



CITY COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

TO: Matthew R. Schmitz, MPA – City Manager

FROM: Susi Lampe, CMC, IaCMC, IaCFO – Assistant City Manager/City Clerk/Treasurer

DATE OF MEETING: May 11, 2026

ITEM TITLE: Code of Ordinances Chapter 52.02 Exemption Request

BACKGROUND:

On September 26, 2022, the City Council amended Code Section 52.02 to read as follows:

52.02 EXEMPTION. The Council reserves the right to declare any particular area exempt from this chapter if it involves conservation areas or other natural grass, flower, or wildlife area, such exemption to be approved annually by the Council by motion and filed in writing with the Clerk.

Karla Kula had a portion of her backyard exempted last year and has submitted a written request for Council approval for the calendar year 2026.

DISCUSSION:

On April 27, 2026, the City received a written communication from Karla Kula requesting to maintain a pollinator yard for the upcoming year. Section 52.02 of our Code of Ordinances stipulates that exemptions for natural areas must receive annual approval from the City Council. While Ms. Kula held this exemption during the previous year, there have been observations regarding the aesthetic appearance of the property and the placement of unapproved signage. We are bringing this forward so that the City Council can discuss the request and weigh the environmental intent against the visual standards expected within our neighborhoods.

RESULTS:

The City has established priorities during strategic planning sessions. This item supports the Vision from that session of **supporting high-quality City services** and **promoting and encouraging community involvement and engagement**. This item helps achieve that vision by allowing the City Council to publicly deliberate on the balance between individual environmental initiatives and the consistent aesthetic standards of our community.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

There is no direct financial impact to the City associated with this request.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is presenting this request for City Council review, discussion, and final direction, without a formal recommendation for approval or denial.