

City of Seymour

SEYMOUR, IN

Mayor Matt Nicholson

Pledge Summary

Seymour is the "Small Town" that singer/songwriter John Mellencamp wrote about in the lyrics to his hit song "Small Town." Located in south central Indiana, the city has a growing population of around 21,000. We have several public parks, one of which is home to our new pollinator garden started in 2021. We also have several downtown green spaces for the public to gather. Last year was the first year for our Monarch Pledge and we hope to do even more this year to strengthen our commitment to monarch and pollinator conservation.

Action Items Committed for 2022

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 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.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.
- 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.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.
- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Systems Change

- Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Matt Nicholson	2023	3/31/2023	
Mayor Matt Nicholson	2022	12/21/2021	Leadership Circle
Mayor Matt Nicholson	2021	3/29/2021	Signatories

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 (e.g., 50).

225

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.” (Only allow numerical values.)

100 youth and 125 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).

.01

Where is your habitat being created? This may include residences (yards, containers, balconies, etc.), schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community

gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces and common areas or parks.

Parks, rights-of-way, City Hall

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

We have used the Mayors' Monarch Pledge to bring attention to a park in an older, lower income neighborhood. Future revitalization of this park includes a splash pad, new playground and more pollinator habitat.

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

Seymour's motivation for taking and continuing to work on the Mayors Monarch Pledge is a desire to improve our environment and community for the future.

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?

Local resources, including our Department of Public Works, local library, Extension Office, Department of Natural Resources and Solid Waste Management and Recycling have been the most helpful to us in meeting our goals. Additional financial resources would help us meet our goals and be useful to help expand equitable engagement in community process and access to high-quality, usable nature.

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

We have had a lot of positive feedback on our monarch butterfly and pollinator conservation efforts over the last year. In November 2022, we were presented with the Green Project of the Year Award from Accelerate Indiana Municipalities (AIM) for our pollinator gardens.

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:

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

Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.

How many estimated individuals participated in your challenge? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 100).

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

When did this challenge take place?

What is the total acreage of habitat created? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 acres). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones.

Please describe your challenge and the results.

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 (e.g., 150).

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

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

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?

How many plants were planted?

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located?

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

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.)

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

[monarch_pledge.png](#)

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

[monarch_pledge_2.png](#)

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

Flyers, social media posts, newspaper articles, radio announcements

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.

Parks and Recreation, Department of Public Works, Water Pollution Control

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

All three departments have been working together to identify areas in our community that do not have to be mowed on a regular basis. Parks and Rec. is focusing on areas along trails to allow for growth of natural landscaping and planting pollinator gardens in parks. Department of Public Works has focused on our new rural bypass to allow for natural or wild habitat to grow along it and planting pollinator gardens in traffic islands, parking lots and in downtown flowerpots. Water Pollution Control is working on not mowing entire ditches to allow for growth of natural landscaping and planting pollinator friendly landscaping around the sewer plant.

Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other

long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.

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

[pollinators in our backyard.png](#)

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

[pollinator garden 1.jpg](#)

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

Jackson County Public Library, local Extension Office, Department of Public Works and a local nursery

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and their monarch butterfly conservation efforts.

The city publicized a Pollinators in Your Backyard program offered in the spring at our local library and instructed by horticulturist and Extension Office Manager Richard Beckort. The class was open to the public and focused on pollinators other than bees, including monarch butterflies. Department of Public Works also worked with the library and Schneider Nursery to plan and plant a new pollinator garden in the parking lot at City Hall which has been successful in attracting Monarch butterflies this year.

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.

With conservation and social equity as two of our parks department's pillars or priorities, we are beginning work to overhaul Westside Park to give more amenities and pride to an older, low-income neighborhood. Our parks board hired a consultant to develop a 5-year Master Plan with input from the public that includes major changes to this park, including the addition of a new playground, splash pad and restrooms to increase use. Other goals include creating pollinator gardens and planting more trees in all of our parks. At Westside, we partnered with youth groups (Teens for Change, Scouts) to plant and maintain pollinator habitat and added a bee motel.

Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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

[pollinator mural 2.jpg](#)

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

[pollinator mural.jpg](#)

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

Seymour High School Art Department

How many individuals were engaged in this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 50).

6

Please describe the community art project that was implemented in your community and how it contributed to cultural awareness and recognition (e.g., number of art installations, type of art).

We have been adding interactive murals at our parks and our most recent one included flowers and bees to promote and bring attention to the beauty of pollinators. A previous one included large butterfly wings. The paintings make the perfect backdrop for pictures and are a fun way for children to "see" nature bigger than life. We hope to continue to add murals in all of our parks and other city-owned public places.

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

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event?

50

How many people attended your event?

20

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

We partnered with Jackson County Invasives Partnership last spring to publicize a native plant sale with plugs from Aquatic Control, a local business. Plants available included Butterfly Weed, Cardinal Flower, Columbine, Mountain Mint, Purple Coneflower and Wild Geranium.

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

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

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

[pollinator_garden_3.jpg](#)

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

[pollinator_garden_finished_1.jpg](#)

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

[pollinator_garden_finished_2.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)

Seymour City Hall, 301-309 North Chestnut St. The garden is located on the south side in the employee parking lot.

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

Marc Stephens with Department of Public Works, Trina Roark with the Jackson County Public Library and Laura Eglen with Parks and Recreation.

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.

.023

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

A traffic island near City Hall at Chestnut and Third streets.

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted?

35

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants?

.0001

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

This island is watered and weeded by hand regularly by Department of Public Works. In late fall, annuals were removed while perennials were left alone.

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?

.5

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.

Several Bradford Pear trees, which are invasive in Indiana, were removed along with scrub on the sides of one of our overpasses to allow for natural ground cover and wildflowers to grow.

Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

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

Department of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Water Pollution Control,

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.

City departments are looking for best locations to plant and grow milkweed to propagate the Monarch population. They also are looking for sources of milkweed and are studying the idea of starting a nursery. This is an ongoing project that we hope to complete by the end of 2023.

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

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

Parks Department, Parks and Rec. Board

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.

The Parks 5 Year Master Plan was already completed, and conservation is already part of that plan, but the department plans to specifically add Monarch butterfly conservation in the next master plan to be started in 2025.