Mount Vernon

Mount Vernon, IA

Mayor Thomas Wieseler

Pledge Summary

Mount Vernon is a bedroom community of 4527 situated in east central Iowa between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. Our citizens are focused on all things involving sustainability and that includes earning certificates like Tree City, Bee City USA and of course as a monarch friendly community. Our cause is helped with an 1100 student private college, Cornell, in our town.

Action Items Committed for 2026

Communications and Convening

- 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 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.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).
- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

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

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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.).

25

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.)

2

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.

2

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.

Road right-of-ways, high school, community gardens

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

Not really

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

It's very important that we continue to be engaged with saving monarchs, it's part of our town culture and we want to continue our streak of qualifying for this.

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?

Nothing to add here.

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

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Nothing to add here.

Selected Action Items

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.

Mt. Vernon Wellness Center, SE Linn Community Center and Seeds of Faith church were groups we engaged in for community gardens and green space dedicated as pollinator friendly.

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.

On a hard to maintain hillside by a street, we established prairie and are in year 2 of developing it as monarch friendly.

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

Members of the Mount Vernon Sustainability Committee took ownership of maintaining monarch friendly with college students from a volunteer organization from Cornell College.

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)

One plot beside a church, another beside our Wellness Center.

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

Southeast Linn Community Center Board and Wellness Center staff

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

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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.

2

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

2

Please describe the educational information on the sign(s), and provide any links to externally purchased sign(s).

Signage says this is a monarch friendly area and not to spray or mow.

Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

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

Master Gardeners and Cornell College Grounds staff

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.

N/A

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?

Our Public Works team and Parks & Recreation Commission.

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

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In progress

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

Prairie development is a multi year project. Two years left

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:

April 5, 2026

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

Mayor's Monarch Day proclamation

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

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