

RESOLUTION NO. 20220303-029

WHEREAS, Bee City USA is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species, by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, Bee City USA offers a program to certify cities and counties that satisfy certain requirements as Bee City USA affiliates; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the more than 3,600 species of native bees in the United States, along with introduced honeybees, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides (including insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides), parasites, diseases, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local growers; and

WHEREAS, ideal pollinator-friendly habitat (A) is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees blooming in succession throughout the growing season to provide diverse and abundant nectar and pollen, since many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted; (B) is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat; (C) comprises undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting

and overwintering; and (D) provides connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience; and

WHEREAS, Integrated Pest Management is a long-term approach to maintaining healthy landscapes and facilities that minimizes risks to people and the environment by: identifying and removing the causes of pest problems rather than only attacking the symptoms (the pests); employing pests' natural enemies along with cultural, mechanical, and physical controls when prevention is not enough; and using pesticides only when no other method is feasible or effective; and

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators fosters broad-based community engagement in environmental awareness and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, the White House released a Presidential Memorandum on June 20, 2014, establishing a Pollinator Health Task Force, and one of the Task Force's goals is to increase and improve pollinator habitat; and

WHEREAS, the city council has passed multiple resolutions in support of the bee and other pollinators, including Resolution No. 20111110-068 to identify elements in City Code that may contribute to the decline of honeybees, Resolution 20180628-071 to ban the use of certain chemicals that contribute to health dangers for humans, pets, wildlife, bees and other pollinators as part of the City's Integrated Pest Management program, and Resolution No. 20150514-004 to incorporate native milkweed into City-owned properties, preserve lands, parks, and open spaces in order to create critical habitats for pollinators such as monarch butterflies and bees; and

WHEREAS, a core principle of the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan is the integration of nature into the city, and Austin has demonstrated its commitment to that principle by striving to protect and enhance the city's natural resources

through National Wildlife Foundation initiatives such as the Community Wildlife Habitat official designation and the Mayor's Monarch Pledge City; and

WHEREAS, over the past year, Parks and Recreation Department staff have joined with several local and national community groups, regional government partners, educational institutions, and dozens of volunteers to prepare Austin to receive the Bee City certification; and

WHEREAS, the extraordinary efforts of these stakeholder groups and volunteers, including Pollinate Austin, Travis County Balcones Canyonland Preserve, Texas Student Public Interest Research Group Campus Action, Bat Conservation International, Raise Design Studio, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, Desert Door Texas Sotol, Wild Spirit Wild Places, and Me and the Bees Lemonade, provide the energy, expertise, and passion to protect pollinators and to make Austin a successful Bee City USA community; and

WHEREAS, Austin should be certified a Bee City USA community to enhance understanding of the vital role that pollinators play and what each of us can do to sustain them, and to encourage healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement; **NOW, THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to designate the appropriate City department as the Bee City USA sponsor to execute and oversee the following:

1. **Application and Application Fee:** Apply for designation as a Bee City USA affiliate and pay the required application fee; and
2. **Celebration:** Host at least one educational event or pollinator habitat planting or restoration each year to showcase Austin's commitment to

raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat; and

3. **Publicity and Information:** Install and maintain at least one authorized Bee City USA street sign in a prominent location, and create and maintain a web presence on the City of Austin's website to include, but not be limited to, links to the adopted resolution and to the national Bee City USA website; contact information for Austin's designated Bee City USA liaison and committee; reports of the pollinator-friendly activities that the community has accomplished in the previous year(s); and a recommended native plant species list and integrated pest management plan; and
4. **Habitat:** Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat, including the cultivation of native milkweed where feasible in the City's landscape portfolio at Austin City Hall, City-owned buildings and properties, and the City's vast preserve lands, parks, and open spaces; and
5. **Pollinator-Friendly Pest Management:** Update the City's integrated pest management plan as needed to reduce pesticide use and expand the use of non-chemical pest management methods; and
6. **Policy and Plans:** Amend existing City planning documents, including but not limited to the Parks and Recreation Department's Land Management and Long-Range Plans and the Austin Climate Equity Plan, make recommendations for plantings, improve practices, and consider other appropriate measures related to pollinator conservation; and

7. **Renewal:** Annually apply for renewal of the Bee City USA designation, including providing a report of the previous year's activities and paying the annual renewal fee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

The City Manager is directed to provide an update to council on whether these items are complete by June 15, 2022.

ADOPTED: March 3, 2022

ATTEST:

G. Brady for

Myrna Rios
City Clerk