The City of Rochester Hills

Rochester Hills, MI

Mayor Bryan Barnett

Pledge Summary

Established in 1984, the City of Rochester Hills, in Southeast Michigan, has a population of roughly 75,000. Rochester Hills is committed to sustaining its position among the nation’s preeminent places to live, work and raise a family. The community continues to value its natural resources and green spaces. The City sees the importance of not only protecting and enhancing these resources; but acting as a leader and model to residents and the community. As part of this effort, the city is committed to taking actions to conserve and maintain pollinator habitats. Actions include supporting local native plants sales, seed collection programs, providing pollinator habitat support to HOA's, residents, local garden clubs and continued stewardship efforts in our City Parks and Green Spaces.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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.
- 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Bryan Barnett	2026	12/3/2025	
Mayor Bryan Barnett	2025	2/6/2025	Signatories
Mayor Bryan Barnett	2024	12/22/2023	Signatories
Mayor Bryan Barnett	2023	12/14/2022	Signatories
Mayor Bryan Barnett	2022	12/13/2021	Signatories

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Mayor Bryan Barnett	2021	12/11/2020	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 (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

310

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.)

20

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.

2.1

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.

Parks / Green Spaces

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

This Pledge continues to drive our use of partnering with local non-profits, like the Clinton River Watershed Council, to provide outreach to our entire community about pollinators and native Plants. The Gardens maintained will be visited at our Bloomer Park by our youth camps, which include sponsored kids from low income families. Additionally, our invasives program provide cost effective resources to have invasive species treated in our community.

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

The City values its natural resources, green spaces, and the wildlife that relies on them. We see the importance of not only protecting and enhancing these resources; but acting as a leader and model to residents and the community. The Mayors Monarch Pledge is a great program to accompany with our Tree City USA designation. We have active Garden clubs and residents that show interest in enhancing our pollinator habitat in our community and in our neighboring communities.

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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?

Webinars typically are the most useful. Continued social media content would be helpful that we could regularly post or share.

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

Numbers provided above do not include the tens of thousands of people (kids and adults) that visit Innovation Hills, the Museum, and Bloomer Park that are exposed to the pollinator gardens in these locations. We also have held several events; like our OAK in the Hills event, which had over 1200 participants, that have components promoting pollinator efforts. We continue provide outreach on social media and in a monthly E-Newsletter regarding invasive species, national pollinators week, and general environmental stewardship. This year we did help support the watershed Council's Native Plant/Milkweed Seed Collection program in one of our parks as well.

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.

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

Park and Natural Resources Department Staff; Planning Department; Ordinance Department

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

This Item is still in progress. Our Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan and Strategic Plan goals and objectives were established, that specifically call out enhancing city properties by removing non-native/invasives. It also includes expanding Green Space properties through land acquisition. They also include developing Citizen led programs and volunteer engagement. Staff has begun to look at sustainability plans and work with our Planning Department to incorporate certain programs that can be incorporated into the City Master Plan and eventually a City Sustainability Plan. In 2025, staff met with Ordinance staff to discuss how to handle Native landscapes that some residents have that technically do not meet ordinances as they pertain to mowing, weeds, etc. Natural Resources staff and ordinance developed a temporary policy that they would work with Natural Resources staff in these instances and require documentation from landowner that they are working with professional and/or has a native landscape plan in place.

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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.

Bare Earth - Opening Day.jpg

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

Early Spring Growth.jpg

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

Master Gardener Sign - 2.jpg

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

Opening Day.jpg

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

Hills of Rochester Garden Club - Innovation Hills Butterfly Garden MSU Master gardeners Rochester Hills Parks and Nat Res Dept.

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

Staff continues to partner with members of the "Hills of Rochester Garden Club" and one of their Master Gardener's to manage an approved plan on a MSU master gardener project. This project involves working with them to design, plant, and maintain our Butterfly Garden at Innovation Hills Park and have their group "adopt" the garden and offer volunteer opportunities as a Master Gardeners project with MSU extension. Members and people looking to get Master gardener credits will assist in planting, maintaining, and fall maintenance of the Butterfly Garden. In addition, outreach/signage is utilized in the garden to educate others. In 2025, the Hills of Rochester Garden Club had a total of 108.5 hours spent volunteering at the Butterfly Garden. This includes 42 hours for the MSU Extension Master Gardener project (2 Master Gardeners).

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

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

20250517_Plant_RainBarrel_Sale_0671.JPG

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

20250517_Plant_RainBarrel_Sale_0676.JPG

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

4 per page Native Plant Sale.pdf

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

Seed program_Group photo.jpg

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

Seeds collected.jpg

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

Native Sale 1 (OAK in the Hills) - 553 Plants ; Native Plant Sale 2 (Museum) - 381 Plants;

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

176

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

Native Plant Sale 1 - Clinton River Watershed Council ; Native Plant Sale 2 - Rochester Garden Club; Museum and Van Hoosen Farms

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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Butterfly milkweed & shrubby cinquefoil.jpg

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

catepillar on swamp milk weed.jpg

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

Early summer growth.jpg

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

monarch catepillar.jpg

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

Bloomer_Garden.png

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

Museum_Bioswale.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)

Maintained Pollinator Garden - Innovation Hills Park (2800 W. Hamlin Rd.) , Maintained Pollinator Garden - Bloomer Park (345 John R Rd.), Maintain Children's Garden / Pollinator Bioswale - Van Hoosen Museum (1005 Van Hoosen Rd.) - combined size of all gardens is approx. 0.4 acres

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

Hills of Rochester Garden Club, Rochester Garden Club, Bloomer Garden Club, Park and Museum Staff, Rochester Hills Green Space Advisory Board

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.

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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.

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

RubyGreenSpace_Burn.jpg

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

Volunteer_StewardshipDay.png

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

26

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 location within our Green Spaces / Parks are maintained as Native Prairies / wet meadows with annual invasive species treatment/removals to promote native forbs and vegetation. In the past year, we also completed forestry mowing on an additional 2 acres of areas inundated with woody invasives, such as buckthorn, to reestablish meadows that we ultimately be restored to habitat that will support pollinators, like Monarchs. Treatments beyond forestry mowing, include prescribed burns, herbicide treatments, volunteer pulls, etc. The City offers a city wide Phragmites program to residents and HOA's to encourage and assist them in removal of invasives on their private properties. We had over 25 HOA's participate this year.

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