City of Columbia Heights

Columbia Heights, MN

Mayor Amáda Márquez Simula

Pledge Summary

Columbia Heights is a first-ring suburb of Minneapolis, MN and has a population of 20,000. The city is urban, has bus lines, all levels of income, housing, business, schools and is the 7th most diverse city in MN. Mayor Márquez Simula of Columbia Heights, MN has committed to saving the Monarch butterfly and other pollinators with their signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engaging residents in building more pollinator habitats throughout the city.

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 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

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- 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.
- 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.
- 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

- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Amada Marquez Simula	2023	4/11/2023	
Mayor Amáda Márquez Simula	2022	12/21/2021	Leadership Circle
Mayor Amáda Márquez Simula	2021	4/27/2021	Leadership Circle

Action Items

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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.).

500

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.)

300 youth and 200 adults

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

5

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.

residences (yards, containers, balconies, etc.), schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces, common areas and parks.

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

Partnering with Latinx community via Outdoor Latinos and Conoce los Parques.

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

Increasing community awareness and habitat for pollinators.

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?

NA

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

NA

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Selected Action Items

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.

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

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

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

What species were collected or propagated?

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

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

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

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

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

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.

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)

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

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

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nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

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)

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)

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

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

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).

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

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.

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

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?

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

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

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

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

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?

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

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.

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

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

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

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

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.

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

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?

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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.

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.

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

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?

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

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.

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

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?

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

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.

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

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:

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August 23, 2021

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

Mayor's Monarch Pledge Month: August 2021

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2021 Mayor's Monarch Pledge Month Proclamation.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.)

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

Social Media, City Website and HeightsNext website. https://heightsnext.org/monarch/

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

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

Engaged with HeightsNext, First Lutheran Church and Latinx Program in Anoka County. Pollinator Class I June 16, 6:30-8 pm, via Zoom Ten Easy Tips to Creating a Pollinator Friendly Yard June 22, 7-8 pm, via Zoom Ask a Landscape Architect July 14, 6:30-7:30 pm, via Zoom Pollinator Class II August 17, 6:30-8 pm, via Zoom Building a Better Backyard for Pollinators September 21, 6-7:30 pm, Columbia Heights Public Library

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.

Heights Next, Anoka County, First Lutheran Church, Outdoor Latinos, Pollinate MN, Columbia Heights Park and Rec Department, Columbia Heights Library.

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

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Host festival, movie night, library events, and art projects. Offer tips to residents regarding program: Tips Plant native flowering plants. Get a list of native plants for your zip code. Reduce the size of your grass lawn and replace it with native blooming plants. Attract hummingbirds by planting dense shrubs for nesting and native plants with bright red and orange tubular flowers for food. Supplement as needed with a nectar feeder. Leave standing dead trees, fallen logs, and bare patches of sandy soil. Most native bees are solitary and lay eggs in tiny tunnels in dead trees, fallen branches, hollow stems, or in sandy soil. You can even put out a bee house filled with nesting tubes. Plant host plants. Butterflies need special “host plants” as food for their caterpillars. Monarchs rely exclusively on milkweed, so planting it will provide essential habitat. Find host plants for butterflies and moths native to your area. Avoid Pesticides. Native plants attract ladybugs, predatory wasps, and other natural enemies of garden pests. These insects are a sign of a healthy garden, and an important food source for birds. No need to spray pesticides. Hand-pick pests if you have an infestation or wash them off with a stream of water from a hose. If you must spray: Only use organic or natural pest deterrents such as soap, garlic and chili pepper; spray only at night, when flowers are not blooming, and when it’s dry and windless; use products that target specific pests rather than broad-spectrum ones; avoid anything labeled as toxic to bees or that kills the “weedy” flowers pollinators visit; specifically avoid garden products that include neonicotinoids; and carefully read and follow application instructions on any spray, using them sparingly.

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

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

Heights Next, Columbia Heights Public Works Department, Outdoor Latinos.

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

Classes Pollinator Class I June 16, 6:30-8 pm, via Zoom Ten Easy Tips to Creating a Pollinator Friendly Yard June 22, 7-8 pm, via Zoom Ask a Landscape Architect July 14, 6:30-7:30 pm, via Zoom Pollinator Class II August 17, 6:30-8 pm, via Zoom Building a Better Backyard for Pollinators September 21, 6-7:30 pm, Columbia Heights Public Library

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

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

Classes Pollinator Class I June 16, 6:30-8 pm, via Zoom Ten Easy Tips to Creating a Pollinator Friendly Yard June 22, 7-8 pm, via Zoom Ask a Landscape Architect July 14, 6:30-7:30 pm, via Zoom Pollinator Class II August 17, 6:30-8 pm, via Zoom Building a Better Backyard for Pollinators September 21, 6-7:30 pm, Columbia Heights Public Library

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

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.

Partnered with Outdoor Latinos for a table at the Conoce los Parques event. https://www.facebook.com/events/locke-county-park/anoka-county-fest-latino/362128835625318/

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?

Columbia Heights Recreation Department.

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).

20

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).

Several water color classes hosted by the Columbia Heights Recreation Department, and Senior Citizen Activities Program.

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)

Monarch Festival allowed for seed packet making for children.

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

30

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

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HeightsNext, Kiwanis, City of Columbia Heights Recreation Department.

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

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)

Blooming Sunshine Pollinator Garden

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

HeightNext

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.

0.1

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.

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)

60

What was the date of your festival?

August 18, 2021

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

Heights Next, Kiwanis, City of Columbia Heights Recreation Department

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).

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Festival and Movie Night were located at Columbia Heights City Park (Husset Park) and was accessible to all. 6:30pm – Participate in seed activities, education tables, and public pollinator art. We want you to join the fun! 7:30pm – Columbia Heights Puppet Wagon monarch butterfly show 8:30pm – Movie “Flight of the Butterflies“

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)

30

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

https://heightsnext.org/product/lawn-sign/

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?

HeightsNext

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

40

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Utilized educational classes, birdscaping, and book club discussions to encourage participation in community garden.

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.

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).

40

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

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HeightNext

When did this challenge take place?

Ongoing

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.

1

Please describe your challenge and the results.

Mayors Monarch Pledge, Map Our Monarchs engaged the community to place their garden on a interactive City map and to use yard signs to encourage others to participate as well.

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