



MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 24, 2023
TO: Sustainability Framework Advisory Committee
FROM: Dan Friedman, Sustainability Coordinator
SUBJECT: Bird City Texas update

Bird City Texas is a program led by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Audubon Texas designed to help communities protect birds through community engagement, habitat enhancement and protection, and creating safer spaces for birds. In order to become certified, communities must fulfill a number of criteria, including holding educational events and campaigns focused on bird conservation, implementing initiatives that protect bird habitat, and safeguarding native bird species from hazards.

In November 2022, the Sustainability department submitted its application to Bird City Texas. In February, we were notified that Denton did not qualify for the certification for the second consecutive year. The reviewers provided feedback that Denton did not conduct enough outreach to audiences outside of the sustainability community and did not have sufficient details on future years' commitments for educational classes, tree rebates, and acquisition of long-term bird habitat. The Bird City reviewers would also like to see more strategic action regarding Lights Out communication campaigns and outreach to businesses. Sustainability staff participated in a feedback call with the Bird City Texas team, who mentioned that Denton's application was very close to certification level and sparked more internal discussion than any other city that applied this year.

Based on feedback from the team, we plan to include more information in next year's application that shows long term planning for educational programming and habitat preservation. Specific details may include a plan for speakers and topics for future years' bird-focused workshops and information about long-term funding for tree rebates through the tree mitigation fund. We also plan to share a more specific plan outlining a Lights Out For Birds communication campaign during the spring and fall migration seasons. Furthermore, we will brainstorm ways to tie our Green Business Program into Bird City's criteria to engage businesses in reducing window collisions and other bird-friendly practices. Lastly, we will explore the possibility of developing official policy that formalizes our practice of leaving dead trees standing for bird species and other native wildlife that benefit from them.

OUR CORE VALUES

Inclusion • Collaboration • Quality Service • Strategic Focus • Fiscal Responsibility