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 on actions that benefit monarchs, pollinators and other wildlife on public and private property. Minnetonka has been a Monarch Champion city four times since 2020. 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 2025

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.

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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.).

5000

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.)

250

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.

31.75

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.

We only track habitat created or maintained on city properties. That would include parks, outlots, trails and facilities.

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 always includes providing outreach material in multiple languages. This year, we also started working with a school in one of the city's most diverse and densely populated areas, to engage those students and get their ideas about how to spread the word into their families and neighborhoods.

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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 restoration efforts 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'd like to know how our experience can help other communities just getting started in this work.

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

Partnerships continue to be an important aspect.

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 2025

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

Ninth-annual Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Proclamation_2025.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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Planting for pollinators_May 2025.pdf

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

Helping pollinators thrive_June 2025.pdf

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

Why use native plants.jpg

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

Plant for water quality.jpg

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

Earth Day staff flyer.pdf

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

Each year we publish articles in the city's print newsletter (mailed to approximately 23,000 households), monthly e-bulletins (emailed to at least 7,400 subscribers), a blog, occasional social media posts and articles or flyers for staff. Numerous publications highlight aspects of pollinator protection, habitat diversity and resilience. For example, on Earth Day we promoted the concept of resilient landscaping to city staff. Our April special section in the print newsletter focused on "Nature's Economy"; the August blog covered the importance of controlling invasive buckthorn to replant native species; and tabling at the winter farmers market emphasized the value of native plants for habitat, water quality and more. • The city's website offers translation for Spanish, Somali, Russian, and other languages spoken in our county, and some education handouts and graphics have been translated into Spanish, French and Korean. The city's website offers translation for Spanish, Somali, Russian, and other languages spoken in our county, and some education handouts and graphics have been translated 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.

Adopt a Park Sign.jpg

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

For the fourth consecutive year, we partnered with Ridgedale Library (a large library hub serving residents in Minnetonka and numerous adjacent suburbs) to deliver a habitat-themed workshop for gardeners in the library's "Striving for Resilience" event series. This year's workshop focused on native edible plants, for their benefits to the food web and people. Related to our volunteer program: New park entry signs were installed in many of Minnetonka's 51 community and neighborhood parks. Soil around each sign was prepped, allowing 31 volunteers to design and plant unique pocket gardens at these sites. This Adopt-a-Park Sign program demonstrates (1) the use of low-growing native perennials that provide pollinator habitat and are more climate resilient, (2) a selection of pollinator-friendly annuals, and (3) gardening methods that don't involve chemicals.

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.

The Marsh_native plantings.jpg

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

Monarch on swamp milkweed.jpg

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

Mtka Industrial Rd culvert seeding.pdf

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 Engineering.

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

(A) This is an ongoing effort, but Parks and Facilities staff are now leaving milkweed, or actively planting it, in some rights-of-way and select planting areas rather than automatically controlling it as a "weed". And in some areas formerly focused on annual or ornamental plants, such as at our wellness facility, they have installed prairie-style plantings that include milkweed and nectar plants. (B) In 2025, Engineering repaired a culvert that runs between an industrial park and one of Minnetonka's largest arterial roads, to manage stormwater drainage toward an adjacent wetland complex and creek. 32,000sf

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of native plant seed mix was installed around the culvert, improving water absorption and reducing the impact of water pollutants from the industrial park's large area of impervious surface.

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.

Pollinator Playground Planting_LLP.pdf

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

Friends of Minnetonka Parks

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

Staff continued to collaborate with volunteers who installed a "pollinator plant walk" next to the play area at one of the city's most visited parks. This planting was installed in 2024 but is still being established and maintained, with planning underway for possible interpretative materials.

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.

St Albans Mill HOA rain garden design.pdf

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

Three homeowners' associations

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

Our Resilient Minnetonka program expanded this year to assist homeowners' associations and townhome associations interested in managing invasive species, improving water quality and taking other actions that can create monarch, pollinator and wildlife habitat. We also collaborate with local watershed districts that offer similar programs. At least three

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associations received technical assistance and grant funding in 2025 through these programs and partnerships.

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.

Landscape Plan_River of Life Assisted Living.pdf

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

All development projects are required to meet criteria for landscaping with at least 25 percent native plants. For example, one of three major development projects in Minnetonka this year was an assisted living facility. The landscape plan included 67 one-gallon butterfly milkweed plants; they also installed 15,000 square feet of native prairie seed on the property, and 1,400 sf of emergent wetland seed – both include milkweed species along with diverse nectar sources.

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.

Resilient Minnetonka.jpg

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

Sample residential landscaping design_A.pdf

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

Sample residential landscaping design_B.pdf

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

Sample residential landscaping design_C.jpg

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

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process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

(A) 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, online learning modules for self-paced learning, an extensive online resource library, technical assistance and funding. (B) In 2025, city staff formed a new partnership with Lionsgate Academy, a charter school that provides an inclusive learning experience for middle and high school students who are on the autism spectrum or have learning differences. The campus is located in one of the city's most densely populated areas and across the street from Green Circle Park, where the city has a long-term investment in managing invasive species and restoring habitat. City staff will collaborate with students in a Service Learning class, to develop meaningful engagement materials that help the public appreciate this park's unique values.

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

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

Ridgedale Library

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).

(A) At July's Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month events, we used a new approach to engage folks in showing their appreciation for pollinators: chalk-art butterflies. Each butterfly was outlined at the beginning of the event and people were able to color in the sections of wings and body as a kind of mosaic. The result was temporary but vibrant art on our city parking lots and sidewalks. (B) We also used our Pollinator Pals activity, which 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.

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

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

3312

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

103

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

None

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.

Seed Collection_2025.pdf

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

6

What species were collected or propagated?

Common, Swamp, Butterfly and Poke milkweeds, along with 11 other native species (see attached list)

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

This was a staff-only effort.

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

In 2025, 12.35 pounds of native seed was collected from numerous city parks and facilities. Rather than propagating plants in a nursery, seeds are typically spread in restoration areas during the late autumn or early winter, allowing them to cold-stratify over the winter and sprout where they are. This facilitates the spread of locally adapted native plants, improves habitat connectivity, increases habitat diversity, helps to compete with invasive plants and efficiently reduces the cost of restoration.

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.

Fire Dept prairie demonstration.pdf

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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)

A 1.2-acre block of native dry and wet prairie was installed several years ago at the city's Emergency Services hub, located next to City Hall, the community center and a major arterial road where many people can see it. No new plantings were done here in 2025, but it is carefully maintained for ecological function and to show residents an example of healthy prairie in an otherwise developed location.

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

None

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.

1.2

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

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

Plymouth-Inverness outlot restoration_2025.pdf

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

Ford Park outlot restoration_2025.pdf

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

(A) The intersection of Plymouth & Inverness Rd; (B) Outlot attached to northeast corner of 2115 Ford Rd.

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

Lakewinds Co-op staff; Tree Trust

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.

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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)

2

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

(A) In 2023, we started restoration of a one-acre site that is used for runoff collection but was, uncharacteristically, covered in turf that had to be mowed. The turf was removed and native prairie seed mixes were hand-sown into the space. Over the past two growing seasons, native plant surveys were conducted. In 2025, at least 31 native wildflower species were identifies, including: swamp, common and butterfly milkweeds; pale purple coneflower; wild bergamot; smooth blue aster; blue and hoary vervains; boneset; Joe Pye weed and prairie blazing star. Weed-whipping and hand pulling of weeds was done in late spring and fall. Swamp milkweed pods and Joe Pye seed were collected here; the seeds will be dispersed back into this outlot and in other restoration areas. (B) This year, we initiated a similar effort on a one-acre unmaintained outlot adjacent to the city's Ford Park and will use similar staging for maintenance.

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.

Median_Ridgedale Commons.jpg

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

Ridgedale planting areas.jpg

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

(A) Median, rights-of-way and roundabouts on the length of Ridgedale Dr. (see attached map); (B) Rain garden in the ROW of 11522 Minnetonka Blvd, the city's Public Works facility

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

0

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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.

0.5

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

(A) No new roadside plantings were done in 2025 along Ridgedale Drive, but existing landscaping in this area was maintained through weeding and watering (as necessary). (B) 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. Like all city roadside plantings, this is weeded and maintained annually.

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.

MNR presentation_socmed.jpg

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

Make a Nature Journal.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)

• See Action Step 8, regarding our new collaboration with Lionsgate Academy. We also have an onoing outdoor education program that includes many volunteer events, allowing adults to participate in restoration projects at city parks and learn how restoration builds habitat for pollinators and wildlife. At the request of a high school club, staff presented to teens about pollinator ecology. And at the city's very popular outdoor autumn event, staff led a nature journaling activity to encourage hundreds of children and families to observe and appreciate the natural world in their yards, our community natural areas and beyond.

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)

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2

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

Minnetonka High School; Lionsgate Academy

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

Collaboration on guiding students in a service-learning project to create public engagement materials connecting residents to a local park where staff have long been restoring monarch habitat.

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).

150

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

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

Staff maintain the space annually, weeding as part of our ongoing restoration work.

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).

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

None

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

Minnetonka is a 31-year participant in the Arbor Day Foundation's Tree City USA program.

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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.

Polli-Neighbor Pledge_English.jpg

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

Polli-Neighbor Pledge_Spanish.jpg

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

Good Polli-Neighbor certificates_map 2025.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?

None

When did this challenge take place?

July 2025, as part of Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month - but we promote the challenge year-round

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.

7

Please describe your challenge and the results.

(A) This was the seventh year of our Polli-Neighbor Pledge, promoted during Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month and fall migration. We have translated the pledge into

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Spanish, French and Korean. (B) This year, the Natural Resources division sent out Good Polli-Neighbor certificates of appreciation to eight households and associations that undertook native planting projects embodying this pledge.

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.

Community science.pdf

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).

120

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.

(A) As part of Minnetonka's annual Monarch and Pollinator Awareness Month, we always share a list of community science programs accessible online, such as Journey North and Monarch Larva Monitoring Project. See attachment for monarch butterfly festival item. (B) This year the city installed Chronolog photo stations in three city parks. These stations crowdsource a visual record of three spots where the city is restoring a woodland, a prairie and a creek shoreline. Regular park users and passersby use the photo station to frame a photo, then email it using a site-specific code. Collectively, the photos are used to create a timelapse video that shows the progress of a restoration project over time. Participants can follow along, seeing how the city's efforts (often with the help of volunteers) are improving habitat for pollinators and wildlife – and for our own enjoyment in the parks we value.

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.

City Hall planting_2025.pdf

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

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None

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

700

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

This is ongoing – we plant diverse native species in restoration areas and naturalistic planting areas, and use natives or pollinator-friendly annuals (like Tithonia and Zinnia) in formal planting beds. For example, this year planting areas in the main parking lots at City Hall were enhanced with more than 700 plugs of 12 native species, including butterfly milkweed as a monarch host plant and prairie blazing star as a superfood for migratory monarchs in late summer and early autumn.

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.

Seeding in buckthorn control areas_2025.pdf

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

Cullen Preserve_native planting.jpg

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

2025 ThankYou_Troop409.pdf

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

Volunteers controlling buckthorn in park.jpg

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

St Albans Mill HOA bt control.jpg

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

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31.75

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.

(A) Invasive species management has been ongoing in Minnetonka since the 1990s, with numerous parks under restoration in any given year. Native seed mixes are routinely put down after buckthorn removal; in 2025, 31.75 acres of new restoration area were seeded in the parks. For example: this fall, staff planted 1,944 native plant plugs (including swamp milkweed) and spread native seed mix over a four-acre section of the city's new Cullen Nature Preserve. (B) Volunteers make a world of difference in helping the city achieve big restoration goals in parkland. In 2025, approximately 400 people volunteered, either individually or groups. For example: the Friends of Minnetonka Parks group held dozens of buckthorn control events; corporate and social groups (such as Berd Spokes LLC, Minnesota Off-Road Cyclists and Minnesota GreenCorps) worked in native prairie areas; and Boy Scout Troop 409 fashioned stakes from buckthorn debris to stabilize a slope, then put down a quarter-acre of native wildflower seed. (C) Invasive species are also a significant issue on private property, presenting a barrier to residents' ability to provide native habitat in their yards. Our Resilient Minnetonka program, including education, resources, funding ideas and technical assistance (such as site consultations, residential buckthorn pick-up, rebates for planting, and design assistance) – increases awareness and empowers residents to overcome barriers that might otherwise prevent them from taking action.

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.

MPAM tabling activities.pdf

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

MPAM promotion .pdf

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

Library display for MPAM.jpg

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), e.g. 500)

350

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What was the date of your festival?

July 2025

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

Ridgedale Library

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 ninth-annual celebration included: a pollinator-themed booth at the farmers market, with storytime about pollinators; a "Pollinator Party" event for families to learn about pollinator species and their interactions with plants; a workshop about native edible plants; a display of pollinator- and habitat-themed books at the central library, with coloring pages and other activities; and virtual activities so residents could learn about or help monarchs, pollinators and habitat on their own time. As always, we promoted our Polli-Neighbor Pledge at these events; that graphic has been translated into Spanish, French and Korean.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

2

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

There is interpretive signage about monarchs and milkweed at Civic Center Park, next to the city's new wellness center. Two 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).

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

None

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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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.

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

N/A

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?

None

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 to allow 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 updated its Native Landscapes legislation in 2023, staff revisited the city's lawn ordinance to ensure its language is consistent with state statute. It focuses on "managed natural landscapes," particularly those that reduce or replace turf in favor of milkweed and other native and/or resilient plantings. The proposed amendments were approved by City Council in 2024.

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

N/A

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

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

Monarch plant list.pdf

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

None

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 2019, city council passed staff amendments to city code 300, requiring a minimum of 25 percent native plants in landscaping plans for development and redevelopment. The city's natural resources specialist reviews all plans to ensure compliance. This year, staff created a handout to help developers, contractors and others choose native plants that will support federally endangered monarch butterflies. The list emphasizes the need for (1) diverse forage for adults; (2) milkweed for caterpillars; (3) and plants that blossom late to support migrating monarchs.

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

N/A

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.

Public Works.jpg

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

CivicCenter.jpg

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

Headwaters trail.jpg

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

None

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.

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 Civic Center complex, Public Works, trails, and the city's wellness facility.

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

N/A

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?

None

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.

All of the city's major strategic documents include habitat improvement, emphasizing the city's actions on public property and helping residents take actions where they live. These

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documents include: the city’s strategic profile; the 2040 Comprehensive Plan; the Climate Action & Adaptation Plan; the Natural Resources Master Plan; and the Parks, Open Spaces and Trail Plan. Visit our Projects website at https://www.minnetonkamatters.com/hub-page/parks-and-open-space for information about parks currently in the master planning process. Park plans help staff hone in on site-specific approaches for habitat restoration, as well as recreation and public education or other engagement.

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

N/A

Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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

None

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.

(A) • 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 evolved to emphasize chemical use as, ideally, the last in a suite of options for pest and weed control. 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. Where herbicide is the only practical option, it is done in a very targeted fashion (using daubers, or spraying on windless days to prevent drift) and conducted in the early morning or late evening when fewer pollinators are active. (B) In 2024, Minnetonka also became a pilot city in an emerging effort to do Low Salt Design – using landscaping and building methods that reduce the need for road salt, which (among other problems) can harm native vegetation used by pollinators. (C) Also see Action Step 3, about new Adopt-a-Park Sign plantings in city parks.

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

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N/A

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.

Darkness is Habitat 1.jpg

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

Darkness is Habitat 2.jpg

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

City Code_Exterior Lighting.pdf

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

New directional lighting at Big Willow Park.jpg

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

None

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 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.

N/A

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

(A) Minnetonka is working toward this goal through education, technical assistance and incentives, rather than by passing ordinance (and existing ordinance does include exterior lighting performance standards that are inspected). We also do public education about

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darkness as a kind of habitat that should be protected and enhanced. (B) In 2025, new directional lighting was installed around the much-used soccer field at Big Willow Park. This park is one of the gems in Minnetonka's park system, with an active baseball, soccer, and softball complex adjacent to a natural area. Several miles of trails and paths wind along the Minnehaha Creek corridor and through adjacent wooded areas, where active invasive species control and habitat restoration have been underway for several years. The soccer field’s old lighting system had 32 light fixtures with metal halide bulbs; the new system has 20 fixtures using LED bulbs that balance the need for good lighting for human use with characteristics – such as more amber-tinted light and less heat production – that will not attract as many insects.

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