

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between the **City of Charlottesville (“City”)**, a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and Bee City USA an initiative of **The Xerces Society, Inc. (“Xerces”)**, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, with a mission to galvanize communities to sustain pollinators and their habitats. This MOU designates the City as a Bee City USA affiliate and outlines the respective goals and responsibilities of the parties in support of that designation and related programming.

Background

The parties recognize that bees and other pollinators are crucial to the reproduction and health of flowering plant species and a diversity of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and other crops. Pollinator-friendly communities support local and regional economies through healthier ecosystems, increased crop yields, and increased demand for pollinator-friendly plant materials from local growers. Supporting pollinators also fosters community awareness and engagement regarding environmental and sustainability challenges and solutions. However, bees and other pollinators have experienced population declines due to a combination of habitat loss, poor nutrition, pesticides, parasites, diseases, and climate change.

The Program

Therefore, the parties wish to implement a program to enhance understanding among local government staff and the public about the vital role that pollinators play, the steps residents can take to sustain them, and to support and encourage healthy pollinator habitat creation and enhancement (“Program”). The parties agree to work in partnership to achieve these goals, through the specific actions outlined below.

City of Charlottesville Responsibilities

The City will:

1. Designate the City’s Parks and Recreation Department as a Bee City USA sponsor.
2. Designate the Urban Forester of the Parks and Recreation Department as the Bee City USA Liaison.
3. Support the creation of a Bee City USA Committee, to direct and manage the City’s participation in the Program and serve as the intermediary between the citizenry and the City on matters regarding the Program. Members of the Committee may be representatives of the local community of gardening, naturalist, beekeeper, native plant and outdoor enthusiasts or experts. The exact size, composition, powers, duties, and bylaws of the Committee will be

determined at a later date, but the Committee will be authorized to and shall, at minimum:

- a. Host at least one educational event or pollinator habitat planting or restoration each year to showcase the City's commitment to raising awareness of pollinator conservation and expanding pollinator health and habitat.
- b. Install and maintain at least one authorized Bee City USA street sign in a prominent location within the City.
- c. Create and maintain a webpage on the City's website that includes a copy of this MOU; links to the national Bee City USA website; contact information for the City's Bee City USA Liaison and Committee; reports of the pollinator-friendly activities the community has accomplished the previous year(s); a list of recommended native plant species; and details regarding the City's integrated pest management plan.
- d. Develop and implement policies and practices to expand pollinator-friendly habitat on City-owned property, which will include identifying and inventorying the City's real property that may 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) the approximate annual area of pollinator habitat created or enhanced.
- e. Maintain, continue, and update as needed the City's integrated pest management plan designed to prevent pest problems, reduce pesticide use, and expand the use of non-chemical pest management methods.
- f. Establish a policy to acknowledge and commit to the Bee City USA designation and review relevant City policies and procedures to consider and make recommendations regarding improvements to policies and practices affecting pollinator conservation; locations for pollinator-friendly plantings; and other appropriate measures.
- g. After completing the first calendar year as a Bee City USA affiliate, each February, apply for renewal of the City's Bee City USA designation following the format provided by Bee City USA, including a report of the previous year's Program activities, and pay the renewal fee based on the City's population per Bee City USA guidelines.

Bee City USA Responsibilities

Bee City USA will:

1. Provide pollinator conservation resources, such as Xerces books and guidelines, Bee City USA brochures, and bookmarks.
2. Provide a pollinator habitat sign.
3. Provide access to an online affiliate portal, where the City may access a variety of resources, including information about native plants, native plant suppliers, and Integrated Pest Management plans; interact with other affiliates; post community events; and access outreach and education resources.
4. Provide electronic files for the City to create a custom affiliate logo that can be used on City materials associated with the Program.
5. Provide artwork that is appropriate for use by the City on City street signs.
6. Provide access to training opportunities, workshops, and webinars on a variety of topics including Integrated Pest Management, planting to support pollinators, and outreach and education.
7. Provide access, upon request and resources allowing, to one-on-one support with an appropriate staff member of Xerces for individualized consultations regarding the Program.
8. List the City of Charlottesville on the Bee City USA website.
9. Permit the City to promote its affiliation with the Bee City USA Program.

Party Representatives

The following persons will serve as the main point of contact for their respective organizations for questions or concerns related to this MOU and the duties and responsibilities of the parties. These representatives may be changed at any time with notice in writing to the other party. The representatives of each party are:

For the City of Charlottesville:

Steven Gaines
Urban Forester
Parks and Recreation Department
City of Charlottesville
605 E. Main Street
Charlottesville, VA 22902

For The Xerces Society, Inc.:

Matthew Shepherd
Director of Outreach & Education
The Xerces Society, Inc.
1631 NE Broadway #821,
Portland, OR 97232
(503) 232-6639

434-970-3587
gainess@charlottesville.gov

matthew.shepherd@xerces.org

Term

This MOU will take effect on the date on which the last signatory executes it. The term of the MOU is one year, with the option to renew for one-year terms in accordance with the Bee City USA renewal procedures which include the submission of a report and the payment of a renewal fee. Renewal will not occur automatically. The initial term of this MOU will end on December 31 of the first complete calendar year after the execution of this MOU.

MOU Modifications

This MOU may be modified at any time. Any modifications must be in writing and signed by both parties in the same manner as this MOU was executed.

Termination of MOU

Either party may terminate this MOU, and thus terminate the City's status as a Bee City USA Affiliate, for any reason by notifying the other party in writing a minimum of 30 days prior to the effective date of such termination. In the event of such termination, no portion of the application or renewal fee will be refunded, and the City shall take all steps necessary to remove any reference to its former status as a Bee City USA Affiliate from all public-facing City property and materials.

Signatures

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the parties have caused their respective duly authorized representatives to execute this MOU:

Samuel Sanders, Jr.
City Manager
City of Charlottesville

Date



Matthew Shepherd
Director of Outreach & Education
The Xerces Society, Inc.

8/14/2025

Date

Approved as to form:

Charlottesville City Attorney's Office

Date