

While we were working on revising the pollinator proposal that we discussed a few months ago, the city newsletter came out that mentioned that Arden Hills participates in the GreenStep Cities program. And one of the actions that we can take to advance in the program is to participate in a preservation and recognition program such as Bee City USA.

The main questions are:

- How much do we care about our rating in the GreenStep Cities program?
 - We can submit our own pollinator proposal to the city council and, if it passes, reach the 1 star level, or we can aim for the Bee City USA program, which could get us 3 stars (but at a higher cost and with more steps to negotiate).

Best Practice Action 10.7

GreenStep City Best Practices: Land Use

Design for Natural Resource Conservation No. 10

Adopt development ordinances or processes that protect natural systems and valued community assets.

Best Practice Action 7

Support and protect wildlife through habitat rehabilitation, preservation and recognition programs.

- The National Wildlife Federation's [Community Wildlife Habitat program](#) partners with cities, neighborhoods, and communities of all kinds to become healthier, greener, and more wildlife-friendly. Communities earn community-wide certification by certifying individual properties (homes, parks, schools, businesses, and others) in their community as Certified Wildlife Habitats and by doing education and outreach in their community.
- GreenStep worked with Audubon Minnesota to create a [bird-friendly community recognition program](#) that counts actions cities have already taken in the GreenStep program. As of 2019 the GreenStep cities of Bemidji, Hastings, Northfield, La Crescent and St. Paul are recognized as Minnesota Bird Cities.
- [Bee City USA](#) works to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, in particular the more than 3,600 species of native bees in this country, by increasing the abundance of native plants, providing nest sites, and reducing the use of pesticides.

1 star Report city actions that strengthen the ecology for birds, pollinators, other wildlife and for native plants; for example, replacing a dam with a spillway/rapids to restore and enhance fish passage and habitat.

2 star Register and begin work on completing actions in the Bird City MN program, Bee City USA, or/and the Community Wildlife Habitat program.

3 star Be recognized as a Bird City Minnesota, Bee City USA, or/and a certified Wildlife Habitat.

BEE CITY USA COMMITMENTS

Thinking globally and acting locally, Bee City USA provides a framework for communities to work together to conserve native pollinators by increasing the abundance of native plants, providing nest sites, and reducing the use of pesticides.

Bee City USA affiliates make commitments to conserve native pollinators, laid out in a resolution adopted by the local city council. City staff and community members work together to carry out these commitments and make their city a better place for pollinators. Incorporated cities, towns, counties, and communities across the United States are invited to make these commitments and become Bee City USA affiliates.

Join the cities across the country rallying to protect pollinators and bring your community together to create positive change!

Establish a standing Bee City USA committee to advocate for pollinators.

Every committee will be different, but should include individuals with experience and interests that will help the committee complete the commitments. Committees generally include a mix of volunteers and city staff. The committee should have a chair or multiple co-chairs. This committee should be managed either by the affiliate (i.e. City or County) or a non-profit organization and should have a regular meeting schedule that is open to the public. See the resolution for full requirements associated with the committee.

Create and enhance pollinator habitat on public and private land by increasing the abundance of native plants and providing nest sites.

Creating or enhance pollinator habitat on public and private land each year. To assist with habitat creation and provide guidance for the community, affiliates create a native plant list and native plant supplier list. There's no need to create these materials before applying, but they should be complete by your first renewal. Guidance and examples will be provided to assist in developing each of these resources.

Reduce the use of pesticides.

Create and adopt an integrated pest management (IPM) plan designed to prevent pest problems, reduce pesticide use, and expand the use of non-chemical pest management methods. Like the native plant list and native plant supplier list, the IPM plan should be developed over the first few years of affiliation.

Incorporate pollinator-conscious practices into city policies and plans.

Establish a policy in the city's comprehensive plan to acknowledge and commit to the Bee City USA designation. Review the 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.

Host pollinator awareness events.

Host or co-host at least one pollinator awareness event each year. The focus of these events should be native pollinators and the steps we can take to conserve them.

Publicly acknowledge Bee City USA affiliation with signs and an online presence.

Display at least one sign designating your community as a Bee City USA affiliate. Xerces provides the artwork for these signs and encourages affiliates to work with local sign makers to have them printed. Affiliates also commit to maintaining an online presence where they share information about their activities as well as their native plant list, native plant supplier list, and integrated pest management plan.

Pay an initial application fee and annual renewal fee.

To sustain the Bee City USA program affiliates pay an application fee and annual renewal fees. These fees are based on population. Visit the application page to learn more about fees. Renewal fees are the same amount as the application fee. (*\$200/year for Arden Hills*)