Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon, IA

Mayor Thomas Wieseler

Pledge Summary

Mt. Vernon has a slowly growing population of 5427 and is a community focusing on all things sustainable.

Action Items Committed for 2024

Communications and Convening

- 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 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.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Thomas Wieseler	2026	4/24/2026	
Mayor Thomas Wieseler	2025	12/7/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Thomas Wieseler	2024	4/7/2024	Signatories

Action Items

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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.).

50

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.

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.

Roadsides, yards community garden.

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

Not really relevant in Mt. Vernon.

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

Growing citizen interest, my continued interest in all things sustainable.

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?

Your zoom classes, and having a committee member who also works for Linn County Conservation.

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

Nothing to add.

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Selected Action Items

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).

At spring community clean up day, yard signs for no mow May as well as supporting monarch gardens were available for residents to have for free and post in their yards.

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.

Have connected with SE Linn Community Center on their community garden and also supplemented with the garden at the LBC in Mt. Vernon for additional garden items. No real language issues in our town.

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.

Two members of our Sustainability Committee have been actively meeting with City staff to prep an area that is tough for the City to maintain-as prairie.

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

They have identified two areas to start planning and planting prairie seeds for.

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)

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Outside the side door of the Lester Buresh Wellness Center

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

Partnering with SE Linn Center

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.

.5

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?

MV Sustainability Committee

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

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.

Not yet

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

City Public Works staff know the Council focus to do less mowing, higher mowing, use less on herbicides and use little pesticides.

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

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

Our Parks & Recreation committee

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

In progress and will be that way for a long time.

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

As our P & Rec board adds City parks, they are aware of the focus of making friendly habitat for monarchs and other friendly insects.

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