

City of Sun Prairie

Sun Prairie, WI

Mayor Paul Esser

Pledge Summary

Sun Prairie is a vibrant and thriving community located in northeastern Dane county, just east of the City of Madison. Sun Prairie has become known in the region for its high quality of life, its excellent parks and recreation programs, historic downtown, exceptional public school system, and progressive approach to the development and redevelopment of the community. The city is committed to making Sun Prairie a leading sustainable, vibrant and environmentally friendly community by taking steps to conserve energy, reduce waste, and preserve our natural resources. The city is looking forward to engaging residents in building more pollinator-friendly habitats throughout the community.

Action Items Committed for 2023

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.

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.

Systems Change

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Steve Stocker	2026	2/20/2026	
Mayor Paul Esser	2025	3/25/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Paul Esser	2024	3/21/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Paul Esser	2023	3/28/2023	Signatories
Mayor Paul Esser	2022	3/29/2022	Signatories
Mayor Paul Esser	2021	4/19/2021	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).

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." (Only allow numerical values.)

100 youth, 200 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).

.04

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 and shared public spaces - City Hall, Stoneridge Estates Park, Fox Point Park, Grandview Park, Orfan Park, Sheehan Park, and Wyndham Hills Park

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

We've expanded the number and location of pollinator gardens and as a part of these efforts have been working with organizations that represent the community. For example, one of the organizations the city worked with was Team Anjani which is a local community group made up of South Asian youth and adults who dedicate their efforts to community service.

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

Participation in the Mayor's Monarch Pledge allows the city to strategically identify priorities and goals that align with our sustainability goals and best practices across the country. It provides an opportunity to make a public commitment to pollinators and opens the conversation with the community to take action to support pollinators and native plants.

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 Neighborhood Fund was a great resource to support our Mayor's Monarch Pledge programming. We also received plants from the native plant giveaway which we were able to use to support our new pollinator garden at city hall. The city is wrapping up an urban forest management plan. We would be interested in additional plants next year to support our efforts. We had aimed to host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap but was not able to due to budget constraints and other priorities. We are interested in receiving support on getting started on this process. I would like to see additional resources on the website to guide us in this work. What else should we know about your monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the

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

We continue to focus our efforts on creating small patches of habitat throughout our park system and other city facilities by planting native plants and installing education signs to increase awareness of these activities. There are approximately 16 separate gardens throughout the city. We've created a website to raise awareness on the city's efforts in this area: <https://cityofsunprairie.com/1746/Pollinator-Garden-Information-Resources>. We will continue to work to empower and to encourage city residents to participate in the city's efforts to increase the abundance and diversity of pollinators. We hope to challenge ourselves next year and tackle changes at the systems level through ordinances and policies.

Selected Action Items

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

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

How many people attended your event?

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

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:

4/18/2023

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

Celebrating Earth Day, Arbor Day and affirming Sun Prairie's Commitment to Mayors Monarch Pledge

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

[Supporting_Document_for_-_PROCLAMATION_-_EARTH_DAY___ARBOR_DAY_\(.pdf\)](#)

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.

[Stoneridge Estates.jpg](#)

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

[City hall 1.jpg](#)

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

City of Sun Prairie Sun Prairie Parks Friends Sun Prairie Area School District Team Anjani

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

This year, we implemented No Mow May practices in 8.4 acres of city parks. In total, 107.19 acres of pollinator foraging resources were conserved by participants who registered with the city's No Mow May Program. The city also planted several milkweed and native nectar plants in pollinator gardens throughout city parks and shared public spaces (7 locations in 2023).

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.

[City hall 1.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)

City Hall, 300 E. Main Street

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

City staff, Downtown BID, Sustainability Committee, Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission, White Pelican Farms, Sun Prairie Parks Friends, Dane Conty Plant Dane Program

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.

0.01

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?

? Sustainability Committee, City Council, Sun Prairie Area School District, the Gratton Lab at UW-Madison, and 1000 Friends of Wisconsin.

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.

3/21/23, resolution suspending enforcement of noxious weeds for No Mow May for the month of May can be found here: https://agendas.cityofsunprairie.com/OnBaseAgendaOnline/Documents/ViewDocument/Resolution%20for%20-%20RESOLUTION%20DESIGNATING%20THE%20MONTH%20OF%20MAY%20AS%20NO%20MOW%20MAY%20_.pdf?meetingId=2447&documentType=Agenda&itemId=47685&publishId=48082&isSection=false. Additionally, at the November 7, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting, the Council approved No Mow May as an annual program.

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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

City staff and Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Commission

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 PRF Commission has aligned itself with the International Dark-Sky Association's stance on outdoor lighting and adopted its Five Principals for Responsible Outdoor Lighting as a guideline for park and trail lighting. Staff have best practices to meet minimum requirements when installing fixtures when exterior lighting fixtures are deemed necessary, but no ordinance has been adopted. The city's internal green infrastructure working group will continue to address this in 2024.