# City of Vaughan

City of Vaughan, ON

Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua

## Pledge Summary

The City of Vaughan is a city in Ontario, Canada with a population of 300,000. The City has supported the Mayors' Monarch Pledge since early 2018 and is committed to protecting pollinators and educating its citizens on the importance of pollinators and their habitats. Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua is committed to continuing to fulfill actions to benefit pollinators as listed in the Monarch Pledge.

## 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.
- 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.
- 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.)

### Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.
- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

### Systems Change

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.
- 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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## Past Pledge Archive

| Mayor Name | Program Year | Pledge Date | Achievement |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mayor Steven Del Duca | 2025 | 4/30/2025 | Leadership Circle |
| Mayor Steven Del Duca | 2024 | 3/25/2024 | Leadership Circle |
| Mayor Steven Del Duca | 2023 | 3/2/2023 | Leadership Circle |
| Mr Maurizio Bevilacqua | 2022 | 3/15/2022 | Leadership Circle |
| Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua | 2021 | 12/9/2020 | 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.).**

1086

**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.)**

400 youth, 686 adults

**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.**

2.62

**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.**

Community gardens, public parks and shared community spaces, roadsides. Residential gardens have not been captured in data.

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

Messaging, education and campaigns for the Mayors' Monarch Pledge are delivered to all residents and neighbourhoods across Vaughan. However, the City's Thornhill SNAP engages specifically with people living in subsidized housing - through the SNAP, and in support of the Monarch Pledge, a pollinator garden was planted in that neighbourhood in 2021. In 2021, the City partnered with a youth team part of the Youth Challenge

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International's Innovate My Future Program, to design pollinator education and seed packets for the target audience of seniors.

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

The City of Vaughan recognizes that pollinator species are essential in producing the food we eat, play a vital role in the health of our forests and grasslands and provide environmental benefits to maintain healthy ecosystems. Taking the Pledge demonstrates the City's commitment to initiatives that provide opportunities to celebrate biological diversity and educate citizens and City staff on the importance of pollinators. Additionally, on December 17, 2019, Council adopted Green Directions Vaughan, the City's community sustainability plan. Actions within Green Directions Vaughan direct staff to improve greenspace as community amenities and promote habitat condition for wildlife, and to promote green infrastructure, including pollinator habitat, to build resilience based on the effects of climate change.

**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?**

The policy recommendations/documents are useful. Since we are a Canadian City, some of the resources are not applicable as they focus on American communities and best practices. Additional Canadian best practices

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

The City of Vaughan is shifting to emphasize local collection action to help meet our goals and encourages community partners to collaborate to achieve a variety of sustainability outcomes. In 2021, the City of Vaughan set the foundation for a new community stewardship strategy which will provide individuals and community groups with funding to implement environmental and stewardship initiatives in their communities and one of the key themes is building pollinator habitat.

## Selected Action Items

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

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

88-2008 COV Pesticide Bylaw.pdf

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

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N/A

**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.**

2008

## 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:**

May 27, 2020

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

National Pollinator Week and Flight of the Monarch Day

**Upload a copy of your proclamation.**

Extract_20cw0520_20ex_11.pdf

## 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).**

Provided a free native pollinator-friendly seed giveaway to residents at several events throughout 2021 including: Earth Hour, National Pollinator Week, at public tree and pollinator planting events. Developed communications strategy included PSAs, newsletter content and social media directly related to pollinators and their habitats, as well as provided downloadable educational activities for kids.

## Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain

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## mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

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

Policy Planning and Sustainability (PPS, City team) Parks, Forestry and Horticulture Operations (PFHO, City Department) Neighbours Sharing Native and Pollinator Plants (NSNPP, community group) Urban Growers (youth group part of the Youth Challenge International's Innovate My Future Program www.yci.org)

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

There are 29 "Grow Zones" designated throughout the City, implemented by the PFHO department. Discussions between PPS and PFHO teams include in which zones is it feasible for additional seeding/planting. These departments are also collaborating on a community stewardship funding initiative to encourage community members/groups to plan, or get involved in existing, pollinator planting projects. The fund would provide money and support for the groups to implement planting projects. NSNPP provides the City with potential locations in their neighbourhood where they can plant and maintain pollinator gardens, additionally they encourage the City to take action in other neighbourhoods. The City has partnered with Youth Challenge International to support a team of youth who are developing planting education materials and providing pollinator-friendly seed packets targeted to seniors.

## 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)

263 (50 given away to schools, 30 to Vaughan libraries, 127 in seed giveaway for earth hour, 123 for seed giveaway for pollinator week, 13 at planting event)

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

13

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

Blessed Trinity Catholic School was engaged in the Earth Hour event, all members of the community were engaged for the seed giveaway and the planting event.

## Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

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

IMG_5913.JPG

**Where is the demonstration garden located and how does this location relate to the cultural significance of the monarch (if relevant)? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible)**

Vaughan City Hall; 2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Vaughan, ON L6A 1T1

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

York Region Food Network, City of Vaughan Staff, residents of a senior residence adjacent to the property and staff from a local Bank.

**What is the size of the demonstration garden (in acres)? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 0.5 acres ). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.**

0.01

## 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?**

City staff from the Horticulture team and Sustainability team, staff from a two local businesses and residents of a seniors home helped to plant the gardens.

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

323

**Please describe your effort in completing this action.**

The City Hall pollinator garden is located within a community garden and was planted in 2019. An additional pollinator garden was planted at a future location for a community garden, also in 2019 - a total of 323 plants were planted between the two gardens. In the face of COVID-19, there were amendments to the City's community garden program and all new work proposed for the gardens have not been completed. Staff are working on a Community Garden Strategy that will guide future and current operations of our community gardens, and moving forward all new community gardens will include a pollinator garden. City staff will engage with the Coordinators of current community gardens to encourage planting pollinator-friendly plants in the gardens in 2022.

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## Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

IMG_2100.jpg

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

4

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

Vellore Park, Veterans Park, Doctors McLean Park, Vaughan City Hall. Signs denote a pollinator garden and the reasoning behind why it is there including a link to vaughan.ca/environment for more information on pollinators.

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

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

Grow Zone Sign.png

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

Internal City departments

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

In progress

**If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.**

Working internally with Parks, Forestry and Horticulture Operations department to create "grow zones" in certain City parks that are not mowed and will be seeded with native pollinator plants. There are currently 29 Grow Zones that have not been seeded.

## Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

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

Planting Provisions Residents to Plant City Boulevard Tree.pdf

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

TreePlantingApplicationPackageFINAL.pdf

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

Council extract -Beautification Strategy 2.0.pdf

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

Parks, Forestry and Horticulture Operations (City dept), residents in Vaughan were engaged in the revision of the Beautificaion Strategy

**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.**

2021

**If this action is In Progress, please describe your progress and a target date when you plan to complete action.**

It is standard City practice to include native plants, shrubs and trees in City landscaping. In 2021, the City planted 24 sponsorship flower beds and 60 beds under our Beautification Strategy – these beds included pollinator-friendly plants, ornamental shrubs and some annuals. The City has a list of approved tree species for home owners and contractors planting trees on private property (attachments included). In addition, Beautification Strategy was revised, and approved by Council in September 2021. The new strategy outlines the use of only native trees in plantings, and converting medians and roundabouts into pollinator gardens.

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