

Council Communication

October 20, 2014, Study Session

Discussion Regarding Bee City USA Proposal

FROM:

Dave Kanner, city administrator, dave.kanner@ashland.or.us

SUMMARY

At its July 15, 2014, business meeting, citizens approached the Council with a request that the City of Ashland apply to become a Bee City USA. Bee City USA is a relatively new program, similar to the Tree City USA program, in which participating cities take various steps to recognize, protect and celebrate bees and other pollinators. The Council requested that this item be placed on a study session agenda.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

In June of 2012, the city of Asheville, North Carolina, decided to celebrate pollinators of all varieties and become the inaugural Bee City USA. In August of 2014, Talent, Oregon, followed suit and became the second Bee City USA. At the July 15, 2014, City Council meeting, Kristina Lefever and Laura Ferguson requested that Council consider applying for Ashland to become a Bee City USA. Council requested that this be placed on a Study Session agenda for discussion and consideration. In order to become a Bee City USA, Ashland would be required to:

1. Fill out and submit the [Bee City USA application](#).
2. Establish a Bee City USA committee or subcommittee devoted to pollinator conservation
3. Approve a Bee City USA [resolution](#)
4. Hold an annual celebration of being a Bee City USA with a [proclamation](#) and public awareness programs
5. Publicly acknowledge the Bee City USA designation with signage in town and web links on the City of Ashland website
6. Annually submit a [renewal application](#) with a report on Bee City related activities

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Costs will include staff time to run the required Bee City USA committee or subcommittee, as well as costs to create and hang the required signage. It's possible other costs will be required, depending upon how Council would like the public awareness portion of the requirement to be handled.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUESTED ACTION:

N/A

SUGGESTED MOTION:

N/A This item is for discussion purposes only.



ATTACHMENTS:

[FAQs](#) regarding becoming a [Bee City USA](#)

Bee City USA [Application](#)

Bee City USA [Resolution](#)

Bee City USA [Proclamation](#)





Follow us! (<http://www.facebook.com/BeeCityUSA>)

Search

(/)

News & Events (/)

Become A Bee City USA
(/become-a-bee-city-usa.html)

Pollinator Week
(/pollinator-week.html)

About (/about.html)

FAQ's (/faqs.html)

Create Custom
Pollinator Plant List
(/create-custom-pollinator-plant-list.html)

Resources
(/resources.html)

Our Supporters (/our-supporters.html)

Education
(/education.html)

Contact Us (/contact-us.html)

Press Releases (/press-releases.html)

Frequently Asked Questions



Hummingbird moth. Photo: USFWS

What is Bee City USA?

Pollinators are vital to humans and our planet. One in every three bites of food we eat is courtesy of insect pollination-- 85% of flowering plants depend on pollinators for reproduction.

Bee City USA designation is both an honor and a responsibility. The Bee City USA program endorses a set of standards, defined in a resolution, for creating sustainable pollinator habitats. Cities and towns across America are invited to adopt these standards and become a Bee City USA designee.

Why Do Pollinators Need Our Help?

U.S. honey bee populations are declining at a stunning annual rate of 30% or more. While honey bees may be more appreciated for their pollination services because we enjoy the honey and wax they produce and they are transportable to orchards and fields, the thousands of native bee species-- bumble, mining, mason, sweat, alkali, cuckoo, orchard, carder, leafcutter, carpenter, long-horned, squash, sunflower, digger, etc.--also have been declining at alarming rates, and in many cases, going extinct.

The threat to native bees increases the more specialized they are due to their tongue length and the nest building materials they require. Size also matters: bumble bees are bigger and can fly a mile or more from their nests to forage, but sweat bees are smaller and usually fly no more than 200 yards from their nest. **Attracting Native Pollinators**, produced by the Xerces Society (<http://www.xerces.org/>), is an excellent resource on this topic. Other pollinators include butterflies, moths, beetles, hummingbirds, and bats.

In the old days, bears and skunks, and the occasional famine caused by droughts, were beekeepers' greatest worries. Unfortunately, the threats have grown more insidious. Honey bees and other pollinator populations started declining in the 1950s with the introduction of pesticides, some of which have since been banned. Later, in the 1980s, the arrival of parasitic mites in the United States killed most feral honey bee colonies and further reduced honeybee populations.

Then, in late 2006, North American beekeepers witnessed a mysterious phenomenon dubbed "Colony Collapse Disorder." Adult bees abruptly vanished from hundreds of colonies, deserting the queen and her brood. Today, it is generally believed that honey bee decline is caused by a complex combination of factors that progressively weaken their individual and collective immune systems, including diseases, parasites, mono-cropping, and exposure to systemic pesticides that permeate the entire plant being treated. Marla Spivak's Ted Talk on You Tube (http://www.ted.com/talks/marla_spivak_why_bees_are_disappearing.html) not only explains the situation.

What Is Pollinator-Friendly Habitat (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/pollinatorfriendlypractices.pdf)?



Male Eastern Tiger Swallowtail on thistle. Photo: James Wilson

The ideal pollinator-friendly habitat:

- Provides diverse and abundant pollinator food sources (nectar and pollen from blooming plants) that bloom in succession.
- Provides water for drinking, nest-building and cooling, diluting stored honey, and butterfly "puddling."
- Is pesticide-free or has pesticide use carried out with least ill effects on pollinators.

- Is comprised of mostly, if not all, native species of grasses, perennials, shrubs and trees. (Many native pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-evolved for millions of years.)
- Sources plants from nurseries that do not treat seeds with neonicotinoid pesticides, which permeate the entire plant and remain active for as much as years. (Some big box stores label their plants "bee-friendly" even though they were grown from seeds treated with "neonics.")
- Provides for safe and humane removal of bees when required.
- Provides undisturbed spaces (leaf piles, unmowed fields, fallen trees) for nesting and overwintering for native pollinators.

Municipalities can raise pollinator awareness by designating pollinator zones in public spaces with explanatory signage.

How Do I Identify Pollinators? (<http://www.beecityusa.org/types-of-pollinators.html>)

There are about 200,000 species of animals in the world that provide pollination services. However the most prolific are native bees and honey bees. The US Forest Service has a Pollinator of the Month website (<http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/pollinator-of-the-month/index.shtml>) and the USDA has a basic introduction to how to distinguish pollinators from other insects (<http://www.ars.usda.gov/Main/docs.htm?docid=11414>).

What About The Danger of Stings?

According to the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC) in their "No Fear of Stings!" brochure, "Some people may have an allergic reaction (even some who do not know they are allergic to stings). A very small proportion of the adult population (3%) and children (about 0.5%) are allergic to bee stings and are at risk of possible systemic reactions including anaphylactic shock. If someone experiences nausea, wheezing, or difficulty breathing following a sting, or if they are stung multiple times, they should seek immediate medical care. This is rare, but is an early systemic symptom of anaphylactic shock. **You are more at risk of being struck by lightning (about 700 fatalities per year) than dying from a bee sting.** For example, in the U.S. population, only 40 people out of 310 million people die from stings in a typical year. Many of these incidents are actually from wasp or ant stings rather than native bees or honey bees. Ground-nesting yellow jacket wasps (*Vespula* species) are defensive around their populous nests."

To order copies of this excellent brochure produced by the Garden Taskforce of the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NAPPC), go to www.pollinator.org/brochures.htm (<http://www.pollinator.org/brochures.htm>) or download a copy here ([/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/nappc.nofear.brochfinal.pdf](http://uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/nappc.nofear.brochfinal.pdf)).

Bee City USA urges urban beekeepers to take every precaution to avert honey bee contact with neighbors. See "North Carolina State Beekeeper Association's Best Practices for Urban Beekeepers ([/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/ncsba_best_practices_for_urban_beekeepers.pdf](http://uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/ncsba_best_practices_for_urban_beekeepers.pdf))" for guidelines.

Is There A Model Beekeeping Ordinance?

While having a beekeeping ordinance is not required for being a Bee City USA community, we encourage responsible beekeeping policies. A search (at www.municode.com (<http://www.municode.com>)) through the more than 1,000 bee-related city ordinances around the country reveals a wide assortment of regulations, conditions and guidelines for urban beekeepers. These range from quite progressive and pro-beekeeping to outright prohibitions. As the importance of bees and the value of beekeeping becomes better publicized and understood, more and more cities are working to write ordinances that permit and promote responsible beekeeping. That is, beekeeping done on a scale and in a fashion that is safe, considerate of others and appropriate to

areas of greater population density. Madison, Wisconsin, (<http://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/bi/obtaining-a-city-of-madison-beekeeping-license/108/>) has an extremely well drafted city ordinance developed in cooperation between city officials and the local beekeeping community. It addresses hive barriers and setbacks that create safe flight patterns in dense neighborhoods. It is worth a look if your city lacks an ordinance or has one that would benefit from an update.

Please notify webmaster at beeecityusa@gmail.com if you find broken links or other website issues.



Follow us! (<http://www.facebook.com/BeeCityUSA>)

Search

(/)

News & Events (/)

Become A Bee City USA
(/become-a-bee-city-usa.html)

Pollinator Week
(/pollinator-week.html)

About (/about.html)

FAQ's (/faqs.html)

Create Custom
Pollinator Plant List
(/create-custom-pollinator-plant-list.html)

Resources
(/resources.html)

Our Supporters (/our-supporters.html)

Education
(/education.html)

Contact Us (/contact-us.html)

Press Releases (/press-releases.html)

Become A Bee City USA®

Help us build a movement to turn the tide for pollinators across America. Asheville became the inaugural Bee City USA community in June 2012, and Talent, Oregon, ([/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/talent_certificate.pdf](#)) was designated the second community in August 2014. When we receive your signed **Application** (below) complete with attachments, we will add your community's name to the Bee City USA website, and send you the artwork to produce your own signs to proudly announce the commitment your municipality has made to sustain pollinators, and the larger



Asheville Councilman Cecil Bothwell (left) leads Pollinator Parade during August 18, 2012 launch of Bee City USA at Asheville City Market.
Photo: Greg Starks

environment.

Benefits of Being a Bee City USA Community

When city leaders complete the application process to become a full-fledged affiliate of Bee City USA, they:

- extend the municipality's credibility to local grassroots pollinator conservation efforts,
- institutionalize the municipality's commitment beyond any one elected official's or staff member's

term of service, and

- open doors to widespread collaboration for establishing and maintaining healthy pollinator habitat within the municipality's boundaries.

By being a Bee City USA community, city leaders can improve their city or town's environment, eating habits, and economy:

- Help to ensure the survival of vital animal species crucial to our planet's complex food web.
- Raise community awareness of how our food grows and improve local food production through expanded pollination. More than 150 food crops in the United States depend on pollinators, including blueberries, apples, oranges, squash, tomatoes, and almonds.
- Improve local plant nursery markets by increasing demand for native, pollinator friendly plants.
- Raise community awareness of the dangers of non-native invasive plants to the local ecosystem.
- Raise community awareness of more natural ways to deal with home and garden pest problems than toxic chemical pesticides.
- Raise community awareness of the local environment's seasonality as understanding grows about the pollinators' reliance on blooming plants and trees.
- By encouraging urban beekeeping, increase micro and small business opportunities. Newly discovered pride in local food products, such as artisanal honey and other honey bee products, creates new business opportunities. Honey is absolutely unique to the nearby flowers from which the bees gather nectar. Its taste and color vary dramatically as a result. Furthermore, as the community of beekeepers grows, the market for beekeeping supplies grows.

Here's How Cities & Towns May Apply (Note: All documents are supplied below.)

1. Review Bee City USA's **Application**.
2. Establish a Bee City USA committee or subcommittee devoted to pollinator conservation.
3. Develop your Bee City USA **Resolution** following the template provided.
4. Submit an **Initial Application** for Bee City USA designation.
5. Adopt the Bee City USA **Resolution** and email a copy of the signed Resolution to beecityusa@gmail.com (<mailto:beecityusa@gmail.com>).

Once designated:

1. Annually celebrate being a Bee City USA designee with a **Proclamation** and public awareness activities.
2. Publicly acknowledge your commitment through signage and web links.
3. Following the **Renewal Application** form, annually report your activities to Bee City USA to renew your designation.

Application Documents: Resolution Template (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/resolution_template_4-14.pdf), (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/initial_application.pdf) Resolution Template in Word, (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/resolution_template_4-14-word_doc.doc) Initial Application Form, (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/initial_application_4-14.pdf) Initial Application Form in Word (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/initial_application_4-14-word_doc.docx), Annual (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/renewal_application_4-14.pdf) Renewal Application Form (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/renewal_application_4-14.pdf), Annual Renewal Application Form in Word (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/renewal_application_4-14-word_doc.docx), Sample Proclamation (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/sample_bee_city_usa_proclamation_1-14.pdf), Sample Proclamation in Word (/uploads/1/2/8/9/12899788/sample_bee_city_usa_proclamation_1-14.docx)

Would your town or city like to become a Bee City USA community?

Name *

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
First	Last

Email *

Comment *



INITIAL APPLICATION

Please email this completed application with requested attachments to **beecityusa@gmail.com** with APPLICATION in the subject line.

As _____ (Title—Mayor or other city official) of _____ (City/town and State), I herewith make application for this community's designation as *Bee City USA* having met the *Bee City USA* standards noted below, and recognizing that this application must be renewed annually to maintain *Bee City USA* designation.

STANDARD 1: Establish a *Bee City USA* Commission, Board, Subcommittee, or Responsible City Department and their Representative (i.e. Liaison to *Bee City USA*)

- Name of responsible entity: _____
- Name of representative, phone, and email: _____
- Date of establishment of board or subcommittee: _____
- List or attach member names: _____
- List scheduled meeting dates: _____

STANDARD 2: Develop *Bee City USA* Resolution Following Template Provided by *Bee City USA*

Please attach resolution to be adopted and provide date resolution is scheduled for consideration by municipality's governing body: _____ [Date to be considered]

STANDARD 3: Agree to Publicly Acknowledge Your *Bee City USA* Designation as Outlined in the *Bee City USA* Resolution, Within One Year of the Date Entered Below.

STANDARD 4: Agree to Publicly Celebrate Your *Bee City USA* Designation Annually as Outlined in the *Bee City USA* Resolution, Within One Year of the Date Entered Below.

STANDARD 5: Agree to Re-apply for *Bee City USA* Designation and Summarize Annual Activities to Raise Awareness Of and Sustain Pollinators as Outlined in the *Bee City USA* Resolution, Within One Year of the Date Entered Below.

Mayor or equivalent:

Name: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____
Signature/Date: _____

(Liaison) Person Completing This Form:

Name: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____
Signature/Date: _____

Please send this document in PDF format to beecityusa@gmail.com. Upon a favorable review of your application and after receipt of an electronic copy of your adopted *Bee City USA* resolution (template provided), we will promptly add your municipality to the list of designated communities on our website, and send you a *Bee City USA* community certificate and artwork for you to produce your *Bee City USA* street sign(s).

Certification (To be completed by *Bee City USA*)

Congratulations! *Bee City USA* is pleased to advise you that we received your application and have concluded that you have met the standards for designation as a *Bee City USA* community through the _____ calendar year. With your help, we are making the world safer for pollinators, one city at a time. If we take care of the pollinators, they will take care of us.

RESOLUTION NO. _____
RESOLUTION DESIGNATING [city/town], [state] A *BEE CITY USA*

WHEREAS, the goal of *BEE CITY USA* is to promote healthy, sustainable habitats and communities for bees and other pollinators; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the tremendous diversity of wild native bees, along with the honey bees that were brought here from Europe in the 1600s, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts and vegetables: *"One in every three bites of food we eat is courtesy of insect pollination. Even our meat and milk trace back to insects that pollinate the alfalfa and other feed for beef cattle and cows"* (Mace Vaughan, Pollinator Program Director for the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation); and

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators around the globe have experienced dramatic declines due to a combination of habitat loss, use of pesticides, and the spread of pests and diseases, with grave implications for the future health of flora and fauna; and

WHEREAS, cities and their residents have the opportunity to support bees and other pollinators on both public and private land; and

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators fosters environmental awareness and sustainability, and increases interactions among community stewards such as commercial and backyard beekeepers, farmers, children, educators, Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, plant nurseries, municipalities, neighborhoods, and garden suppliers and clubs; and

WHEREAS, the economic benefits of (native and honey) bee-friendliness are:

- Healthy ecosystems--insect pollinators are required for pollination and reproduction of about 85% of flowering plants globally, plants that: 1) are vital for clean air and water; 2) provide food, fiber and shelter for people and wildlife; and 3) support the very insects that pollinate our crops and form the basis of food webs.
- Increased vegetable and fruit crop yields due to bee pollination.
- Increased habitat for natural enemies of crop pests and therefore reduced need for and costs associated with pesticides.
- Increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local nurseries and growers.
- Income earned by beekeepers and others through the sale of bee products, beekeeping equipment and supplies, and hive rentals for pollination; and, heightened prestige and premium asking prices for place-based honey, which enhances the visibility and reputation of its community of origin; and

WHEREAS, [city/town] should be a *BEE CITY USA* affiliate because:

- XXXX
- XXXX
- XXXX

WHEREAS, ideal pollinator-friendly habitat:

- Provides diverse and abundant nectar and pollen from plants blooming in succession.
- Provides clean water for drinking, nest-building, cooling, diluting stored honey, and butterfly puddling.
- Is pesticide-free or has pesticide use carried out with least ill effects on pollinators.
- Is comprised of mostly, if not all, native species of annual and perennial wildflowers, shrubs, trees, and grasses because many native pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-evolved.
- Includes, where possible, designated pollinator zones in public spaces with signage to educate the public and build awareness.

- Provides for safe and humane removal of bees when required.
- Provides undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, un-mowed fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering for native pollinators; and

WHEREAS, in order to enhance understanding among municipal staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play and what each of us can do to sustain them, the [City/Town] of [name of city/town] agrees to meet the following standards required of all *BEE CITY USA* affiliates:

- 1) Establish/maintain a **subcommittee** of an appropriate municipal body or department, comprised of citizens and staffed by employees, charged with assembling and disseminating information on topics of pollinator-friendly habitat and policies to municipal departments, residents, businesses, and developers. For example, it might be a subcommittee of the Sustainability, Natural Resources, or Tree Commission.
- 2) Pass this *BEE CITY USA* **resolution** (which articulates these standards).
- 3) **Publicly acknowledge** the community's commitment by agreeing to a) install/maintain at least one authorized *BEE CITY USA* street sign in a prominent location, and b) create/maintain links on appropriate pages of the municipal website which includes the municipality's *BEE CITY USA* liaison(s), links to a PDF of this signed Resolution and the *BEE CITY USA* website, and summaries of the pollinator-friendly activities the municipality has undertaken or accomplished the previous year(s).
- 4) Commit to **annually celebrate** National Pollinator Week (third full week of June) or some other appropriate occasion through events, proclamations, and promotions that showcase the municipality's commitment to being a *BEE CITY USA* affiliate.
- 5) Commit to annually **apply for renewal** of the community's designation and submit a report of *BEE CITY USA* activities following the format provided.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE [City/Town Council or appropriate body] THAT:

The [City/Town Council or appropriate body] accepts the designation and commits to the standards of *BEE CITY USA*.

Read, approved, and adopted this ____ day of _____, 20__.

City/Town Clerk

Mayor (or appropriate official)

Approved as to form:

City/Town Attorney

City/Town of _____
PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, pollinator species such as thousands of species of bees are essential partners in producing much of our food supply; and

WHEREAS, pollinator species provide significant environmental benefits that are necessary for maintaining healthy, biodiverse urban and suburban ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, pollination plays a vital role for the trees and plants of our community, enhancing our quality of life, and creating recreational and economic development opportunities; and

WHEREAS, for decades the City/Town of _____ has managed urban landscapes and public lands that include many municipal parks and greenways, as well as wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, the City/Town of _____ provides recommendations to developers and residents regarding landscaping to promote wise conservation stewardship, including the protection of pollinators and maintenance of their habitats in urban and suburban environments; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, _____, Mayor of the City/Town of _____, do hereby proclaim the day/week of _____ [month, day(s), year] as our municipality's observance of

National Pollinator Week

And, _____ [City/Town/Community] as an affiliate of

Bee City USA®

and urge all citizens to recognize this observance.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of _____ [City/Town, State], to be affixed this ____ day of _____ [month], _____ [year].

NOTE: Please send a copy of your proclamation to Bee City USA at beecityusa@gmail.com
This proclamation was inspired by the sample proclamation provided by the Pollinator Partnership for National Pollinator Week at http://pollinator.org/npw_action.htm.