

Date: 2021-03-31

Subject: **Recommendation Report: Bee City Designation for Brampton**

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Report Number: Public Works & Engineering-2021-301

Recommendations:

1. That the report titled: **Bee City Designation for Brampton** to the Committee of Council meeting of March 31, 2021 be received;
2. That staff be directed to complete Bee City Canada's application process to designate Brampton as a Bee City; and
3. That Council proclaim the third week of June annually as National Pollinator Week.

Overview:

- Pollinator species worldwide are at an increasing risk of population decline due to habitat loss, climate change, pesticides and pest diseases.
- The Bee City designation administered by Bee City Canada is a yearly commitment a municipality can make to ensure that pollinators are protected and recognizes the municipality's efforts towards pollinator protection.
- Currently there are 45 Bee Cities in Canada with 30 in Ontario.
- The City of Brampton is currently implementing multiple supporting plans and programs that protect pollinators and promote collaborations that benefit both pollinators and residents.
- The Bee City Canada designation builds upon existing initiatives, and can establish new approaches and partnerships that advance numerous City objectives, including those identified in the Term of Council Priorities, Brampton 2040 Vision, and the Brampton Grow Green Environmental Master Plan.

Background:

Plants form the building blocks of all ecosystems and disruption to their pollination and subsequent reproduction is likely to result in a decline in plant species diversity and can adversely affect the animals and birds that rely on them. Pollinators play a critical role in maintaining healthy native plant communities and in ensuring that flowering plants produce seeds. In addition, these pollinators play a significant role in crop production. It is estimated that the commercial value of crop pollinators in Canada is roughly \$2 billion annually.

Founded in 2016, Bee City Canada is a federally recognized charitable organization with the goal to educate Canadians about the importance of pollinators and to inspire action to ensure pollinator habitat protection. The organization supports collaborative efforts of communities and organizations committed to helping pollinators by offering four designations. These designations are: Bee Cities, Bee Partners, Bee Schools and Bee Campuses.

Bee City Canada offers an opportunity for the City of Brampton to promote and enhance its leading efforts to protect and enhance the City's natural heritage system. The **Bee City Canada Designation** builds upon existing initiatives and can establish new approaches and partnerships that advance numerous City objectives.

This designation requires a yearly commitment that a municipality can make to promote healthy, sustainable habitat for pollinators by supporting collaboration and initiatives that benefit both pollinators and City residents. It also gives deserved recognition to cities that are advocating for pollinators.

National Pollinator Week celebrates pollinators and educates the public about how to protect them. Originally started in the U.S, Pollinator Week has expanded as an international celebration including Canada and is administered by Pollinator Partnership Canada (P2C). Pollinator Partnership Canada is a registered charitable organization that is dedicated to protecting and promoting pollinators and their habitats through conservation, education and research.

Brampton is well positioned to be a Bee City. The Bee City designation is supported by the Brampton Grow Green Environmental Master Plan, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Natural Heritage and Environmental Management Strategy (NHEMS) and the Eco Park Strategy.

These overarching frameworks and strategies inform the following programs and initiatives that improve pollinator health and habitat:

- Brampton One Million Trees Program
- Don't Mow Let it Grow Initiative
- Valley Naturalization Program
- Park Environmental Stewardship Program
- Community Stewardship Program

As Canada's Flower City, Brampton's floral heritage is an important aspect of the City's cultural heritage. With over 400 road-side gardens and one million spring flowers, the City offers beautiful views to residents and tourists. Acquiring the Bee City designation is great way to celebrate Brampton's Flower City heritage.

Current Situation:

As outlined in Brampton's Official Plan, the City recognizes the importance to protect the natural environment. The Bee City designation provides the opportunity to:

1. promote healthy, sustainable habitat for pollinators to thrive in Brampton;
2. celebrate Brampton's leadership in natural heritage protection and enhancement;
3. foster environmental awareness and increase collaboration and engagement of community stewards for pollinators and pollinator habitat;
4. set an example and encourage residents and businesses to recognize the importance of biodiversity and how pollinators are impacted by climate change; and
5. celebrate Brampton's "Flower City" heritage and ensure the succession of floral blooms in the city's 400 roadside gardens.

Currently, there are 45 municipalities in Canada that have achieved the Bee City designation; with 30 located in Ontario. Some of the Bee Cities include:

- Toronto
- Montreal
- Calgary
- Mississauga
- Hamilton

To see a complete list of Canada's Bee Cities, visit Bee City Canada's [website](#). Additionally, in Brampton, the Friends and Stewards of Dorchester Park have achieved Bee City's Bee Partners designation.

Bee City Canada Application

To apply to become a Bee City, Bee City Canada has set out requirements under its application that require internal staff to oversee all Bee City affairs. These requirements can all be accommodated by existing City programs and include:

1. Establishing a cross functional team - The City's existing Green City Team (consisting of Parks Maintenance and Forestry, Parks Planning and Development and Environment and Engineering staff) will be responsible in undertaking this role as it is a cross-functional collaborative team that coordinates actions of the Natural Heritage Restoration Program;
2. Paying an annual re-application fee – the \$1000 annual fee covers resources provided by Bee City Canada; and
3. Committing to the following actions:
 - Create and maintain current pollinator habitats
 - Educate the public about the importance of pollinators
 - Celebrate pollinators during National Pollinator Week (June)

Through the proclamation of the National Pollinator Week, the City can further enhance pollinator outreach and engagement to fulfill the yearly Bee City commitments.

Next Steps:

Following Council's direction to submit the Bee City Canada application to designate Brampton as Bee City, next steps include:

1. Integrating the Bee City requirements into the existing Green City Team mandate;
2. Promoting the Bee City designation on the City's website and social media; and
3. Continuing to support collaborative efforts with residents such as establishing pollinator gardens and engaging the community in environmental stewardship.

Corporate Implications:

Financial Implications:

The Bee City Canada Designation requires a yearly renewal fee of \$1000 that will be funded from the City's Environmental Master Plan Implementation budget.

Other Implications:

There are no other implications resulting from the approval of the recommendations of this report.

Term of Council Priorities:

The Bee City Canada focuses on three of the Term of Council Priorities.

The Bee City Canada Designation supports *Brampton is a Green City* priority as it ensures that the City will focus on actions that support natural heritage restoration as well as promote community events and outreach programs that benefit residents and the natural environment.

The Bee City Designation also supports the *Brampton is Healthy and Safe City* and *Brampton is a Mosaic* priorities by supporting urban agriculture initiatives, providing green space for residents to connect with nature to improve mental health, and supporting community events, engagements and outreach programs that empower Brampton's residents.

Conclusion:

The Bee City Designation will recognize the City as a leader in biodiversity protection and set an example for surrounding municipalities. Bee City Canada offers the opportunity to effectively engage residents with Brampton's natural environment and help the City achieve its sustainability goals, all of which align with City's Term of Council priorities.

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