

**County Executive
of
Howard County, Maryland**

Executive Order: 2019-08

Dated: August 30, 2019

**Subject: Designating Howard County as a
Bee City USA affiliate**

WHEREAS, the mission of Bee City USA is to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators, responsible for the reproduction of almost 90% of the world's flowering plant species, by providing them with healthy habitat, rich in a variety of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides; and

WHEREAS, thanks to the more than 3,600 species of native bees in the United States, along with introduced honey bees, we have very diverse dietary choices rich in fruits, nuts, and vegetables; and

WHEREAS, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides (including insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides), parasites, diseases, and climate change; and

WHEREAS, pollinator-friendly communities can benefit local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased vegetable and fruit crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local growers; and

WHEREAS, an ideal pollinator-friendly habitat (a) is comprised of mostly native wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees blooming in succession throughout the growing season to provide diverse and abundant nectar and pollen, since many wild pollinators prefer or depend on the native plants with which they co-adapted; (b) is free to nearly free of pesticides, as many pesticides can harm pollinators and/or their habitat; (c) comprises undisturbed spaces (leaf and brush piles, unmown fields or field margins, fallen trees and other dead wood) for nesting and overwintering; and (d) provides connectivity between habitat areas to support pollinator movement and resilience; and

WHEREAS, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a long-term approach to maintaining healthy landscapes and facilities that minimizes risks to people and the environment by: identifying and removing the causes of pest problems rather than only attacking the symptoms (the pests); employing pests' natural enemies along with cultural, mechanical, and physical controls when prevention is not enough; and using pesticides only when no other method is feasible or effective; and

WHEREAS, supporting pollinators fosters broad-based community engagement in environmental awareness and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, Howard County should be certified a BEE CITY USA community because a formal commitment to pollinator conservation in Howard County would strengthen the existing government and community pollinator efforts while providing the framework to work towards a unified goal; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that healthy communities are the result of healthy ecosystems. By sustaining pollinators, we support balanced ecosystems and healthy, thriving communities; and

WHEREAS, additionally, conserving pollinators supports other County initiatives such as the Natural and Working Lands Challenge and “We’re Still In”; and

WHEREAS, Howard County has already taken the following efforts to support pollinators.

- Howard County Department of Recreation & Parks (DRP) has:
 - created 55 acres of pollinator-friendly meadow habitat on Howard County parkland.
 - established Monarch Way-Stations at two County parks.
 - engaged professional researchers from the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center to conduct Bee Surveys at Centennial Park.
- Howard County’s Pesticide Policy is being strengthened and improved.
- Howard County has worked in conjunction with the following partners to preserve pollinator habitat and support pollinator education and outreach activities:
 - Howard County Conservancy’s Daisy Road Meadow Covenant which is part of 1,900 acres preserved county-wide by the Conservancy.
 - Howard County Bird Club and DRP developed a pollinator seed mix that has been used at several County meadow sites.
 - Howard County Public School System’s 3rd grade science Monarch program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDERED, in order to enhance understanding among local government staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play and what each of us can do to sustain them, Howard County chooses to support and encourage healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement, and I order as follows:

1. The Howard County Department of County Administration, Office of Community Sustainability (the “Office”) is hereby designated as the Bee City USA sponsor.
2. The Administrator of the Office, or the Administrator’s designee, is the Bee City USA Liaison.
3. The Office shall facilitate the Howard County Bee City USA program.
4. The Howard County Conservancy, in coordination with the Office, shall facilitate the Howard County Bee City USA program.
5. The Howard County Conservancy, in coordination with the Office is authorized to and shall:
 - a. **Celebration:** Host at least one educational event or pollinator habitat planting or restoration each year to showcase Howard County’s commitment to raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat.
 - b. **Publicity & Information:**
 - i. Install and maintain at least one authorized Bee City USA street sign in a prominent location;
 - ii. Create and maintain a webpage on the Howard County website which includes, at minimum, a copy of this Executive Order; links to the national Bee City USA website; contact information for your Bee City USA Liaison and Committee; reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished the previous year(s); and your recommended native plant species list and integrated pest management plan (explained below).

- c. **Habitat:** Develop and implement a program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat on public and private land, which includes, but is not limited to, identifying and inventorying Howard County's real property that can be enhanced with pollinator-friendly plantings; creating a recommended locally native plant list to include wildflowers, grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees and a list of local suppliers for those species; and, tracking (by square footage and/or acreage) annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced.
- d. **Pollinator-Friendly Pest Management:** 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.
- e. **Policy & Plans:** Establish, through the County, a policy in the County's General Plan to acknowledge and commit to the Bee City USA designation and 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.
- f. **Renewal:** After completing the first calendar year as a Bee City USA affiliate, each February, apply for renewal of Howard County's Bee City USA designation following the format provided by Bee City USA, including a report of the previous year's Bee City USA activities, and paying the renewal fee based on Howard County's population.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, Calvin Ball, as County Executive of Howard County, Maryland have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of Howard County to be affixed this 30 day of August, 2019.



Calvin Ball
County Executive

