

Report to Council

<u>Subject</u>	Updates to the Municipal Pollinator Garden
<u>Department</u>	Infrastructure Services
<u>Division</u>	Transportation and Development
<u>Report #</u>	INS-2026-010
<u>Meeting date</u>	March 9, 2026

Recommendations

That report INS-2026-010, Updates to the Municipal Pollinator Garden, be received; and
That That Council authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign the Memo of Understanding Amendment on behalf of the Town between The Corporation of the Town of Orangeville and The Corporation of the County of Dufferin, to permit the installation and maintenance of a pollinator garden on County-controlled property at 30 Centre Street.

Overview

This report provides Council with an update on the Town's municipal pollinator garden initiative and seeks authorization for the Mayor and Clerk to execute an amendment to the existing Memorandum of Understanding with the County of Dufferin.

The Pollinator Protection Plan originally identified a Mill Creek Trail location further upstream. However, the need for the first pollinator garden to function primarily as a high-visibility community engagement and demonstration site led staff to revisit the corridor and recommending that the garden be relocated to 30 Centre Street adjacent to the community garden and Mill Creek area. As the site is on County property and the current MOU does not expressly permit this use, Council support and approval is required to execute the MOU amendment so the project can proceed.

Background

On March 24, 2025, Council adopted Resolution 2025-057 directing staff to report back on the development of a Pollinator Protection Plan, including pollinator-friendly procurement and planting policies. Council further directed staff to identify suitable locations on Town-owned property for the development of a municipal pollinator garden and to report back with proposed locations, budget implications, and an implementation plan for consideration.

On July 14, 2025, Council considered staff's work and passed Resolution 2025-139. Through this resolution, Council:

- Received Report INS-2025-038, Pollinator Protection Plan;

- Directed staff to draft the 2026 budget to include \$6,000 for the pollinator garden, using savings identified during the budget process that would otherwise reduce the budget for a pollinator workshop, and to support public engagement and education.

The proposed pollinator garden is intended to proceed as described in the Pollinator Protection Plan; however, after some review and further discussion a more suitable and accessible location being recommended is 30 Centre Street adjacent to the existing community garden.

The previously recommended location was along the Mill Creek Trail south of Montgomery Boulevard between Chapman Road and Gooseberry Street.

The proposed new location, 30 Centre Street is County of Dufferin-controlled property. The Town and the County already have an established agreement governing use of this site, as the property has historically been used for an OSAT Community Garden. Given that there are currently agreements in place establishing the use of some of the spaces and that this location is high visibility, it was determined that the pollinator garden located in this area would be a natural fit.

Since the original 2013 MOU and authorizing bylaw did not explicitly address approval authority for future amendments or additional ancillary agreements, and because the pollinator garden is proposed on County controlled land, an amendment to the existing MOU is required to formally document the County's permission and establish terms for installation, maintenance, and responsibilities. Accordingly, Council authorization is now required for the Mayor and Clerk to execute the proposed MOU amendment on behalf of the Town.

Analysis/current situation

The Pollinator Protection Plan identified a preferred municipal pollinator garden location at Mill Creek Trail, south of Montgomery Boulevard, between Chapman Road and Gooseberry Street.

However, and given that the first municipal pollinator garden is intended first and foremost as a public engagement and demonstration tool, the project should be located in an area that currently receives visitors or can reliably receive visitors during the garden's establishment and demonstration period. As a result, staff have reviewed alternatives and are recommending the community garden area at 30 Centre Street as the preferred location.

30 Centre Street is recommended as the preferred location for the Town's first municipal pollinator garden because it best meets the project's primary purpose as a high-visibility community engagement and demonstration site while also maximizing ecological and operational benefits. The location is connected to an established and planned visitor activity (including trail/multi-use path connectivity) and is adjacent to the community garden, where increased pollinator presence can directly support garden productivity through pollination activities. The site is also situated within a strong ecological environment, full sun exposure, proximity to Mill Creek (water source), and adjacent naturalized and planned native plantings, supporting the creation of a broader native plant

corridor that will reinforce habitat value and connectivity. Operationally, it allows the Town to convert an existing garden footprint (rather than add a new garden asset) at a time when Parks resources are under increased demand due to the transition of additional gardens from the Horticulture Society, while also supporting community alignment with the Horticulture Society and other municipal partners.

Corporate implications

The establishment of the pollinator garden at 30 Centre Street requires an initial investment to develop, implement and educate the public to its use. The 2026 budget includes an allocation of \$6,000 to cover the cost to complete this initiative and this budget will be sufficient. It should also be noted that Staff has applied for additional funding from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation. If this application is successful, the additional funding would be used to create a more accessible space that could be used by everyone. If not successful, staff will consider an inclusion in the 2027 budget. The Town expects to find out if successful in obtaining the funding by mid-April.

The Town will assume on-going maintenance of the garden and take stewardship and provide support through maintenance, education, risk management and sustainability.

Conclusion

Council direction has advanced the Town's work on pollinator-friendly actions, including establishing a municipal pollinator garden as a visible demonstration and engagement tool. Due to proximity to other services and its high profile location near the future Mill Creek Trail, Staff recommend proceeding with the pollinator garden at 30 Centre Street, where the site's full-sun conditions, proximity to Mill Creek, proximity to the community garden, and trail connectivity will maximize ecological benefits and public exposure. As the site is located on County of Dufferin controlled property and the existing 2013 MOU does not expressly authorize this use, an MOU amendment is required to formalize permission and responsibilities. The County of Dufferin has provided certainty by agreeing to the proposed location. By adopting the recommendations of this report for the Mayor and Clerk to execute, The MOU will allow the Town to proceed with implementation in 2026.

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

The MOU Amendment includes standard administrative provisions, including notice requirements between the Town and County regarding correspondence, operational issues, and any termination or change in contact information.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Kocialek, P.Eng., PMP
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Attachment(s):

1. Dufferin County – Letter of Support
2. Supplementary Information
3. Memorandum of Understanding Amendment