

**Resolution #2-R-26**  
**Resolution Supporting Vegetation Analysis and Advancing a Data-Informed Mowing Reduction Strategy**

Date: April 1, 2026

Submitted By: Alderperson Schultz – District 9; Alderperson Meltzer – District 2;

Alderperson Wolff – District 12; Alderperson Stancil-Martin – District 11

Referred To: Parks & Recreation Committee

**Summary:** *This resolution supports the Appleton Sustainability Advisory Panel's ongoing vegetation and invasive species analysis as a critical foundation for future land management decisions. It requests that ASAP develop data-informed recommendations for mowing reduction, native planting, and invasive species control upon completion of the analysis. It also encourages incorporation of this work into the City's forthcoming Sustainability Master Plan.*

**WHEREAS**, the City of Appleton is committed to responsible land stewardship, sustainability, and efficient use of public resources; and

**WHEREAS**, the Appleton Sustainability Advisory Panel (ASAP) is currently conducting a citywide vegetation analysis to better understand existing ground-cover conditions, including turf grass, natural areas & invasive species cover across all public managed lands; and

**WHEREAS**, this analysis provides a necessary foundation for evaluating opportunities related to mowing practices; improving ecological function, enhancing biodiversity, supporting and expanding pollinator habitat as well as conducting targeted invasive species remediation and long-term land management in general; must be addressed to ensure the success of pollinator habitat, native plantings, and naturalized areas; and

**WHEREAS**, invasive species are present within portions of the City's landscape and must be addressed to ensure the long-term success of pollinator habitat, native plantings, and naturalized areas; and

**WHEREAS**, the Appleton Sustainability Advisory Panel and the Park and Recreation Department have already begun incorporating low-mow pollinator habitat and naturalized area pilot projects within its parks and public spaces, demonstrating both capacity and interest in evolving traditional mowing practices; and

**WHEREAS**, the Appleton Sustainability Advisory Panel has expressed further interest in advancing mowing reduction and alternative ground-cover strategies and seeks direction to develop recommendations upon completion of this analysis while recognizing that such strategies must be grounded in accurate, citywide vegetation data; and

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Common Council supports completion of the citywide vegetation analysis to help inform future land management decisions; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Appleton Sustainability Advisory Panel, in coordination with the Parks and Recreation Department and other relevant departments, is encouraged to develop data-informed recommendations related to reduced mowing practices, native plantings, invasive species management, and other land management strategies following completion of the analysis; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that any recommendations developed through this process should be phased, practical, and operationally implementable; and

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that the results of this work be considered for incorporation into the City's Sustainability Master Plan currently being developed with Pale Blue Dot.

## **Addendum A — Conceptual 5-Year Implementation Strategy** *For reference and planning alignment*

### **Year 1 — Baseline & Pilot Identification**

- Complete citywide vegetation analysis
- Integrate existing datasets (GIS, land cover, invasive occurrence)
- Identify **pilot areas**:
  - parks
  - riparian corridors (e.g., Fox River)
  - low-value mowing zones
- Establish data standards and tracking metrics

### **Year 2 — Pilot Implementation**

- Convert select pilot areas to:
  - reduced mowing
  - native/pollinator plantings
- Initiate **targeted invasive species removal** in pilot zones
- Begin community education and signage

### **Year 3 — Evaluation & Model Development**

- Evaluate pilot outcomes:
  - cost vs savings
  - maintenance requirements
  - ecological performance
- Develop **prioritization model** for expansion:
  - invasive density
  - habitat value
  - maintenance efficiency

### **Year 4 — Targeted Expansion**

- Expand program into:
  - additional parks
  - stormwater corridors
  - underutilized turf areas
- Continue invasive species control aligned with expansion zones
- Refine operational practices

### **Year 5 — Program Integration**

- Establish mowing reduction and naturalized areas as a **standard land management practice**

- Integrate into:
  - Parks planning
  - Sustainability initiatives
  - Capital and maintenance planning
- Report measurable outcomes:
  - acres converted
  - invasive reduction
  - maintenance impacts