City of Sandy Springs

City of Sandy Springs, GA

Mayor Rusty Paul

Pledge Summary

The City of Sandy Springs is the second largest city in metro Atlanta with a vibrant a population of almost 110,000. Enjoying twenty-two miles of shoreline along the Chattahoochee River, two local forest preserves and hundreds of acres of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area, environmental stewardship is a natural priority for the City of Sandy Springs. We became a Bee City USA Affiliate in 2021, and by signing the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, we strengthen our commitment to improving pollinator habitat in our parks and engaging the community in efforts to saving the monarch butterfly and wildlife in general.

Action Items Committed for 2022

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 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

- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- 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

- 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.

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- 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 Rusty Paul	2024	12/15/2023	
Mayor Rusty Paul	2023	2/6/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Rusty Paul	2022	3/8/2022	Signatories

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.).

45

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.)

40 youth, 5 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.

0.36

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.

While the community is encouraged to create habitat, we do not have metrics to support this. The City's efforts are focused in public parks.

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

We are developing a program for children in Spanish that should be delivered in 2023 in a neighborhood with a high concentration of Latino/Hispanic families

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

Friends of Lost Corner approached Mayor Paul, who is an experienced beekeeper. The Lost Corner Preserve was established with the mission of promoting native plant species and habitat. The City is committed to being a good steward of its environment and the community fully supports our efforts.

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?

Resources in languages other than English (Spanish in our case).

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

We had personnel turnover that slowed down our ambitions but we expect to engage in more initiatives in 2023. We set the ground for a wildflower/sparse mowing in an interstate right-of-way and we solarized a 0.1a steep slope at one of our parks in anticipation of sowing wildflowers this upcoming spring.

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.)

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

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

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Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

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)

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

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.

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

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

Sec._8.4.4.___Outdoor_Lighting_Design.docx

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

The Development Code was adopted after extensive public engagement.

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.

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April 2017

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.

Staff involved with permitting (Arborists, Planners and Sustainability Manager) propose to developers alternative plant species to their proposal to enhance pollinator habitat.

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.

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

TA22-0008 Proposed Amendment deferral.docx

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

Public Works Staff and Landscape Maintenance Contractor Recreation & Parks Staff and Landscape Maintenance Contractor Sandy Springs Bee City Committee

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

Beekeeping experts reviewed the proposed Sustainable Landscape Practices that will be adopted by Mayor and City Council on 12/06/2022. Recreation & Parks created pockets of habitat in 3 parks. Public Works is developing a wildflower right-of-way program with reduced mowing frequency. The Sustainable Landscape Practices to be adopted by Mayor and City Council on 12/06/2022 include guidance on plant species selection and landscape maintenance.

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

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

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What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

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10

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.

Each City park is evaluated and treated against invasive plant species by a certified contractor. Manual removal is the preferred approach, however broadleaf foliar herbicide can be used for large populations (English ivy in particular) and species that are more difficult than others to control (such as kudzu). We are also setting up a group of volunteers to help homeowners get invasives under control on their properties. We held one basic training workshop in October and are planning to offer more sessions in the spring. We also have a toolbank to help support their projects.

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?

Sandy Springs Bee City Committee

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 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.

N/A

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

Mayor and City Council are expected to adopt the Sustainable Landscape Practices on 12/06/2022 that include guidelines on design and maintenance.

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)

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We have two demonstration gardens (Marsh Creek Rain Garden and Windsor Meadows Park) with a third one underway (Lost Corner Preserve).

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

N/A

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.

0.36

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