

Parks are for...?

People. I suspect that's the answer most Albertans would offer to that question. The City of Red Deer is unique in Alberta in offering a different answer...pollinators. As this winter drew to its official end, Red Deer City Council unanimously passed a motion calling on the City's parks department to explore dedicating space and habitat in existing and future parks for pollinators. This initiative promises to create habitat for native pollinators and honeybees; it will provide the native plants pollinators need to survive and thrive such as lupins, fireweed, goldenrod, and blanket flower. Council also asked the parks department to help raise community awareness about how much our livelihoods depend on pollinators (Councillors Harris and Mulder, who drafted the motion, claimed that two-thirds of the world's food crops depend on pollinators and that the annual economic value of the services native pollinators provide in North America is more than \$3 billion). It also called on the City of Red Deer to explore instituting a permanent ban on neonicotinoids.

- Ian Urquhart