

RESOLUTION NO. 20150514-004

WHEREAS, a core principle of the *Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan* is the integration of nature into the city; and

WHEREAS, Austin residents have embraced the value of a healthy, environmentally friendly city, borne out by the National Wildlife Federation's recent recognition of Austin as the top-ranked city for wildlife in the country; and

WHEREAS, Austin has long been a stop for the North American monarch butterfly on its legendary migratory path of thousands of miles over several generations to and from Mexico each year, with Texas serving as one of the most important spring and fall habitat areas for the species; and

WHEREAS, the monarch butterfly became the State Insect of Texas by a 1995 resolution adopted by the Texas Legislature; and

WHEREAS, scientific studies point to the rapid decline of the monarch butterfly due to the loss of milkweed habitat needed to lay their eggs and for their caterpillars to eat, resulting from development, land management practices, and chemically-aided agriculture in the United States and Canada; and

WHEREAS, because the decimation of pollinators, including the North American monarch, which serves as an iconic species, has potential negative consequences for natural ecosystems as well as for human food production, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently studying the species to determine if it should be listed under the Endangered Species Act; and

WHEREAS, on a national level and in Austin, the National Wildlife Federation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has undertaken efforts to

reinvigorate milkweed and other nectar-producing plants to help restore monarch habitat in open spaces and suburban and urban gardens; and

WHEREAS, because there are many different species of milkweed in the U.S., it is important to recognize that only native milkweed is vital to the restoration and survival of the monarch habitat in Texas; and

WHEREAS, the National Wildlife Federation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are encouraging communities up and down I-35 to plant native milkweed where appropriate and valuable nectar plants; **NOW, THEREFORE,**

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:

The City Manager is directed to collaborate with the local offices of the National Wildlife Federation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and initiate a process for incorporating the cultivation of native milkweed where feasible into the city's landscape portfolio at Austin City Hall, city-owned buildings and properties, as well as the city's vast preserve lands, parks, and open spaces.

ADOPTED: May 14, 2015

ATTEST: 

Jannette S. Goodall
City Clerk