Bella Vista

Bella Vista, AR

Mayor John Flynn

Pledge Summary

Bella Vista is a scenic city of over 32,000 residents, located in the Ozark Mountains of Northwest Arkansas, where nature lovers can enjoy numerous amenities, such as, multiple lakes, golf courses, and biking and hiking trails. The city also has a vibrant community that is committed to creating habitat for pollinators, especially the monarch butterfly. In 2024, Mayor Flynn has committed to restoring the monarch population by encouraging development of pollinator friendly spaces and by educating our residents about the importance of pollinator conservation.

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.
- 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 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.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- 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.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

Systems Change

- 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.
- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor John Flynn	2026	3/31/2026	
Mayor John Flynn	2025	3/5/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor John Flynn	2024	2/14/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor John Flynn	2023	2/3/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Peter Christie	2022	3/14/2022	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.).

4600

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.)

0

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.

.01

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.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

Currently there is habitat created in our community garden space located at one of our bike/hiking trailheads. Additionally, the public space in front of the entrance to City Hall.

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

Currently steps we've taken have revolved around the community as a whole, but the City of Bella Vista will work to identify low income areas and communities of color with projects in 2025..

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

Bella Vista is a very nature oriented city located in the Ozark Mountains and is facing a large amount of developments. A key driver for taking the pledge was to establish the importance of protecting our natural resources and habitats to work in a cohesive manner with new projects taking place in the city.

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?

More model ordinances and supporting data for changes and their benefits to residents from the WWF would be helpful for future educational opportunities.

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

We are actively in discussion with developers on adding pollinator friendly spaces to developments as they are proposed to the Planning Department. Along with this, we worked on plans for public art and education for our residents.

Selected Action Items

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.

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.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

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.

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.

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.

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

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:

April 11, 2025

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

Mayor's Monarch Pledge Day

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2025 Monarch Butterfly Pledge pdf.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 posts were created to engage with the public and raise awareness about the importance of pollinator gardens and tree planting across the community. This expanded into general lawn maintenance, as well as, education on ordinance changes and how pollinator gardens were now encouraged with said changes. Tracking the total engagement is tough, but through our social media outreach, we were able to hit 23,616 unique impressions on top of in person interactions with residents.

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.

2

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

Between the City's Tree Advisory Board and the Master Gardeners Club within Bella Vista, as well as, general residents of the city, we partnered together to recognize efforts in the city to establish and recognize the importance of pollinator spaces, as well as, the importance of preserving our tree canopy. Both the City and Master Gardeners promoted each other's efforts via social media and attended ceremonies for each organizations to support one another.

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

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

City Hall Pollinator Space.jpg

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

As part of our development review process, we engaged with developers, engineers, and architects to design pollinator spaces into the landscape plans of their large-scale developments. This request has been met with positive responses; however larger commercial projects did not complete in 2025 with the exception of establishing a pollinator space in the partially completed City Hall. While more pollinator spaces did not come to fruition this year, the City and its staff did work on larger picture items that help tackle environmental issues that affect pollinators. These steps consisted of working with local entities to replace developed or impacted areas with pollinator plants. Recently a new stretch of highway in Bella Vista was reconstructed and seeded with crimson clover and wildflowers. 2025 was the first spring for that to bloom. Additionally, the city worked on creating and passing ordinances regarding preservation requirements for newly developed residential lots alongside our previous ordinance approvals for mowing and landscaping height limitations, and a lighting ordinance that promoted dark sky principles for the City from 2024.

Create a community art project to enhance and promote 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.

Greenway Art Project.jpg

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

This was a city endeavor through the Art Advisory Board

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).

1

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).

The city worked with a local artist to paint a mural along the Greenway section that enters the City boundaries. The piece recognizes the beauty of Bella Vista while incorporating elements of pollinator friendly plants, establishing a gateway into our community.

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

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

550 Native trees/large shrubs were given away via the City's Spring and Fall giveaways.

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

500

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

The City's giveaways are made possible via a grant in collaboration with the Peel Compton Foundation.

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.

City Hall Pollinator Space.jpg

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)

101 Town Center is the location of our City Hall that is currently being expanded. With that expansion we provided a pollinator space at the main entrance to showcase our diligent efforts to promote preservation and the importance of pollinator spaces within our community. We request our developers to provide pollinator spaces within their development, so put our space in a location that greets you as you first walk into our office.

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

This effort was led by the project planning team.

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

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

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

1.jpg

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

2.jpg

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

3.jpg

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

4.jpg

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

5.jpg

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

6.jpg

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

7.jpg

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

7

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

The City continues to maintain educational signage within our community. These signs are located along bike/hiking trailheads and large community gathering spaces. They highlight the biodiversity that makes up our region of the Ozark Mountains correlating the importance of our major tree types and their influence on wildlife, as well as, our native pollinators and the flowers and plants that support their life cycles.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

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.

Ord 2024-09.pdf

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

Research was done on other cities around the nation and discussions were had with the City's code reform consultant on model ordinances. Additionally, the Planning Commission provided input on a new proposal.

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

Completed

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.

March 25, 2024. The purpose of this new ordinance was to amend the code of ordinances of the City of Bella Vista to adopt a new Article 10: Outdoor lighting to Chapter 109 Zoning to provide for outdoor lighting regulations for new commercial developments. Since then, the city has undergone a full code reform of the Zoning Code in which further tools were provided to help developers provide compliant fixtures for their developments.

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?

City of Bella Vista and The Bella Vista Garden Club

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

30

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Along with our educational signage, the city partnered to plant a variety of species of pollinator friendly plants at one of our major trailheads to beautify the space as well as have an example to go along with our educational signage. The Garden Club continues to

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]

maintain the space with the plants now thriving several years after establishment. Additionally, the City has incorporated a pollinator garden at the entrance of the completed portion of our newly renovated City Hall. The City will maintain this in the coming years to showcase our pollinator education efforts.

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?

The City of Bella Vista and Tree Advisory Board

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.

On January 28, 2024, our new mowing and landscaping ordinance took effect, allowing for native plants to be placed in residential lots and not be restricted by the 10 inch height restrictions that were previously in place. This promotes the growth of healthy pollinator plants for insects.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u148:v1.14.0.49966]