City of Toronto

Toronto, ON

Mayor John Tory

Pledge Summary

Toronto is home to more than 2.9 million people making it Canada's largest city and fourth largest city in North America. Toronto is also home to diverse pollinator communities that contribute to resilient ecosystems and enhance urban biodiversity. In 2018, Toronto adopted a Pollinator Protection Strategy, that identifies a set of guiding principles, six priorities and 30 actions that the City and community can take to protect our diverse native pollinator community. Toronto is committed to protecting the more than 360 species of bees and more than 100 species of butterflies and other pollinators that call Toronto home.

Action Items Committed for 2021

Communications and Convening

- Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.
- Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)
- Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.
- Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

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- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).
- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Olivia Chow	2026	1/15/2026	
Mayor Oliva Chow	2025	4/29/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Olivia Chow	2024	4/17/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor John Tory	2023	2/14/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor John Tory	2022	3/16/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor John Tory	2021	3/19/2021	Leadership Circle

Action Items

In total, how many individuals have been reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan-Dec)? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

300

Of the total number of individuals engaged, how many youth (0-18) were reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan. - Dec.)? If none, please write 0." (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.)

not sure

In total, how many acres of monarch habitat have been created in your city in the last 12 months? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

2.5

Where was the habitat created this year? Example locations may include residences, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, shared public spaces, and more.

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private front yards, schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, community gardens, shared public spaces and parks

How are you leveraging the Mayors' Monarch Pledge program to engage marginalized communities, such as low-income communities or communities of color?

Our PollinateTO Community Grants program prioritizes Neighbourhood Improvement Areas

What was your community's motivation for taking and continuing to work on the Mayors' Monarch Pledge?

Community interest

What resources have been most helpful to you thus far and what new resources would you like to see to help meet your goals? What resources would be useful to help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

online webinars

What else should we know about your monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the last year?

We have partnered with community organizations to expand our reach and train more interested community members in habitat creation.

Selected Action Items

Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.

Date of Proclamation:

Third week of June

Title of Proclamation (i.e. – Monarch Day or Pollinator Week):

Pollinator Week

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

City of Toronto Pollinator Week 2021.docx

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Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you have community members who speak a language other than English, we encourage you to also communicate in that language; Champion Pledges must communicate in that language.)

Please describe the methods of public communication below (e.g., printed materials, social media, print media).

web content, videos, social media, brochures, info sessions, training Please see PollinateTO - https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/water-environment/environmental-grants-incentives/pollinateto-community-grants/

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

Native plant gardening groups were engaged online. Community gardens were given grant funding to plant native plants. Please see PollinateTO https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/water-environment/environmental-grants-incentives/pollinateto-community-grants/

Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

How many community organizations and groups participated? Please list them below.

Pollinator Partnership Canada, RainscapeTO, Toronto Green Communities

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and revisions/maintenance implemented for mowing or planting programs.

Pollinator Partnership Canada held online staff training session with Parks and Transportation staff responsible for maintenance and mowing. Resulted in changes considered to mowing guidelines, plant choices, and maintenance practices.

Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

How many community organizations and groups participated? Please list them below.

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Please see PollinateTO for a list of groups funded: https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/water-environment/environmental-grants-incentives/pollinateto-community-grants/

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and revisions implemented for mowing and maintenance programs.

Held online webinars for groups. See a list of videos and resources at https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/water-environment/environmental-grants-incentives/pollinateto-community-grants/

Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

500

How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

300

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?

Project Swallowtail, Toronto Urban Forestry, Toronto Botanical Gardens

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

How many people attended your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

33

What species were collected or propagated?

unsure

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to host the event?

PollinateTO groups

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

PollinateTO groups were encouraged to host seed saving, seed swapping and seed starting events.

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Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

How many estimated individuals participated in your community science effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 150).

80

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Pollinator Partnership Canada

Please describe the community science program that you supported or initiated. Provide a link to any relevant programs, if possible.

Project Swallowtail - Certified Pollinator Steward training was held
https://pollinatorpartnership.ca/en/pollinator-steward-certification

Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Project Swallowtail

How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

33

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

All PollinateTO funded gardens are required to plant at least one species of milkweed. This is a program requirement.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Upload any relevant documents, images, or other attachments related to your effort on this action.

Permanent Pollinator Garden Sign_revised Final.pdf

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

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68

Please describe the educational information on the sign(s), and provide any links to externally purchased sign(s).

Image attached of signage

Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Pollinator Partnership Canada

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.PH24.3

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Pollinator Partnership Canada

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.PH24.3

Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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What community organizations, groups, or leaders (if any) did you partner with or engage to complete this effort?

Pollinator Partnership Canada

What is the status of this action? Please limit your answer to either "complete" or "in progress" in the answer field below.

complete

If this action is Complete, please include the date it was completed and share a 1-2 sentence description. Please include a copy of the policy by uploading or linking below.

Pesticide bylaw in effect since 2004

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

234 hectares

Please describe the extent of revisions or maintenance to invasive species removal programs, as well as the practices or techniques used to remove the invasive plants.

Invasive species removal techniques include manual control methods such as: hand pull or dig out roots, cut repeatedly to weaken roots, smother with mulch or black plastic, cut large vines at base, girdle large stems of trees/shrubs. Chemical control is only used in extreme circumstances.

Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

Please describe the process to create the strategy , the strategy goals and content, and/or results of implementation. Please also identify who was engaged in this process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

Our focus is on prioritizing PollinateTO grants, Climate Action funding and greening efforts in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. Toronto City Council designated 31 neighbourhoods as Neighbourhood Improvement Areas under the Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020. These recommended neighbourhoods have the lowest overall Neighbourhood Equity Scores. Their Scores fall below the recommended Neighbourhood Equity Benchmark, a

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measure that signals that the overall burden of inequities faced by a neighbourhood requires action.

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