

# King may become a 'Bee City'

By Mark Pavilons

There's no question King Township is a lot of things. We may soon be able to add 'Bee City' to our distinguished list of characteristics.

King council supported the accreditation of Bee City and staff will apply to designate the township as a Bee City.

The idea was forwarded by the Sustainability Advisory Committee, in an effort to support a healthy pollinator population in the area. As a Bee City, King will be a visible model for 'progressive implementation of initiatives designed to protect and encourage native pollinator populations.'

The goal of the Bee City Canada certification is to provide and promote healthy habitats for bees and other pollinator species. These creatures have experienced dramatic population declines around the globe due to climate change, habitat loss and the spread of pests and diseases. A loss of pollinators would have a major impact on the future health of our flora and fauna.

Honey bees play an important role in farm production and in the ecosystem. They are responsible for an estimated 80% of insect crop pollination. One-third of the human diet is derived directly or indirectly from insect-pollinated plants.

The conservation of pollinators is 'critical' to the sustainability of King's natural areas.

'Becoming designated as a Bee City will demonstrate the Township's commitment towards being a leader in sustainability,' according to the staff report.

As a Bee City, King will celebrate the annual National Pollinator Week (third full week in June) and this fits in nicely with the 'King Loves Spring' campaign.

Bee City Canada is made up by researchers, educators, beekeepers, farmers, ecologists, community leaders and many other committed individuals across Canada. They strive to help all Canadians better understand our close connection with pollinators and their critical link to the health of the planet. Their goals are to give direction and encouragement on the actions we can all take to help all pollinators.

'It's our goal to partner with all the communities across our great country, both large and small, in order to protect pollinators and bring awareness to their plight,' said Shelly Candel, director, Bee City Canada.