

Town of Normal

Normal, IL

Mayor Chris Koos

Pledge Summary

1. 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. 2. Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants in medians and public right-of-way. 3. Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar producing plants in public community gardens. 4. Direct city property managers to consider the use of native milkweed and nectar plants at city properties, where appropriate. 5. Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitats for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Action Items Committed for 2021

Communications and Convening

- 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Chris Koos	2026	1/7/2026	
Mayor Chris Koos	2025	1/10/2025	Signatories

Mayor Chris Koos	2024	1/10/2024	Signatories
Mayor Chris Koos	2023	1/12/2023	Signatories
Mayor Chris Koos	2022	2/25/2022	Signatories
Mayor Chris Koos	2021	3/30/2021	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).

0

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.)

0

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).

2.5

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.

Park, right-of-way, and walking trail areas

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

Our efforts to increase native and pollinator areas have been focused to be community wide.

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

By increasing native habitat and pollinators in our park landscape and trail areas, motivated by the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, our goal is to continue to make the Town of Normal a "livable" community.

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?

We haven't utilized any NWF resources to date, however we will as we move forward in our pledge action plan.

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

Staffing limitations, due to the pandemic, slowed our efforts in 2021. However, we were pleased on what was accomplished and will grow upon these efforts in future years.

Selected Action Items

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.

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

[Underwood_planted.jpg](#)

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

Town of Normal Parks Maintenance staff

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

The Town of Normal Parks & Recreation Department removed 1.5 acres of mowed turf area inside Underwood Park and planted milkweed and other native pollinator plants. Prior to the Town acquiring the property, this area was utilized many years ago as a horse pasture.

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

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

[Vernon_3.jpg](#)

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

An old railroad right-of-way and current utility easement between a roadway (Vernon Avenue) and a trail area (Constitution Trail) was cleared of invasive brush and trees. After preparation of the site, it was planted with milkweed and other pollinator-friendly wildflowers and native grasses.

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

1000

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

Approximately 1.0 acres.

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

This newly planted area will be managed with selective herbicide applications and mowing to help get the desired plants to establish. Additional seeding may be necessary to boost areas where desired growth is weak.

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

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

[Audubon.JPG](#)

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

JWP Audubon Society

How many plants were planted?

20

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

The Town of Normal Parks & Recreation Department partners with the JWP Audubon Society that maintains a native perennial garden on Town property. The garden is located along the Constitution Trail and is maintained by volunteers from the organization. Parks Maintenance staff will, upon request, supply mulch and pick up cuttings prior to and following volunteer efforts. Replacement plants (which was approximated at 20) are planted by the organization every spring to provide any needed revitalization to the garden.

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

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

[Fransen.JPG](#)

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants?

.3

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 plant removal has continued at the Hidden Creek Nature Sanctuary. An ecological master plan was completed in 2017 for the natural area within the park. Soon after, the plan was implemented, and much of the invasive material was removed. However, pockets still remain that are addressed as staffing allows. At the Fransen Park Nature Area, invasive honeysuckle was removed along the pine and spruce tree line that was beginning to encroach into the prairie area.

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.

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

[carden sign.jpg](#)

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

The Town of Normal Director of Parks & Recreation

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 majority of the landscape beds in Normal's parks and at many municipal facilities were comprised primarily of annual flower beds. These beds are generally planted in May and

removed in October. Therefore the remainder of the year, these beds would be empty. Through the support of the Director of Parks & Recreation, staff horticulturalists have converted most of these beds to contain perennial pollinator plants. The revisions should be completed by the summer of 2023.