

City Council Agenda Item Memo

From: City of Brookings Sustainability Council

Council Meeting: February 11, 2025

Subject: Resolution 25-014: designating the City of Brookings as a Bee City USA Affiliate

Presenter: Albert Patin, Sustainability Council Vice Chair

Summary and Recommended Action:

The Brookings Sustainability Council recommends the City Council adopt the Bee City USA affiliate designation. This designation provides a framework to promote pollinator-friendly policies and practices within our community.

Item Details:

Pollinators, including bees, butterflies, and other insects, play a crucial role in maintaining healthy ecosystems and supporting local agriculture. However, these essential species face significant threats due to habitat loss, pesticide use, and climate change. Bee City USA, an initiative of the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, provides a framework for communities to take actionable steps to protect and enhance pollinator populations.

Established frameworks for communities to follow would include;

1. Establishing a Pollinator Committee: A volunteer committee or an existing group will oversee the implementation of Bee City USA objectives.
2. Developing a Pollinator Habitat Plan: The city will work to create, enhance, and maintain pollinator habitats on public and private lands.
3. Reducing Pesticide Use: The city will adopt policies to minimize pesticide application, focusing on integrated pest management practices.
4. Hosting Educational Events: Conducting events to educate the public on the importance of pollinators and how they can help.
5. Annual Reporting: Submitting an annual progress report to Bee City USA to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.

Establishment of the Bee City USA designation will provide benefit to the Brookings community in several specific ways:

- Enhance local biodiversity by supporting native pollinator populations.
- Strengthen local agriculture by ensuring the sustainability of pollination services.
- Promote community engagement through educational initiatives and volunteer opportunities.
- Showcase the city's commitment to environmental stewardship, attracting eco-conscious residents and visitors.

- Position the city as a leader in sustainability efforts, potentially opening opportunities for grants and partnerships.

The Bee City USA resolution provides a framework for communities to support pollinators in a variety of ways which are more beneficial than current No Mow practices. The Brookings Sustainability Council and the Brookings Parks and Recreation Department will work together to fulfill the commitments required to maintain Bee City USA affiliate status.

The City of Brookings has already implemented practices and programs which support pollinators, including adding areas of pollinator habitat in city parks, increasing the number of No-Mow Zones, reducing pesticide use by using ladybugs for pest control, and incentivizing native plant purchases for homeowners as part of the Stormwater Incentive Program. In addition, SDSU has been a Bee Campus USA since 2018.

In conclusion, the Sustainability Council believes adopting the Bee City USA designation aligns with the City of Brookings' goals of promoting environmental sustainability, enhancing community well-being, and fostering ecological resilience and recommends the City Council approve this initiative to ensure a thriving future for our pollinators and our community.

Legal Consideration:

None.

Strategic Plan Consideration:

- Service and Innovation Excellence – The City of Brookings will provide an accessible environment committed to ongoing innovation and outstanding service through listening and engagement.
- Sustainability – The City of Brookings will meet environmental, community and economic desires and needs without compromising future generations' quality of life by strategically planning, implementing and maintaining infrastructure and facilities.

Financial Consideration:

The application fee and annual renewal fee is based on population. The current cost for the City of Brookings would be \$200. The costs and responsibilities associated with applying for and maintaining Bee City USA status would be shared by the Brookings Sustainability Council and the Brookings Parks and Recreation Department.

Supporting Documentation:

Resolution

Presentation