



# ROWLETT BEE CITY USA 2022 REPORT

## **Reconnecting with Nature**

**By: The City of Rowlett Neighborhood Planning & Keep Rowlett Beautiful**

## Contents

City of Rowlett.....	3
Rowlett Neighborhood Planning.....	3
Keep Rowlett Beautiful.....	3
Vision & Mission.....	4
Policies and Practices.....	6
Education & Outreach.....	8
Enhancing Pollinator Health & Habitat.....	16
Closing Statement.....	19

## City of Rowlett

Rowlett is home to approximately 70,000 residents and is nestled on the shores of Lake Ray Hubbard in far east Dallas County and a portion of west Rockwall County. Just 20 minutes east of downtown Dallas, Rowlett rests on two peninsulas reaching out into Lake Ray Hubbard with more than 30 miles of shoreline. The community offers a relax, kick back environment where one can enjoy the sun set on the shimmering waters of the lake, kayak from Scenic Point Park, picnic with the family, or participate in any number of water sports. This makes our city one of only a handful of communities in the region that can offer that type of lakeside living.

Our citizens enjoy all the amenities a close-knit community can offer. In Rowlett, you will find award-winning schools, affordable homes, top quality health care, an outstanding regional hospital, beautiful lakeside parks, a variety of community entertainment with special events and much more.

Lately Rowlett has become a prime location for new development. The addition of the President George Bush Turnpike and the DART Blue Line light rail to Rowlett serve as the economic engines that bring visitors and major development directly to the heart of the city.

## Rowlett Neighborhood Planning

The Rowlett Neighborhood Planning Program was established in 2020 to integrate the established short-term neighborhood programming into long range urban planning. The program's overall mission is to strengthen neighborhood livability and increase community cohesion through the proactive management of Rowlett's housing stock, culture, and history. Its existence is meant to promote sustained human flourishing, environmental and economic resiliency through innovative urban planning, intentional programming, and productive fun for all.

The Neighborhood Planning Program is housed under the Community Development Department designated to be the Bee City USA sponsor per Resolution 067-21 of the City Council. The Neighborhood Planning Supervisor was designated as the Bee City USA Liaison.

## Keep Rowlett Beautiful

Keep Rowlett Beautiful (KRB), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit service organization was established in 1996 to preserve Rowlett's quality of life. The organization is governed by a volunteer board of directors. KRB is an affiliate of Keep Texas Beautiful and Keep America Beautiful. KRB participates in projects and programs with both organizations.

Keep Rowlett Beautiful was assigned by the Rowlett City Council to serve as the committee to whom on the city's behalf is authorized to perform the activities stipulated on Resolution 067-21 of the City Council of the City of Rowlett, Texas.

# Vision & Mission

## Vision

To become a leader in creating and conserving sustainable healthy habitats through citizens and stakeholders' collaboration.

## Mission

To build thriving and healthy pollinator friendly environments and open spaces that connect residents with nature.

## Benefits

- ▶ To protect pollinators and the life that supports our ecosystem.
- ▶ To ensure the safety of our food chain.
- ▶ For the preservation of our soil and waterways by leaving contaminants such as pesticides out of these systems.
- ▶ To help sustain a healthy local and regional economy.
- ▶ To bring together our community for a common cause that truly makes a positive impact.
- ▶ For future generations to continue to enjoy the benefits and beauty of nature.

*"We are leaders and advocates for the worldwide initiative that cares for and helps preserve habitats for all pollinators." Lilyana Morejon, Rowlett Neighborhood Planner*

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## Policies and Practices

1. Are efforts underway in your community to further reduce pesticide use in residential or business areas? This may include neighborhood-led efforts, outreach to landscapers, etc. If so, please describe.
  - a. The City of Rowlett incorporates multiple practices to help minimize potential negative environmental and human impact from pesticide exposure, while providing effective pest control management. Our approach consists of no mowing of protected areas until the appropriate time of the season (i.e inactive growth). Education of internal staff and the public via signage/ad campaign. When feasible it is highly recommended to use organic herbicide/insecticide when in proximity to pollinator gardens. As a city, we commit to more of a targeted approach when it comes to the treatment of pests and weeds, chemical intervention is a last-course resolution. Per Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) policy applications will be performed when windspeeds are 10 mph or less, which will help further lower the chance of particle drift entering the waterways or undesired locations. Interdepartmental discussions are occurring to ensure consistency across all city departments.
  - b. New Development: The Neighborhood Planning team makes comments during the development review process suggesting to developers of new projects to consider adding pollinator habitats to their projects.
2. Please describe actions by your affiliate to attend training on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management and/or to review IPM plans and programs considered of high quality by Bee City USA?
  - a. A handfull of the Rowlett Parks & Recreation staff members currently hold a non-commercial political pesticide applicator license . To maintain current non-commercial political pesticide applicator licensing they must obtain (5) CEU's a year. The training topics range from pesticide factors, safety, laws, regulations, and IPM.



*“As a city, we commit to more of a targeted approach when it comes to the treatment of pests and weeds, chemical intervention is a last-course resolution.”*

- b. The Parks & Recreation Department is working on having general staff training related to Integrated Pest Management knowledge and other educational materials to help staff understand pest management control practices.

**3. Do you consider yourself a model for other affiliates? Are you available to teach and mentor other affiliates?**

- a. The City of Rowlett is able to mentor other affiliates on community education and outreach. We can share the tools and techniques that have worked for us in our city and that we feel confident can work in any community willing to learn more about building pollinator friendly habitats. We can guide a leadership group on standard practices necessary to build strong stakeholder connections and establish effective communication outlets that can assist in getting the information out to residents. Lastly we can advise on methods that are impactful that support and sustain citywide pollinator friendly programs and initiatives.



# Education & Outreach

## 1. How many pollinator-related events did you host or help with last year (in total)?

a. The City of Rowlett had several pollinator related events throughout the 2021- 2022 calendar year.

I. **Earth Day** – Hosted by Keep Rowlett Beautiful

- Earth Day is an annual celebration that honors the achievements of the environmental movement and raises awareness of the need to protect Earth’s natural resources for future generations. In April 2022 Keep Rowlett Beautiful hosted the first annual city Earth Day event which brought over 30 vendors, partners, and educational institutions to share with our community awareness on environmental issues that affect us all today.

II. **Designing a Habitat for Pollinators Workshop at the 2021 Tri- City Neighborhood Summit** – Hosted by the City of Plano, Garland, and Rowlett.

- The workshop explored how collaborative neighborhood efforts like designing and building pollinator gardens sustain ecological communities. This interactive workshop was taught by Texas Master Naturalist and Master Gardener Cindy Ling, a member of the environmental non-profit Keep Rowlett Beautiful (KRB).



Graphic 2. “Designing a Habitat for Pollinators” workshop presented by Texas Master Naturalist and Master Gardener Cindy Ling, at the 2021 Annual Tri-City Neighborhood Summit.

III. **Schrade Bluebonnet Park Pollinator Garden Ribbon Cutting Ceremony** – Hosted by Neighborhood Planning and The Rowlett Parks and Recreation Department.

- The ribbon cutting ceremony at Schrade Blueblubonnet Park had two main objectives. First, we looked to celebrate the first official City owned and maintained pollinator garden. Second



to build awareness on the importance of creating pollinator friendly habitats around open space/urban areas.

**2. How many people attended those events (in total)?**

- a. The city had over 600 + participants attend events related to pollinator education and outreach.
  - I. Earth Day > **500 + attendees**
  - II. Schrade Bluebonnet Park Pollinator Garden Ribbon Cutting Ceremony > **40 attendees**
  - III. Fall 2021 Tri – City Neighborhood Summit > **103 participants**

**3. How many Bee City USA logo street signs have you installed to date (in total)?**

- a. The city placed two Bee City signs, both posted at a high traffic high visibility area. One is located on a major thoroughfare, Lakeview Parkway (Antioch Dr/Lakeview PKWY intersection). The second sign is located near the Rowlett’s Recreation Center, 5300 Main Street. The sign is fronting a pollinator garden maintained by the local environmental non-profit organization Keep Rowlett Beautiful (KRB).



*Graphic 3. Sign location at Antioch Dr/Lakeview PRWY.*



*Graphic 4. Sign location near the Rowlett’s Recreation Center at the pollinator garden near the historic Coyle House.*

4. Did your city council/county commission (highest elected body) issue a proclamation for National Pollinator Week last summer?

- a. We did not do a proclamation for National Pollinator Week. However, we did have a ribbon cutting ceremony at Schrade Bluebonnet Park to celebrate the first city owned and maintained pollinator garden. Members of our City Council and City Staff attended to share this historic moment for the city.

5. Please describe pollinator conservation event(s) in your community last year, whether your committee hosted them or not, but indicating which of the events your committee hosted.

- a. **Ribbon Cutting Event at Schrade Blue Bonnet Park** – Hosted by Rowlett Neighborhood Planning and Rowlett Parks and Recreation.

- I. Around 40 members from the community, City Staff and City Council officials joined the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to celebrate this first official city-owned and maintained pollinator garden. The creation of the pollinator garden and the events that led to this special day was possible because of a shared effort between the Rowlett Parks and Recreation Department, Neighborhood Planning and KRB.

- b. **2021 Annual Tri City Neighborhood Summit ( Designing a Habitat for Pollinators Workshop)**- Hosted by the City of Rowlett, Plano and Garland.

- I. The workshop explored how collaborative neighborhood efforts like designing and building pollinator gardens sustain ecological communities. This interactive workshop was taught by a Texas Master Naturalist and Texas Master Gardener Cindy Ling a Member of the environmental non-profit Keep Rowlett Beautiful.

	STRENGTH	LIVABILITY	NEIGHBORHOODS	WORKSHOPS	TIME
WELCOMING REMARKS					8:30 - 9:00 AM
WHO LIVES NEXT DOOR? HOUSING DIVERSITY			MAKING NEIGHBORHOODS LIVABLE FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES	THE POWER OF GRATITUDE	9:00 - 9:40 AM
SMARTER, STRONGER, HEALTHIER, HAPPIER: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE RECONNECT WITH NATURE	POSITIONING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD FOR SUCCESS (MIDDLE NEIGHBORHOODS)		ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS: PETS AND WILDLIFE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD	DESIGNING A HABITAT FOR POLLINATORS	9:45 - 10:25 AM
KEYNOTE SPEAKER: STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABILITY					10:35 - 11:15 AM
INCLUSIVE ORGANIZING IN NEIGHBORHOODS	WHEN DISASTER STRIKES	NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES	EMPOWERING YOUTH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT		11:30 AM - 12:10 PM
EXTRAS!					
11:15 - 11:30 AM					
ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AWARDS					
12:30 PM- END					
TAKE THE SUMMIT SURVEY & ENTER FOR A CHANCE TO WIN PRIZES!					

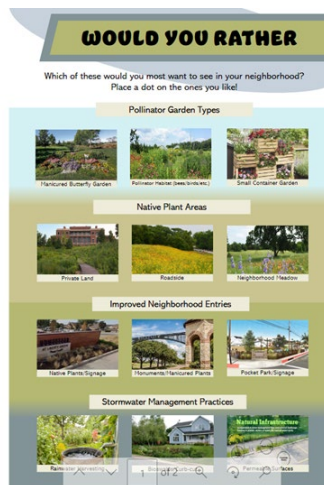
Graphic 5. 2021 Neighborhood Summit Schedule



Graphic 6. Texas Master Naturalist and Texas Master Gardener Cindy Ling presenting to a virtual audience the important role of pollinators in our ecosystem.

c. **2022 Earth Day Celebration** - Hosted by Keep Rowlett Beautiful

- I. Earth Day was an opportunity to promote all the environmentally friendly initiatives that the city has been working on throughout the year. At the event the Neighborhood Planning team had a visual preference survey for attendees. Out of 153 survey takers the top three most wanted types of natural areas were pollinators habitats (24), neighborhood meadow native plants (22), and rainwater harvesting (22).



Graphic 7. Visual preference survey distributed during earth day.



Graphics 8. Staff and exhibitors during Earth.

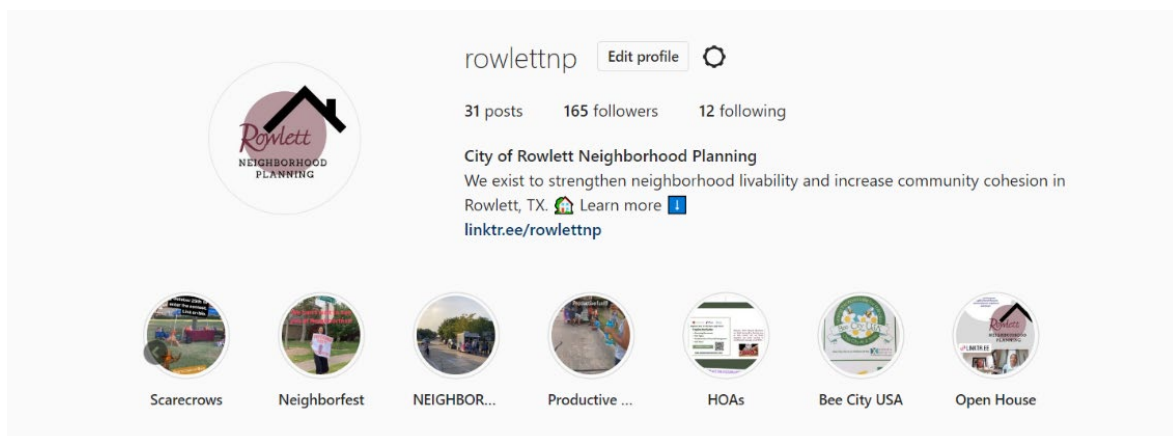
- d. **Spirit of Rowlett Program** - Hosted by the City of Rowlett Neighborhood Planning team.
- I. During the springtime the Neighborhood Planning team recognized a mother and son duo for their extraordinary efforts in building pollinator friendly habitats. Michelle and Brandon Clark have been gardening for about four years. Their home garden which includes front flower beds, tree beds, raised and elevated beds, lots of fruit and flowering trees, containers and window boxes are pesticide and herbicide free. They use companion planting, nature's pest control (bugs, birds, lizards) and other organic options to try to keep garden optimal. They have minimal pest/weed control and to the areas that need application they don't service when pollinators are abundant. They hand pull weeds in high pollinator areas and plant certain weeds for the butterflies, bees, and other insects. They have sacrificial plants for butterflies, bees, and other insects as well. The family share their garden harvest with both local wildlife, neighbors, and friends. They love to invite people to visit, learn something new and take something home with them.



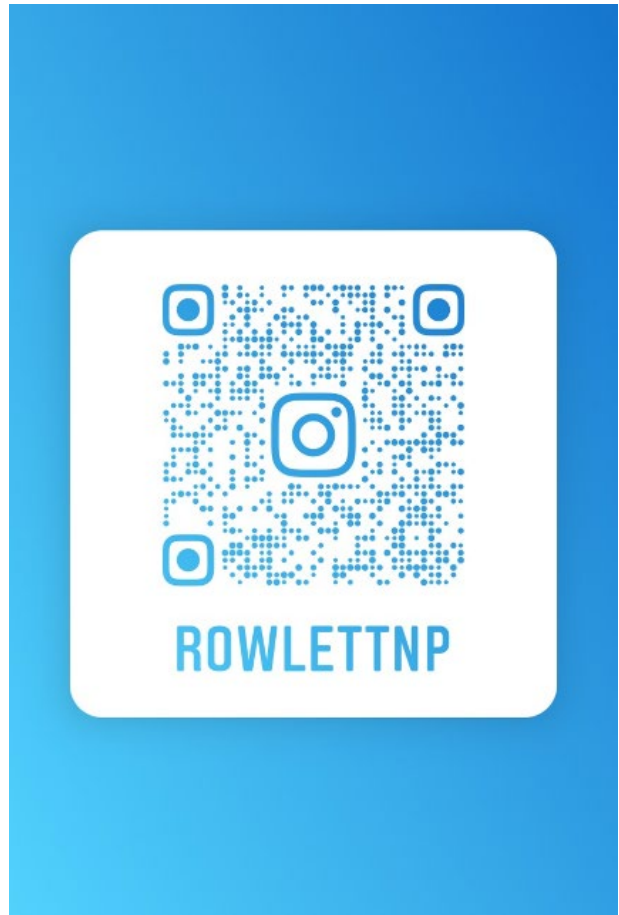


Graphic 9. Michelle and Brandon’s Pollinator home garden.

- II. Click here > <https://youtu.be/9QT7CPkNxa8> to watch and listen to Michelle and Brandon’s conversation with Neighborhood Planning Supervisor, Tara Bradley.
- e. Rowlett Bee City Website and Social Media - Managed by the Rowlett Neighborhood Planning team.
  - I. The Rowlett Bee City USA website lives under the City’s Neighborhood Planning webpage. The site is dedicated to providing the community with news and education related to helping create, protect and preserve pollinator friendly habitats. Click here to visit > [Bee City USA | Rowlett, TX - Official Website](#)
  - II. The Rowlett Neighborhood Planning team operates and manages an active social media presence which it is used as a communication outlet to notify and share with the community educational materials and events related to pollinator conservation.



Graphic 10. Rowlett Neighborhood Planning shares events related to pollinator conservation via Facebook and Instagram.



Graphic 11. Rowlett Neighborhood Planning shared an Instagram story with the community during an HOA Open House event in July, 2022.

# Bee City USA

## We are a Bee City USA® affiliate!

In 2021, the City of Rowlett became an affiliate of [Bee City USA®](#), an initiative created by the [Xerces Society](#) for Invertebrate Conservation, to help communities sustain and reverse pollinator decline. A framework is set forth for communities to conserve native pollinators by ensuring healthy habitats with a variety of native plants, nest sites, and protection from pesticides.



## Rowlett's Pollinator Friendly Mission

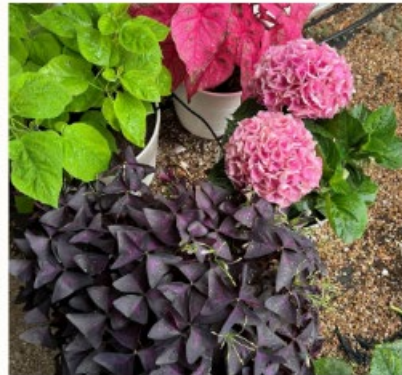
The City of Rowlett supports the Bee City USA®'s commitment to conserving native pollinators. Our **mission** as an affiliate is to build a thriving and healthy community connecting you, our residents, with nature. The **vision** for this program is that with your collaboration, the City of Rowlett becomes a leader in creating and conserving sustainable healthy environments.



### Have photos to share with us?

**What is blooming in Rowlett? Do you see any pollinators around?** Let us know by [uploading a photo](#) of seasonal blooms and pollinators around our city! We will showcase your photos here!

### Check out what is blooming in Rowlett Neighborhoods!



Graphic 12. The Rowlett Bee City USA webpage is an interactive site that the community visits for current news and educational resources about pollinators.



# Enhancing Pollinator Health & Habitat

## 1. How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?

- a. The Schrade Bluebonnet Park, 4701 Sunny Brook Dr, where the city-maintained pollinator garden reside is about 211,675.2 sq. ft. /5 acres. During the spring and fall wildflowers are visible and an abundance of bees and butterflies inhabit the area.
- b. The Pollinator near the Rowlett Recreation Center is approximately 400 sq. ft. The garden is very active with pollinators inhabiting during the spring and fall time. Our wonderful team of volunteers from Keep Rowlett Beautiful have this garden thriving. There is a number of residents that walk by on their way to Pecan Grove Park and stop to observe the bees and butterflies that wander around this beautiful garden.



*Graphic 13. Pollinators wandering around the pollinator garden near the Rowlett Recreation Center right by the historic Coyle House.*

**2. How many volunteers helped with those projects?**

- a. The City Parks and Recreation staff created the Shrade Bluebonnet Pollinator Garden. They also take care of the garden maintenance.
- b. Members of the local environmental non - profit Keep Rowlett Beautiful (KRB) help maintain the pollinator garden near the Rowlett Recreation Center.
- c. Neighborhood Planning team and Keep Rowlett Beautiful is actively looking for volunteers to participate as garden leaders as we continue to grow pollinator habitats around the community.

**3. Please describe pollinator habitat creation or enhancement event(s) in your community last year, whether your committee hosted them or not.**

- a. Shrade Blue-Bonnet Park Pollinator Garden.
  - i. The Rowlett Parks and Recreation, Neighborhood Planning team and Keep Rowlett Beautiful collaboration efforts made possible the first official City-owned and maintained pollinator garden at Shrade Bluebonnet Park. The team was excited to share the news with the community as it symbolizes a milestone for the city that marks a step forward to becoming leaders and advocates for the worldwide initiative that cares for and helps preserve habitats for all pollinators.



*Graphic 14. Shrade Bluebonnet Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, May 2022.*





*Graphic 15. Pollinator Garden at Schrade Bluebonnet*



## Closing Statement

Our first year as a Bee City USA affiliate brought us excitement and joy. The city had two great events, the Neighborhood Summit and Earth Day to help bring education and awareness on pollinator habitat creation and conservation. We built our first ever City owned and maintained pollinator garden at Schrade Bluebonnet Park. We explored new mediums of communication with our community through Facebook and Instagram, which allowed us to expand our audience and share news about environmental conservation and pollinator education.

The Neighborhood Planning team continues to host a yearlong program called Texas Smart Yard in collaboration with Keep Rowlett Beautiful (KRB). The program recognizes citizens and business owners that apply environmentally friendly landscaping practices that save time and money, conserve water, reduce yard waste and chemical use by simply putting nature to work in yards and gardens around Rowlett. Neighborhood Planning also awarded the Spirit of Rowlett to an extraordinary mother and son duo that serve as role models to our community for their efforts in building and protecting habitats for pollinators. Michelle and Brandon Clark (Spring 2022 Spirit of Rowlett) continue to help push for better ways to keep pollinators and their habits unharmed while teaching the local community about gardening and the benefits of locally grown produce.

Lastly, the city drafted its first ever Implemented Pest Management (IPM) Plan. Our Parks and Recreation Department takes all the credit for this one. After several meetings and written drafts, we finally have a plan that encompasses an effective pest management control plan that represents an environmentally sound, science-based approach to pest management. In all we continue to be excited and are eager to start creating and implementing new education and outreach programs, local policy initiatives and events that bring our community together while learning to build better places for pollinators.