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**Item No. Info Item 2**  
**Environment & Sustainability Standing Committee**  
**April 6, 2023**

**TO:** Chair and Members of (Name of Community Council or Board)

**SUBMITTED BY:**



Cathie O'Toole, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** March 8, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Application for Halifax as a Bird Friendly City

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**INFORMATION REPORT**

**ORIGIN**

May 31, 2022 Regional Council motion (Item No. 15.2.1):

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Morse

“THAT Halifax Regional Council direct the Chief Administrative Officer to prepare a staff report evaluating the application from Halifax to Nature Canada for certification as a Bird Friendly City.”

MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

**LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

Administrative Order Number One, the Procedures of the Council Administrative Order:

Parks and Open Spaces

5. The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee shall:

- (a) encourage the appropriate policy structure to address amount, use and protection of parks, forests (urban and rural) and open spaces for the use and enjoyment of the residents of the municipality.

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, SNS 2008 c 39:*

7A The purposes of the Municipality are to (a) provide good government; (b) provide services, facilities and other things that, in the opinion of the Council, are necessary or desirable for all or part of the Municipality; and (c) develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

79A (1) Subject to subsections (2) to (4), the Municipality may only spend money for municipal purposes if (a) the expenditure is included in the Municipality's operating budget or capital budget or is otherwise authorized by the Municipality.

## **BACKGROUND**

It is estimated that bird populations in North America have declined by 25% in the last 50 years and that Canada has lost 40-60% of shorebird, grassland bird, and aerial insectivores (e.g. swallows) since 1970<sup>1</sup>. Conservation and restoration of bird habitat is urgently needed to slow and reverse this trend.

In addition to providing habitat for other species of wildlife, healthy bird habitat like intact forests and wetlands provides numerous co-benefits and ecosystem services such as reducing flooding and erosion, filtering groundwater, and providing space to enjoy nature. Bird conservation provides economic and socio-cultural co-benefits such as hunting and birdwatching.

In Canada, the five main threats to birds are habitat loss, pesticides and contaminants, invasive species and cats, collisions with built structures and climate change<sup>2</sup>. Most of these threats are particularly heightened in urban areas. Fortunately, they can be mitigated through policies and regulations that address factors such as invasive species management, building design, and land-use planning. In other words, many threats that impact birds can be mitigated through decisions made at the municipal level.

Bird Friendly City (BFC) is a certification program<sup>3</sup> developed and coordinated by Nature Canada. Nature Canada is a national nature conservation charity that represents a network of over 130,000 members and more than 1,000 nature organizations, including Nature Nova Scotia. The purpose of the BFC certification is to provide municipalities with a clear standard that outlines steps to make a city more hospitable for birds to flourish and co-exist with people and built infrastructure. To date, there are over 16 municipalities in Canada with the BFC certification, and about 30 others are in the application process<sup>4</sup>.

A group consisting of residents, researchers, environmental professionals and HRM representatives formed the Bird Friendly Halifax Coalition (the Coalition) to prepare the application for BFC status. Efforts related to becoming a more bird friendly city align with the municipality's strategic initiative to increase the protection and health of ecosystems<sup>5</sup>.

## **DISCUSSION**

Municipalities apply to BFC by detailing efforts on a series of bird-friendly actions, including mitigating threats to birds, providing education and outreach materials, and restoring natural habitat. Nature Canada staff score the applications by assigning points based on the level of completion of each action. Based on the number of points, applicants can be granted certification at the Entry, Intermediate or Advanced Level, or denied certification if the minimum points are not met.

Nature Nova Scotia, a member organization of Nature Canada, reached out to municipal staff and community partners in fall 2021 to gauge interest in applying for BFC certification. All parties saw value in the application and formed a committee that met monthly to gather data for the application. One requirement of the application was formal municipal acknowledgement of BFC through a motion of Council or a presentation to Council. This was achieved through the motion that this information report is responding to. The application was submitted to Nature Canada in spring 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> NABCI Canada State of the Birds Report 2019: <http://nabci.net/wp-content/uploads/2019-State-of-Canadas-Birds-1.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.birdscanada.org/conservation/major-threats-to-birds/>

<sup>3</sup> For more information about the Bird Friendly City program: <https://naturecanada.ca/defend-nature/how-you-help-us-take-action/bfc/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://naturecanada.ca/defend-nature/how-you-help-us-take-action/bfc/#certified>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/city-hall/budget-finances/budget/strategic-priorities-plan/regional-council-administrative-priorities>

Nature Canada staff returned the application in October 2022 and indicated that HRM qualifies for BFC status at the entry level, with a score of 28 points out of 50. At the United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15) in Montreal that took place in December 2022, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada, Steven Guilbeault, officially recognized all new Bird Friendly Cities, including Halifax.

The municipality received points in several categories relating to threat reduction, particularly for retrofitting streetlights with downward-facing LED lights that are more friendly for migrating birds<sup>6</sup>, and implementing an Integrated Pest Management Plan that has a focus on pesticide reduction<sup>7</sup>. Strategic plans like HalifACT, the Halifax Green Network Plan and the Integrated Mobility Plan also made the application stronger by showing support for nature-based climate solutions, wildlife corridors, and an active transportation network that reduce the risk of bird-vehicle collisions.

To advance from Entry level to Intermediate or Advanced, additional work is required in the areas of ecological restoration, biodiversity planning, habitat mapping and protecting natural areas. Much of this work can be done in collaboration with external stakeholders, particularly actions relating to public outreach and research. Actions relating to public outreach and education are ongoing and will continue in 2023-2024 with staff support as part of current workplans.

Full application details are included as Appendix A. A blank template of the application form is included for reference as Appendix B.

### **Value of the Bird Friendly City Program**

The diverse actions described in the BFC application highlight how many municipal operations connect with, and have the potential to impact, bird health and biodiversity. HRM is on track for some of the actions, but the connection with bird health is rarely made. For example, we can celebrate the co-benefits of LED streetlights, that are both energy-efficient and bird-friendly. Preserving and restoring watercourse buffers is a nature-based solution to climate change that protects residents from flooding while also providing nesting habitat for waterfowl.

However, there are several actions in the application that HRM has not yet implemented. Initial work to address these actions can include increased engagement and communication, including a webpage, the election of an official City Bird and an annual celebration to mark World Migratory Bird Day in May. This work will be done in collaboration with community partners (see Appendix A for more detail about who is leading each action). Other actions will take considerably more effort to achieve. One key knowledge gap is the location of important bird habitat in the municipality. This aligns with Action 17 in the Halifax Green Network Plan<sup>8</sup>.

Now that Halifax is part of the BFC program, there is extensive support both nationally and locally to become even more bird friendly in the future. Access to this expertise will benefit delivery of several ongoing programs such as the Halifax Green Network Plan and the Urban Forest Management Plan.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Engagement with community partners can be completed with existing staff resources. Community outreach and engagement on bird habitat can be accommodated within the existing operating budget for D935. Additional costs would be required if the municipality decided to pursue higher levels of BFC certification in the future.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/energy-environment/energy-efficient-lighting-projects>

<sup>7</sup> <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/220531rc1514.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Action 17: "Explore opportunities to develop on-going partnerships with Provincial Government departments, universities and non-profits to refine, maintain and update the key datasets needed to understand the health of the Region's ecosystems, wildlife populations and wildlife movement corridors, including the spread of invasive species." – Halifax Green Network Plan, HRM & O2 Planning + Design, 2018.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Community engagement and collaboration is an integral part of the BFC program. HRM's application for BFC status was initiated and is being coordinated by community organizations. Nature Nova Scotia is coordinating a group of stakeholders in the bird community, including environmental non-profit organizations, academic researchers and municipal staff and Councillors. In addition to Nature Nova Scotia and HRM, the following community stakeholders are engaged in the BFC application process: Ecology Action Centre, Halifax Field Naturalists, Hope for Wildlife, Birds Canada, Nova Scotia Bird Society and researchers at Dalhousie University. One of the minimum requirements in achieving BFC status is the creation and maintenance of the Coalition to coordinate and champion ongoing public engagement.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Appendix A: Evaluation of Halifax Submission for Bird Friendly City Status  
Appendix B: Bird Friendly City Application Template

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

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## Appendix A: Evaluation of the Application for Bird Friendly City Status

### Description of Table

The first column is the action as described by Nature Canada in the application. The second is a subjective rating of how much effort will be required by HRM staff and Coalition members to advance the action. The third column lists the lead organization or team. The fourth column is a description of the work completed on this action to date, and/or a description of potential future work. It is important to note that many of the actions are led by external partners and are not all the responsibility of municipal staff. Many of the projects in the future potential action category would require a significant amount of additional staff and financial resources – they are noted as being out of scope of this report and are not recommended for action at this time.

Description	Status	Lead Organization(s)	Current or Future Potential HRM Action
Establish a Bird Team to drive the project forward	Complete/ On Track	Nature Nova Scotia	HRM staff from Environment and Climate Change (ECC) are active members of the Bird Friendly Halifax Coalition of local stakeholders including representatives from multiple conservation organizations.
Pass a council resolution nominating or supporting your municipality's efforts to be a Bird Friendly City	Complete/ On Track	HRM	Council passed a motion directing staff to complete a staff report evaluating Halifax's application for Bird Friendly City status. Creation of the staff report and that motion demonstrate commitment from the municipality.
Once your municipality has been accorded Bird Friendly City status, the Bird Team must provide an annual report card on activities related to your Bird Friendly City status	Requires future staff time (low commitment)	Nature Nova Scotia, Bird Team	Contingent on receiving BFC status. This action will require future staff time to collaborate with Nature NS staff in the preparation of an annual report. It is anticipated that this is a low effort commitment.
Include information about Bird Friendly City on the Municipality's website somewhere it can be easily found	Requires future staff time (low commitment)	HRM	ECC staff will work with communications staff to develop content for halifax.ca to share information about the BFC program, and additional resources about birds and biodiversity. In the interim, staff at Nature NS have created a webpage to share Bird Friendly City content: <a href="https://naturens.ca/actions/birdfriendlyhalifax/">https://naturens.ca/actions/birdfriendlyhalifax/</a>
Regulatory and educational measures taken to help control and reduce populations of cats roaming at large	Complete/ On track	HRM	Council approved a recommendation to extend funding to the SPCA for their Trap, Neuter, Release program for feral cats for another five years <sup>1</sup> . At this time, the Coalition does not recommend pursuing additional regulatory measures to control outdoor cats.
Demonstrate that your municipality is taking measures to reduce window collisions	Requires future staff time (moderate commitment)	HRM	Future staff commitment is required to evaluate the feasibility of encouraging the use of the CSA Bird Friendly Building Design Standards <sup>2</sup> , which could address window collisions. Requiring bird friendly design would require changes to the Nova Scotia Building Code, which is outside of HRM's jurisdiction. Consideration could be given to future municipal buildings.
Demonstrate your municipality has a light pollution reduction strategy, with	Complete/ On track	HRM	Most streetlights in HRM were converted to shielded LED lights by the end of 2017.

<sup>1</sup> <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/221025rc1513.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> An example is CSA A460:19, Bird-friendly building design:  
<https://www.scc.ca/en/standardsdb/standards/29805>

Description	Status	Lead Organization(s)	Current or Future Potential HRM Action
light pollution mitigation standards and a retrofit program to replace streetlamps with energy-efficient shielded fixtures			Since 2010, HRM has partnered with Efficiency Nova Scotia to implement lighting retrofits in >100 municipal buildings, resulting in cost and energy savings <sup>3</sup> .
Municipality has a policy to reduce or eliminate non-essential pesticide use	Complete/ On track	HRM	On July 12, 2022, Regional Council voted to repeal HRM's Pesticide By-law <sup>4</sup> . In HRM, as in other parts of the province, the use of non-essential pesticides is regulated by Nova Scotia Environment & Climate Change under the <i>Non-essential Pesticides Control Act</i> . In lieu of this By-law, Council approved an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy. IPM is a holistic, ecological decision-making model to help prevent and manage pest damage with an emphasis on reducing pesticide use. Staff are now implementing the IPM strategy, developing species-specific management plans and developing an outreach and engagement plan.
Municipality takes regulatory measures and encourages voluntary measures to reduce the amount of plastic waste generated	Requires future staff time (moderate commitment)	HRM	There is a single-use plastic bag ban in effect across Nova Scotia <sup>5</sup> . In addition, Council endorsed the Plastics Resolution in September 2021, which is a municipal resolution in favour of federal action to manage plastics <sup>6</sup> . HRM Solid Waste Resources (SWR) is committed to reducing plastic waste. Their Single Use Plastic Reduction campaign encourages residents to find alternatives to single use plastic items like plastic bags and straws. Reducing the amount of plastic waste generated by households and businesses is also a key message that is incorporated into school presentations, webinars and public information booths by SWR educators.
Measures in place to reduce bird collisions with vehicles when passing through important bird habitat	Requires future staff time (moderate commitment)	HRM	Although there are two federally recognized Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in HRM (see below), more effort is required to identify greenspace owned by HRM that is important bird habitat. Staff can use citizen science data collected through eBird and collaborate with researchers and wildlife conservation groups to identify bird hotspots. This information can be used to inform many future recommendations, relating to vehicle collision reduction and dog off-leash park placement.
Municipality has policy and practices to prohibit or mitigate disturbance of birds from humans or their pets at natural areas or important bird habitat			
Natural areas within the municipal boundaries are protected within the Municipal Plan and there is a commitment to increase this area	Ongoing	HRM	There are extensive protected open spaces and parks with HRM and ongoing programs to acquire additional lands to contribute to areas such as Regional Parks.
Municipality has an official strategy to protect the biological diversity in its parks and natural areas	Requires future staff time	HRM	HRM does not currently have a Biodiversity Strategy. See examples from <a href="#">Vancouver</a> , <a href="#">Toronto</a> , <a href="#">Hamilton</a> , <a href="#">Calgary</a> and <a href="#">Surrey</a> . Creating a Biodiversity Strategy would require direction from Council and additional

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/about-halifax/energy-environment/energy-efficient-lighting-projects>

<sup>4</sup> <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/220531rc1514.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://novascotia.ca/single-use-plastic-bag-ban/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/regional-council/210914rc1122.pdf>

Description	Status	Lead Organization(s)	Current or Future Potential HRM Action
	(extensive commitment)		staff resources. This is outside the scope of this report.
Municipality has a climate change adaptation strategy that includes specific measures including nature-based climate solutions	Complete/ Ongoing	HRM	<a href="#">HalifACT 2050</a> addresses climate change adaptation, including nature-based climate solutions. Staff are currently working on multiple green infrastructure and nature-based solution projects such as rain gardens, living shorelines and naturalizations.
Municipality has a habitat management strategy based on ecological and climate considerations. These include: a) Increasing the number of trees and area of the urban forest b) Protecting trees on private and public lands c) Prohibiting active vegetation management during breeding season	Requires ongoing staff time (moderate commitment)	HRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Urban Forest Management Plan aims to maintain and increase the cover of the urban forest. This plan is currently being updated – a staff person and funding for consulting has been resource for the next year to complete this task.</li> <li>A staff report regarding the implementation of a Private Tree By-law is forthcoming from Planning &amp; Development</li> <li>Urban forest staff focus pruning efforts during the winter, thus avoiding the breeding season</li> </ul> <p>All the above requires extensive, ongoing staff commitment and is out of the scope of this report.</p>
Municipality has an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) within or adjacent to its boundaries	Complete	HRM, Birds Canada	There are two federally recognized IBAs in HRM: <a href="#">Musquodoboit</a> and the <a href="#">Eastern Shore Islands</a> .
Municipality promotes the importance of planting native local flora on municipal lands, especially where new development is occurring through development and landscaping guidelines and standards in areas near natural features	Requires future staff time (moderate commitment)	HRM	On January 29, 2019, Regional Council approved the staff report, HRM Park Naturalization Strategy Recommendation Report, that outlined directions for proceeding with a naturalization pilot project. A map of existing pilot sites can be found on the <a href="#">HRM website</a> . On July 7, 2022, the ESSC passed a motion <sup>7</sup> to recommend that Regional Council direct staff to expand the naturalization pilot to a municipal-wide program and include \$150,000 in the 2023/24 operating budget for RC's consideration to support the program. The proposed budget includes one full-time coordinator and two seasonal gardener positions to support program implementation. This is dependent on approval in the 2023/2024 budget.
Demonstrate widespread community participation in initiatives to encourage native plant habitat that supports native birds and pollinators on private property, to increase the urban tree canopy on private land, and to support other “green infrastructure” initiatives to address climate change	Requires future staff time (moderate commitment)	HRM, Nature Nova Scotia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Urban Forest Master Plan establishes guiding direction for planning, programming, and regulatory activities related to managing and enhancing the urban forest cover in HRM</li> <li>Regional Planning staff are drafting a staff report to assess the pros and cons of different regulatory approaches to tree protection, including tree development charges and a private tree bylaw. ;</li> <li>ECC and P&amp;D staff are developing engagement materials for homeowner stormwater management, with a focus on green infrastructure such as rain gardens;</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> <https://cdn.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/standing-committees/220707esscmindsdraft.pdf>

Description	Status	Lead Organization(s)	Current or Future Potential HRM Action
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Administrative Order 2020-014-OP Respecting Boulevard Gardens</i><sup>8</sup> stipulates that residents may plant vegetation other than sod in their abutting Right of Way strip (following the guidelines set out in the AO). Such gardens have the potential to increase biodiversity and habitat for birds; Future work could be done by HRM or partners to capture the amount of community participation in the above programs</li> </ul>
Bird Friendly City partner groups implement stewardship to increase or improve breeding or stopover habitat for bird conservation priority species from your Bird Conservation Region Plan	Ongoing	Nature Nova Scotia, Bird Team	Partners such as Nature Nova Scotia and Birds Canada currently implement stewardship programs. There is opportunity for HRM to support and engage with this work in the future. Participating on the Coalition will be a good way to learn about collaboration opportunities.
Hold (and officially proclaim) a World Migratory Bird Day event annually to celebrate birds in your municipality.	Requires future staff time (moderate commitment)	Nature Nova Scotia, Bird Team	HRM staff led an Intro to Birding hike in May 2022. In the future, HRM staff can collaborate on a larger event to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day.
A significant percentage of local schools and other educational organizations (e.g. Scouts Canada, Earth Rangers, 4-H) provide students with opportunities to connect with nature, enjoy birds and learn how to help them	Ongoing	Bird Team	Partners such as Ducks Unlimited Canada, HRM's Adventure Earth Centre and Hope for Wildlife administer outdoor education programs that touch on wildlife biodiversity. Staff participation in the Coalition will be a good way to learn about future collaboration opportunities.
College and University campuses have adopted practices that actively reduce threats to birds or establish habitat that benefits birds	Unknown	Bird Team/Future University partner	No known projects currently. Staff participation in the Coalition will be a good way to learn about future collaboration opportunities.
Bird Team partners (including Municipality) provide public access to resources (web links, brochures etc.) that encourage and inform the public of the benefit to birds from native plant gardening or establishment of natural habitat patches on their property in support of birds and/or pollinators (e.g. backyard habitat program)	Requires future staff time (low commitment)	Bird Team	ECC staff will work with communications staff to develop content for halifax.ca to share information about the BFC program and additional outreach materials about birds, biodiversity and the value of native plants.
Municipality and Bird Friendly City partners install demonstrations or displays in public areas that educate citizens on the benefits of bird friendly actions and encourage engagement	Requires future staff time (low commitment)	Bird Team	This could be a part of a future engagement strategy. Staff participation in the Coalition will be a good way to learn about future collaboration opportunities.
There is at least one birding location within your city or town that has infrastructure to facilitate the observation and appreciation of birds	Complete/Ongoing	Bird Team, HRM	Current locations include the Frog Pond trails and signage, and the observation tower at Belcher's Marsh. Project partners may develop interpretive signage for other locations.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.halifax.ca/sites/default/files/documents/city-hall/legislation-by-laws/2020-014-OP.pdf>

Description	Status	Lead Organization(s)	Current or Future Potential HRM Action
(e.g. signs, panels, observation tower, and trails)			
A Bird Team partner periodically publishes a “Bird checklist” for your city or town	Complete/ Ongoing	NS Bird Society	The NS Bird Society and the Halifax Field Naturalists both maintain local and regional bird lists.
Businesses in your area promote bird friendly practices	Unknown	Bird Team/Future community partner	Outside the scope of this report.
You have a “City Bird” species that was selected through a public engagement process	Requires future staff time (low commitment)	Nature Nova Scotia, Bird Team	A ‘City Bird’ voting campaign could be developed and implemented by a partner organization, such as Nature NS. HRM could support and promote this campaign.
There are active citizen science programs to monitor birds in your municipality including Christmas Bird Count, Swift Night Out, and Marsh Monitoring, and Global Bird Rescue, which monitor birds on areas that include public land	Ongoing	Bird Team, Bird Studies Canada, Nature Nova Scotia	Several local partners run annual Christmas Bird Counts for youth and adults. Birds Canada manages <a href="#">Marsh Monitoring</a> and <a href="#">Swift Watch</a> programs.

# BIRD FRIENDLY

## APPLICATION FOR CONSIDERATION

CITY REPRESENTED:

DATE OF SUBMISSION:



BIRD FRIENDLY  
CITY

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# MANDATORY CRITERIA

# MANDATORY CRITERIA

## M-1 – ESTABLISHMENT OF BIRD TEAM

### DESCRIPTION

Establish a Bird City Team (standing committee) to drive the project forward. Try to ensure that your team represents different perspectives and has a liaison with the municipality.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide a list of the bird team members, affiliations and contact information.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

<b>Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?</b>	
<b>Confirmed by Scoring Committee as having met Standard?</b>	

# MANDATORY CRITERIA

## M-2: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, LAND AND INCLUSION

### DESCRIPTION

Provide evidence you have determined in which indigenous traditional territory(ies) your municipality occurs and that you are encouraging the participation and perspective of the local Indigenous community in the initiative.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide the name of the relevant Indigenous Nation(s) and report on the outcome of an invitation to participate in the initiative.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

<b>Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?</b>	
<b>Confirmed by Scoring Committee as having met Standard?</b>	

# MANDATORY CRITERIA

## M-3: FORMAL MUNICIPAL SUPPORT

### DESCRIPTION

Pass a council resolution nominating/ supporting your municipality's efforts to be a Bird Friendly City OR a letter of support from a high ranking city official

### SCORING INDICATORS

Willingness to pass council resolution within the first year of certification OR a letter of support for the certification program from a high ranking city official (mayor, CEO, etc).

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

<b>Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?</b>	
<b>Confirmed by Scoring Committee as having met Standard?</b>	

# MANDATORY CRITERIA

## M-4: ANNUAL REPORT

### DESCRIPTION

Once your municipality has been accorded Bird City Status, the Bird Team must provide an annual report card on activities related to your Bird City status.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide Annual Report card (calendar year) by February 1.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

<b>Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?</b>	
<b>Confirmed by Scoring Committee as having met Standard?</b>	

# MANDATORY CRITERIA

## M-5: CITY WEBSITE

### DESCRIPTION

Include information about Bird Friendly City on the City website somewhere it can be easily found.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide link and proof of posting.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

<b>Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?</b>	
<b>Confirmed by Scoring Committee as having met Standard?</b>	

# MANDATORY CRITERIA

## M-6: RENEWAL

### DESCRIPTION

Complete a renewal application as required every 2 years to keep your status as "active."

### SCORING INDICATORS

Renewals are up to date.  
There will be a one-year grace period for a renewal to occur.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

<b>Criteria Complete or Undertaken to Complete?</b>	
<b>Confirmed by Scoring Committee as having met Standard?</b>	

# SECTION 1: THREAT REDUCTION

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.1 (A) OWNED CATS

### DESCRIPTION

Regulatory and educational measures taken to help control and reduce populations of cats roaming at large:

(A) Coordinated efforts directed at cat owners to reduce the number of owned cats outside such as educational campaigns, licensing and no-roam bylaws.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Proof of each action required. Two points per action. Generally if you can demonstrate some level of progress for each action, you will be awarded one point. Two points will be limited to comprehensive efforts to address that one issue. For example, for (A) to get 2 points, you need to have a no-roam bylaw AND demonstrate both enforcement of the bylaw and an educational campaign to make cat owners aware of the bylaw.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.1 (B) UNOWNED CATS

### DESCRIPTION

(B) Within the municipality there is an active strategy to reduce populations of unowned (feral) cats and mitigate their threat to birds (e.g. removing feral colonies from areas of high bird importance).

### SCORING INDICATORS

Evidence of an active program to humanely reduce the number of unowned outdoor cats. 2 points will be awarded for broad, municipal-wide strategies and actions that can demonstrate progress on the goal.

### HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.1 (C) MONITORING OF ROAMING CATS

### DESCRIPTION

(C) The bird team and/ municipality either has, or is a partner in programs/ projects to estimate the number and/or distribution of cats outdoors so that progress on reducing the populations of outdoor cats can be tracked over time.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Proof of implementation of a cat counting/estimating protocol to establish baseline numbers or to compare with baseline numbers will be awarded 2 points. Proof of intent to implement such a protocol gets one point.

### HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.2 (A) WINDOW COLLISIONS – NEW CONSTRUCTION

### DESCRIPTION

Demonstrate that your municipality is taking measures to reduce window collisions by:  
(A) Developing and implementing bird friendly design standards/CSA Bird Friendly Building Design standard for new construction

### SCORING INDICATORS

*Proof of each action required.*

(A) refers to the municipality developing or adopting bird friendly or bird safe standards for new construction. One point is awarded if the standard is a guideline, two points if the standard is a requirement.

### HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.2 (B) WINDOW COLLISIONS – EXISTING AND PROPOSED MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

### DESCRIPTION

(B) Assessing and mitigating risk to birds from existing and proposed municipal buildings

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point if individuals or a group monitors window collisions, and/or assess risk by using BirdSafe or a similar program.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.2 (C) WINDOW COLLISIONS - EDUCATION OF PROPERTY OWNERS

### DESCRIPTION

(C) Informing and educating property owners and tenants of existing buildings (including home owners) of measures they can take to mitigate bird collision risk

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point is awarded with evidence of educational campaigns focused on the broad public or specific neighbourhoods.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.2 (D) TREATED WINDOWS - BASELINE DATA

### DESCRIPTION

(D) Establishing a baseline and maintaining a database of the number of residences or buildings with treated windows in the city to demonstrate progress over time

### SCORING INDICATORS

Evidence of the database is provided.

### HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.3 (A) LIGHT POLLUTION – REDUCTION STRATEGY (MIGRATION)

### DESCRIPTION

(A) Municipality has a light pollution reduction strategy and supports actions to reduce light pollution, particularly during migratory seasons.

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point is given upon evidence of a strategy to reduce light pollution

### HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.3 (B) LIGHT POLLUTION – NEW DEVELOPMENTS / RETROFIT

### DESCRIPTION

(B) Light pollution mitigation standards for all new developments and/or retrofit program to replace street lamps with energy-efficient shielded fixtures

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point given for either proof of mitigation standards (e.g., bylaw or guidance), and/or proof of a retrofit program (e.g., retrofitting standard street lights with downward directional street lighting). To attain "high level" certification, there must be evidence of both standards for new development and a retrofit program

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.3 (C) LIGHT POLLUTION - OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

### DESCRIPTION

(C) Outreach campaign for residents and businesses to promote responsible light control practices within the municipality.

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point for educational and outreach campaigns to reduce light attraction during migration periods such as the “lights out Toronto” campaigns of the past.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.4 PESTICIDE USE

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality has a policy to reduce or eliminate non-essential pesticide use that directly or indirectly harms birds, on public and private land that is implemented through local bylaws. This policy should include restrictions on pesticides used to control nuisance insects such as mosquitoes (such as BTI) unless there is a demonstrated health risk (such as proof of West Nile in larvae).

### SCORING INDICATORS

Proof of the policy is provided. Examples of such policies would include a ban on cosmetic use of pesticides. The use of BTI to control mosquitoes and blackflies is controversial, in that it is increasingly used by municipalities to kill mosquito and fly larva in wetlands in response to neighbourhood pressure. There is strong evidence that this reduces the available food for aerial insectivores like swallows and has a negative impact on their populations.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.5 PLASTICS

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality takes regulatory measures and encourages voluntary measures to reduce the amount of plastic waste generated (e.g. banning of single use plastics).

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of regulatory (e.g. a municipal bylaw) and voluntary measures (e.g. a local business) such as a ban on single use plastics, shopping bags, plastic straws, etc.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.6 VEHICLES

### DESCRIPTION

Measures in place to reduce bird collisions with vehicles such as lower speed limits when passing through important bird habitat, and measures to reduce the number of vehicles on the roads (such as a good public transit system and cycling infrastructure).

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of measures to protect birds from vehicle collisions. For example, at locations where a busy road cuts through a wildlife corridor, evidence of mitigation would include lower speed limits, signage about wildlife crossing, or proof of engineered solutions such as wildlife underpasses or overpasses.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# THREAT REDUCTION

## 1.7 HABITAT DISTURBANCE

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality has policy and practices to prohibit or mitigate disturbance of birds from humans or their pets at natural areas or important bird habitat (e.g., leash bylaw, no-go zones certain times of year).

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of policy and examples of implementation such as signage at important bird habitat (e.g. a natural area, wetland or known migratory stop-over site) or evidence of a bylaw in place. Provide evidence that important bird habitats/ biodiversity hotspots are recognized within an official policy document.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# THREAT REDUCTION

## SCORING

### ENTRY

9 points from at least 3 categories.

### INTERMEDIATE

12 points from at least 5 categories including at least 1 category worth 2 or more.

### HIGH

14 points or more. Must include at least 2 points in categories 1 and 2.

**Points Awarded**

*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# SECTION 2: HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

## 2.1 NATURAL AREAS

### DESCRIPTION

Natural areas within the municipal boundaries are protected within the Municipal Plan and there is a commitment to increase this area. Plan distinguishes between natural areas and other types of municipal space such as recreational parks.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of the policy. To maintain this criterion, the city must document the size of the area protected, and demonstrate a commitment to increase in this area over time. Any municipal plan that includes protection of natural area spaces will receive one point. Additional points are based on the evidence of implementation and whether there are ambitious targets to increase the number and size of the protected areas.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

## 2.2 BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality has an official strategy to protect the biological diversity in its parks and natural areas. The strategy includes measures such as promoting connectivity between natural areas, buffering core biodiversity hotspots from harmful human activities, increasing the number of protected areas, and periodically monitoring birds on some city parks to assess the success of the strategy.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of the strategy and its implementation. The strategy to protect biological diversity can be part of the protected areas plan, or vice versa, but must specifically identify protection of biological diversity as a goal. One point is awarded for having an official strategy (adopted by Council). Two points if the strategy has targets and metrics for success and there is evidence of implementation. Three points for cities that meet the previous two tests as well as using monitoring to track changes to biodiversity and use results for adaptive management (e.g. bird monitoring in city owned natural areas).

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

## 2.3 CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGY

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality has a climate change adaptation strategy that includes specific measures including nature-based climate solutions. Examples of this include wetland creation to absorb and retain flood water, or planting trees to create shade and lower the surface air temperature

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of the strategy and its implementation. One point if the City has an official strategy. Additional points are awarded based on evidence of ongoing measures and actions.

### HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

## 2.4 (A) HABITAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality has a habitat management strategy based on ecological and climate considerations. These include: (A) increasing the number of trees and area of the urban forest canopy;

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide proof of implementation of the strategy and each action. One point per action. Evidence for a. includes inventories of trees and plans for increasing the numbers.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

## 2.4 (B) SNAG PROTECTION

### DESCRIPTION

(B) leaving snags standing in cases where public safety is not jeopardized;

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point is based on evidence such as a policy statements or evidence within management plans for natural areas.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

## 2.4 (C) PROTECTION OF TREES

### DESCRIPTION

(C) protecting trees on private and public lands;

### SCORING INDICATORS

Refers to a tree bylaws that protects trees as a public value from private land owners cutting them down without permits.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

## 2.4 (D) RESPONSIBLE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

### DESCRIPTION

(D) Prohibiting active vegetation management during breeding season on municipal lands, including forests, storm-water management facilities, and easements.

### SCORING INDICATORS

A point is accorded if a city can demonstrate that its employees involved in active habitat management do not harm breeding birds or their habitat.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

## 2.5 IMPORTANT BIRD AND BIODIVERSITY AREA (IBA)

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality has an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) within or adjacent to its boundaries. A local partnership promotes the protection and stewardship of this area.

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point if there is one or more nearby IBAs and the Bird Team can provide the names of the IBAs and at least one IBA caretaker group or individual.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

## 2.6 NATIVE FLORA - MUNICIPAL LANDS

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality promotes the importance of planting native local flora on municipal lands, especially where new development is occurring through development and landscaping guidelines and standards in areas near natural features. Subdivision permits should include conditions protecting existing natural habitat and promote use of native vegetation and include measures to discourage illegal disposal of yard waste (a source of invasive exotic plants) in natural areas.

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point for evidence that the municipality promotes the use of site-appropriate native flora in landscaping for its own properties and for development landscaping standards for subdivision permits.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

## 2.7 NATIVE FLORA – PRIVATE PROPERTY

### DESCRIPTION

Demonstrate widespread community participation in initiatives to encourage native plant habitat that supports native birds and pollinators on private property, to increase the urban tree canopy on private land, and to support other “green infrastructure” initiatives to address climate change.

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point if you provide evidence supporting “widespread community participation” in at least one national or international initiatives or local program that encourages increasing wildlife habitat on private land. This could include membership in a program like Bee City for example.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# HABITAT PROTECTION, RESTORATION, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

## 2.8 STOPOVER & NESTING HABITAT

### DESCRIPTION

Bird City partner groups implement stewardship to increase or improve breeding or stopover habitat for bird conservation priority species from your Bird Conservation Region Plan. Example species include Species at Risk (e.g. Chimney Swift) and other aerial insectivores, Eastern Meadowlark and other grassland birds and shorebirds. Example actions including providing housing (e.g., maintained Purple Martin condos), and maintaining bird-friendly hay production.

### SCORING INDICATORS

A point is awarded to cities in which there are active stewardship recovery projects such as those suggested in the criterion description.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

## SCORING

### ENTRY

8 points from at least 3 categories.

### INTERMEDIATE

11 points from at least 4 categories.

### HIGH

14 points from at least 6 categories including at least 1 point from categories 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4.

**Points Awarded**

*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# SECTION 3: COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.1 WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

### DESCRIPTION

Hold (and officially proclaim) a World Migratory Bird Day event annually to celebrate birds in your municipality.

### SCORING INDICATORS

This is a mandatory action for this program. Cities must hold a Bird Day event to apply. To receive all 4 points, you must provide proof of the event and Mayor's or Council proclamation in support of Bird Day.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.2 SCHOOLS, GROUPS & COMMUNITIES

### DESCRIPTION

A significant percentage of local schools and other educational organizations (e.g. Scouts Canada, Earth Rangers, 4-H) provide students with opportunities to connect with nature, enjoy birds and learn how to help them. Local school boards, conservation authority, or municipality, has facilities/staffing to support outdoor/environmental education, including opportunities to observe birds. At least one school does a specific bird-related program such as Christmas bird count for kids or curriculum from Keep cats safe and save bird lives. Educational program must include specific elements designed to engage members of the public who could be considered underprivileged families and groups, racialized youth and recent arrivals to Canada.

### SCORING INDICATORS

Provide evidence in support of this level of outreach and engagement of children, youth and other target audiences. One point is awarded if there are local education facilities and institutions that include activities for children to observe and appreciate birds both in school and outside through an educational organization that offers nature programming to the public. Two points if there are specific bird-related nature programs for recent arrivals to Canada, underprivileged or racialized families. Three points if there is at least one school or organization that offers programming from the Keep cats safe and save bird lives curriculum.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.3 COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

### DESCRIPTION

College and University campuses have adopted practices that actively reduce threats to birds or establish habitat that benefits birds. Implementation of practices should include or be driven by student committees or groups.

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point is awarded based on evidence that institutions that have policies and practices to benefit birds including names of institutions, the programs that they participate in (e.g BirdSafe, Bee City), as well as an example of a recent action and evidence of student involvement.

### HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.4 PUBLIC ACCESS TO RESOURCES

### DESCRIPTION

Bird Team partners (including Municipality) provide public access to resources (web links, brochures etc.) that encourage and inform the public of the benefit to birds from native plant gardening or establishment of natural habitat patches on their property in support of birds and/or pollinators (e.g. backyard habitat program).

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point if you can provide evidence of the digital or paper resources, as well as evidence of public interest and knowledge of them (e.g. social media activity).

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.5 PUBLIC INSTALLATIONS FOR EDUCATION

### DESCRIPTION

Municipality and Bird City partners install demonstrations or displays in public areas that educate citizens on the benefits of bird friendly actions and encourage engagement (benefits of dark sky lighting, window modifications etc.)

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point based on proof of installations (e.g. photographic evidence, or news stories.)

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.6 ACCESSIBLE BIRD-WATCHING LOCATION(S)

### DESCRIPTION

There is at least one birding location within your city or town that has infrastructure to facilitate the observation and appreciation of birds (e.g. signs, panels, observation tower, and trails). This facility is publicly accessible for people without a car (serviced by public transit and/or bicycle and pedestrian trails). Digital information on birding areas should be easily available.

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point based on evidence of a local birding area that is publicly accessible, a brief description of the infrastructures (e.g. trails, observation tower), and how the area can be accessed by someone without a car.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.7 LOCAL SPECIES REFERENCE LIST

### DESCRIPTION

A Bird Team partner periodically publishes a "Bird checklist" for your city or town. This checklist should be easily available in digital form on the Internet. Alternatively, there are eBird hotspots in your City.

### SCORING INDICATORS

One point based on proof that a local bird checklist exists in a published form or there are eBird hotspots in your city.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.8 LOCAL BIRD FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

### DESCRIPTION

Businesses in your area promote bird friendly practices (e.g. sell or offer bird friendly coffee, no single use plastics, treat their windows with feather-friendly markers, etc.). These businesses should be recognized on partner websites.

### SCORING INDICATORS

To receive a point, you must provide proof that at least two businesses in your area have bird friendly practices. You must name the businesses and describe what bird-friendly practices they have.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.9 CITY BIRD

### DESCRIPTION

You have a "City Bird" species that was selected through a public engagement process.

### SCORING INDICATORS

To receive a point for this criterion, you must provide the name of the "City Bird" species, proof of its status, and evidence of the process to select it.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
(for completion by Nature Canada)

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## 3.10 INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY SCIENCE PROGRAMS

### DESCRIPTION

There are active citizen science programs to monitor birds in your municipality including Christmas Bird Count, Swift Night Out, and Marsh Monitoring, and Global Bird Rescue, which monitor birds on areas that include public land. Public participation in these programs is promoted on local media. Demonstrate efforts to engage members of the public could be considered underprivileged, racialized or recent arrivals to Canada.

### SCORING INDICATORS

To receive one point, provide a list of bird-related citizen science programs in your city and describe the level of public interest and engagement of target audiences.

## HOW CRITERIA IS MET

**Points Awarded**  
*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

# COMMUNITY OUTREACH/ EDUCATION

## SCORING

### ALL LEVELS MUST DO 3.1

#### ENTRY

7 points from at least 3 categories.

#### INTERMEDIATE

9 points from at least 5 categories.

#### HIGH

12 points from at least 7 categories.

**Points Awarded**

*(for completion by Nature Canada)*

**BIRD FRIENDLY TEAM**  
**LIST OF MEMBERS, AFFILIATION AND**  
**CONTACT INFORMATION (M-1)**

*CURRENT AS OF:*



BIRD FRIENDLY  
**CITY**