



Report

Subject: Pollinator Protection Plan

Department: Infrastructure Services

Division: Transportation and Development

Report #: INS-2025-038

Meeting Date: 2025-07-14

Recommendations

That report INS-2025-038, Pollinator Protection Plan, be received; and

That staff draft the 2026 budget to accommodate \$6,000 for the pollinator garden, utilizing savings found during the budget process that would otherwise reduce the budget for a pollinator workshop, and for engagement and education with the public; and

That staff prepare a draft Pollinator Policy for review and present suggested amendments to policy, by-laws and procedures in a report to Council in accordance with the timelines in the Pollinator Protection Plan.

Overview

On March 24, 2025, Councillor Prendergast brought forward a motion to Council to Strengthen Pollinator-Friendly Practices in the Town of Orangeville and for staff to develop a Pollinator Protection Plan and include details for a municipal pollinator garden.

To strengthen the Town's commitment as a designated Bee City. Staff recommend that the Town of Orangeville consider adopting a Pollinator Policy. The policy can include items to increase designated natural areas, mandate percentage of pollinator-friendly habitat in new development and Town-owned garden spaces, explore incentive programs for residences to increase pollinator habitat corridors and include feedback from public engagement.

Background

Since 2020, through the Sustainable Orangeville Committee, the Town of Orangeville has been a designated Bee City committing to developing, restoring and preserving pollinator-

friendly habitats. On March 24, 2025, Councillor Prendergast brought forward a motion to Council to Strengthen Pollinator-Friendly Practices in the Town of Orangeville. Council directed staff to report back on the development of a Pollinator Protection Plan including pollinator-friendly procurement and planting policies; and to identify suitable locations on town-owned property for the development of a municipal pollinator garden and proposed locations, budget implications, and an implementation plan for consideration at the July 14, 2025 Council meeting.

Analysis/Current Situation

Pollinators are significant contributors to ecosystems and agricultural food systems and are currently threatened by land use changes, climate change, agriculture and pest management (Pindar *et al.*, 2017). There are over 800 native pollinator species in Canada and their habitat needs include nesting requirements (i.e., bare soil or leaf litter), host plants to lay eggs and in some cases a food source for caterpillars, a life stage of butterflies (government of Canada, 2024). The habitat needs and ranges of native pollinator species are important considerations when implementing pollinator-friendly practices and when designing the municipal pollinator garden.

Creating pollinator habitat supports pollinators by providing food and meeting their habitat needs. This can be achieved through installing and maintaining a municipal pollinator garden. However, because pollinator habitat ranges can extend from 500 metres to 1,500 metres and to create connectivity there should be a land commitment that ranges between 11% to 16% that will support wild bee populations and other pollinators (Pindar and Raine, 2023). A single pollinator garden will not provide sufficient pollinator habitat within the Town of Orangeville. Ensuring connectivity of individual habitats will aid in developing a larger land area habitat corridor and will support the Town's commitment as a Bee City. To build pollinator corridors it is recommended that the Town also focus on pollinator-friendly practices across the municipality to increase the spatial distribution of pollinator habitat. To achieve this, policies and procedures should support this goal, and the public should be engaged so that privately-owned properties are aligned.

Through the development of the Plan, it was found that the Property Standards By-Law No. 2022-021 as amended and the Procurement Policy By-Law No. 2023-061 as amended contained items and language that were not conducive to pollinator-friendly practices. Should Council adopt the recommendations of this report, Staff will work collaboratively with the respective divisions to propose amendments to support pollinator-friendly habitats and practices within these documents.

The recommended location of the municipal pollinator garden is along the Mill Creek Trail south of Montgomery Boulevard between Chapman Road and Gooseberry Street. The garden installation can begin in spring of 2026 so that it can be fully captured within the 2026 budget for Council review and approval.

Parks staff have confirmed that maintenance of the pollinator garden can be undertaken within the current operational budget for the Parks Department. An initial budget of \$2,500

plus HST is proposed to purchase the materials, plants and seeds required to establish the garden. The cost of a 120 cm by 150 cm sign ranges from \$425 to \$640 (inclusive of tax and shipping). The cost of installation has not been captured. Formal quotation will be requested. An alternative option is to engage local artists to collaborate on sign design.

Since habitat ranges of pollinators can extend up to 1,500 metres it is important that the Town focus on creating connectivity between pollinator habitats through the development of habitat corridors (Pindar and Raine, 2023). This can be achieved through pollinator habitat created on private properties. In addition to public engagement with respect to the municipal pollinator gardens, it is recommended that a workshop for residents/ private property owners to provide education on creating pollinator habitat and implementing pollinator-friendly practices is undertaken. The CVC has indicated that these types of engagements can be hosted by their experts at cost of \$1,500 plus HST. Formal quotation is recommended.

Opportunities to offset costs include the following:

- Consider volunteer opportunities for planting and maintenance
- Engage community groups (e.g. Horticultural Society, County of Dufferin's Youth Climate Activation Circle) to consider incorporating the municipal pollinator garden in their annual workplan, to host a community engagement event (such as the CVC workshop) or provide in-kind contributions such as plants, materials or volunteer time
- Apply to the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation grant by January 15 to cover the costs of establishing the municipal pollinator garden
- Approach local businesses for donations

Other Opportunities:

- Staff have also considered an option to include this initiative within the Sustainable Orangeville Committee's 2026 workplan and existing budget, however an in-depth review and discussion with the committee related to capacity and other potential initiatives for 2026 has not yet been undertaken.

Next steps, pending Council approval, include:

- Consult Sustainable Orangeville Committee to determine potential for inclusion in 2026 workplan and existing budget allocation.
 - Draft a 2026 budget for the pollinator garden, pollinator workshop and educational programming
 - Undertake engagement with the public with respect to the municipal pollinator garden, interest and viability,
 - Prepare a draft Pollinator Policy for review and present suggested amendments to policy, by-laws and procedures in a report to Council.
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Corporate Implications

Parks staff have confirmed that maintenance of the pollinator garden can be undertaken within the current operational budget for the Parks Department. However, time spent maintaining the pollinator garden may take away from labour resources for other Town-owned gardens and parks.

It is estimated that the municipal pollinator garden will cost \$2,500 plus HST plus the cost of the sign which ranges from \$425 to \$640 (inclusive of tax and shipping) and any installation costs. Working with a local artist to develop the sign may have additional costs.

Additionally, a community workshop and education materials for residents/ private property owners to provide education on creating pollinator habitat and implementing pollinator-friendly practices is estimated to cost \$2000 plus HST.

The cost to establish the garden, design, purchase and install signs, and hold a community workshop is estimated at approximately \$5,000 (including non-recoverable HST). Staff will refine this estimate and draft the 2026 budget to include this program, funded either from savings from other budget line items, or by being incorporated into the Sustainable Orangeville Committee 2026 workplan and existing budget, for Council's consideration.

Conclusion

As a designated Bee City, the Town of Orangeville commits to developing, restoring and preserving pollinator-friendly habitats. As presented in the Pollinator Protection Plan, and pending Council approval, Staff recommends addressing this item in the 2026 budget for a pollinator garden, pollinator workshop, and engagement with the public with respect to the municipal pollinator gardens. Staff will also prepare a draft Pollinator Policy for review with suggested amendments to existing policies, by-laws and procedures in a future report to Council.

Strategic Alignment

Strategic Plan

Strategic Goal: Future-Readiness

Objective: Sustainability

Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Plan

Theme: Protect and enhance the natural environment

Strategy: Protect and enhance natural heritage and the urban forest

Notice Provisions

Not Applicable

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Kocialek, P.Eng., PMP
General Manager, Infrastructure Services

Reviewed by:

Tony Dulisse, CET
Manager, Transportation & Development

Prepared by:

Emily McAuley, B.Sc., M.E.S.
Senior Climate and Sustainability Specialist

Attachment(s): 1. Pollinator Protection Plan