



Legislation Text

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Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Meeting Date: September 15, 2016

To: Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

From: Tj. Heinrich, Street & Park Foreman

Turf to Pollinator Pilot Program Recommendation

Action Requested:

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board recommend a pilot area for funding considerations from City Council.

Summary Report:

At the May 17, 2016, City Council meeting, the City Council designated Northfield as a Pollinator Friendly Community. This designation provides insight and direction on how to move the community forward to be more pollinator friendly.

As part of the Park capital planning process, staff has identified areas within the city to convert possibly from turf grass to pollinator friendly native plantings. These areas are considered no/low use areas that are currently maintained as turf grass open space by mowing.

Staff also conducted a cost-benefit analysis comparing the operations and maintenance costs associated with turf grass compared to the operations and maintenance costs associated with pollinator-friendly plantings. The conclusion of that analysis is that over a ten-year period, there would be cost savings and the ability of Streets and Parks staff to focus savings from mowing efforts to address other needs on City infrastructure.

Staff has identified locations for possible Turf to Pollinator Program implementation and those include: Aspen Park, Grant Park, Hauberg Woods, Hidden Valley Park, Jefferson Park, Oddfellows Park (Triangle), Lions/Riverside Park, Sibley Swale Park, Truman Park, Tyler Park, Way Park, Prairie Hills Park, Sechler Park, and Spring Creek Park.

The Environmental Quality Commission has endorsed this program and has recommended that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board evaluate locations within Northfield for possible implementation. The role of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board is to discuss the possible implementation of the program and also to discuss some of the locations staff has identified. The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board toured all the staff recommended sites on August 29, 2016.

After the tour the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board chose three locations for staff to research the cost to implement the program. Those parks were Oddfellows Park (Triangle), Lions/Riverside Park & Jefferson Park (Fingers).

Figures for each area that staff & the Park and Recreation Advisory Board chose are being sought.

Financial Impacts:

Along with creating a pollinator-friendly environment, conversion from turf grass to pollinator friendly native plantings will be a neutral cost impact on Street and Parks operations. Savings from mowing efforts would be utilized to address other needs on City infrastructure.