

Date: January 6, 2016

To: Kamloops Mayor & Council

RE: Bee City Certification – Kamloops to become the first Bee City in BC

Dear Mayor and Council

Background:

The City of Kamloops mission statement, “Making Kamloops Shine” would not be possible without the help of our pollinator friends. Pollinators are vital to a healthy and resilient ecosystem. The conservation of pollinators is critical to the sustainability of Kamloops’ natural areas and urban gardens. Certain pollinator species have been determined to be in decline due to habitat loss, climate change, pesticide use, and disease/pests. A diverse and resilient pollinator community is a key component of a sustainable city for us all.

The City of Kamloops has various initiatives in place that show our support of a healthy and sustainable ecosystem, especially when it comes to our pollinator friends. Some of these initiatives include:

- On April 1, 2014, the Kamloops City Council approved amendments to Animal Control Bylaw to allow beekeeping in all single-family and two-family residential zones, as well as in institutional zones when associated with a community garden or educational program.
- The City of Kamloops produces a brochure titled, “[What’s the Buzz? Beekeeping in Kamloops](#)”. This helps educate people on how to have your own hive, how to join a club or association, by-laws around beekeeping, etc.
- Kamloops also has our very own beekeeping club called the Kamloops Bee Keepers, [www.kamloopsbeekeepers.com](http://www.kamloopsbeekeepers.com). The Kamloops Bee Keepers are a branch of the British Columbia Honey Producers Association, organized in 1920 to promote and encourage beekeeping in BC. They have many years of experience in all aspects of honey production. This knowledge is regularly shared through meetings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every second month and at field days throughout the year.
- The Kamloops Bee Keepers host an annual event called “The Day of the Honey Bee”. It is an interactive display that is set up at the very successful Kamloops Farmers Market near the end of May. The purpose of the day is to promote community understanding of the importance of the honey bee in urban food production through pollination, and to highlight awareness of the plight of the honey bee.
- Kamloops is a member of Communities in Bloom, which promotes civic pride, environmental responsibility and beautification through community involvement and focusses on green spaces in communities.
- The BC Wildlife Park Education department has developed and delivers an educational program called “Bees and Me”. This interactive program is for Kindergarten and Grade 1 students. The students meet Betty Bee and learn about the most important pollinator of the world, experience the life of a bee through interactive story time, and about what bees need to survive, their important jobs and how they are different from us!
- Thompson Rivers University has also taken an interest in the honey bee and its many opportunities, including: the partnership with Accolades and the culinary department,

public sales of honey as a fundraiser, teaching and education within various programs, etc.

If Kamloops were to be an approved Bee City, it will assist us in highlighting the existing programs in place and allow us to continue to educate our community and visitors on the importance of pollinator friendly habitats. Tourism Kamloops, in partnership with the City of Kamloops, Kamloops Communities in Bloom Committee and the newly formed pollinator working group, will work together to create an edible garden located at the Kamloops Visitor Centre. This garden will be a pollinator friendly habitat and include the planting of native flowers, interpretive signage and possibly installing a bee hive. This garden will act as an educational garden as well as offer visitors to our city the opportunity to learn and pick some fresh veggies, fruits and herbs to enjoy on their journey.

As a next step, Kamloops can show its commitment to pollinator protection by becoming the first city in BC to achieve the Bee City Certification. The Bee City program endorses a set of commitments, (defined in the attached resolution) for creating sustainable habitats for pollinators. Cities, towns and communities across North America are invited to join in making these commitments and become certified as Bee City affiliates. Since the Bee City program was first launched in the United States in 2012, 15 American cities have achieved Bee City certification. The program has recently expanded enabling Canadian cities to become involved.

Kamloops has the opportunity to lead by example and become the first city in British Columbia to obtain the Bee City certification.

By becoming a certified Bee City, Kamloops will be officially recognized as a community that supports healthy pollinator populations. Upon certification, Kamloops will have formalized its commitment to pollinator conservation and will serve as an example to other municipalities and organizations. In doing so, Kamloops will increase opportunities to collaborate with community partners, residents and non profit organizations in establishing pollinator protection initiatives. Certifying Kamloops as a Bee City will raise awareness about the importance of pollinator biodiversity, food production, native plants and habitat protection.

Here's how Kamloops can become the first Bee City in British Columbia:

1. Adopt a resolution designating Kamloops a Bee City
2. Complete the Bee City Canada Application form

Once certified:

1. Celebrate Kamloops designation annually and raise public awareness
2. Publicly acknowledge Kamloops commitments through signage and web content
3. Renew Kamloops commitment annually by completing a renewal application form with a summary of Kamloops pollinator protection accomplishments

The newly formed pollinator working group, consisting of representatives from the City of Kamloops, Tourism Kamloops, Kamloops Central Business Improvement Association, British Columbia Wildlife Park, Kamloops Bee Keepers and the Kamloops Master Gardeners, will be responsible for overseeing the Bee City certification process. Public awareness, raising activities and education sessions will be coordinated in partnership with the Kamloops Beekeepers. There are no financial obligations incurred by Kamloops in becoming a certified Bee City.

Recommendations:

1. City Council adopt the resolution designating the City of Kamloops a Bee City, contained as Attachment A, and request the Mayor (or designate) to sign it.
2. City Council direct the newly formed pollinator working group to submit the signed resolution designating the City of Kamloops a Bee City and completed Bee City application, contained as Attachment B, to the Bee City program to obtain official Bee City certification.

Attachments

- A. Resolution designating the City of Kamloops a Bee City
- B. Bee City Application

Sincerely,

Lisa Strachan

Tourism Kamloops

Director, Destination Development & Trade Relations