



SO YOUR COMMUNITY IS A CERTIFIED BEE CITY USA® AFFILIATE—NOW WHAT?

Here are some ideas to get you off on the right foot.

Committee Management

Elect committee officers that suit your needs—e.g. chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer, PR chair, program chair, social media chair, fundraising chair....

Hold regularly scheduled meetings of your committee that are open to the public.

- Announce the meeting time and place on a webpage hosted by your city or county, as well as on a Facebook page, in the newspaper, and other media outlets. Your goal is to create the broadest coalition of supporters for pollinator-friendly landscapes possible. Maintain an email sign-up sheet so attendees can stay engaged. It would be great if the person indicated as “liaison” for your city or county attended all meetings, but the most important role they play is to be your communications ally within the city/county structure when you need help.

Have an agenda and take notes to be shared afterwards.

- In addition to committee members and attendees, these notes can be emailed to anyone in the city/county structure who needs to be kept informed (elected officials, Bee City USA liaison, Parks and Recreation staff, Public Works staff, sustainability staff, etc.)
- Possible agenda items: You may want to think of your agenda items in two categories: Education and Habitat Creation/Enhancement. Everything else may fall under those headings. Then you may want to classify agenda items as activities to be completed during the current year vs. long-term goals. Of course, classification is flexible and goals may quickly become short-term given the right circumstances, or vice-versa. Having an agenda based on clear plans for which the committee has consensus makes it much easier for volunteers and other supporters to rally around your plans.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

Start-up Phase

Take stock of your assets! Which individuals, organizations and businesses have the capacity and would like to help? Create a talent/stakeholder list—who are your local/regional experts in honey bees, wild bees, butterflies, native plants, gardening, or least toxic integrated pest management? Don't forget Cooperative Extension, US Fish & Wildlife Service, your state's office for wildlife conservation and management, and the Soil & Water Conservation Service. Many of these folks may be willing to serve on your committee, make presentations, and/or provide advice. People with other talents—photography, art, writing, event management, public relations, teaching, fundraising, social media—are also valuable assets. Ask Bee City USA for information about recruiting and retaining volunteers shared in one of the monthly conference calls.

Annual Goals

Begin with the end in mind—look at the guidelines for the annual renewal application and reporting guidelines. (<http://www.beecityusa.org/heres-how.html>)

Create annual goals that have deadlines and the people responsible for each activity.

Keep a file with programs and media about your activities to help with compiling your annual renewal report, tracking the square footage and/or acres enhanced for pollinator habitat.

For the **first year**, your goals could be:

1. bringing stakeholders together to create annual goals;
2. mounting at least one Bee City USA street sign;
3. asking your city council to make a proclamation in support of National Pollinator Week (template provided by Bee City USA);
4. posting your adopted resolution and announcing your committee members and meetings times/places on a city/county webpage;
5. participating in Bee City USA's monthly conference calls;
6. launching a Facebook page; and,
7. hosting your first annual awareness event during National Pollinator Week (<http://www.pollinator.org/pollinatorweek/>), the 3rd full week of June, or some other appropriate occasion such as:
 - Earth Day (April 22) - <http://www.earthday.org/earth-day/>
 - National Garden Month (April) - www.nationalgardenmonth.org
 - Arbor Day (last Friday in April) - <https://www.arborday.org/celebrate/>
 - Garden for Wildlife Month (May) - www.nwf.org/How-to-Help/Garden-for-Wildlife/Garden-Month.aspx
 - National Wildflower Week (1st week of May) - www.wildflower.org/nww/
 - International Day for Biodiversity (May 22) - <https://www.cbd.int/idb/>
 - Butterfly Education and Awareness Day (1st Saturday in June) <http://afbeducation.org/butterfly-conservation/butterfly-education-and-awareness-day/>

- National Moth Week (last full week of July) - <http://nationalmothweek.org>
- National Honey Bee Day (3rd Saturday in August) - www.nationalhoneybeeday.com
- National Honey Month (September) - www.honey.com/tools-tips-and-resources/september-is-national-honey-month
- National Bat Week (last week of October)- www.batconservation.org/take-action/national-bat-week
- World Bee Day (May 20) - https://www.worldbeeday.org/files/declaration/17_12_20_PRESS_release_WBD_ENG.pdf

Afterwards, your **annual goals** might be as simple as planning your annual awareness event(s) and planting a demonstration garden rich in native plants and free of pesticides. Consider making updating your city council or county commission on a semi-annual or annual basis an annual goal.

Here is a diverse list of possible activities to choose among from year to year:

1. Review **city/county policies and practices** and update them to include your Bee City USA commitments.
2. Inventory your **city/county-owned land** to identify locations for pollinator plantings.
3. Serve as a **clearinghouse to share information** about any activities related to pollinators in your community.
4. **Celebrate gardeners** (individual and institutional gardeners and landscapers) who are practicing PC (pollinator conscious) landscaping that is rich in a diversity of native plants and free to nearly free of pesticides. You could work with local media to run a story series on them and/or recognize them on your website/Facebook page, and/or with garden signs. (Bee City USA offers garden signs for you to have printed.) You may have a volunteer who would enjoy photographing their gardens/landscape. You may want to collaborate to host a pollinator-friendly garden tour complete with inexpensive reusable yard signs featuring factoids about pollinators and pollinator-friendly habitat. (Bee City USA has samples of pollinator factoid signs to share.) *Thanks to Kristina LeFever, Ashland, OR, for launching this program.*
5. Create and annually update sources for plants in your **recommended native species list** for your area and share it with the public. See a how-to at <http://www.beecityusa.org/create-custom-plant-list.html>. Ask your city/county to adopt the list for their landscaping. (This is a significant undertaking that will have multiple benefits: it provides guidance for what to plant on public and private land, it makes plant retailers and wholesalers aware of your efforts to create more pollinator-friendly habitat, it serves as a tool to educate the public about the plant-pollinator relationship, it helps to drive consumers to local nurseries that supply native plants and provides them with a stronger market, it encourages more growers to grow the plants you prefer, it encourages the growers and the public to begin collecting seeds and propagating local ecotypes of native plants...)
6. Provide **incentives for developers** to use native, pollinator friendly plants in their landscape.
7. Develop a **Least Toxic Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Plan** to use only least toxic pesticides (i.e. insecticides, fungicides, herbicides) and avoid or reduce

- pesticide use for least ill effects on pollinators, scheduling treatments only during times when pollinators are least active. (Carrboro, NC, has a great IPM plan: <http://townofcarrboro.org/140/Least-Toxic-Integrated-Pest-Management> Ask your city/county to adopt a **Least Toxic Integrated Pest Management Policy** and offer workshops for staff, the public, and pesticide applicators. Consider offering Continuing Education credits for professionals.
8. Develop a **policy** discouraging or banning the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes on ornamental landscapes, on municipal property, or within the municipality's jurisdiction (similar to the [cosmetic pesticide ban](#) now in force in the province of Ontario, Canada or in Takoma Park, Maryland).
 9. **Demonstration habitat**--Plant and/or label native, pollinator-friendly plants on city-maintained lands and at schools and designate pollinator refuges in public spaces. Plant or enhance **school gardens** with pollinator plantings.
 10. Develop and post a **list of speakers** and experts knowledgeable about pollinator habitat (with their consent).
 11. Make **presentations** at meetings of civic organizations, garden clubs, naturalist clubs, churches, etc. Bee City USA can provide a generic PowerPoint.
 12. Manage or promote **citizen science projects** (the Great Sunflower project, Journey North, or Bumblebee Watch (All are linked at <http://www.xerces.org/citizen-science/pollinator-citizen-science/>)
 13. **Reduce turf lawns**--Encourage mowing lawns less frequently to allow dandelions and clover to bloom, or replace lawns or portions of lawns with clover, native plants, or pollinator meadows.
 14. Collaborate to host **native plant sales (or exchanges)** in spring and/or fall featuring local nurseries. List local native nurseries on your local Bee City USA webpage.
 15. Develop a display and **table at events, especially farmers markets** to share pollinator and plant information. The pollinated/non-pollinated grocery basket idea below works well as one table element.
 16. Each month, host a **grocery basket day** with participating markets: one basket has groceries that don't need animal pollinators; the other has groceries that benefit from animal pollinators. See list of foods and their pollinators at http://pollinator.org/list_of_pollinated_food.htm Thanks to Deborah Palmer, Decatur, GA, for this idea.
 17. Create a **Meet-up** for pollinator gardeners. Thanks to Homestead Gardens in Anne Arundel County, MD, for this idea.
 18. Create a **"Bloomin' Report"** during the growing season to be shared at beekeeping meetings, on line, and/or through the media. Find a naturalist/gardener who watches for what's in bloom every two weeks or monthly, takes pictures, and posts them to a publicly available site (your Bee City USA affiliate webpage and/or Facebook page). Thanks to Kim Bailey, Hendersonville, NC, for this idea!
 19. If removal of honeybees is necessary, promote colony capture rather than destruction.
 20. Work with an appropriate organization or agency to host volunteer days for **removing invasive exotic plants**.

21. **Roadside habitat**--Identify a **road corridor** that could be transformed into pollinator habitat with the help of the right collaborators simply by mowing it less frequently and removing invasive exotic plants. Collaborate with the Department of Transportation to make roadsides pesticide-free native pollinator meadows.
22. Ask your local bee club to make educational presentations and to host a **honey tasting** to demonstrate how nectar flavors differ from plant species to species.
23. Locate a local monarch expert(s) by looking at Monarch Watch's list of Conservation Specialists (<http://www.monarchwatch.org/cs/>) and the monarch waystation registry (www.monarchwatch.org/waystations/registry/) and collaborate to host a **monarch education and/or tagging day**. Consider adopting the Mayors' Monarch Pledge - www.nwf.org/Garden-For-Wildlife/About/National-Initiatives/Mayors-Monarch-Pledge.aspx
24. Provide **public education** through workshops, brochures, websites, media, etc. regarding best practices to sustain pollinators. Bee City USA has artwork available for brochures, table displays, posters and bumper stickers.

REMEMBER:

This is a long game, so keep it fun and set reasonable expectations for yourself and others. After all, most of you are volunteers!