

CITY OF NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 2016-052
DECLARING NORTHFIELD A POLLINATOR FRIENDLY COMMUNITY AND
ENCOURAGING RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES TO ADOPT POLLINATOR FRIENDLY
PRACTICES

WHEREAS, the City of Northfield is dedicated to promoting a healthy community and natural environment now and in the future; and,

WHEREAS, pollinators are an integral component of a healthy environment, natural ecosystems, and local food systems, providing essential pollination of plants in order maintain a healthy, aesthetically pleasing, natural environment and to grow a wide diversity of foods; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Northfield already promotes environmental stewardship through its guiding documents including our comprehensive plan, park and trail master plan, and our participation in the GreenStep Cities program; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Northfield recognizes and supports beekeeping as a seasonal agricultural practice, to be regulated in accordance with agricultural guidelines; and,

WHEREAS, pollinator populations are in steep decline due to ongoing loss of habitat as a result of human land use practices and a large-scale expansion of pesticide use by homeowners, landscapers, property managers, and farmers (USDA); and,

WHEREAS, systemic pesticides have been shown to cause illness and death to bees according to recent University of Minnesota research, and,

WHEREAS, local food production is essential to continue to improve the health and food security of Northfield residents, and pollination is an essential component of local food production; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council already found it in the public interest for the City to demonstrate its commitment to pollinator preservation through the use of best management practices such as our organic pest management (OPM) which eliminates the use of harmful pesticides on public property wherever possible in favor of reasonable alternatives.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL THAT:

The City of Northfield is hereby declared a Pollinator-Friendly Community. The City celebrates policies and practices that protect and support pollinator health.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Northfield on this 17th day of May, 2016.

Attest:



City Clerk



Mayor

VOTE: ☒ GRAHAM ☒ DELONG ☒ LUDESCHER ☒ NAKASIAN
 ☒ PETERSON WHITE ☒ POWNELL ☒ ZWEIFEL



City of Northfield

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Legislation Text

File #: Res. 2016-052, Version: 1

City Council Meeting Date: May 17, 2016

To: Mayor and City Council
City Administrator

From: David E. Bennett, Public Works Director/City Engineer

Consider Pollinator Friendly Community Resolution.

Action Requested:

Staff recommends approval of the Resolution Declaring Northfield a Pollinator Friendly Community.

Summary Report:

On April 5, 2016, St. Olaf College students James Rewhaldt, Jeremiah Gatlin, and Michaela Bolder provided an introductory presentation on becoming a pollinator friendly community. Their presentation identified the benefits of pollinators for our ecosystem and the recent decline in the pollinator population worldwide. Their request is for the City to consider adopting best management practices (BMP's) for pollinators.

At the May 10, 2016 Council Work Session the staff reviewed the BMP's and operational impacts on the City. With input from Council, staff has updated the resolution to reflect their discussion (Attachment 1).

A summary of operation impacts of the BMP's are provided below.

- Consider banning neonicotinoids from City use.
 - Neonicotinoids can be in pesticides, currently City departments rarely use pesticides, should it be needed a pesticide without neonicotinoids can be utilized.
- Decrease amount of area Northfield mows and replant those areas with pollinator friendly habitat.
 - As the City develops the Park Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), if adopted this is an item that we would further evaluate on an ongoing basis. If those areas switch from a mowing to a native grass, there is a cost saving on mowing but there would still be maintenance costs such as burning and bailing.
- Implement programming where Northfield residents can get native grass and flower seeds.
 - Native grass and flower seeds are available through numerous greenhouses and landscape suppliers on the private market. The Environmental Quality Commission is in support of expanding the City stormwater rebate program for rain barrel and rain gardens to include native plantings. As proposed, it wouldn't increase the funding available in the program but native grasses would be an additional eligible item.
- Can the City add a community engagement to promote pollinator education?
 - The City currently doesn't provide pollinator education. However, this maybe more beneficial to target schools for the educational component. If adopted, the City communications staff would be able to distribute information through the website and social media but would be

beneficial if resources were provided for easy distribution to minimize time.

Additionally, which will not have cost impacts, is to incorporate the education in conjunction with City stormwater program. Education and outreach is provided through the program and we could tie habit around stormwater best management practices to include pollinator friendly habitat.

- Can the City expand its organic pest management policy to include banning neonicotinoids?
 - This is an item that could be completed as part of the approval of a pollinator friendly City as noted in the first bullet point above.

In summary, there are minimal impacts to City operations and budget. Staff is supportive of the request.

Financial Impacts:

Financial impacts to the City would be minimal.