



Agenda Abstract

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date: April 14, 2025
Department: Public Space and Sustainability
Agenda Section: Consent
Public hearing: No
Date of public hearing: N/A

PRESENTER/INFORMATION CONTACT

Stephanie Trueblood, Public Space and Sustainability Manager

ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED

Subject: Resolution establishing a policy to promote the use of native plants and the elimination of invasive plants on town-owned property

Attachments:

Resolution

Summary:

In the Comprehensive Sustainability Plan the town states its commitment to employing an integrated ecosystem approach and stewardship mentality to protect, conserve, and restore critical environmental areas and natural systems and maintaining the environment and natural systems for future generations in a sustainable manner. One of the recommendations in the Comprehensive Sustainability Plan is to develop and adopt a native plant policy for town-owned and maintained properties that improves and expands habitat for wildlife and pollinators.

Native plants are essential to biodiversity and environmental resilience. Plants that have adapted to local climate, soil, and other conditions over time have characteristics that contribute to the overall health of Hillsborough's natural systems such as stabilizing soils and providing food and habitat for wildlife. Native plants also help mitigate climate impacts such as flooding and habitat loss. The deep root systems of native plants are especially important near streams and rivers where they help filter stormwater runoff and reduce stormwater pollution. Native plants also protect biodiversity because many insects, birds, and other wildlife depend on specific native plants for food.

Significant efforts have been undertaken by the town to promote and restore native plants and remove invasive plant species. The town reduces mowing of town spaces to a minimum, organizes volunteer invasive plant species removal workdays, uses native plants in parks and public spaces, and conducts outreach to educate the community on the importance of native plants in the ecosystem. The Hillsborough Tree Board and staff from the Stormwater and Environmental Services division reviewed the policy and recommend its approval. Establishing a policy to promote the use of native plants and the elimination of invasive plants on town-owned property furthers the town's sustainability efforts.

Financial impacts:

None

Staff recommendation and comments:

The adoption of a native plants policy is prioritized in both the Comprehensive Sustainability Plan and Strategic Plan.

Action requested:

Adopt Resolution for a policy to promote the use of native plants and the elimination of invasive plants on town-owned property.