City of Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor, MI

Mayor Christopher Taylor

Pledge Summary

Ann Arbor is a city located along the picturesque Huron River in southeast Michigan. With a population of about 120,000, it is home to over 160 parks, totaling about 2,200 acres. Over half of those acres are comprised of natural areas which are managed and maintained by the Natural Area Preservation division of the Parks and Recreation Services Unit. The University of Michigan and Washtenaw County also own and maintain significant natural acreage within the city. The Ann Arbor community places high importance on environmental stewardship, both on public lands and in private yards. Mayor Christopher Taylor has taken the Mayors' Monarch Pledge in recognition of the importance of the monarch butterfly and other pollinators to the health of our ecosystems and our community members. We are committed to protecting and restoring our precious pollinator habitat.

Action Items Committed for 2025

Communications and Convening

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

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- 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).
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

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

Systems Change

- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Christopher Taylor	2026	1/13/2026	
Mayor Christopher Taylor	2025	1/17/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Christopher Taylor	2024	2/2/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Christopher Taylor	2023	1/12/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Christopher Taylor	2022	1/25/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor Christopher Taylor	2021	1/5/2021	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.).

120000

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.)

40000

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

below (e.g., 3). Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

0

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.

Parks and private yards

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

Our Environmental Education and Engagement Coordinator has been hard at work creating connections in traditionally underserved areas of our community. She has forged connections with community centers, senior centers, and after school programs to offer classes revolving around the importance of our local wildlife, including pollinators. This year, she represented the city's Parks Department at Leslie Science and Nature Center's Monarch Migration Festival, where she was able to reach new members of the community.

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

We are committed to protecting and enhancing pollinator habitat due to the fact that monarchs and other pollinator species populations are experiencing widespread declines. We understand the importance of pollinators to the health of our ecosystems, and our Natural Area Preservation unit is committed to protecting and restoring those ecosystems for the benefit of all flora and fauna, in addition to our community members. We want to inspire our community to continue to take action in their own yards as well.

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?

Educational webinars have been very helpful and have proved to be a great resource to share information among city staff and with members of the community. In the past, grants have also been very helpful for community organizations to purchase or be gifted native plant material, and it would be nice to see more of these. Bigger picture, additional grants for the purpose of hiring more staff could help us expand our habitat restoration and environmental engagement efforts into new areas of our city. Finally, online tools that can be customized to our area, such as an online database of pollinator plants that show optimal plants for Ann Arbor's climate, are a great resource for our community.

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

Pollinator conservation continues to be a topic of much conversation and activism in Ann Arbor. As in pervious years, residents, city staff, and community leaders and partners are

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

enthusiastic about enhancing pollinator habitat in our city.

Selected Action Items

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.

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

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.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

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.

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.

a2payc-yard-sign-front.jpg

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

The City's Office of Sustainability and Innovation continued its Pollinator-Aware Yard Care (PAYC) program in the spring of 2025, with the goal of increasing resident awareness regarding yard-care strategies that support pollinators and their habitat. This program consists of a webpage that lists actions residents can take to protect pollinators in their yards and serves as a compendium of resources for residents interested in taking those actions. In addition, yard signs are available that indicate that the resident's yard is a part of the program, and it directs those who are interested to the webpage. This year, 145 people joined the program, and 82 yard signs were placed in the community. The Office of the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner also continued to advertise their design assistance visit program, in which staff visit residents' homes by appointment and offer advice and information on how to build a rain garden, natural shoreline, or native garden. The program recommends native plants that will work well for individual sites and match the homeowner’s aesthetic tastes.

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.

CSP+Flyer.pdf

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

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

Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation Department, Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation division, Washtenaw County Parks, the Leslie Science and Nature Center, the Office of the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner, The Stewardship Network, Michigan Conservation Stewards, Michigan State University Extension

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

The City's Parks & Recreation Department supported the Leslie Science and Nature Center for their annual Monarch Migration Festival (See Action Item 21). The City's Natural Area Preservation (NAP) division, the Washtenaw County Parks, and the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner's Office are coordinating partners of the Michigan State University Extension's Conservation Stewards Program, which seeks to educate and involve individuals in environmental and conservation issues in Michigan. This programs focuses on the importance of conserving native habitats for the benefit of all flora and fauna, including butterflies and other pollinators. NAP is also a financial supporter of The Stewardship Network, a respected local organization that works to connect, equip, and mobilize people and organizations to care for land and water in their communities, which includes conserving and enhancing pollinator habitat.

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.

The City's Natural Area Preservation staff continued to actively work with developers seeking to incorporate native plants and rain gardens into the landscaping of their developments. NAP staff reviewed seed mixes and plant lists for appropriateness, and advised on minimizing negative impacts to existing natural features.

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)

976

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

260

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

Funding for the City's 10,000 Trees community native tree planting program was provided by American Forests. The program is carried out by the City's Office of Sustainability and Innovation.

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)

A butterfly garden was maintained at Gallup Park (3000 Fuller Rd), one of the busiest parks in Ann Arbor. This garden has high visibility, and is likely to make a significant impact upon visitors to the site. A native shoreline habitat near a highly-visited playground was also maintained in the same park. At Veteran's Memorial Park (2150 Jackson Ave.), an Alternative Mowing Demonstration Garden was maintained at the entrance to the park's pool and ice rink facility.

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

The City of Ann Arbor Rotary Club partners with City Parks staff to maintain the butterfly garden at Gallup Park.

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.

0.14

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

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

Bird City logo.jpg

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

Michigan Audubon

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

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

Ann Arbor was designated as a Bird City Michigan in 2025. https://birdcity.org/michigan

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).

5

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

Michigan Butterfly Network, Kalamazoo Nature Center

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

The Natural Area Preservation division continued to be the Ann Arbor hub for the Michigan Butterfly Network (https://naturecenter.org/michiganbutterfly). Volunteers were trained in the identification of monarchs and other butterfly species, and they were trained in the Pollard method of surveying. Volunteers completed 63 surveys in 10 city parks and public areas, and they reported all the butterflies they saw along their survey routes to www.pollardbase.org. Attendees of the Leslie Science and Nature Center's Monarch Migration Festival also released tagged butterflies in order to enhance local butterfly populations and to contribute to the national tracking and monitoring effort. See Action Item 21.

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?

Volunteer park adopters

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

145

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

Volunteer park adopters with the Adopt-A-Park program planted plugs of native nectar-producing plants such as northern blazing star, sand coreopsis, ironweed and Joe-pye-weed, along with native shrubs such as ninebark, sand cherry, and elderberry in gardens at 3 city parks.

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

440

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.

The City's Natural Area Preservation division continued its extensive ongoing invasive species removal program in natural areas within city parks, which in focuses on expanding native prairie, forest, and wetland habitat where milkweed and other nectar plants thrive. Throughout the year, new areas of invasives were removed in order to restore areas of lower ecological quality. Ann Arbor follows an Integrated Pest Management plan, which considers a wide variety of techniques for controlling invasive species. These include mechanical methods such as pulling, mowing, and bagging stumps; burning with prescribed fire or propane torches; and biological controls, in addition to the use of herbicides. When herbicide use is deemed necessary, NAP's goal is always to use the least toxic product, applied at the lowest effective concentration, in the most targeted manner possible, with timing that is most effective for the species we are trying to control. Similarly, the Adopt-A-Park program removed invasive plants from several native plantings in parks around the city, by pulling, cutting, and bagging stumps. The Office of the Washtenaw County Water Resources Commissioner also regularly removes invasive species from public rain gardens though herbicide treatment, manual cutting and pulling, controlled burns and cutting below the water line as methods of treatment. Where large amounts of invasives are removed, annual seed mix is added during each maintenance visit to reduce the amount of invasive resprouts.

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)

500

What was the date of your festival?

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

9/14/25

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

Leslie Science and Nature Center

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).

The Monarch Migration Festival was held at the Leslie Science and Nature Center on September 14. Attendees of the festival got their own tagged monarch butterfly to release, as well as a pollinator pack that included native seeds and a butterfly identification guide. Games, educational activities, a butterfly tent, and information from local partners were also available onsite. The Leslie Science and Nature Center is conveniently located in a walkable location near downtown Ann Arbor, and has several nearby bus stops, making it easily accessible to members of the community. The event was advertised throughout the community by several local and regional news outlets.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

AlternativeLawnBanner.pdf

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

AAPPollinatorWurster.png

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

StemNesting.png

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

4

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

The first attached sign was posted at our Alternative Lawn Demonstration garden at Veterans Memorial Park. The QR code takes visitors to a web page highlighting the city's sustainability efforts. The second sign was maintained at a native garden in Hanover

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]

Square Park, a prominent downtown park. The QR code takes visitors to the city's Pollinator Aware Yard Care Initiative website. The third sign was maintained in pollinator gardens in Wurster Park, and it explains how to create habitat for stem-nesting bees. A fourth educational sign about pollinators was installed at Graydon Park this year.

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

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

Michigan Dark Skies

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 September 2021, Ann Arbor City Council adopted an outdoor lighting ordinance that promotes good lighting practices and reduces human-sourced light pollution. The new ordinance is intended to benefit the nocturnal ecosystem and reduce unnecessary energy use. See https://a2gov.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5069411&GUID=3A107615-3220-468B-8ADC-9673EE60BA5C&Options=&Search= for more information.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u240:v1.14.0.49966]