City of Minnetonka

Minnetonka, MN

Mayor Brad Wiersum

Pledge Summary

Minnetonka is a fully developed suburban community of more than 53,000 residents located eight miles west of Minneapolis. The city’s natural surroundings — including woodlands, prairies, wetlands and other bodies of water — set it apart from similar-sized Twin Cities suburbs and give the community a distinct character. Minnetonka has a long history of habitat protection and restoration, and in 2017 joined the Mayors' Monarch Pledge to focus actions that benefit monarchs, pollinators and other wildlife on public and private property. Minnetonka has been a Monarch Champion city three times since 2020, and in 2023 worked on all 29 action steps. We welcome you to contact our pledge coordinator, Christine Petersen (cpetersen@minnetonkamn.gov or 952-988-8442) to learn more about Minnetonka’s efforts on behalf of pollinators.

Action Items Committed for 2024

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 community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- 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.
- Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.
- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).
- 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.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).
- 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.
- 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.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.
- California Specific: Pass a resolution to protect over-wintering monarch butterfly habitat on public or private lands.

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Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Rebecca Schack	2026	12/12/2025	
Mayor Brad Wiersum	2025	1/30/2025	Monarch Champions
Mayor Brad Wiersum	2024	12/18/2023	Monarch Champions
Mayor Brad Wiersum	2023	12/12/2022	Monarch Champions
Mayor Brad Wiersum	2022	1/10/2022	Monarch Champions
Mayor Brad Wiersum	2021	12/21/2020	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.).

8000

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.)

1000

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.

16

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.

The acreage above refers only to publicly owned natural areas (parks, outlots, trails) or facilities, rights-of-way, medians, etc. We don't track new habitat on private property, but we have multiple programs to encourage and assist residents adding pollinator habitat.

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

This work is being done alongside our other equity and engagement efforts. This includes youth engagement, providing outreach materials in multiple languages, and offering technical assistance or incentives to help residents achieve goals for native habitat and resilience on their property.

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

We joined in 2017 because we were looking for a framework to formalize and extend the pollinator protection and habitat restorations already underway in Minnetonka.

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're always eager to hear how other cities are addressing equity and innovating outreach, education and engagement related to monarchs and pollinators.

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

Along with education offerings, publications and technical assistance, we strive to form partnerships that extend the impact of our work.

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:

July 2024

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

Eighth-annual Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

1_MMP Proclamation_2024.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.)

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

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2_Communications.pdf

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

o Each year we publish monthly newsletter articles (mailed to approximately 23,000 households), monthly e-bulletins (emailed to at least 7,300 subscribers) and occasional social media posts. Numerous publications refer to or focus on aspects of pollinator protection, habitat diversity and resilience. o Our website offers translation for Spanish, Somali, Russian, and other languages spoken in our county. In 2024, we also completed translations of our Polli-Neighbor Pledge graphic into Spanish, French and Korean.

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

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

3_Engage with community garden groups.pdf

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

o We collaborated with the local chapter of Wild Ones, a nonprofit focused on native plants, to host urban ecologist Douglas Tallamy for a virtual talk in May 2024. This was followed, the next month, by a very productive discussion group around Tallamy's book, Bringing Nature Home. o We also partnered, for the third year, to deliver a habitat-themed workshop in Ridgedale Library's "Striving for Resilience" event series.

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.

City departments participated, including Public Works (which includes Natural Resources, Parks, Streets, and Facilities) as well as Recreation.

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

This is an ongoing effort, but Parks and Facilities staff have begun to leave milkweed, or actively plant it, in some rights-of-way rather than automatically controlling it as a "weed". And in some areas formerly focused on annual or ornamental plants, they have installed prairie-style plantings that include milkweed and nectar plants. Parking lot plantings at our wellness facility are also done with prairie species. Another example: Recreation staff reached out with a concern about an unmaintained planting bed in a highly visible area at the entrance of the city's wellness facility. The restoration specialist and her interns designed

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and installed a new garden, preserving existing common milkweed and adding several native pollinator forage species and nativars, as well as grasses. The public response has been significant.

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.

5_Engage with gardening leaders.pdf

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

Friends of Minnetonka Parks, West Metro Master Naturalists, Wild Ones Prairie Edge chapter

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

o Staff worked with a local Friends group to plan and install a “pollinator plant walk” in one of the city’s most-visited parks. o Natural Resources staff presented to the local chapter of Minnesota Master Naturalists about monarchs and milkweed, and collaborated with the nonprofit Wild Ones to present public events emphasizing the value of native plants.

Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.

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

7_Residential planting plan sample.pdf

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and associated opportunities to create monarch habitat.

o Minnetonka’s landscaping ordinance (city code 300) was amended in 2019, “requiring at least 25 percent of new plantings in a proposed landscape plan be native or native cultivar species beneficial to pollinators”. This applies to all new development and redevelopment proposals. Plant lists and other guidance documents were prepared, and Natural Resources staff work with developers to provide information, review plans and promote compliance. Some developers who are familiar with this ordinance now routinely incorporate pollinator-friendly plantings. (see also Action Step 26) o Our Resilient Minnetonka program offers technical assistance, such as landscape design, which is customized for each participant by professional consultants in consultation with city staff and/or our watershed districts. We also

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offer an online resource library with links to landscape design tools, for residents eager to make and implement their own design.

Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

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

8_Resilient Minnetonka program.pdf

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

8_Youth leadership in Natural Resources.pdf

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.

o Our Resilient Minnetonka program is grounded in education to inform, inspire and empower residents to take actions that increase the diversity and quality of habitat on private property. We offer in-person workshops (such as this year's Urban Habitat class), online learning modules for self-paced learning, and an online resource library. o Since 2022, Natural Resources staff have mentored the Natural Resources Club at Minnetonka High School. The club emphasizes volunteerism as well as actions that improve the environment, including pollinator habitat. With staff guidance, they have proposed (and approved by school administration) to pursue two projects on the high school campus in the 2024-25 school year: a "soft landings" planting, and a tree trek. Both projects will include habitat installations and signage to educate the community

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

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

10_Native plant sale.pdf

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

10_Native plant sale.pdf

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

3396 plant plugs, plus bulk seed mix for 38,000 square feet (and small seed packets or milkweed/wildflower seedballs)

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

300

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

o The city's annual online native plant sale runs from April through September, as a collaboration with a local native plant grower, MNL Corp. It offers diverse native plant plugs and several seed mixes. In 2024, Minnetonka residents could request a discount coupon worth $35 of their order (an increase from $20 in previous years). We also give away about 100 mixed seed packets, and we do a milkweed-and-wildflower seedball making activity for Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

11_Milkweed seed collection.pdf

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

3

What species were collected or propagated?

Common, swamp and butterfly milkweeds

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

None - this was done by our seasonal interns

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

o Natural Resources interns collected milkweed and nectar plant seeds from plantings at the Public Works facility and several city park. Most of that seed has been prepared and hand-spread in restoration areas to cold-stratify over the winter; some was retained for use in milkweed and wildflower seedball-making events next year.

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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12_Demonstration gardens.pdf

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)

o New demonstration gardens were established in 2024 at Lone Lake Park, which got a Pollinator Plant Walk near its playground and a superfood garden near the pickleball courts. Green Circle Park's existing Monarch Waystation area was managed for foxtail and other invasive plants, using hand-pulling rather than chemical control.

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

Friends of Minnetonka Parks; Natural Resources staff

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.

0.6

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.

14_ROW rain garden.pdf

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

11522 Minnetonka Blvd.

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

100

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

0.2

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

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A right-of-way rain garden at Minnetonka's Public Works facility filters stormwater runoff from the adjacent arterial road and the facility's parking lot. In 2024, the garden was regraded, and Natural Resources interns took the lead on weeding and replanting in that area, which will be weeded and maintained annually going forward.

Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

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

15_Outdoor education.pdf

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? If you are involved with another National Wildlife Federation program, please mention that below. (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

This summer we collaborated with Minnetonka Public Schools to offer sessions in its Summer of Service program. Students in grade 4-6 spent a day weeding, mulching and watering the city's "food forest" – a planting area with native trees and shrubs that provide edible fruit, nuts or seeds for people and wildlife. Older students (grades 7-9) learned about invasive species control at another city park.

How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

1

Please list the names of the schools you are working with.

Minnetonka Public School District

What resources, if any, are you providing to educators?

Experience in the field

How many students and educators would you estimate are being reached? Please limit your answer to only number of adults and youths engaged in the answer field (e.g., 200 students and 20 educators).

50

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

None

How many acres of monarch and pollinator habitat have been planted through this effort? 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.

0.25

What is the maintenance schedule to ensure planted habitat is maintained?

At least twice-yearly weeding, pruning, and mulching, plus watering as needed to supplement rainfall during the growing season

Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

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

16_Tree City USA.jpeg

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

Arbor Day Foundation

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

Minnetonka is a 30-year participant in the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program. https://www.arborday.org/our-work/tree-city-usa

Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

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

18_Monarch caterpillar rescue_053124.JPG

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 (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 150).

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1

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

None

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

o As part of Minnetonka’s annual Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month, we always share ideas for community science. o In 2024, we also took initial steps to build a pilot community science program specific to Minnetonka. Its goal will be twofold: (1) survey areas on public property where volunteer milkweed stems must be removed from formal planting beds, in order to rescue and relocate any monarch eggs or caterpillars; and (2) survey monarch use of recent restoration areas for forage or breeding. This year, one college student was trained and volunteered with staff on the first goal.

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.

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

17_Pledge and translations.pdf

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

500

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

All Seasons WIld Bird Store

When did this challenge take place?

July 2024

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. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

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5

Please describe your challenge and the results.

This was the sixth year of our Polli-Neighbor Pledge, promoted during Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month and fall migration. In 2024, the pledge was translated into Spanish, French and Korean and posted at events. (See attachment for Action Step 2) Please note that we don't track the amount of habitat created or maintained on private property, so the number above is just a guess.

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.

19_Burwell House woods.jpg

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

19_Monarch on coneflower.jpg

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

City divisions: Natural Resources, Parks, Facilities

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

400

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

This is ongoing – in addition to planting diverse native species in restoration areas and naturalistic planting areas, we are using more and more natives or pollinator-friendly annuals (like Tithonia and Zinnia) in formal planting beds.

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.

9_Dia de Muertos.pdf

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

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9_Community art.pdf

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

Ridgedale Library; the city's Internal Equity Committee

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

500

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).

o We did two small- to medium-scale community art projects in 2024. The first was a textile arts class, offered through our partners at Ridgedale Library (one of the county's largest libraries), for adults and teens to make pollinator-themed clothing. And, as part of Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month, we also made a Pollinator Pals activity that was distributed (along with several pollinator-education coloring pages) at city events, on our pollinator awareness webpage, and through the children's section at the library. o Additionally, the city's Internal Equity Committee set up a display for Dia de Muertos, including cultural connections between that celebration and the arrival of migrating monarchs to overwintering areas in Mexico.

Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes 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.

21_Monarch celebrations 1.pdf

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

21_Monarch celebrations 2.pdf

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

21_Monarch celebrations 3.pdf

How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field ((Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only),

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e.g. 500)

350

What was the date of your festival?

Month of July 2024

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

Ridgedale Library; Minnetonka Recreation dept.

Please describe the details of your monarch butterfly festival and how you ensured the event was accessible by all residents in the community (e.g., events, length, notable successes, outreach, location).

July is Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month in Minnetonka. This year's eighth-annual celebration included three community engagement events (tabling at the community center and wellness center, and a booth at the farmers market with storytime about pollinators) as well as a textile arts workshop for families. We also offer virtual activities that help residents learn about or help monarchs, pollinators and habitat on their own time. As always, we promoted our Polli-Neighbor Pledge at these events, and this year translated that graphic into Spanish, French and Korean.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

22_Monarch sign The Marsh.jpg

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

3

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

There is an interpretive sign about the monarch life cycle next to the city's new wellness center. A pair of Spanish-language signs (from Monarch Joint Venture) were installed at the same location, covering the monarch life cycle and milkweed/habitat needs.

Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

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

This was done years ago at the state level.

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.

This was done years ago at the state level - not sure of the date or statute.

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?

Minnetonka's Natural Resources division and Community Development department

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.

In the mid-1990s, Minnetonka’s lawn ordinance was updated in the mid-1990s to permit prairie/meadow vegetation – quite an unusual choice at the time. That ordinance was amended in 2020 to permit pollinator lawns. After the State of Minnesota amended its Native Landscapes legislation in 2023, staff revisited the city’s lawn ordinance to ensure the language is consistent with state statute – encouraging “managed natural landscapes,” particularly those that might replace turf in favor of milkweed and other native and/or resilient plantings. The proposed amendments were approved by City Council in 2024.

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

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

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25_City code 845.030_amended 2024.pdf

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

Minnetonka's Natural Resources division and Community Development department

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.

The city's landscaping ordinance (city code 300) was amended in 2019, "requiring at least 25 percent of new plantings in a proposed landscape plan be native or native cultivar species beneficial to pollinators". Some developers who are familiar with this ordinance now routinely incorporate pollinator-friendly plantings.

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.

26_Native plants at city properties 1.pdf

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

26_Native plants at city properties 2.pdf

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

Minnetonka's Public Works department (including Natural Resources, Parks, and Facilities divisions)

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.

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We consider this an ongoing effort. Milkweed and diverse native and climate-resilient nectar plants are routinely added and maintained in park restoration areas and city facilities. Good examples include the Police and Fire buildings, Public Works, the city's wellness facility, and the community center.

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.

28_Mtka Low Salt Design Pilot.pdf

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

Bolton & Menk LLC

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.

o Until 2023, state law prohibited municipalities from making policy or passing ordinance related to chemical use by residents, landscaping contractors, pest control companies, etc. In 2023, Chapter 18B of state law was amended to allow cities of the first class (population 150,000 or greater) to take over pesticide regulation – but Minnetonka does not qualify, so we continue to follow state authority on this matter. Restoration practices and public education have also evolved to emphasize alternatives to chemical use. We teach and practice soil care because healthy soils promote healthier plants; and we implement integrated pest management. Wherever possible, our restoration specialists manage invasive species using hand-control, mowing or weed-whipping, and prescribed burns so herbicide is a last strategy. (Refer to attachments for Action Step 20) o In 2024, Minnetonka also became a pilot city in an emerging effort to do Low Salt Design – landscaping and building methods that reduce the need for road salt, which (among other problems) can harm native vegetation used by pollinators.

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

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

27_Park restoration examples.pdf

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

27_Sample park restoration plan.pdf

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

Minnetonka's Natural Resources division, with support from park crews, contractors, and about 400 volunteers

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.

o The Natural Resources Master Plan was created in 2021 and will be implemented over a period of ten or more years, with strong emphasis on invasive species control and restoration toward healthy, diverse target plant communities that are suitable for each park. In 2024, there were approximately 16 acres of parkland in new restoration; we also have many acres citywide in long-term restoration or maintenance from prior years. Sample park planning and restoration documents are attached. o A new Community Forest Management Plan has gone through public comment and Park Board review; this tool will support the master plan and includes consideration of pollinator needs. o A citywide Climate Action and Adaptation Plan bolsters Minnetonka’s Energy Action Plan by adding strategies for environmental protection and resilience. (See also Action Step 29)

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

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

29_Lights Out Minnetonka_Sep 2024.pdf

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

Minnetonka's Natural Resources division and Community Development department

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

In progress

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

Minnetonka is working toward this goal through education, technical assistance and incentives, including: (1) passing a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan that emphasizes the economic and other benefits of reduced and altered lighting – see https://www.minnetonkamn.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/14362/638544966530500000; (2) conducting inspections in support of existing ordinance related to exterior lighting performance standards; and (3) ongoing education and outreach about creating and protecting diverse habitat – including darkness as a kind of habitat – on public and private property.

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.

20 and 28_Invasive species control and chemical reduction 1.pdf

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

20 and 28_Invasive species control and chemical reduction 2.pdf

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

20 and 28_Invasive species control and chemical reduction 3.pdf

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

20 and 28_Invasive species control and chemical reduction 4.pdf

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

7

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.

o Invasive species management has been ongoing in Minnetonka since the 1990s, with numerous parks under restoration in any given year (such as those described in the attached documents). o In the past few years we've also: (1) built buckthorn and garlic mustard learning modules; (2) increased volunteerism to expand restoration programs in

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parks (and encouraged residents to volunteer as a way to learn skills they can use at home); and (3) promoted lawn reduction to residents. We also developed the Resilient Minnetonka program, including education, resources, funding ideas and technical assistance (such as site consultations, residential buckthorn pick-up, rebates for planting, and a small number of design & plan sessions). This program is intended to increase awareness and empower residents to overcome barriers that might otherwise prevent them from taking action. We emphasize projects that add monarch and pollinator habitat, increase climate resilience, reduce lawn area in favor of ecologically functional plantings, replace buckthorn and other invasive species, and protect water quality by collecting stormwater or reducing erosion.

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

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

13_Fire Station 5 outlot.pdf

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

13_Sheridan Hills outlot.pdf

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

13_PI outlot_first growing year.pdf

Where is the monarch habitat located? (Please provide an address, if possible)

Intersection of Plymouth Rd & Inverness Rd (https://www.bing.com/maps?cp=44.939338%7E-93.441668&lvl=18.8&style=g); across from 15155 Wayzata Blvd.; and adjacent to 2308 Sheridan Hills Rd.

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

These were Natural Resources staff projects

What is the total acreage of land that has been converted? 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. Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

2

How many lots were converted to monarch habitat? Please limit your answer to only the number of lots in the answer field below (e.g., 3)

3

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Please describe when the lots were converted to monarch habitat and the planned maintenance schedule.

o In 2023, we reviewed the city's 500+ outlots to find one or more that could be converted with maximum impact. We started with a one-acre site that is used for runoff collection but, uncharacteristically, covered in turf that must be mowed. The turf was removed in autumn 2023, and native prairie seed mixes were hand-sown into the space. This year, a remarkable variety of native plants were already up and blooming in the outlot, including common and swamp milkweed, blue vervain, great blue lobelia, and others. Weed-whipping was done in late spring and fall to deter weedy and invasive plants, and that kind of maintenance will continue going forward until the native plantings are fully established. In future, we plan to prune native trees around the space and remove invasive trees. Eventually we will plant more native trees and shrubs that benefit pollinators. o In 2024, we also undertook similar efforts at two other outlots.

Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

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

6_Engage with associations.pdf

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

Three homeowners' or townhome associations: Waters Edge, Clarion Hills, and St Albans Mill

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

o We continue to inform homeowners and townhome associations of available education and technical assistance options from the city, county and local watershed districts. That's starting to show results, with some associations doing their own resilient landscaping projects and others using consultants to create and install designs.

California Specific: Pass a resolution to protect over-wintering monarch butterfly habitat on public or private lands.

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

We are not in California

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

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We are not in California

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.

We are not in California

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