City of Grand Forks

Grand Forks, ND

Mayor Brandon Bochenski

Pledge Summary

Grand Forks, ND, is located on the Minnesota border, across from its sister city of East Grand Forks, MN. The city was named for its location at the fork of the Red and Red Lake Rivers. Grand Forks boasts a population of 59,166. Combined with its twin city of East Grand Forks, Minnesota, it forms the center of the Grand Forks, ND-MN Metropolitan Statistical Area, often called Greater Grand Forks. Over the past five years, several agencies have embraced the opportunity to provide wildflower and pollinator gardens throughout the community. The city of Grand Forks has built partnerships with Audubon Midwest, the University of ND, and GF Park District to establish restoration projects along the English Coulee.

Action Items Committed for 2023

Communications and Convening

- 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.

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.

Systems Change

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Brandon Bochenski	2024	3/29/2024	
Mayor Brandon Bochenski	2023	4/28/2023	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

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number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

30

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 youth and 30 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.

0.1

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.

Schools, public parks, historical sites, community gardens

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

We are sharing information with these communities as well as encouraging the planting of community gardens everywhere but especially in low income neighborhoods.

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

Coming from an agricultural community, we felt a responsibility to educate residents on the importance of pollinators and how to support them.

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?

Assembling a community task force for this project has been the most helpful resource. Communication on pollinator-friendly projects helps us track our progress. More access to grants could help expand equitable engagement in community processes. Due to the amount of work equitable engagement entails, staffing limitations also weakens our ability to expand within this community.

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

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Due to our late registration, the status of our program is still in the intial stages of planning and organizing. We are hoping increased resources and information in spring of 2024 will help expand pollinator gardens in our city.

Selected Action Items

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.

3 groups participated: City of Grand Forks Public Works Department The Greenway City of Grand Forks Park District

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

The Public Works Department actively lessened the mowing in native grassland areas such as the Greenway and the English Coulee. This included mowing grassland perimeters less to gradually promote the growth of native plants outwards towards paved trails. The English Coulee Restoration Project is also in progress, which assists in the development of native species along the coulee in order to promote pollinator growth and stormwater health. The Grand Forks Park District are continuously developing pollinator-friendly gardens as a part of their planting program. This includes pollinator garden expansion in Sertoma Park and University Park. In total, they have developed almost 4,000 square feet in pollinator friendly gardens. Engagement with groups involved included open forms of communication to discuss the goals and expectations for the 2023 summer and fall seasons as well as their progress reports.

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.

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

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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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A demonstration garden is located at Sertoma Park and has been in development for two years. Sertoma Park is a prominent park in our community as it is dedicated to our sister city Kanuma, Japan. (3300 11th Ave S, Grand Forks, ND 58201)

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

The Grand Forks Park District led this effort as they manage Sertoma Park.

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.

0.05

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?

City of Grand Forks Public Works Department and the Greenway

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.

Like many communities across the United States, the City of Grand Forks has had a long-standing ordinance to regulate grass length within the community. This ordinance was developed to provide uniformity- and prevent potential health and safety concerns associated with un-kept vegetation. This ordinance addressed only typical turf grasses and did not allow native plantings. That has since changed to allow ornamental grasses and native flowers to be planted in defined areas, including berms and public right of way. https://library.municode.com/nd/grand_forks/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTICICO_CHXPUSANU_ART7PUNUALGRWE_10-0705EX

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