



## Member Motion

### City Council

#### Notice of Motion

MM31.22	ACTION			Ward: All
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### **Officially Recognizing Toronto as a Certified Bird Friendly City - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Jennifer McKelvie**

*\* Notice of this Motion has been given.*

*\* This Motion is subject to referral to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

#### **Recommendations**

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Jennifer McKelvie, recommends that:

1. City Council support the efforts of Nature Canada and the potential to become a certified Bird Friendly City.
2. City Council direct the City Manager to explore partnership opportunities with Birds Canada in an effort to organize the Toronto Bird Celebration to celebrate Toronto's status as a Bird Friendly City.

#### **Summary**

As the City of Toronto is widely recognized as a leader in bird conservation, Nature Canada would like to celebrate and award the City's efforts by certifying the City as a Bird Friendly City, once they complete their evaluation of the application. The bird team in Toronto is currently in the process of filling out the application, however, Nature Canada has requested that the Toronto City Council makes a resolution in support of becoming a Bird Friendly City, one of the requirements of the program.

Toronto was the first city in North America to establish bird-friendly policies and many cities in Canada and the United States have since followed suit. In 2005, a Notice of Motion was passed by City Council directing staff to report back on

how to reduce migratory bird deaths in Toronto.

In 2006, a staff report was adopted by City Council that directed all City of Toronto facilities to turn their lights off at night during migratory seasons. It also directed staff to support the work of the Fatal Light Awareness Program (FLAP), an organization that advocates for the plight of migratory birds that the City has been working with ever since.

Along with that, FLAP is a national partner in Nature Canada's Bird Friendly City program, as well as a member of the local Toronto Bird Team. In 2007, the City adopted and released the "Bird-Friendly Development Guidelines", which provided voluntary options and strategies for developers and building-owners to help make their buildings bird-friendly. In 2010, City Council directed that all new development applications must meet the requirements of the Toronto Green Standard (TGS), which includes many bird-friendly elements drawn from the 2007 Guidelines. Since then, Toronto has also released the following documents in support of the bird-friendly components of the TGS:

Best Practices for Bird-Friendly Glass (2016), Best Practices for Effective Lighting (2017).

Most recently the City led in the development of bird-friendly building guidelines for the Canadian Standards Association leading to a voluntary national standard for bird-friendly buildings that can be adopted by any jurisdiction in Canada.

The City of Toronto has also developed various plans and strategies to protect biodiversity and natural habitat in and around the City, which is essential for birds to thrive as they return to Canadian landscapes during their breeding seasons. Examples include: Sustaining and Expanding the Urban Forest: Toronto Strategic Forest Management Plan 2012-2022, Toronto Ravine Strategy, Toronto Biodiversity Strategy and Pollinator Protection Strategy. Toronto's Private tree by-law and Ravine and Natural Feature Protection by-law protect the urban forest, ravines and natural areas, which are important habitat for bird species.

The City promotes the appreciation of birds through publications such as Birds of Toronto. Every May the City of Toronto participates in the Toronto Bird Celebration, a two week long celebration of birds, culminating in the Colonel Sam Smith Bird Festival, co-hosted by the City of Toronto and community partners.

Certification is a badge of honor and a source of community pride. It tells the world that a city or town is doing things to help birds and reverse their declines in their own backyard. A Bird Friendly City certification strengthens a municipality's legacy as a champion for bird conservation and celebrates the

efforts of a municipality, as well as the local community organizations, to protect birds in their own backyards.

**Background Information (City Council)**

Revised Member Motion MM31.22

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-165366.pdf>)