.
- 2022 Bell-Sargent Graduate Scholarship, University of Guelph.
- 2021 University Graduate Scholarship, University of Guelph.

Societies

- 2023 Sigma Lambda Alpha Landscape Architecture Honor Society (invitation only), Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture.

CONFERENCE & OTHER PRESENTATIONS:

Academic conference presentations

- Upcoming 2024 ‘The Barefoot Path Spalt, Germany: A Linear Playscape Merging Playground and Trail Attributes for Family Play’. 35th International Geographical Congress 2024, Dublin, Ireland. (August)

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- 2023 ‘South Guelph LID Analysis and Design’. GIS Days, Western University. (Online)
- ‘Yorkville Park Digitalization and Analysis’. GIS Days, Western University. (Poster)
- ‘Governance of Trail-Network Development’. Atlantic Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers (ACAG) Annual Meeting, Memorial University of Newfoundland. (Online)
- ‘Barefoot Paths: Trails for the Sole’. Ontario Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers (CAGONT) Annual Conference, Toronto Metropolitan University.
- 2022 ‘Barefoot Paths: Trails for the Sole’. Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) and Ontario Association of Landscape Architects (OALA) Joint Conference, London, Canada.
- 2017 ‘Barefoot Paths: Trails for the Sole’. ReKindle the Spark Conference for Outdoor Education as part of the Latornell Conservation Symposium.
- 2014 ‘Schoolyard Greening’. Horwood Conference, Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario (COEO) Canadian Student Outdoor Education Conference, Queen’s University.

Professional presentations

- Upcoming 2024 ‘Reconnecting with Nature: Combating Climate Change through Experiences with Nature’. Green Drinks Sarnia, Canada. (May)
- ‘Linear Playscapes Merging Trail and Play’. World Trails Conference 2024, Ottawa, Canada. (October)
- 2023 ‘Barefoot Paths: Trails for the Sole’. Parks and Recreation Ontario (PRO) Forum, Hamilton.
- ‘One Bench One Tree’. International Society of Arboriculture Ontario (ISAO) Conference, London, Canada.
- 2019 Presenting Outdoor Education and Barfoot Path Concepts to Managers of the City of Sarnia Parks and Recreation Department.
- 2018 Presenting the Barefoot Path Concept to Managers of the City of Vaughn Parks and Recreation Department.
- 2016 ‘Outdoor Risk Management’. A presentation to staff of the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, Mississauga, Canada.

Other outreach activities

- 2023 Barefoot Path Experience set-up. Touch a Truck Event, Haldimand County, Jarvis, Canada.
- One Bench One Tree Booth. Landscape Ontario Congress, Toronto.

SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE:

Kula, T. (2023, Aug 20). Blisters and bucks: Inside a Sarnia man's epic El Camino trek. *The Observer*. <https://www.theobserver.ca/news/local-news/camino-for-a-cause>

Lander, M. (Host). (2023, May). *Manuel Spiller's Camino for a Cause Fundraiser* (Television Broadcast). Sarnia, ON: YourTV.

Vega, N. (2023, May 15). Sarnia man embarks on pilgrimage, supports Inn of the Good Shepherd. *Sarnia News Today*. <https://sarnianewstoday.ca/sarnia/news/2023/5/15/sarnia-man-embarks-pilgrimage-supports-inn-good-shepherd>

DiGiovanni, T. (2023, March 8). A legacy that lasts. *Landscape Ontario*. <https://horttrades.com/a-legacy-that-lasts>

Dobson, C. (2021, October 14). City man spearheading rest area for hospital workers. *The Sarnia Journal*. <https://www.thesarniajournal.ca/top-story/city-man-spearheading-rest-area-for-hospital-workers-7971761>

CBC News. (2021, July 14). Tree and bench project honours healthcare workers at hospitals across Canada. CBC Kitchener-Waterloo. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/university-guelph-one-bench-one-tree-hospitals-canada-1.6101118>

Carty, M. (2021, July 7). University of Guelph's 'One Bench One Tree' project honours healthcare workers. *Global News*. <https://globalnews.ca/news/8009927/guelph-one-bench-one-tree-project/>

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS:

Canadian Association of Geographers

Ontario Association of Landscape Architects