City of St. Louis

St. Louis, MO

Mayor Tishaura Jones

Pledge Summary

The City of St. Louis is located on the eastern border of Missouri along the banks of the mighty Mississippi River. This location is a natural byway for Monarch butterfly migration. In 2014, St. Louis began its Milkweeds for Monarchs initiative and has established well over 400 green spaces with milkweed and nectar sources to support the Monarch and other pollinators. Mayor Tishaura O. Jones continues the City's important efforts to support pollinators and connect residents with nature. Monarch and pollinator gardens will continue to be established and maintained in city parks, neighborhoods, schools and at homes across St. Louis.

Action Items Committed for 2023

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 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Cara Spencer	2026	3/20/2026	
Mayor Cara Spencer	2025	3/11/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Tishaura O. Jones	2024	3/29/2024	Signatories

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Mayor Tishaura Jones	2023	3/28/2023	Signatories
Mayor Tishaura Jones	2022	2/8/2022	Signatories
Mayor Tishaura Jones	2021	2/19/2021	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 number of individuals reached in the answer field below (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

100

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.)

100 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.

6

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.

Habitat is being created on vacant lots, community gardens, tree lawns, city parks, traffic-calming planters, homeless shelters and along greenways. Further, greenspaces with Monarch habitat continued to be maintained in cul-de-sacs, senior citizen centers and the entrance to the state psychiatric hospital. Beyond Neighbors Naturescaping gardens, residents are also restoring habitat in their own home gardens.

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

Every effort is made to reach and engage marginalized communities. This year, 58% of the gardens that Brightside provided free native plants to are located in primarily low-income and/or communities of color.

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

Our community residents and leaders are motivated by the opportunity to make a difference for future generations of pollinators as well as people as they are very reliant

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upon each other.

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?

To date, Brightside has had limited involvement with the resources offered by the National Wildlife Federation although we anticipate taking more advantage of these resources in the future.

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

In 2023, the City of St. Louis hired a Native Plant Steward. Her primary responsibility is to manage the City's engagement with and maintenance of native plantings at City Hall, in City Parks and along the Butterfly Byway as well as along Great Rivers Greenway bike trails. While requests for milkweed and nectar-producing plants through Neighbors Naturescaping was down compared to 2022, there has been a significant increase in the number of volunteers and volunteer groups interested in helping maintain the native plants in Brightside's Demonstration Garden.

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.)

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

2023 SLUGS Flyer.pdf

Please describe the methods of public communication below (e.g., printed materials, social media, print media).

Through Brightside's Neighbors Naturescaping program, community groups are encouraged to plant native milkweed and nectar-producing plants to benefit the Monarch butterfly and other important pollinators. Brightside promotes this program through printed material including a flyer mailed to 1,500 neighborhood leaders in the city of St. Louis, social media outreach (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) and through Community emails to all City employees. In conjunction with the Missouri Department of Conservation, University of Missouri – Extension and City of St. Louis, Brightside sponsors the St. Louis Urban Gardening Symposium (SLUGS) to share the importance of native plants. In 2021, SLUGS featured best-selling author, Doug Tallamy and all participants received a copy of

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Nature’s Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard. This is the perfect complement to Neighbors Naturescaping as we encourage residents to plant pollinator gardens in their neighborhood as even small greenspaces can make a big difference. In 2023, SLUGS featured two local experts. Dave Tylka, biology professor, author and native plant expert was the keynote speaker and presented “Landscaping for Bees, Butterflies and Other Important Pollinators.” Jean Ponzi, Green Resources Manager with the world-renowned Missouri Botanical Garden led a discussion regarding mosquitos and mosquito-borne illnesses and best practices for mosquito management to protect pollinators. After these two presenters, other notable experts with the Missouri Department of Conservation led discussions regarding the importance of native plant habitat and took participants on a tour of Brightside’s Demonstration Garden to highlight plants in their natural habitat and their important benefits to pollinators. SLUGS flyer uploaded. Brightside also makes available to anyone visiting, Missouri Department of Conservation publications regarding native plants and Monarch conservation, including: Milkweeds and Monarchs; Homegrown Milkweeds; and The Plight of the Pollinator.

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

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

2023 Neighbors Naturescaping Flyer.pdf

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

Through Brightside's Neighbors Naturescaping program, community groups in the City of St. Louis are encouraged to plant native milkweed and nectar-producing plants. Neighborhood groups and nonprofit organizations may request up to $1,500 worth of native plants to improve public spaces in the city to restore habitat for Monarchs as well as other pollinators. In 2023, Brightside provided native plant material and the tools needed to care for their new or enhanced garden to 12 community groups. These efforts created new green spaces or enhanced existing gardens on vacant lots, community gardens, city parks, traffic-calming planters and a homeless shelter. These groups planted 130 milkweed plants and 671 nectar-producing perennials in addition to 177 native grasses, sedges and shrubs.

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)

In 2023, between the two native plant sales and the native plant giveaway, in 2023, St. Louisans planted 275 milkweed plants and 1,000 nectar-producing perennials in addition to 177 native grasses, sedges and shrubs.

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

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160

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

As always, Brightside partnered with the City of St. Louis for the plant distribution event and relied on the Missouri Department of Conservation for funding for Neighbors Naturescaping. There were 12 other neighborhood or community groups that established or enhanced greenspaces in their area.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

85

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

informal milkweed collection -- participants in St. Louis Urban Gardening Symposium were encouraged to collect milkweed seed

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

informal milkweed collection -- participants in St. Louis Urban Gardening Symposium were encouraged to collect milkweed seed

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.

Wash U volunteers.jpg

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)

The Milkweeds for Monarchs garden at City Hall continues to be maintained as habitat for Monarchs and other important pollinators. In 2023, the primary responsibility for maintaining this garden became the City’s new Native Plant Steward’s responsibility. In addition, Brightside also maintains a Demonstration Garden at one of St. Louis' most heavily-traveled intersections adjacent to 4646 Shenandoah. The Monarch banners are part of a three-banner set surrounding the Demonstration Garden and the Monarch archway is the entrance to the garden. Community volunteers often get their group picture taken in front of the Monarch entrance. In the attached photo, many of the volunteers are

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seen holding their appreciation gift of a Monarch reusable bag which serves as a constant reminder about the importance of protecting the Monarch.

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

In 2023, Brightside and City of St. Louis partnered with Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, corporate volunteer groups, organizations and other community volunteers to maintain the Demonstration Garden and City employees to maintain the City Hall Monarch garden. Many of the volunteers who work in the Demonstration Garden are given a Monarch reusable bag as an appreciation gift for their service. The bag serves as a constant reminder about the importance of protecting the Monarch.

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.

0.5

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.

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

In 2023, Brightside and City of St. Louis partnered with Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, corporate volunteer groups, organizations and other community volunteers to maintain the Demonstration Garden and City's new Native Plant Steward maintained the City Hall Monarch garden. There were also 12 organizations that enhanced or developed Neighbors Naturescaping gardens in 2023.

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

On a weekly basis, April to October, Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists volunteer in Brightside's Demonstration Garden to care for the native plants. They also share their expertise with corporate and other community group volunteers who help in Brightside's garden throughout the growing season.

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

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

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In 2023, Brightside worked with 12 community groups to establish or enhance community gardens through Neighbors Naturescaping.

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

978

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Through Brightside's Neighbors Naturescaping program, community groups in the City of St. Louis are encouraged to plant native milkweed and nectar-producing plants. Neighborhood groups and nonprofit organizations may request up to $1,500 worth of native plants to improve public spaces in the city to restore habitat for Monarchs as well as other pollinators.

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