



Girl Scout Gold Award | Project Proposal

Your Name: Ellie Meakin

NOTE: BEFORE COMPLETING THIS FORM, CHECK WITH YOUR COUNCIL TO DETERMINE IF THEY REQUIRE GOLD AWARD TRAINING AND/OR ONLY ACCEPT APPLICATIONS ONLINE. IF YOUR APPLICATION MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE, PLEASE GO TO: [HTTPS://GOGOLD.GIRLSCOUTS.ORG](https://gogold.girlscouts.org).

Prior to starting your project, submit this proposal to:

Council Name: Central Texas

Street Address: 12012 Park 35 Circle

City: Austin

State: TX

Zip Code: 78753

Email: MyGoldAward@gsctx.org

Phone: (512)453-7391

NOTE: BE SURE TO SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL BY THE DATE ESTABLISHED BY YOUR COUNCIL

Your Name: Ellie Meakin

Country: United States

Street Address: 310 Nixon Dr.

City: Austin

State: TX

Zip Code: 78746

Email: em89349@eanesisd.net

Phone: (512)217-1399

Age: 17

Grad Year: 2026

School: Westlake High School

Troop/Group Number: 844

Troop/Group Volunteer: Carolyn Meakin

Troop/Group Volunteer's Phone: (512)663-7132

Email: oliveme10@yahoo.com

Girl Scout Gold Award Project Advisor: Erin Cord

Project Advisor's Organization: Bat Conservation International

Project Advisor's Phone: (512)327-9721

Email: ecord@batcon.org



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Prerequisites: You must have either completed A) the Girl Scout Silver Award and one Senior or Ambassador Journey, or B) two Journeys. Please list the prerequisites you completed below and obtain your troop/group volunteer's signature.

| Senior/Ambassador Journey | Date Completed | Troop/Group Leader Approval Date |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Mission Sisterhood (English) | 3/2023 | <i>Carolyn Meakin</i> 8/12/2024 |

| | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Girl Scout Silver Award Completion Date | 6/1/2022 |
| Council Where You Earned The Award | Central Texas |
| Troop/Group Leader Approval Date | <i>Carolyn Meakin</i> 8/12/2024 |

Your Team: List the names of individuals and organizations you plan to work with on your Gold Award project. This is a preliminary list that may grow over the course of your project.

| Individual (if applicable) | Organization | How my team will help |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Mindy Vesscovo | Austin Bat enthusiast | Consult - Information/education |
| Carolyn Meakin | Family | Plot installation/social media campaign |
| Christopher Meakin | Family | Plot installation, purchasing consult |
| Evie Ching | Girl Scouts | Garden implementation & co-shopper |
| Emily Smith | Girl Scouts | Garden implementation - dig-out and prep |
| Paisley Mathis | Girl Scouts | Garden implementation - sod prep & rocks |

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|---------------------|---|---|
| Vivy Stillman | Girl Scouts | Garden implementation - planting & fertilizer |
| Violet Martin Baker | Girl Scouts | Garden implementation - watering and weeding |
| Andrea Sparks | Rollingwood Educational Garden | Implement online education campaigns |
| Kelly Menking | Girl Scouts of Westlake - Quartermaster | Oversee garden badge program for Service Unit |
| Molly Llama | Master Gardener | Garden |

Proposed Project Description

Gold Award Title: Bat Habitat Community Education

Proposed Start Date: 4/30/2025

Proposed Completion Date: 4/1/2026

The theme(s) my Gold Award will address is/are:

- ☒ Animals
- ☒ Environment & Sustainability
- ☒ Outdoors

My Gold Award aims to address this issue:

My Gold Award project will address the issue of decreasing native bat populations in Austin and around the country.

According to the National Parks Service (nps.gov) bats face a variety of different threats in many areas across the country. The devastating disease called white-nose syndrome, windmill turbines, habitat loss, and climate change have caused large numbers of bats to die. The number of safe places for bats to live and forage for food is decreasing.

What can we do? Improving bat habitats is essential for their survival. My Gold Award partner, Bat Conservation International suggests there are many steps people can take to help improve bat habitats:

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build appropriate bat houses for roosting, preserve natural habitats, reduce light pollution, avoid pesticides, plant native plants to encourage insects to breed (which is a vital food source for many bat species) and lastly educate the community.

For my Gold project, I've decided to focus on the issue to improving the rapidly decreasing food sources available to bats which causes the decrease of bat populations.

The reason I selected my issue are:

Bats are an integral part of the Austin ecological landscape.

Through research, I have learned that bats need abundant food sources to survive and re-populate.

I've been interested in learning more about bats after living in Austin my whole life.

Root Cause**The root cause of my issue is:**

As mentioned before, according to the National Parks Service (nps.gov) bats face a variety of different threats such as the devastating white-nose syndrome disease, windmill turbines, habitat loss and climate change all of which lead to declining bat populations across the world.

Specifically in Austin, the issue of urbanization makes it harder for bats to find shelter and food and as a result their numbers are declining. As our city grows the opportunity to feed in safe green spaces that are attractive to bugs that bats eat decline. Bats mainly eat winged bugs, which not all garden plants attract, so its important for us to build safe green spaces and plant the right plant varieties to help improve the food supply thus helping the bat population to increase.

Declining bat populations are a significant corner, yet community awareness about this issue often falls short. Educating the community about the importance of having a reliable food source for bats can help inspire people to build their own bat garden.

The overall goal of this project is to improve the environment for bats and the Austin Community who I need to reach to improve their knowledge and attitudes surrounding bats and what they can do to help our community.

I will address the root cause by:

First, I plan on developing educational campaigns that will increase my communities awareness of the

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struggles bats face in our area due to decreasing food supplies and offer information about how they can help.

1. At Rollingwood community events such as the yearly Rollingwood 5k, Easter Egg Hunt and 4th of July park celebrations (and more) I will host a table and provide information regarding how bat gardens can help bats survive as well as how they benefit our environment. I'll point them to where the garden is or will be planted and encourage them to take a look or request their help in volunteering to help support the Rollingwood Education Garden.
2. The Rollingwood Educational Garden has agreed to provide funding for signage around the bat garden. The signage will include a QR code that takes visitors to a survey and feedback form. Over time the number of completed surveys can give insights into visitor counts. The survey can also direct visitors to Bat Conservation International's web page about importance of bat gardens and how to build bat gardens in their own back yard.
3. I will create an Instagram and NextDoor page that will promote the bat garden to members of the community as well as educate how people could potentially plant their own bat garden in their backyard. Links to Bat Conservation International's website for their newsletters and community events will also be made available. The Rollingwood Facebook page will be updated to include similar posts to reach the Rollingwood audience.
4. A bat patch program will be utilized to encourage younger scouts to learn more about native bats in Austin and what they can do to help the bats.

Addressing root cause is continued on document uploaded...

Target Audience

The target audience(s) for my Gold Award project is/are:

Area Girl Scouts who are looking to learn more about bats and our ecosystems

Austin Community. More specifically, the residents of Rollingwood, TX where my bat garden will live

The skills, knowledge, and/or attitudes my target audience will gain are:

Bats will thrive with the food provided by gardens we implement ensuring their future is safe

Bats are important part of the ecology of Austin and can have positive impact on our environment

How to create a bat garden in their own backyard, as well as how to care for the garden over time.

I will know that my audience has gained the desired skills/knowledge because:

My project will include an educational component that will allow the community to join me to visit the

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garden (or go on their own) and learn about the positive impact of bats living in our environment. The goal is to teach people why we should be concerned about the decreasing bat population and what it means to our community to increase our bat population.

I know that my audience has gained the desired skills and knowledge because I will include a survey during community garden tours to assist with the measurement of their understanding as well as for program improvement. During community events, we will survey those who join the garden tour. We will include a QR code on signage that visitors can use to access more information and stop them with a link to a survey.

Lastly, I will announce the garden on Instagram and Next Door providing information about both the garden as well as links to Bat Conversation International's web page for educational purposes. There too can be a survey "tell us what you think" plus a counter of likes and comments.

Proposed Impact-National and/or Global Link

My Gold Awards's national and/or global link is:

According to Bat Conservation International's web site, bats are an unlikely hero with global impact. With over 1,400 species, bats are the 2nd largest order of mammals and are widely dispersed across 6 continents. Globally, bats provide vital ecosystem services in the form of insect pest consumption, plant pollination and seed dispersal, making them essential to the health of the global ecosystems.

I believe if we all do a small act like building a bat garden, together we can contribute to maintaining healthy ecosystems, which will have a ripple effect on a larger scale.

Proposed Impact-Measurable Goals

Measurement of my project's success:

| What my audience will learn/gain | How I will measure impact | When I will measure impact |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| They will learn the importance of keeping a reliable food source for the bats | Survey | At the end of the community garden tour and activity |
| The scouts will learn the importance of bats to our community | Number of patches awarded | At the end of my project and then yearly by the service unit. |

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|---|--|---|
| Education about the importance of bats in our community via Instagram | Followers/interactions with posts | Throughout project |
| How to make a garden in their own backyard | Views on YouTube video linked from QR Code at garden sign | Throughout project |
| Visits to the garden | QR code on signage (not allowed: cameras, mobile tracking, motion sensors or drones) | Throughout my project then ongoing by Rollingwood Com Gardens |

My Gold Award project goals are:

My Gold Award project goals are:

1. To ensure a safe and reliable food source for the Austin bat community through the build of a bat garden to the recommended specifications provided by Bat Conservation International. Once the Rollingwood Community Garden has approved my garden I will be complete with that portion of the project **Completion Date April 15, 2026**
2. Community education - Events. I plan on participating in City of Rollingwood community events where citizens can join me to observe the bat garden and discuss the purpose of the garden and how they to can start their own garden or volunteer to maintain mine. I will provide hard copy surveys to participants and also ask them to sign up to volunteer - **completion date between May 2025 - June 2026**
3. Community education - Social Media. I will introduce / announce to my community the opening of the new bat garden in Rollingwood Park inviting them to come and admire and learn more about the benefits of gardening for bats. I will measure interest through the interactions (likes & comments) left by community members. I will partner with Rollingwood Education Garden to ensure their Facebook page includes information about the new garden, how to build a similar garden and upcoming events promoting the garden. I will also develop both Next Door and Instagram posts that introduce the community to the project and continually post updates, share pictures & videos as well as educational articles regarding bats. **Completion Date - April 2026**
4. Implementation of a bat patch program for young Girl Scouts. I will provide the Westlake Service Unit the programming and initial patches along with a fun survey girls can fill out at the end of the patch program. **Completion Date - May 2026**

Proposed Impact-Sustainability

Your Name: Ellie Meakin**My Gold Award will be sustained beyond my involvement by:****Sustaining the Educational Programs**

-Rollingwood Events - I will provide the Rollingwood Education Garden with brochures, photos, bat garden instructions and signage (also available through QR codes) to share at all community events to help spread the idea of bat conservation.

-Bat garden signage - Implement a permanent sign in the garden containing a QR code leading visitors to Bat Conservation International's Web pages about bats and the benefit of inviting bats to your yard and gardens.

-Social media - I will turn-over the social media plans to Rollingwood Education Garden so they can continue to promote the bat garden to our communities.

-Girl Scout patch program will be sustainable through the work of the Westlake Service Unit's Outdoor Quartermaster who will provide the bat patch program ongoing for all young scouts for years to come.

Sustaining The Garden

My plan for maintaining the bat garden and education programs after implementation involves a partnership with the City of Rollingwood's Community Education Garden. The Rollingwood Community Garden has been place for over 10 years and provides resources, tools, water and volunteers who maintain and care several garden plots. My bat garden will be added to this Community Garden in the coming months.

It also requires me to share several key practices involved in bat garden maintenance. These practices are recommended by Bat Conservation International, my advisor, and they are below:

1. Regular Monitoring: **Inspect** the garden periodically. Check for signs of wear, damage, or overgrowth.
2. **Monitor** bat activity—observe roosting, feeding, and flight patterns.
3. Habitat Maintenance: **Prune** plants as needed to maintain roosting spaces and clear flight paths.
4. **Replace** dead or diseased plants promptly.
5. Water Sources: Ensure **consistent water availability** for both plants and bats.
6. **Clean and refill** water source.
7. Insect-Friendly Plants: **Plant native species** that attract insects. Bats rely on these insects for food.
Avoid pesti

Create Your Plan**I will put my plan into action by:**

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| Date | Activity | Teammate(s) Needed | Resources Needed | Hours of Work |
|-----------|---|---|--|---------------|
| 3/1/2024 | Research Issue | Erin Cord, Bat Conservation International | Computer, in person meeting | 3.00 |
| 4/1/2024 | Research Solutions | Erin Cord, Bat Conservation International | In person meeting. Online resources to investigate | 3.00 |
| 5/1/2024 | Discuss with Rollingwood Education Garden | Andrea Sparks | Phone & in-person meeting | 2.00 |
| 5/1/2024 | Discuss Garden needs | Garden Managers at various locations | Phone, in person meetings | 2.00 |
| 10/1/2024 | Work on Proposal | None | Computer | 4.00 |
| 4/1/2025 | Edit Proposal | None | None | 3.00 |
| 5/1/2025 | Develop Materials for Educational Components | Volunteers - Erin Cord (BCI) | Educational materials | 6.00 |
| 5/1/2025 | Garden Design - work with designer | Molly Llama | Garden Design Software | 2.00 |
| 6/1/2025 | Plan Bat Patch Program w/ SU | Westlake SU Quartermaster | NA | 3.00 |
| 6/1/2025 | Survey Development | NA | Computer | 2.00 |
| 6/1/2025 | Develop Garden Sustainability Plan | Eric Cord | Computer | 2.00 |
| 7/1/2025 | Lead education posts via Rollingwood Community garden FB page | Andrea Sparks | None | 3.00 |
| 7/1/2025 | Raising Money | None | None | 4.00 |

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| 7/1/2025 | Implementation - Community Event Planning | Rollingwood Women's Club | NA | 5.00 |
| 2/1/2026 | Implementation - Garden Supplies Procurement | Evie Ching and Christopher Meakin | Truck | 3.00 |
| 2/1/2026 | Implementation - Garden Preparation | Molly Llama, Carolyn Meakin, Paisley Mathis and Emily Smith | Garden tools (provided by Rollingwood Education Garden) | 4.00 |
| 2/1/2026 | Organization of volunteers - volunteer project plan | All | Computer, timelines, responsibility list | 4.00 |
| 3/1/2026 | Implementation - Planting | Vivy Stilman, Violet Martin-Baker, Carolyn Meakin | Garden tools | 5.00 |
| 3/1/2026 | Implementation - Initial Maintenance | Andrea Sparks and Carolyn Meakin | Garden tools | 5.00 |
| 3/1/2026 | Educational Videos | Carolyn Meakin/ Andrea Sparks | Camera | 5.00 |
| 4/1/2026 | Measure Community Engagement at Events | Erin Cord, Andrea Sparks | None | 2.00 |
| 4/1/2026 | Bat Patch Program transfer to service unit leaders | Kelly Menking | None | 3.00 |

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| 4/1/2026 | Bat Garden sustainability plan transfer to Rollingwood, | Andrea Sparks | None | 2.00 |
| 4/1/2026 | Social Media Announcements and education (ongoing throughout project) | Andrea Sparks | Phone, computer | 5.00 |
| 4/1/2026 | Measure Social Media Engagement | Andrea Sparks | None | 3.00 |
| 4/1/2026 | Implement badge patch program with Girl Scouts | SU Quarter Master | Badges | 4.00 |
| 4/1/2026 | Survey measurement analysis | Andrea Sparks | Computer | 2.00 |
| 4/1/2026 | Educating Community via neighborhood events (4 events) - over several months | Erin Cord/ Evie Ching/ Vivy Stillman | None | 8.00 |

Total Hours: 99.00

Estimate your project expenses and how you plan to meet those costs (e.g., donations, cookie proceeds, money-earning project):

| Item | Source of Funding | Amount |
|-----------|-------------------|----------|
| Plants | Donations | \$200.00 |
| Plants | Donations | \$200.00 |
| Plants | Donations | \$200.00 |
| bat patch | Donations | \$75.00 |
| Mulch | Donations | \$0.00 |

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| Sign | Donations | \$45.00 |
| Tools | Donations | \$0.00 |
| Paint | Donations | \$0.00 |
| Shading | Donations | \$90.00 |
| Rock Edge | Donations | \$55.00 |
| Soil | Donations | \$100.00 |

Total Expenses: \$965.00

The strengths, talents and skills I currently have and will put into action are:

- ☒ Innovation
- ☒ Empathy
- ☒ Project Management
- ☒ Budgeting
- ☒ Confidence
- ☒ Community Building
- ☒ Problem Solving
- ☒ Implementation
- ☒ Character

The skills I plan to develop as I work towards earning my Gold Award are:

Time Management: learning to work within deadlines and other priorities



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Organization: learning to work with many different organizations/people

Patience: learning to understand and work within others people schedules

Communication: learning to reach out whenever needed with proper communication styles.

Leadership: learning to create a group and have to direct them

Goal Setting: learning to set small steps to reach big goals.

Tell the World!

I will let others know about my Gold Award (the impact of my project, what the Gold Award is, and what I learned in earning it) by promoting via :

Note: This is NOT about your Gold Award's sustainability.

☒ Website

☒ Social Media

☒ Articles

☒ Public Demonstrations

Project Advisor Name: Erin Cord

Date of Validation: 8/12/2024

Date of Proposal Submission: 4/23/2025