



Legislation Text

File #: RES 16-171, **Version:** 1

Outlining the City of Saint Paul's commitment to being pollinator-friendly.

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul is dedicated to promoting and maintaining a healthy urban and natural environment today and in the future; and

WHEREAS, pollinating insects, such as bees, are integral to a healthy ecosystem and to a wide diversity of essential foods, including fruits, nuts, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, such pollinators, including native bees and other insects in particular, are threatened by the loss of natural flowering habitat, pesticide use, pathogens and parasites; and

WHEREAS, the more native plants introduced into any landscape attracts more native insect diversity, including predators, so fewer pests survive

WHEREAS, the use of pesticides for control of harmful pests sometimes has unintended consequences against beneficial insects such as bees and the insect predators which are often pollinators; and

WHEREAS, there has been increased scrutiny specifically on the link between a class of pesticides commonly used that contain neonicotinoids and a decline in pollinators; and

WHEREAS, the City's Parks and Recreation Department conducts a number of activities that are aimed at increasing pollinator populations such as:

- Designs all new and renovated facilities with a consideration for adding natural areas with beneficial pollinator friendly plantings where possible.
- Actively restoring and enhancing naturalized park areas using pollinator friendly native plants.
- Provides ornamental gardens that now include high pollinator valued plants and currently display hundreds of hanging baskets with flowers sourced as non-neonicotinoid from growers, and grows thousands of additional plants in-house without the use of chemicals.
- Employs an existing Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program for all grounds work.
- With the exception of some premier facilities, the vast majority of neighborhood and regional parks including the Como Conservatory gardens, are maintained pesticide free, e.g., dandelions are left untreated.
- Exploring over-seeding little used turf areas with more beneficial clover where possible.
- Forestry plants a diverse array of tree species, many that support pollinators by providing food, habitat, and other materials such as resins, and currently performs limited chemical treatment for emerald ash borer using internally injected non-neonicotinoid insecticides.
- Works closely with the University of Minnesota Bee Squad on bumble bee surveys using volunteers and providing hands-on education programs on bees and pollinators

WHEREAS, the City supports beekeeping and has developed rules to guide residents and business on how to properly keep bees in Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, the City has a number of pollinator friendly lands and gardens that include Hamline Midway, Sun Ray and Riverview Libraries, Bruce Vento and Trout Brook Nature Sanctuaries, Regional Parks such as Como, Phalen, Lilydale, and Crosby, Highland 18 Hole Golf Course; and

WHEREAS, the City has an active partnership with neighborhoods and the Capitol Region Watershed District to increase the number of boulevard rain gardens; each rain garden is planted with a number of pollinator-friendly species; and

WHEREAS, Saint Paul Regional Water Services and Public Works Department Street Maintenance protects pollinators by refraining from using pesticides on any of its grounds; and

WHEREAS, the City's Parks and Recreation Department is partnering with the University of Minnesota Bee Squad to research community apiaries at Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and to develop educational opportunities for the public to learn how they can help bees; and

WHEREAS, the City is partnering with Public Art Saint Paul on a creative public art project "Bee Real, Bee Everywhere" project funded by Knight Foundation to improve bee habitat and educate and inspire the public to protect bees and other pollinators; and

WHEREAS, some specialized facilities such as the Como Park Conservatory indoor tropical gardens, golf course tees, fairways and greens, or premier athletic fields may have a higher need for use of pesticides and exceptions for such areas are recognized as not yet having reasonable alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the State of Minnesota preempts any powers of local governments to regulate any and all matters concerning the registration, labeling, distribution, sale, handling, use, application, or disposal of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it is in the public interest for the City to demonstrate its commitment through the use of best management practices such as up-to-date integrated pest management (IPM) which eliminates the use of harmful pesticides on public property wherever possible in favor of reasonable alternatives; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Saint Paul shall:

- a) Direct all city departments to develop or update an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program that requires site inspections, monitoring and prevention strategies, an evaluation on the need for pest control, and when pest control is warranted the use of structural, mechanical, biological, organic, and other nonchemical methods will be utilized first. If these methods are found to be ineffective, sustainable strategies will be employed that minimize economic, health, and environmental risks; and
- b) Provide city employees routine education that promotes and assists in protecting pollinators and provides ideas in creating favorable pollinator habitat; and
- c) Work with partners at leased facilities, such as golf courses or re-purposed recreation centers, to ensure knowledge of and compliance to Integrated Pest Management practices; and
- d) Eliminate the use of neonicotinoid insecticides, and other pesticides proven to be harmful to pollinators, on city grounds; specific exceptions are allowed for the Como Park Conservatory indoor tropical gardens, golf course tees, fairways and greens, or premier athletic fields such as McMurray, Dunning, Rice & Arlington, CHS Fields, and when used, follow all best practices when applying, e.g., the appropriate timing of applications; and
- e) Explore piloting an alternative pest management system on a portion of a golf course tee, green or fairway, and on a premier athletic field in 2016; and
- f) Reduce the use of all pesticides and systemic insecticides wherever possible and phase out entirely as safer and reasonable alternatives become available; and
- g) Require all city departments with any inventory of materials containing neonicotinoids, and other pesticides proven to be harmful to pollinators, to discontinue their use and properly dispose of them unless a justifiable need has been identified by another department. If such a need is identified, the product shall be officially inventoried and applied in a controlled and limited manner according to all current application best practices. The need and use of such products shall be reviewed by departments on an ongoing basis until a reasonable alternative is identified; and

- h) Include planting of flowering natural areas, with a preference for MN native perennials, in the design of new or renovated public spaces, and restore existing spaces with pollinator favorable habitat when opportunities to do so are manageable; and
- i) To the best of its ability, the city will source plant material and trees from nurseries that do not use neonicotinoids, or other pesticides proven to be harmful to pollinators; and
- j) Continue to advocate at the State and Federal level for increased authority to address the non-agricultural use of pesticides and for other pollinator friendly policies; and
- k) Communicate to the public, through City websites, signage and other means, efforts to protect pollinators including the delineation of parks and public spaces that are pesticide free zones; and
- l) Encourage all property owners in the City of Saint Paul - residential, commercial, and institutional - to be more conscious of pollinator stewardship practices, including ending the purchase and sale of plants treated with systemic insecticides; planting more pollinator friendly plants on their property, including MN Native perennials; and not using pesticides, including systemic insecticides, on their property.