

# City of Aurora

Aurora, CO

Mayor Mike Coffman

## Pledge Summary

More than 386,000 residents choose to live in Aurora, making it the third largest city in Colorado and the 54th largest in the United States. The city covers more than 160 square miles, and is located within three counties: Arapahoe, Adams, and Douglas. Aurora boasts over 8,000 acres of open space, 119 miles of trail, 103 parks, 3 nature centers, and 2 reservoirs.

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

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

## Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Mike Coffman	2026	3/30/2026	
Mayor Mike Coffman	2025	3/16/2025	Leadership Circle

Mayor Mike Coffman	2024	3/27/2024	Signatories
Mayor Michael Coffman	2023	2/16/2023	Signatories
Mayor Mike Coffman	2022	3/29/2022	Signatories
City Manager & Aurora City Council Member, Ward 1 Jim Twombly & Crystal Murillo	2021	4/29/2021	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 (e.g., 50).**

1497

**Of the total number of individuals engaged, how many youth (0-18) were reached through the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in your community this year (Jan. - Dec.)? If none, please write 0." (Only allow numerical values.)**

921

**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).**

10

**Where is your habitat being created? This may include residences (yards, containers, balconies, etc.), schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces and common areas or parks.**

Natural areas as part of Aurora's open space system- Jewell Wetland Butterfly Garden, Confluence Natural Area, Piney Creek Trail, Sand Creek Park and Sand Creek Regional Greenway, and Pronghorn Natural Area

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

At the Party for Pollinators a concerted effort was made to engage the northwest Aurora community with participation from organizations such as Food Justice for Northeast Aurora and Generation Wild Northeast Coalition. We also provide direct pollinator and pollinator habitat programming at and with the local library branch located in this part of the city as a centralized hub.

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

The office of the Mayor expressed interest in continuing to engage with the Mayor's Monarch Pledge and continued efforts for pollinator and monarch conservation.

**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?**

Facilitation of networking opportunities and a larger, more collaborative PR campaign about what cities are doing through this pledge to help spread the word would help expand the engagement.

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

More community members participated in volunteer stewardship efforts this year and this trend is expected to continue in the coming year. As well, more pollinator programming was offered to the community at large and more individuals were reached, including nearly double the number of youth engaged with pollinator focused programming.

## 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:**

6/17/2025

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

Aurora Pollinator Week

**Upload a copy of your proclamation.**

[2025 Aurora Pollinator Week\\_signed.pdf](#)

**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)**

We installed a new native plant garden at the Morrison Nature Center at Star K Ranch Open Space- 16002 E Smith Rd. Aurora, CO 80011 as well as maintained the demonstration gardens at the Aurora Water-wise Garden (15151 E Alameda Pkwy. Aurora, CO 80012) and the Plains Conservation Center (21901 E Hampden Ave. Aurora, CO 80013).

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

The native plant garden was planted with the help of open space and natural resources volunteer stewards, local scouting troops, and students from North Middle School in Aurora.

**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.**

1.75

**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.**

[new monarch tagger holding butterfly 10.9a.jpg](#)

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

[Another Tagger Holding Monarch.jpg](#)

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

[Tagged monarch.jpg](#)

**How many estimated individuals participated in your community science effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 150).**

202

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

Butterfly Pavilion, Monarch Joint Venture, Monarch Watch, Journey North, and Colorado Butterfly Monitoring Network, Bud Burst

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

We partnered with educational organizations and community science projects to monitor butterfly populations in Aurora. Community science projects offered the public means of assisting in pollinator monitoring while giving service to the City itself. Volunteers observed and recorded butterflies in Aurora open spaces and parks multiple times per season, informing land management from the Open Space and Natural Resource Division when making conservation decisions. The two monarch focused projects that Aurora participated in are centered around the two legs of monarch migration and are meant to better understand the timing and pace of themigration, mortality during the migration, and changes in geographic distribution. The tagging program helps answer questions about the origins of monarchs that reach Mexico. It also shows that the probability of reaching Mexico is related to geographic location, and the date (particularly as this relates to the migration window for a given location). As well, with City of Aurora run BioBlitz events periodically throughout the year we were able to document a broader view biodiversity through having community member participation. <https://butterflies.org/research-and-protect/butterfly-monitoring/><https://monarchwatch.org/> and <https://monarchjointventure.org/get-involved/study-monarchs-community-science-opportunities>

**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.**

[IMG\\_7619.png](#)

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

[IMG\\_7593.png](#)

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

[IMG\\_7574.png](#)

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

[IMG\\_7559.png](#)

**How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 500)**

141

**What was the date of your festival?**

June 21, 2025

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

City of Aurora Mayor Mike Coffman, COA Water Department, Butterfly Pavilion, Generation Wild, Aurora Public Library, Aurora History Museum, Highline Canal Conservancy, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Bee Joy Farm, Aurora Seed Farm, Revols Beehive Garden, COA Open Space Advisory Board

**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).**

This event has now become a yearly festival meant to increase monarch butterfly and pollinator awareness by celebrating what they do. The event was held at the Aurora Water-wise Garden at the Aurora Municipal Center along trails with several booths along the way. Participants learned about Monarchs and pollinators at the booth stops with hands on activities and games presented by numerous community partners and organizations. The date and times of the festival were selected to maximize participation and coincide with the national Pollinator Week, Aurora Pollinator Week, Colorado Pollinator Month. The walk was short and accessible. The festival was free. Outreach was performed using all available channels (electronic, print, word of mouth). This was the third year of the event and we saw a 40% increase in participation compared to last year's event.

**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.**

A state wide campaign was initiated by Great Outdoors Colorado focused on getting underserved youth into nature. The city of Aurora joined as part of this initiative with a coalition of neighboring government organizations and non-profit organizations to engage with underserved communities. The results have been outstanding and Great Outdoors Colorado has continued to support and fund the initiative.

<https://www.generationwildnemc.org/about-us>

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

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

[Plant Giveaway at Party for Pollinators - June 2025.JPG](#)

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

[7-30-2025 PCC Native Garden Staff and Volunteer.jpg](#)

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

[11-22-2025 Native Plant Seed Swap Winter Sowing Demo Morgana.jpg](#)

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

[11-22-2025 Native Plant Seed Swap.jpg](#)

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

260 plants from 9 species were given away during the plant giveaway event and hundreds of seeds from 110 different species were given away during the winter seed swap event

**How many people attended your event?**

185

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

City of Aurora Open Space and Natural Resource Division, COA Water Conservation Division, Revols Beehive Gardens and Aurora Seed Library, and Wild Ones Front Range

**Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.**

**How many people attended your event?**

10

**What species were collected or propagated?**

Swamp Milkweed (*Asclepius incarnata*), Showy Milkweed (*A. Speciosa*), Butterfly Weed (*A. Tuberosa*), and Horsetail Milkweed (*A. subverticillata*)

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

City of Aurora Seed Library, Revols Beehive Gardens, Front Range Chapter of Wild Ones, COA Water Conservation Division

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

Throughout the end of 2024's growing season, numerous open space volunteer stewards collected seeds from various milkweed stands in City of Aurora Open Spaces. Over the winter 2024 into 2025 volunteer plant fosters propagated these collected seeds into over 60 successful milkweed seed starts which were then included in our plant giveaway effort this year. During the 2025 field season, volunteers once again collected over 400 milkweed seeds from at least 5 different open spaces, and over 20 volunteers cleaned and prepped these seeds for winter propagation for next year.

**Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.**

**What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants?**

2500

**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.**

Staff and volunteers utilized integrated pest management techniques to eradicate, contain, and/or suppress invasive species based on each individual species priority ranking by the state department of agriculture. Raising awareness amongst the public, implementing reseeding efforts, and using mechanical control methods are among the numerous ways invasive plant species were tackled.