

City of Greensboro

Greensboro, NC

Mayor Nancy Vaughan

Pledge Summary

The City of Greensboro resides in the piedmont region of North Carolina with a population of roughly 300,000. Greensboro manages nearly 12,000 acres of parks and open spaces with assets including public gardens, regional and neighborhood parks, beautification areas, over 100 miles of trails and greenways, lakes, several community gardens, and numerous other passive and active recreational amenities and facilities. Through the establishment of multiple pollinator gardens and meadows, the development of educational signage and programming, and the identification of an ongoing need to reduce mowing and increase native habitat, the city has taken steps toward supporting our natural environment. Mayor Vaughan of Greensboro, NC has committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with the signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to further engaging residents in expanding pollinator habitat throughout the city. Recently the City has enacted policy requiring the use of native plants in new landscape plantings throughout City property while eliminating the use of invasive plants. Current efforts that the City of Greensboro is undertaking to support monarch habitats are the Bird & Butterfly Meadow at Price Park, pollinator gardens at the Keeley Park Community Garden, Wovenworks Park, and the Meeting Place Cornerstone along the Downtown Greenway, a partnership with the Guilford County Extension Master Gardeners to provide environmental education (currently virtual) and multiple community partnerships for smaller pollinator gardens in parks. Additional extensive efforts by City of Greensboro involve partnering with Greensboro Beautiful at the Greensboro Arboretum, which includes a formal butterfly garden, a certified Monarch Waystation, interpretive signage specifically dedicated to monarchs, and an Ornamental Grass and Pollinator Meadow. The Pollinator Meadow includes Asclepias among its perennial plantings and features interpretive signage dedicated to broader pollinator preservation. Monarch butterflies have seen a decline in the past 50 years and by informing the public and plants for this species, the Greensboro Science Center plays a critical role in helping save these unique and crucial animals. The Greensboro Science Center is home to three butterfly gardens located throughout the zoo and is the home of the Cole Family Butterfly House and Monarch Conservation Project. The horticulture staff at the Greensboro Science Center maintain the gardens, which contain butterfly loving plants including milkweed. Water from rain collecting barrels help to irrigate the gardens. The Cole Family Butterfly House and Monarch Conservation Project spotlights native butterfly species, with a special emphasis on the iconic, but diminishing, monarch butterfly and creates a lush, verdant garden space that will bring attention to the life and plight of monarch butterflies; serves as another focal-point species to the Greensboro Science Center's new Conservation & Research Department; informs the community of the importance of planting milkweed (monarch caterpillars' sole source of food); creates a fun and dynamic seasonal exhibit filled with native butterflies; and adds a new educational experience focused on pollinators and their importance.

Action Items Committed for 2024

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.

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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Marikay Abuzuaiter	2026	3/31/2026	
Mayor Nancy Vaughan	2025	3/19/2025	Signatories
Mayor Nancy Vaughan	2024	3/25/2024	Signatories

Mayor Nancy Vaughan	2023	3/15/2023	Signatories
Mayor Nancy Vaughan	2022	3/23/2022	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 (e.g., 50).

200

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.)

50

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).

2

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.

In a broad perspective, native tree planting efforts have impacted well over 50 acres of land in the city. Related to shrubs, perennials, and specifically milkweed, plantings have taken place at public gardens, recreation centers, and neighborhood parks.

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

This year introduced a new Earth Day event at one of our regional parks in a marginalized community. This event included a plant giveaway of pollinator plants to community members.

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

Mayors' Monarch Pledge is an additional avenue to pursue through our sustainability efforts which runs adjacent to our native plant program and goals to reduce mowing and increase meadowland in our 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?

Several resource documents have been useful as "how-tos" and the annual reporting helps keep us focused on goals.

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

Our community's focus is shifting specifically toward tree canopy from an equity and heat zone perspective. While not directly focused on monarchs from a host plant perspective, the focus on native trees should continue to drive us toward better habitat goals. Pollinator hosts will continue to be a focus of new and renovated plantings as we move forward.

Selected Action Items

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.

[ExoticPlantGuidelines.pdf](#)

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

90

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.

Invasive plants are managed directly in stream corridors across approximately 45 Parks and Recreation locations consisting of roughly 90 acres of treated space. This treatment follows guidelines set by the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources in their Exotic Plant Guidelines (attached). These methods include a combination of physical reduction and removal along with targeted herbicide application.

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

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

400+

How many people attended your event?

1500

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

50+ Community Groups plus 10 sponsor/donor organizations. https://www.greensboro-nc.gov/departments/office-of-sustainability-and-resilience/sustainability-programs/earth-day/-fbclid=IwY2xjawF_Mv9leHRuA2FibQlxMAABHaipB3GQE54KqWUvLYbXDpURr8Tmj1r3MCGQOpIMRK9bIFIQaZ6pwKQd-Q_aem_e8vOrLR5SgXjdwZPLA8MLg

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.

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

[Resolution - Greensboro Native Plants_Final.pdf](#)

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

Office of Sustainability and Resilience, T. Gilbert Pearson Audubon Society, NC Native Plant Society, NC Invasive Plant Council

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.

March 5, 2024 Attached policy was implemented requiring minimum 50% native plant composition in any new landscape or landscape renovation on city property.