



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
PARKS AND SUSTAINABILITY
COMMISSION REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 04/06/2026

ITEM NO: 3

DATE: April 06, 2026
TO: Parks and Sustainability Commission
FROM: Nicolle Burnham, Parks and Public Works Director
SUBJECT: Native Plant Garden Grant Application

RECOMMENDATION: Consider Possible Native Plantings in Blossom Hill Park

REMARKS:

Parks and Public Works staff were approached by a volunteer group to plant a native species garden in Blossom Hill Park. This is similar to other volunteer planting efforts at Oak Hill Playlot. Staff are supportive of these efforts at planting native gardens but does note that these come with additional maintenance needs. At Oak Hill staff have covered these additional needs. As part of the Commission discussion staff will present information about these maintenance requirements.

The proposal to be received by the Commission includes applying for grant funds to pay for the plant media. At this time staff are unclear what obligations come from the grant funds, and if a private entity can receive the grant funds or whether the Town must sign the grant agreement and/or be a conduit for the funds. Staff recommend that the Town's commitment be discussed during consideration of this topic. If the Town must be a signatory to the grant application or the grant itself then the Commission can make a recommendation to Town Council regarding the grant. Please note that neither the Commission nor the staff can commit to the Town to a grant agreement.

Attachment 1 is a presentation from the volunteer group regarding the proposed grant and associate planting plan.

Attachments:

1. Creating a Pollinator Garden in Blossom Hill Park

PREPARED BY: Nicolle Burnham
Parks and Public Works Director

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Attachment 1



Creating a Pollinator Garden in Blossom Hill Park



Why Plant Natives?

1. Native plants provide vital food and habitat for pollinators and birds.
2. They are drought adapted and need less water.
3. Natives also tend to have longer roots that filter and clean water, reducing pollution,
4. Native plants thrive when left alone. They need less maintenance than introduced garden plants.
5. Native plants restore soil health which contributes to climate resilience.
6. Native plants resist pests naturally.
7. Native plants support the rich biodiversity of the Bay Area.

Xerces Garden Kits

Xerces is an International non-profit working to protect invertebrates including bees and butterflies.

Once a year, Xerces provides free kits to plant native garden spaces. These kits are tailored for the location of the garden and are intended to increase the amount of invertebrate habitat.



Kit for Our Area

Garden - Central Coast

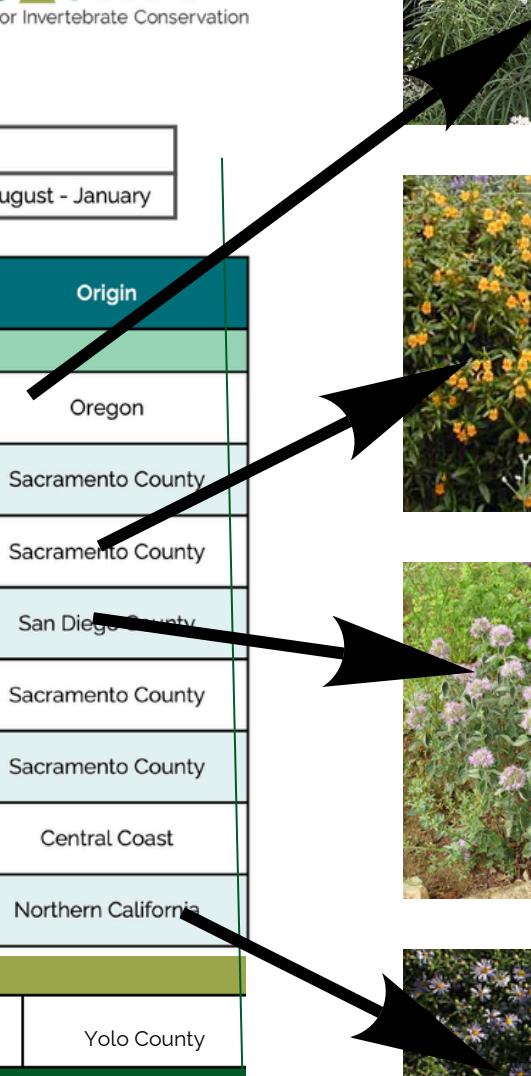
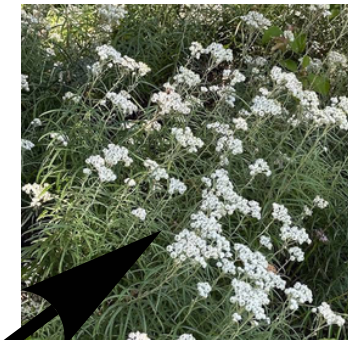


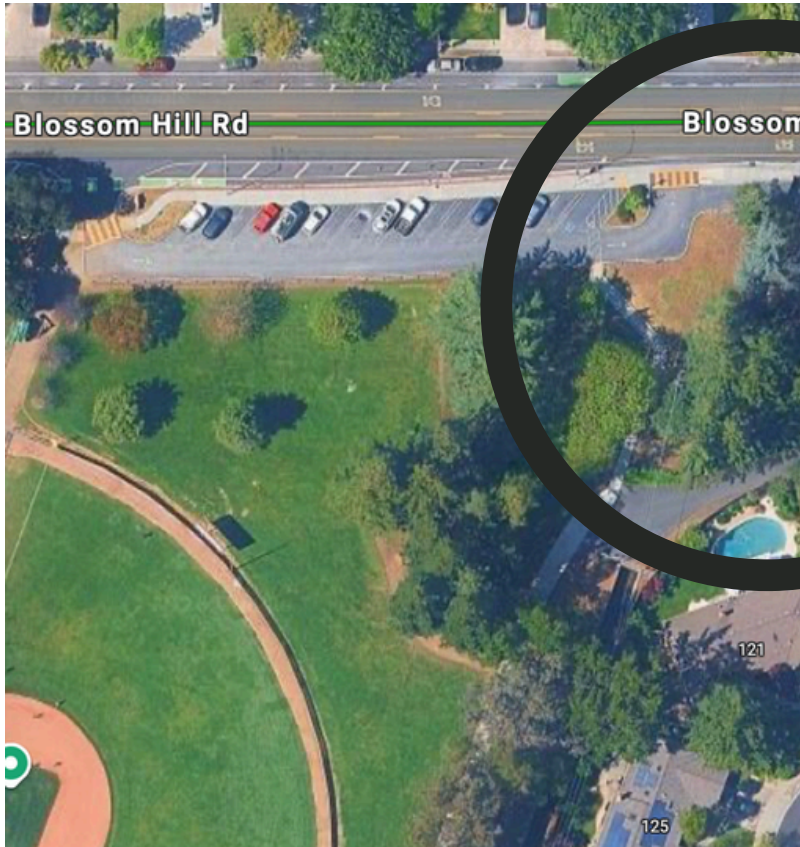
Benefited Pollinators			
Monarch Butterfly	Other declining butterfly	Bumble bee	Specialist / bee of concern

Water Needs		
L = Low	M = Medium	H = High

Bloom Time		
Early: February - April	Mid: May - July	Late: August - January

Scientific Name	Common Name	Number	Bloom Time	Sun Exposure	Water Needs	Size (H x W)	Benefited Pollinators	Origin
Form: Forb								
<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i>	Pearly everlasting	3	Mid/Late	Full Sun - Partial Shade	L	3' x 3'		Oregon
<i>Asclepias fascicularis</i>	Narrowleaf milkweed	9	Mid	Full Sun - Partial Shade	L - H	2' x 1'		Sacramento County
<i>Diplacus aurantiacus</i>	Sticky monkeyflower	3	Early through Late	Full Sun - Partial Shade	L	4' x 4'		Sacramento County
<i>Monardella villosa</i>	Coyote mint	3	Mid/Late	Full Sun - Partial Shade	M	2' x 3'		San Diego County
<i>Penstemon heterophyllus</i>	Foothill penstemon	3	Early through Mid	Full Sun - Partial Shade	L	3' x 3'		Sacramento County
<i>Phacelia californica</i>	California phacelia	3	Early through Late	Full Sun - Partial Shade	L	1' x 1'		Sacramento County
<i>Solidago velutina ssp. californica</i>	California goldenrod	3	Late	Full Sun	L - M	3' x 6'		Central Coast
<i>Symphotrichum chilense</i>	Pacific aster	3	Late	Full Sun - Partial Shade	L - H	2' x 3'		Northern California
Form: Grass								
<i>Stipa pulchra</i>	Purple needlegrass	3	N/A	Full Sun	L	3' x 2'		Yolo County
Form: Shrub								
<i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i>	California buckwheat	3	Early through Late	Full Sun - Partial Shade	L	3' x 3'		Sacramento County
Total		36						





We are looking at this area on Blossom Hill Road next to the parking lot and between the path and the edge of the park. Currently the area is covered in bark mulch.

Blossom Hill Park



View from sidewalk on BH Rd. When facing the park, the area is on your left.



View from under redwoods looking towards BH Road

Oak Hill Play Lot



Bill Broad started this garden in Fall 2024. He did the initial work himself, but quickly had other volunteers interested in helping. The garden is starting to fill in and already looks amazing! Bill will lead the Blossom Hill effort as well

Before



Early days



Now



Los Gatos Almaden Pollinator Garden



Los Gatos Almaden Pollinator Garden along Los Gatos Almaden Road is another resident maintained native garden.

Both existing gardens have a positive working relationship with the town.

Plan Timeline

- Xerces proposal due April 10, 2026
- Selections made in May - If not selected, hope to have sufficient donations to fund plant purchase
- Sept/early October - site preparation
- Plants arrive October 21
- October - Planting
- Until Rains Start - Watering the new plants
- Spring 2027 - Weeding and garden maintenance

Plants begin to grow and flower!

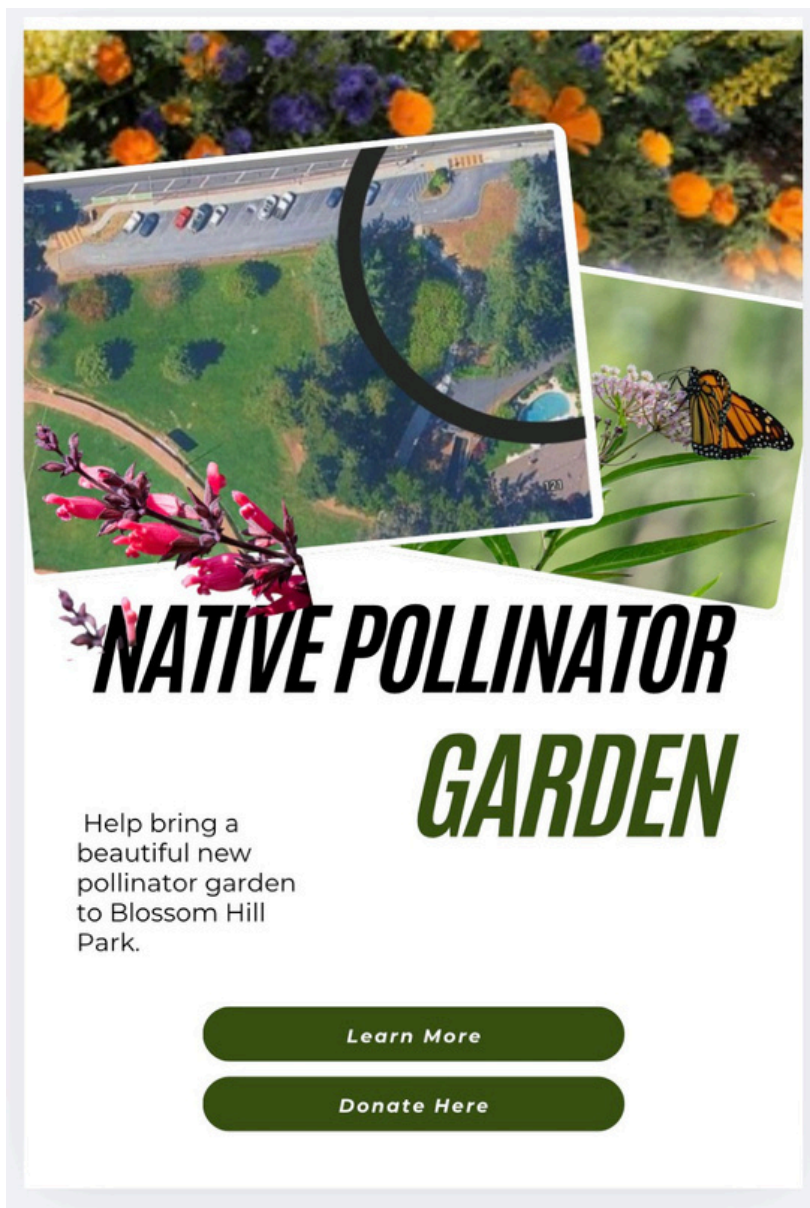
- Summer 2027 - regular watering
- Fall 2027 - ongoing maintenance, planting round 2
- Spring 2028 -

Garden starts to fill in

Town Park's Team Input (by October)

- Hopefully the town can install a quick-access valve or hose bib at one of 6 different boxes labelled water or irrigation near the garden location. Existing quick-access is far from the garden and inconvenient considering that hand watering will be required. Most natives will need supplemental water until they get established. Continued minimal watering keeps native more attractive in the park setting.
- Hopefully the town can provide as-needed mulch to the area to keep weeds to a minimum.
- Avoid pesticide usage near the pollinator garden.

Project Publicity



- Would like to create a poster about the project to display at Spring into Green. (draft idea on left)
- Would like to collect email addresses from people interested in helping either physically or financially
- Would like to create sign to display in Park with QR Codes to collect additional emails