City of Moorhead

Moorhead, MN

Mayor Shelly Carlson

Pledge Summary

Action Items Committed for 2021

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 city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

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.
- Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2026	3/9/2026	
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2025	3/21/2025	Signatories
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2024	3/26/2024	Signatories

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Mayor Shelly Carlson	2023	3/30/2023	Signatories
City of Moorhead Mayor Shelly Carlson	2022	2/8/2022	Signatories
Mayor Shelly Carlson	2021	4/26/2021	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.).

150

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.)

These were mostly adults.

In total, how many acres of monarch habitat have been created in your city in the last 12 months? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

.09

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 converted some turf grass into pollinator beds at our Public Works buildings.

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

We have not made a concerted effort to engage marginalized communities in pollinator plantings at this time.

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

We have many citizens who are concerned about protecting pollinators, and there is a lot of energy around this topic right now.

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?

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Some parts of the Pollinator Gardening webinar were very useful. It was most geared towards Texas, so that did not apply to us as much here in Minnesota. However, the overall principles are the same, and there are some plants that live in both regions.

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

The City of Moorhead has been working with Dakota Audubon and converting turf grass along the river into native prairie. The overall acreage that Dakota Audubon has converted is 159. They are also working along the river on the North Dakota side. This will help create a travel corridor for pollinators and other wildlife. The city plans to continue efforts to create pollinator habitat within the city as well.

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:

June 14th, 2021

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

Moorhead Pollinator Week, June 21st-27th.

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Proclamation -- Pollinator Week -- June 21-27, 2021.docx

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.

CrystalandPatrice.jpg

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

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The City of Moorhead created a post on Facebook about the pollinator planting that Public Works staff installed. The Facebook post explained the Mayor's Monarch pledge briefly, and it explained the need to create more habitat for pollinators. It was not specifically used as a call to action for homeowners to plant pollinator beds in their homes or neighborhoods, but it did highlight the need for this type of habitat and showed that the city is making steps to create more pollinator habitat. This Facebook post had 108 "likes", which is pretty good for the city's Facebook page. Here is the text for the post: The City of Moorhead has signed the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, which calls for cities to do at least three action items to help pollinators thrive. Populations of butterflies and other pollinators are struggling due in part to habitat loss, so members of the City of Moorhead's forestry and parks maintenance staff converted some green space by the Public Works offices into pollinator beds. The projects cover about 4,000 square feet, with more than 90 species of native and pollinator-friendly plant varieties. There are nectar-producing plants and host plants for at least 13 species of local butterflies to lay eggs on and for the larvae to feed on. Not only was it a fun project, but it will help pollinators, which are crucial to our environment. Over the next several years the pollinator gardens will continue to mature and become more established; several types of bees were found on the plants within minutes of planting! Public Works staff were present at a neighborhood tour of several pollinator beds in October, and we described the efforts we have underway to add more pollinator plantings. Staff met many local citizens who were enthusiastic about adding more pollinator plantings in the city. There were an estimated 30 people in attendance.

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.

The city has been working with at least 4 internal divisions (Engineering, Planning, Parks and Recreation, Forestry) and one external group (Dakota Audubon) looking into more opportunities for expanded pollinator habitat along the Red River. The City of Moorhead is also part of the Resilient Task Force, which is actually comprised of interested citizens from the local colleges and universities, the city, the county, and non-profit groups in the community. There is a proposed project as part of this group that could expand pollinator habitat.

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

The City of Moorhead has a River Corridor Master Plan where staff from Engineering, Planning, Public Works, and Dakota Audubon have been converting grass into woodland or native prairie along the river. This has been an ongoing effort, and the City of Moorhead is part of other efforts to engage with the community and create more native/pollinator plantings. The City of Moorhead is working with the Resilient Task Force, which is looking into more opportunities for plantings. These efforts are coming from a working group within the task force.

Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community

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location.

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

After DMV 2.jpg

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

After Shop.jpg

Where is the demonstration garden located and how does this location relate to the cultural significance of the monarch (if relevant)? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible)

The locations are at 700 15th Ave N and 1300 15th Ave N, Moorhead, MN.

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

This was a project taken on by Forestry and Park Maintenance, as well as a Forestry Corps member.

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.

.09

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

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

For the brand new planting at the Public Works locations, we worked in-house to complete the effort. We did rely on the expertise of the nursery we worked with to help us with plant selection.

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

628

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

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Public Works Staff converted about 4,000 square feet of previously mowed lawn into pollinator beds. A lot of thought went into choosing plants that were the most favored as nectar producers and host plants for local pollinators. This was planned, prepped, and planted late this summer into October. As part of this project, Public Works staff also transplanted some roses that would have been destroyed in a construction project. The roses were incorporated into the pollinator beds, adding color and a food source for pollinators that utilize rose species.

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?

Clay County Soil and Water Conservation District.

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 in place before this year. Milkweed was not included as a noxious plant because it is a native plant. Within the city, there are no listed noxious weeds, there is just a policy to keep lawns below eight inches, unless the homeowners have a permit to convert their lawn to a native planting.

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

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

!FINAL BLVD Planting Application Packet.pdf

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

This was already in place. The city’s ordinances focus on the height of the grass/plants, requiring residents keep their lawns cut below eight inches in height. There is a permit for people to convert their lawns into a natural lawn, which has been in place since around 1984 according to our Planning Department. There is also a permit for those who wish to plant pollinator plants on the boulevard, and this policy was established in 2018. The boulevard planting permit is attached.

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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.

1984, 2018

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

The Pollinator Walk event that occurred this Fall was a tour of both private and public native plantings in a neighborhood and two parks. More events could be done like this in the future to help community members to learn more about native planting and its benefits.

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.

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

Public Works staff, Planning, Dakota Audubon, Resilient Moorhead, Concordia College, and more.

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.

This is currently underway. There are several more areas being looked at to incorporate native/pollinator plantings. Some staff are actively collaborating with community leaders to install more native planting sites. Public Works has also assisted in a project from a Green Corps member to implement a pollinator bed in an unused portion of grass by a bus stop. There is a lot of energy in the community for pollinator plantings to help create habitat and beautify the city.

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