City of Greensboro

Greensboro, NC

Mayor Marikay Abuzuaiter

Pledge Summary

The City of Greensboro, located in the Piedmont region of North Carolina, has a population of approximately 308,000 and manages nearly 12,000 acres of parks and open space. These assets include 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 recognition of an ongoing need to reduce mowing and increase native habitat, the City of Greensboro has taken steps to support its natural environment. Mayor Abuzuaiter has committed to protecting the monarch butterfly and other pollinators through the signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to further engaging residents in expanding pollinator habitat throughout the city. The City has adopted a Native Plant Policy, requiring the use of native plants in new landscape plantings on City property and eliminating invasive species. Current efforts to support monarch habitat include the Bird & Butterfly Meadow at Price Park; pollinator gardens at 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; and multiple community partnerships supporting smaller pollinator gardens in parks. Additional extensive efforts by City of Greensboro involve partnering with Greensboro Beautiful at the Greensboro Arboretum, which features 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 declined significantly over the past 50 years, and through public education and targeted plantings, the Greensboro Science Center plays a critical role in helping conserve this species. Additional conservation and education efforts are led by the Greensboro Science Center, which maintains multiple butterfly gardens throughout the zoo and hosts the Cole Family Butterfly House and Monarch Conservation Project. The horticulture staff maintain these gardens with nectar-rich and host plants, supported by irrigation from rain barrels. The Cole Family Butterfly House and Monarch Conservation Project spotlights native butterfly species, with a special emphasis on the iconic, but declining monarch butterfly. The project creates a lush garden space that highlights the monarch's life cycle and conservation needs, serves as a focal point for the Science Center's Conservation & Research Department, educates the community about the importance of planting milkweed (the sole food source for monarch caterpillars), and provides a dynamic seasonal exhibit focused on pollinators and their ecological importance.

Action Items Committed for 2026

Communications and Convening

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- 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.
- 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 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.

Systems Change

- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.
- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

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

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 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.

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

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

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help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

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.).

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.

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

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.)

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

Selected Action Items

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:

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

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

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.

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

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

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Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

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.

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

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

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.

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

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

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.

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

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

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.

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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)

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

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

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)

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

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.

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.

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