

## Committee of the Whole (2) Report

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**DATE:** Wednesday, May 20, 2020

**WARD(S):** ALL

**TITLE: PROCLAMATION REQUEST – NATIONAL POLLINATOR WEEK  
AND FLIGHT OF THE MONARCHS DAY**

**FROM:**

BILL KIRU, ACTING DEPUTY CITY MANAGER, PLANNING AND GROWTH  
MANAGEMENT

**ACTION:** DECISION

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**Purpose**

To seek Council adoption of Proclamation requests for both National Pollinator Week and Flight of the Monarchs Day.

**Report Highlights**

- Both of the Proclamations support the Mayors' Monarch Pledge adopted by Council on March 20, 2018
- In 2018, Council proclaimed June 18 to 24, 2018 as National Pollinator Week
- The City is committed to protecting pollinators and educating its citizens on the importance of pollinators and their habitat
- Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua is listed under the Leadership Circle on the National Wildlife Federation's website, for taking eight or more actions to protect the Monarch butterfly

**Recommendations**

1. THAT National Pollinator Week be proclaimed on an annual basis in June, as designated by Pollinator Partnership Canada;
2. THAT Flight of the Monarchs Day be proclaimed on an annual basis on a date in August, as designated by Toronto and Region Conservation Authority; and

3. THAT the Proclamations be posted on the City's website and staff be directed to promote the above-noted Proclamations, as appropriate.

## **Background**

### **A week in June is declared National Pollinator Week**

On March 20, 2018, Council adopted a resolution committing to the Mayors' Monarch Pledge (Pledge) of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). The Pledge requires that municipalities fulfill yearly actions. These actions can include increasing the amount of habitat for pollinators, launching public communication efforts to encourage citizens to plant their own pollinator gardens, and developing partnerships with community groups and agencies to identify larger restoration planting sites. In 2018, the City committed to five of the twenty-five actions identified by the NWF and in 2019, the City increased its commitment to fulfilling nine actions.

A recommendation from the Pledge included issuing a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the Monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. To fulfill this recommendation, on June 19, 2018, Council adopted the proclamation that June 18-24, 2018 be National Pollinator Week, in support of Pollinator Partnership Canada's (P2C) National Pollinator Week.

P2C is a registered not-for-profit organization in Canada dedicated to the protection and promotion of pollinators and their ecosystems. Every year, P2C declares a week in June as National Pollinator Week and recommends municipalities proclaim a "City Pollinator Week". P2C also promotes this initiative through their ecoregional planting guides, community initiatives and research. P2C encourages municipalities to get involved and provides resources that can be utilized in education and promotion campaigns.

### **City staff continue to work towards fulfilling the Pledge**

In 2019, the City of Vaughan committed to nine actions under the Pledge, including planting native milkweed and nectar plants on City properties in order to increase the amount of habitat for pollinators, launching public communication efforts to encourage citizens to plant their own pollinator gardens, and developing partnerships with community groups and agencies to identify larger restoration planting sites. Each year, City staff report on the actions to the NWF. In 2020, the City will continue to fulfill the nine actions and in future years will work toward achieving additional actions. Refer to the City's Pollinator Projects website for a description of the nine actions, at the following link:

[https://www.vaughan.ca/cityhall/environmental\\_sustainability/Pages/Pollinator-Projects.aspx](https://www.vaughan.ca/cityhall/environmental_sustainability/Pages/Pollinator-Projects.aspx)

Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua, representing the City, has been listed in the [Leadership Circle](#) on the NWF website, for taking eight or more actions to help protect and create Monarch butterfly habitat. The listing can be found at the following link:

<https://www.nwf.org/MayorsMonarchPledge/Signatories>

### **The Monarch Nation program is promoting Flight of the Monarchs Day**

Monarch Nation is a program of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) which brings together a number of partners/stakeholders with a focus to ensure Canadian children are knowledgeable about species at risk and informed about how to support Canadian wildlife. Through Monarch Nation, TRCA is leading the Flight of the Monarchs Day, a national campaign that will provide an opportunity to increase community awareness related to species at risk while engaging new communities in the work of habitat restoration. In order to promote the event, TRCA has requested that municipal governments proclaim August 22, 2020 as Flight of the Monarchs Day. TRCA will provide participating municipalities with a toolkit containing resources and examples of activities to promote the initiative

### **Previous Reports/Authority**

Previous reports considered by City Council regarding the Monarch butterfly and other pollinator programs can be found at the following links:

On March 20, 2018 Council adopted the Mayors' Monarch Pledge.

[Council Meeting Extract – March 20, 2018](#)

On June 19, 2018 Council adopted a Pollinator Week Proclamation to affirm the City's commitment to the Mayors' Monarch Pledge.

[Council Meeting Extract – June 19, 2018](#)

### **Analysis and Options**

The 2018 Pollinator Week Proclamation does not include the recommendation to proclaim Pollinator Week on an annual basis. An annual proclamation of Pollinator Week demonstrates the City's commitment to protecting pollinators and educating the public on the importance of pollinators and their habitat. The dates in June are determined by Pollinator Partnership Canada, each year, and the City of Vaughan will align Pollinator Week with these dates. An updated Pollinator Week Proclamation is appended as Attachment 1.

By proclaiming Flight of the Monarchs Day, the City will focus awareness on the Monarch butterfly. This is the first year TRCA has organized the Flight of the Monarchs Day and depending on its success, TRCA is likely to repeat the campaign on an annual basis. The City will align targeted outreach and activities with TRCA each year. By supporting this initiative, the City is meeting the actions of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. The Flight of the Monarchs Day Proclamation is appended as Attachment 2.

### **Staff will provide pollinator-related education and activities**

In the weeks leading up to Pollinator Week and Flight of the Monarchs Day, Environmental Sustainability staff will provide citizens with educational resources and at-home activities via the Environmental Sustainability website. In addition, staff will collaborate with other City departments to provide educational resources to showcase on their respective websites. Corporate and Strategic Communications have been engaged to determine the feasibility of utilizing social media platforms and other digital channels for promotion.

Staff propose to have a booth at various City events, such as Environmental Days and Concerts in the Park, to promote the City's pollinator projects and hand out pollinator-friendly seed packets. Also, staff secured a free booth at the Woodbridge Farmers Market on August 20, 2020 to provide Monarch-specific education and a hands-on activity for kids. Communication strategies will be adjusted, as needed. In future years, staff will work with community groups to organize pollinator garden planting events to align with Pollinator Week and will continue to work with TRCA to determine programming for Flight of the Monarchs Day.

### **Proclamations align with Green Directions Vaughan 2019**

On December 17, 2019, Green Directions Vaughan, the City's community sustainability plan, was adopted by Council. Actions within Green Directions Vaughan direct staff to improve greenspace as community amenities and promote habitat condition for wildlife, and to promote green infrastructure, including pollinator habitat, to build resilience based on the effects of climate change. By proclaiming Pollinator Week and Flight of the Monarchs Day, the City is taking steps to meet the actions within Green Directions Vaughan.

## **Financial Impact**

Staff will utilize existing operating budgets for the materials needed for activities and displays and to supplement promotion, such as social media advertisements.

## **Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations**

York Region was declared the first Monarch Friendly Region in Canada at the May 11, 2017 Committee of the Whole Meeting. A link is provided below:

<https://www.york.ca/wps/wcm/connect/yorkpublic/93d84de9-6227-4907-9d82-54c0841cb7cc/may+11+greening+ex.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>

## **Conclusion**

Proclaiming a week in June as Pollinator Week and a day in August as Flight of the Monarchs Day meet multiple actions in the Pledge and demonstrates the City's commitment to these environmental sustainability initiatives. These initiatives provide opportunities to celebrate biological diversity and educate citizens and City staff on the importance of pollinators. The Proclamations support actions in Green Directions Vaughan to improve greenspace and support wildlife habitat.

**For more information**, contact Alanna MacKenzie, Sustainability Coordinator, ext. 8941.

## **Attachments**

1. City of Vaughan Pollinator Week Proclamation
2. City of Vaughan Flight of the Monarchs Day Proclamation

## **Prepared by**

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