

Passed 7-0 (Rosenbarger,
Zulich absent)

RESOLUTION NO. 2025-14
A RESOLUTION of the Common Council of Bloomington, Indiana
Designating Bloomington as a BEE CITY USA® affiliate.

WHEREAS, the mission of BEE CITY USA 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, thanks to the more than 430 species of native bees in Indiana, along with introduced honey bees, residents 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, characteristics of an ideal pollinator-friendly habitat include:

(A) It 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) It is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat;

(C) It comprises undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering; and

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

WHEREAS, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which is already used by the Bloomington Parks & Recreation Department, 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 Bloomington Comprehensive Plan includes Goal 3.4 "Increase the areas of native shrubs, trees, and herbaceous plants to increase ecosystem services associated with green infrastructure, including improved soil, air, and water quality and increased carrying capacity of pollinators, birds, and other wildlife" as well as Policy 3.4.1: "Create a vegetated-habitat connectivity plan" and Policy 3.4.2: "Eliminate, to the greatest extent feasible, invasive plant and animal species." This goal and these policies support habitats for pollinators such as bees in Bloomington; and

WHEREAS, the City's Climate Action Plan includes Goal G-2 "Increase quantity and quality of climate adaptive native habitats," Strategy G-2A "Create and expand native habitat policies and infrastructure" and Strategy G-2B "Increase the use of native species and pollinator restoration areas." This goal and these strategies support habitats for pollinators such as bees in Bloomington; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington has long been committed to planting pollinator friendly and native plants in its parks and public greenspaces. The City conducts regular weed wrangles (targeting invasives) and native plantings with volunteers, encourages and supports neighborhood pollinator gardens, and partners with a range of local organizations to run annual native plant sales (MC-IRIS), collect and distribute native seeds (Project Wingspan), and improve the urban tree cover (Canopy Bloomington), all of which benefit pollinator species; and

WHEREAS, affiliating with Bee City USA may result in cost savings for the Parks and Recreation Department by providing a variety of in-kind resources and support, including a welcome package with educational books, a habitat sign, and outreach materials; ongoing access to training,

webinars, digital publications, and an online affiliate portal offering event planning, habitat creation, and pesticide reduction guidance; promotional opportunities through Bee City USA's communication channels; a custom logo and signage artwork; inclusion on a national map and directory; and direct access to Xerces Society staff for one-on-one technical support; and

WHEREAS, the Bloomington Environmental Commission contributes to city-wide education focused on pollinators and native plantings at its annual Bugfest, Earth Day events, Ecoheroes contest for students, and habitat connectivity plan; and

WHEREAS, Indiana University Bloomington, encompassing nearly 2,000 acres, was recently designated a Bee Campus USA and will serve as a key community partner by promoting pollinator habitat conservation, reducing pesticide use, and advancing education, research, and outreach efforts that support pollinators and their ecosystems.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, MONROE COUNTY, INDIANA, THAT:

Section 1: The City will submit this resolution to the BEE CITY USA program for certification as an official Bee City. The City of Bloomington supports and encourages healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement and aims to enhance understanding among local government staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play and what all residents can do to sustain them.

Section 2: The Bloomington Environmental Commission is hereby designated as the BEE CITY USA sponsor and will be responsible for forming a BEE CITY USA Committee. The Urban Greenspace Manager within the City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department is designated as the BEE CITY USA liaison. Facilitation of Bloomington's BEE CITY USA program is assigned to the Environmental Commission.

Section 3: The Parks and Recreation Department in coordination with the Environmental Commission is authorized to and shall pursue the following actions on behalf of the City of Bloomington:

- a. **Celebration:** Host at least one educational event or pollinator habitat planting or restoration each year to showcase Bloomington's commitment to raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat.
- b. **Publicity & Information:** Install and maintain at least one authorized BEE CITY USA street sign in a prominent location, and create and maintain a webpage on the Parks and Recreation Department's website which includes a copy of this resolution and links to the national BEE CITY USA website; contact information for the BEE CITY USA liaison; reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished in the previous year(s); and a recommended native plant species list and integrated pest management plan (explained below).
- c. **Habitat:** Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat on public and private land, which includes, but is not limited to, identifying and inventorying Bloomington's real property that can be enhanced with pollinator-friendly plantings; creating a recommended locally native plant list to include wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees and a list of local suppliers for those species; and tracking (by square footage and/or acreage) annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced.
- d. **Pollinator-Friendly Pest Management:** Create and adopt a City-wide integrated pest management (IPM) plan modeled on Parks & Recreation's IPM plan, designed to prevent pest problems, reduce pesticide use, and expand the use of non-chemical pest management methods.
- e. **Policy & Plans:** Establish, through the Bloomington Common Council, a policy in the Bloomington Comprehensive Plan to acknowledge and commit to the BEE CITY USA designation and review the Comprehensive Plan and other relevant documents to consider improvements to pest management policies and practices as they relate to pollinator conservation, identify appropriate locations for pollinator-friendly plantings, and consider other appropriate measures.
- f. **Renewal:** After completing the first calendar year as a BEE CITY USA affiliate, each February, if funding is available, apply for renewal of Bloomington's BEE CITY USA designation following the format provided by BEE CITY USA, including a report of the previous year's BEE CITY USA activities, and paying the renewal fee based on Bloomington's population.

- g. **Bee City USA Committee:** Establish a Bee City USA Committee composed of representatives from the Environmental Commission and community partners, including but not limited to local environmental organizations, Indiana University Bloomington, and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources. This committee shall collaborate to advance Bloomington's Bee City USA goals through pollinator education, habitat restoration, outreach events, and promotion of native plant initiatives.
- h. **Annual Report:** Prepare and submit an annual Bee City USA report, compiled by the Bee City USA Committee in coordination with the Environmental Commission, detailing progress on pollinator conservation efforts, habitat creation or enhancement, community engagement activities, and any updates to recommended native plant and pest management resources. This report shall be made publicly available on the Park and Recreation Department's website.

Section 4: Severability. If any section, sentence or provision of this resolution, or the application thereof to any person or circumstances shall be declared invalid, such invalidity shall not affect any of the other sections, sentences, provisions or applications of this resolution which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this resolution are declared to be severable.


ADOPTED by the Common Council of the Bloomington, IN, this 3rd day of September, 2025


HOPI STOSBERG, President
Bloomington Common Council


ATTEST:


NICOLE BOLDEN, Clerk
City of Bloomington

PRESENTED by me to the Mayor of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this 4 day of Sept., 2025.


NICOLE BOLDEN, Clerk
City of Bloomington

SIGNED and APPROVED by me upon this 4 day of Sept, 2025.


KERRY THOMSON, Mayor
City of Bloomington

SYNOPSIS

The Bloomington Environmental Commission, with the support of the Parks and Recreation Department, is proposing that Bloomington be certified as an official Bee City USA city.

Distributed to: Clerk, Council Attorney, Legal, Mayor, Parks + Recreation, + Planning and Transportation.

