



Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number: PLAN2023-051

Meeting Date: October 10, 2023

Title: City of Kawartha Lakes Resolution Calling for a submission to Nature Canada for Certification as a Bird Friendly City

Description: CKLEAC requires Council endorsement of resolution calling for the submission of an application for certification of the City of Kawartha Lakes as a Bird Friendly City from Nature Canada

Author and Title: Maximilian Faulhammer, Planner II

Recommendations:

That Report PLAN2023-051, City of Kawartha Lakes Resolution Calling for a submission to Nature Canada for Certification as a Bird Friendly City, be received; and

That Council support the Resolution approved by the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee on September 7, 2023 contained in Report PLAN2023-051 and authorize the Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes team to submit the certification application to Nature Canada to designate the City of Kawartha Lakes as a Bird Friendly City; and

That this recommendation be brought forward to Council for consideration at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

On September 7, 2023, the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee (CKLEAC) passed the following resolution requesting that the Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes team be authorized to submit the certification application to Nature Canada to designate the City of Kawartha Lakes as a Bird Friendly City:

Whereas the goal of Bird Friendly City certification is to provide local partners with a clear standard to measure the impact and progress needed to make the City of Kawartha Lakes safe for birds;

And whereas the certification standard is a tool that allows for an independent assessment of key issues by establishing benchmarks and allowing for measurement of progress over time and comparison with other cities;

And whereas birds throughout Canada and North America have experienced dramatic declines due to habitat loss, window strikes, climate change, and the spread of diseases and invasive species, with serious implications for the future health of our ecosystems;

And whereas through certification, the City of Kawartha Lakes and its residents have the opportunity to reduce human-related threats to birds;

And whereas supporting bird-friendly initiatives fosters environmental awareness and sustainability and increases interactions and engagement for habitat protection, restoration, and climate resiliency;

And whereas by becoming a Bird Friendly City, the City of Kawartha Lakes can highlight initiatives already in place and further engage local communities in education and awareness of successful coexistence strategies with birds;

And whereas community bird friendly initiatives are to be undertaken and led by the Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes team; and

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Bird Friendly Kawartha Lakes team be authorized to submit the certification application to Nature Canada to designate the City of Kawartha Lakes as a Bird Friendly City.

This report addresses this direction.

Bird populations, according to [Nature Canada](#), have decreased in North America by 25% over the last 50 years totalling three billion birds. Nature Canada has established an internationally recognized certification program for a Bird Friendly City to help mitigate this decline. [Nature Canada](#) presents a Bird Friendly City as one where:

- Key threats to birds are effectively mitigated;
- Nature is restored so native bird populations can thrive;
- Residents are actively engaged in admiring and monitoring local bird populations;
- Organizations are creating events to protect birds;
- Progressive municipal policies are created to protect urban bird populations; and
- A Bird Team has been created to oversee and lead these initiatives.

At the February meeting of CKLEAC, the committee agreed to support efforts to earn CKL Bird Friendly City certification from Nature Canada. A subcommittee was formed, called the "Bird Team" and an annual work plan was created as part of the requirements for certifications.

Representatives from multiple organizations, including Fleming College, Kawartha Wildlife, Kawartha Conservation, Kawartha Land Trust, Kawartha Field Naturalists, and Kawartha Bird Control, agreed to be official partners in the initiative. Subsequently, Kawartha Lakes Library joined as a "Community Partner" and Fatal Light Awareness Program and Nature Canada joined as National Partners.

The "Bird Team" has already assessed progress towards meeting criteria, shared information on bird-related events, and applied for grants.

Rationale:

Cities across Canada, including cities in the Province of Ontario such as Peterborough, Halton Hills, and Guelph, have already become Certified Bird Friendly Cities. Joining the Bird Friendly City program would show municipal leadership.

The program would allow the City to have access to a network of other Bird Friendly City members as well as other resources to aid in advancing bird-related policies and measures. A rebound in local bird populations would be beneficial to the City of Kawartha Lakes to promote a thriving ecosystem. Ecotourism could potentially increase through events which attract birders as a result of greater bird numbers and species in the City.

Other Alternatives Considered:

No alternatives were considered.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

The Council Adopted Strategic Plan identifies these Strategic Goals:

1. Healthy Environment
2. An Exceptional Quality of Life

This initiative aligns with a healthy environment and creating an exceptional quality of life by promoting ecosystem health, creating a greater diversity of bird species, and build community.

[Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan 2020-2023](#)

Financial/Operation Impacts:

No Financial/Operation impacts.

Consultations:

None.

Attachments:

None.

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Department Head: Richard Holy, Director of Development Services

Department File: CKLEAC