City of Rochester

Rochester, IN

Mayor Trent O'dell

Pledge Summary

Rochester is a city in North Central Indiana with a population of roughly 19,000. The town is surrounded by rural areas and farmland in the early stages of alternative pesticide methods. It is home to beautiful public parks and gardens with an administration focused on community-building innovatives. Mayor O'Dell of Rochester, IN, has committed to saving monarch butterflies and other pollinators with their signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engaging residents in building more pollinator habitats throughout the city.

Action Items Committed for 2024

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.
- 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

- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Trent O'Dell	2025	2/9/2025	
Mayor Trent O'dell	2024	1/25/2024	Signatories

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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.).

120

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.)

80

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.

10

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, homes, and parks

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

We use the Summer Parks program that is hosted through the City Parks and Park Board as a means to reach these demographics in our area.

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

We are teaching them through the Summer Parks Program which is open to all and targets low-income families as well as going into the school and educating on inexpensive pesticides..

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?

Social Media, the Mayor, Park Board, Newspaper, Fulton County Soil and Water, and the Summer Parks Programs

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

We are learning and growing! Expect more next year!

Selected Action Items

Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

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

IMG_5620 (1).jpg

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

IMG_0903.jpg

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

IMG_3516.jpg

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

23050.jpg

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

Parks Board, Street and City Maintence, Fulton County City and Water, Summer Parks Program Director, Mayor

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

200

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

The strategy we have is using the Monarch Pledge as a platform for the Mayor to spearhead the initiative to not spray pesticides in your Parks, reform our mowing practices,and educate the community through art and activities with children and adolescents to pass the knowledge on to the rest of the citizens. We also work loosely with the Fulton County Soil and Water and Tree Board to promote the planting of trees for our

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earth to be clean and rebuilding/enhancing the native plant population that attracts the Monarch population, as well as, other pollinators. We launched this effort by making a press release in the local newspaper publication, as well as, art & education opportunities through the county-wide Summer Parks Program. We continue this project by integrating more social media information and school visits, as well as, strengthening our mowing a lawn maintenance practices. We will also start to work with Purdue Extension to further their outreach of nature preservation/conservation practices that can be used by gardeners and farmers in our area.

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.

IMG_1854.jpg

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

IMG_5620 (1).jpg

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

23050.jpg

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

Butterfly bushes were removed from the Butterfly Garden and replaced with swamp and milk week plants, as well as, other native/nectar producing plants. We are also working with the Rochester City Parks Department to add more native plants for the flower beds in the parks for the Monarchs. We are also teaching and using the Summer Parks Program to help further identify other locations for grow monarch habitats in the community.

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.

Screenshot 2025-04-01 10.21.05 AM.png

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

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The Mayors Office, The City Parks, Fulton County Soil and Water Conservation and The Street Department

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

They mow only the parks where there is public access and they do not spray, they only weed eat. We will continue to work on more planting programs. We purchased $1500 worth of native plants from the plant sale to plant in public places around the the city.

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.

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

IMG_5470.jpeg

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

IMG_5473.jpeg

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

IMG_5467.jpeg

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

City Parks of Rochester, Full Tilt Arts, Rochester Streets Department, and the Northern Indiana Community Foundation

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).

100

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

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installations, type of art).

We painted trash cans that are places around the city with a "pollinator theme". This connects our purpose of raising awareness about the decline of our Monarch population, the story walk with Senorita Mariposa, and our beautification initiatives of keeping our parks clean and free of weeds.

Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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

Screenshot 2025-04-01 10.21.05 AM.png

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

Mayor, Parks Board, Street Department

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

Complete and 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.

The Mayor issued an ordinance that requires the park maintence/street Department to use a weed eater vs herbicide.

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

We are also hoping to start a weed wranglers group through the Fulton County Soil & Water to help with the effort.

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