



Bee City  
CANADA 

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Connecting People,  
Pollinators and Places

## Bee City Canada Application

## A) City or Community Information

Municipality/First Nation Town of Tillsonburg

Province/Territory Ontario

### Mayor, Chief or Chair of Commission

Name & Title Mayor Deb Gilvesy and Kyle Pratt, CAO

Name of Applicant & Title Matt Johnson

Organization or Department Town of Tillsonburg

Address Suite 204 – 200 Broadway

City/First Nation Tillsonburg Province/Territory ON

Postal Code N4G 5A8

Email mjohnson@tillsonburg.ca Phone 5198087745

Bee City Liaison & Title Matt Johnson, Manager of Parks and Facilities

Organization or Department Recreation, Parks and Culture

Address same as above

City/First Nation \_\_\_\_\_ Province/Territory \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the members of your **Bee City Pollinator Team**. This group will oversee the Bee City program. (Expand or reduce table as required)

Name	Affiliation	Email
Julie Columbus	Director of Recreation, Parks and Culture – Town of Tillsonburg	<a href="mailto:jcolumbus@tillsonburg.ca">jcolumbus@tillsonburg.ca</a>

Dave Phillips	Supervisor of Parks and Cemetery – Town of Tillsonburg	dphillips@tillsonburg.ca

**Media Contact** (if not Applicant)

Name & Title \_\_\_\_\_ Colleen Pepper

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Communications and Marketing

Email \_\_\_\_\_ cpepper@tillsonburg.ca \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_ 519-688-3009 Ext. 4008

Tell us about any initiatives currently taking place in your city, community or region which protect pollinators. These may include existing pollinator gardens, habitat restoration projects, efforts to reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides and public education activities to raise awareness about pollinators.

10 years ago the Town of Tillsonburg donated the use of two plots of land (one at the Tillsonburg Cemetery and the other at the Lake Lisgar Water Park) to an organization that planted and maintained the two butterfly (pollinators) gardens. The Town has since taken over these areas.

In 2017, a new "Beautification" position was made to invest more time in the gardens and natural areas throughout the Town. A 100 ft by 20 ft parcel of land was converted from conventional flower garden into our Towns first "Naturalized Area". Seed bearing plants and fruit based trees and shrubs were planting with the intent to draw both pollinators and forage wildlife to the area.

Like most municipalities, the Town of Tillsonburg went pesticide and herbicide free in 2019. After researching various options, the Town settled on a non-toxic herbicide spray comprised of vinegar and salt.

During a 2022 Town Council meeting the Town agreed on to environmentally friendly projects. The first, "Saving Tillsonburg's Canopy" which was an initiative put forth to saving the aging canopy in our parks and trail systems. Tillsonburg hired a Forestry Technician in 2022 to help with this process. The tech was able to plot, identify, and assess all trees on public lands (trails excluded), to form a database of the types of trees, ages and health.

Our beautification lead planted 80% pollinating perennials in all of our Town gardens in 2022. From downtown centerpiece gardens to century landscaping, most plants that were purchase and planted were pollinators.

In 2023, a report is going to the Town Council regarding the installation of 17 "Naturalized Areas" throughout our Town. Some areas will be seed by wildflower hydro seeding, some will be hand planted with native species, while others will be left in a state of "survival of the fittest."

## **B) Yearly Renewal Fees**

**There are no fees on the initial application. The fees below apply on the yearly renewal.**

Less than 5000 population	FREE
5000 – 10,000 population	\$150
10,001 – 25,000 population	\$200
25,001 – 50,000 population	\$300
50,0001 – 100,000 population	\$400
100,001 – 250,000 population	\$500
250,001 – 500,000 population	\$750
500,001 – 1,000,000 population	\$1000
+ 1,000,000 – population	\$1500

### **C) Commitments and Actions**

I/we, the undersigned, understand that the Bee City Canada program consists of three commitments, and we will take the indicated actions to support those commitments:

1. **Creating Biodiversity in Pollinator Habitats:** Describe your plans to create, improve and maintain pollinator habitat, while reducing or eliminating pesticide use.

Since we have been able to phase out the use of pesticides some time ago, the Town of Tillsonburg will be proposing to Council 17 potential areas for conversion to a "Naturalized Area". This item is headed to the Parks, Beautification and Cemetery Committee on April 24<sup>th</sup> and will head to Council at the beginning of May. The areas were specifically chosen due to their geographical areas (forest edge, pond edges etc.), their effectiveness of reducing the amount of commercial mowing the Town and it's contractors perform, and is on or in close proximity to our trail systems (i.e. Trans Canada Trail). These areas are unique and have different benefits. All areas will be planted with native species from The St. Williams Forest Farm and other local native species growers.

2. **Educating the public about the importance of pollinators:** Describe how you plan to educate residents, city staff and others about the importance of pollinators and what people can do to protect them.

We have a wonderful Communications and Marketing team here with the Town of Tillsonburg. We would complete a social media campaign throughout the year, notifying residents of the implementation of the naturalized areas, provide info graphs, pollinator education and the fact that Tillsonburg may now be considered a "Bee City" with encouragement to participate at home.

**3. A yearly commitment to celebrate:** Describe the cities plan to celebrate pollinators during International Pollinator Week (third week of June).

In 2023, the Town of Tillsonburg will be redesigning and planting a new "Turtle Garden, on the shores of Lake Lisgar. The original "Turtle Garden" was installing in the 1990's and served as an area dedicated to the large turtle population of the Town. Years of neglect has left the garden unrecognizable as we though that this would be a great spot of a naturalized area. The current garden is 15ft x 20ft but plan to extend it to 60ft x 40ft. This garden would consist of sand walking trails, accessible areas, native flora and sand pits. We will be including informational signage on species of turtles, the pollinator garden and its advantages.

Our founder, George Tillson, thought that he would come back as a turtle after he passed and within a year of his passing a "massive snapping turtle" showed up and everyone thought it could be George. Since then, the Town has embraced the turtle and even have a "Turtle Fest", that is conveniently during International Pollinator Week. We could incorporate the unveiling of this area in conjunction with the two events.

**4. Briefly discuss your cities long term pollinator strategy.** How will your cities landscape change in the next year? In the next 5 years?

The plan is to implement 17 naturalized areas throughout the Town's parks and trail systems. Two naturalized areas are planned, one on the Trans Canada Trail that include the hydro-seeding of native wildflowers to create a meadow. The second being the Turtle Garden explained in question 3.

**5. Please provide a 50 to 100 word write up on what it means to be a Bee City.**

We will share this exciting news through our social media outlets.

Being a bee city is important to our Town for many reasons. Tillsonburg has a strong agricultural background with the area being a hotspot for tobacco growth through the middle part of a century.

Since the tobacco growing industry has slowed due to health concerns, a lot of the farmers in the area have started growing potatoes and other vegetables. In fact, our neighbor to the east, Norfolk County, is considered "Ontario's Garden" as seen on the signs that mark the entrances to the county.

25 minutes to the west we have "Clovermead", a bee farm that has expanded into an educational center for tourists, locals and school aged children. It really isn't uncommon to see bee hives scattered around the local landscape as farms try to help with the pollination of their crops. We also have our fair share of "honey booths" at the side of the road, selling their local honeys.

Someone once said that it would take \$3 trillion dollars a year to do what bees do for free. We think we should be saving our bee population for that reason alone.

## **D) Other Requirements**

I/we, the undersigned agree to:

1. Publicly display Bee City Canada designation through signs, city/region/community website and other means.
2. To annually report to Bee City Canada. A renewal form and an invoice for applicable fees will be emailed one month prior to renewal date.




## E) Requested Attachments

With your completed application, please provide:

1. Your city, region or First Nation logo (png format) and any usage guidelines.
2. Any photos you would like us to share on social media. This could include pollinator gardens, public events, etc.

## F) Signatures

**Applicant**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

                    Matt Johnson                      
Print Name

                    Manager of Parks and Facilities                      
Title

                    April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023                      
Date

**Bee City Canada Liaison (if not Applicant)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## G) Next Steps

1. (Applicant) Email completed application and resolution (in PDF format) with requested attachments to [applications@beecitycanada.org](mailto:applications@beecitycanada.org) with "APPLICATION" in the subject line.
2. (Bee City Canada) Your application will be reviewed within three business days. We will notify you as soon as your application has been approved or promptly request any clarification, if necessary.

## **H) Bee City Canada's Commitment**

Bee City Canada is committed to publicizing your designation as a Bee City through our website, social media and other channels. In addition, our "Bee City Welcome Package" will be sent to you and will include an official Declaration, recognizing your city or First Nation as a Bee City.

Bee City Canada is grateful for your commitment to take positive actions to help pollinators and for being a role model for other communities across Canada.