City of Rochester

Rochester, MN

Mayor Kim Norton

Pledge Summary

Rochester, MN is a growing city in the north central part of the United States. We are a town of approximately 120,000 and the third largest city in Minnesota. We do have strategies in our Sustainability & Resiliency Plan that align with some of the action items suggested and our Sustainability Coordinator is excited to assist in this area. Many of the action items are already in the works under the guidance of our Environmental Education Specialist and City Parks Department Forester, too. We are all excited about continuing to make improvements that will support the Monarch!

Action Items Committed for 2022

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.
- 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.

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.
- 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.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

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- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).
- 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 Kim Norton	2023	2/3/2023	
Mayor Kim Norton	2022	3/4/2022	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.).

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.)

100 youth, 400 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.

1

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.

residential yards, city parks, and city facilities

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

The City offers a grant program to install native plantings for pollinator habitat.

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

Supporting Monarch Butterflies, especially through an increase in habitat has many co-benefits for human wellness, other pollinator species, and clean water.

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 partner with Metro Blooms and Blue Thumb in Minnesota, as well as Monarch Joint Ventures. More support to local organizations that are already doing this important work.

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

The City of Rochester has joined the Minnesota statewide effort to support the Rusty Patched Bumblebee, which paired with Monarch butterfly conservation can bring together people that have shared goals.

Selected Action Items

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.

Blue Thumb Resilient Yards Workshop coming to Rochester next week.pdf

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

June 2022 RAB Newsletter Article.pdf

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

The City promoted the following programs through public communications: Rochester Garden Grants, Lawns to Legumes, and Resilient Yards. Methods used included: social media, newsletter articles, dedicated website pages, presentations, and meetings.

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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.

IMG_2851.jpeg

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

Master Gardeners MN Water Stewards MN GreenCorps

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

Partnered with Master Gardeners to feature native plants for pollinators on public garden tour event. Also provided materials for Master Gardeners to add to their handouts at outreach events.

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.

WRP Shade Garden.pdf

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

WRP Sun Garden.pdf

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)

This year's demonstration garden is at the City's Water Reclamation Plant located at 301 37th St NW Rochester MN.

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

The City invited city teammates from all departments to join for a planting day and to learn about creating pollinator habitat. The City also partnered with a local boy scout pack to

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assist with some of the planting and learn about creating pollinator habitat.

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.

.03

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

Native Prairie Planting 2022.png

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

Rochester Rain Garden Sign 2022.png

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

50

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

Educational signs are provided to gardens that are part of the Rochester Garden Grants and City owned gardens. Signs are for rain gardens, pollinator plantings, and bee lawns. The signs are posted around the city.

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:

May 7, 2022

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

National Start Seeing Monarchs Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

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National Start Seeing Monarchs Day (May 2022).pdf

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 of Rochester Parks and Recreation Department partnered with other city departments and local organizations including, R Neighbors, EarthFest Rochester, and Master Gardeners.

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

We plan to revise the TGW ordinance this winter. -we have not at this time The City of Rochester Parks and Recreation Department promoted a "No Mow May" program in May 2022 by suspending enforcement of the tall grass and noxious weeds ordinance for the month of May to support flowers that bloom early and support pollinators. The City printed over 500 signs for the program. Info here: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/parks-and-recreation/forestry/forestry-ordinance-enforcement/tall-grass-weeds Additional review of the tall grass and noxious weeds ordinance is underway. There is already a permit that allows for natural landscape plantings that may get confused with tall grass.

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

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

Pesticide-Free Parks Program.pdf

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

City of Rochester Parks & Recreation

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.

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The City has a pesticide-free park program to model the behavior of not using pesticides; however, this has not been pursued in an ordinance yet.

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 sale facebook post.png

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

4644 Live Plugs

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

100

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

Olmsted Soil and Water Conservation District hosted the plant sale, plants and seed mixes were sourced from Minnesota Native Landscapes. The City of Rochester supported the sale by promoting and offering pick up day support.

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?

Parks and Rec, Public Works, Administration, Master Gardeners

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

275

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

We added the native plant garden for pollinators at the City's Water Reclamation Plant. Additionally we conducted maintenance on rain gardens in city parks in partnership with City departments of Parks & Rec, Public Works, and Administration, as well as the Master Gardeners of Olmsted County.

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

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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.

15

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.

Non woody invasives/noxious weeds are covered under the Tall Grass and Noxious Weeds ordinance. There are several volunteer groups that have been working on invasives species removal of buckthorn and garlic mustard in some local and regional city parks.

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?

Master Gardeners, Rochester Flower and Garden Club, Public Works Environmental Services, Olmsted SWCD, Parks and Recreation

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

It is not considered noxious but is currently considered a violation. Revisions to the ordinance are expected in early 2023.

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

Target date is an ordinance update by April 2023.

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

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

Sustainability and Resilie.pdf

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

Page 46 from Plan with pollinator actions.pdf

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

40 community groups were engaged in development of the City's Sustainability and Resiliency Work Plan.

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.

Plan was published in Fall 2021, with community action starting in 2022.

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