



Council Report

Report Number: PLAN2024-071
Meeting Date: December 10, 2024
Title: Partnership with Federal Bird-Friendly Grant
Description: CKLEAC Motion in support of a grant application by Fleming College (Frost Campus) to the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) in relation to the City's Bird-Friendly certification
Author and Title: Mark Jull, Supervisor Policy Planning

Recommendation(s):

That Report PLAN2024-071, **City of Kawartha Lakes Partnership with Federal Bird-Friendly Grant**, be received;

That the City of Kawartha Lakes commits to be a "Community Partner" and support Fleming College's Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) grant application by:

- i. Providing a letter of support on City letterhead; and by
- ii. Sharing information about opportunities for CKL citizens to participate in the research project through various City communications; and

That the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to execute the documents related to this request.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

At the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee (CKLEAC) meeting of November 21, 2024, the Committee adopted the following resolution:

EAC2024.055

Moved by: Doug Paterson

Seconded by: Santosh Patel

Be it resolved that:

Whereas, the City of Kawartha Lakes has been certified as a Bird Friendly City by Nature Canada;

And whereas Fleming College's Frost Campus is a highly-regarded and valued leader in environmental research;

And whereas the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) grant being applied for would provide over \$100,000 in funding for a research project focussed on City of Kawartha Lakes;

And whereas the grant money, if received would have a number of benefits for the City (including enhanced bird-friendly designation, no-cost public education, support for bird-safe municipal buildings, community engagement and student learning opportunities, and practical cost-effective conservation recommendations);

And whereas supporting the grant proposal has no budget implications for City of Kawartha Lakes Council (no financial commitment is required).

That the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee recommends Council agree to become a "Community Partner" and support Fleming College's NSERC grant application by providing a letter of support on City letterhead and by requesting that the City's Communications Department share information about opportunities for CKL citizens to participate in the research project.

Carried

This report addresses that direction.

Rationale:

Kawartha Lakes is a certified Bird Friendly City.

On November 21, 2024, the City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee (CKLEAC) received a briefing note formally requesting CKLEAC recommend the City of Kawartha Lakes Council agree to become a community partner in a College and Community Social Innovation Fund (CCSIF) grant proposal.

This CCSIF grant will be funded by the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and organized by Professor Thom Luloff at Fleming College. According to Professor Luloff, by partnering in this research project, the City of Kawartha Lakes will play a leading role in innovative, community-based research aimed at identifying and implementing the most effective bird-friendly strategies for urban environments.

Overview of the College and Community Social Innovation Fund Grant

The College and Community Social Innovation Fund (CCSIF) grant program supports applied, community-based research that fosters partnerships between colleges and local organizations to address social, environmental, and economic challenges.

The grant proposal, submitted to NSERC and administered through Fleming College, seeks over \$100,000 in funding, most of which will be dedicated to directly supporting research projects involving citizens in the City of Kawartha Lakes. The primary focus is to provide bird-friendly enhancements to households, promote urban conservation, and ultimately deliver practical and cost-effective recommendations for municipalities that answers questions relating to bird safety measures in an urban setting.

This project will involve students from Fleming's Frost Campus in both research and community engagement, making it an ideal blend of academic research, environmental action, and community benefit.

Objective and Goal of the Research Project

The main objective of this research project is to determine: "What is the biggest threat to urban birds, and which bird-friendly action (window mitigation, native

planting/habitat enhancement, or artificial enrichment such as bird feeders, bird baths, or bird houses) offers the best return on investment for bird safety in urban settings?”

The goal is to provide a recommendation tool that can be adapted by municipalities across Ontario which describes the most cost-effective environmental actions that can protect urban bird populations.

Project Scope and Community Involvement

As a community-based research project, City of Kawartha Lakes citizens who wish to participate will be provided with bird-friendly enhancements such as:

- Professionally installed window collision deterrent treatments,
- Native plantings for habitat enrichment, and/or
- Bird feeders, bird baths, and bird houses.

Each enhancement will be installed at no-cost to the City or to participants, and the success of these interventions will be monitored over a three-year period by researchers and Frost Campus students.

By partnering in this project, the City of Kawartha Lakes will help foster active citizen involvement in conservation efforts, encourage sustainable urban planning, and support bird-friendly community education which aligns with our requirements to maintain a Bird-Friendly City designation.

Funding Overview and Cost Structure

The College and Community Social Innovation Fund (CCSIF) grant proposal includes a budget request exceeding \$100,000, with the majority of funds dedicated to procuring and installing the bird-friendly enhancements, which will be subsequently monitored for efficacy, that participating citizens will retain at the end of the study.

There will be no financial commitment required from the City of Kawartha Lakes in this partnership; all associated costs are covered by the grant and administered by Fleming College.

Benefits to the City of Kawartha Lakes

Enhanced Bird-Friendly Designation

- Participation in this research aligns with City of Kawartha Lakes' ongoing bird-friendly initiatives and enhances its status as a conservation-oriented municipality. Each intervention will directly benefit bird populations in urban areas and contributes to City of Kawartha Lakes' environmental objectives.

No-Cost Public Education and Awareness Efforts

- A key component of this project is public education. Through the grant, educational resources and outreach efforts will be conducted in the community, increasing awareness of conservation practices and the importance of urban biodiversity.

Support for Bird-Safe Municipal Buildings

- The research will explore the efficacy of treating windows to reduce bird collisions. As part of the project, municipal buildings identified in a recent Bird Safe Window audit may have decals installed at no cost to the municipality, serving as monitoring sites for this important bird-friendly intervention.

Community Engagement and Student Learning Opportunities

- This project involves Frost Campus students in applied conservation research, providing them with hands-on experience that will benefit CKL and foster a stronger connection between Fleming College and the local community.

Practical, Cost-Effective Conservation Recommendations

- By the project's end, the City will receive a prioritized list of bird-friendly actions based on their cost-effectiveness and impact on bird safety.
- These findings can help CKL make informed environmental policy decisions and serve as a model for other municipalities seeking similar outcomes.

Partnership Request and Commitment

CKLEAC recommends the Council of the City of Kawartha Lakes to partner with the College and Community Social Innovation Fund (CCSIF) grant proposal in this research initiative. The requirements of this partnership for the City of Kawartha Lakes would be defined as:

- Promoting the opportunity for City of Kawartha Lakes citizens to participate in this research project by sharing information and encouraging engagement using existing municipal communication platforms; and
- Providing a letter of support on City letterhead and signing off on related partner documents, indicating the City's support for this project. This letter will be included in the final grant submission to Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC).

This project aligns with CKL's commitment to sustainability and community engagement and promises lasting benefits to both the City and its residents.

Other Alternatives Considered:

No other alternatives were considered.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

Partnering with this grant proposal supports the Strategic Plan's priority for a Healthy Environment. It advances its bird-friendly designation, enhances environmental education in the community, and contributes to meaningful conservation research without incurring any costs. Partnering with this federal grant application aligns with the priority Good Governance which includes seeking federal government funding for service delivery, community infrastructure, and project investments. Supporting the interconnectedness of nature helps develop an exceptional quality of life.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

There are no financial impacts.

Consultations:

None.

Attachments:

None.

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Department Head: Leah Barrie, Director of Development Services

Department File: C06