City of St. Louis

St. Louis, MO

Mayor Tishaura O. 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 along greenways, in city parks, neighborhoods, schools and at homes across St. Louis.

Action Items Committed for 2024

Communications and Convening

- 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.
- Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- 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	

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Mayor Cara Spencer	2025	3/11/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Tishaura O. Jones	2024	3/29/2024	Signatories
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.).

5000

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.

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.

Habitat is being created on vacant lots, community gardens, tree lawns, city parks, City Hall, traffic-calming planters, senior centers and along greenways. Further, greenspaces with Monarch habitat continued to be maintained in cul-de-sacs, senior citizen centers and various other public spaces. 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, 56% of the gardens that Brightside provided free native plants to are located in primarily low-income and/or communities of color or the organization serves primarily low-income clients.

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

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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 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, the City of St. Louis 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. In 2024, a second Nature Steward was hired and plans to hire a part-time Nature Steward are in the works. Their 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. To this end, this year they significantly enhanced the Monarch native pollinator gardens at City Hall, expanding not the just number of plants but also the number of garden locations around City Hall. More than 300 native plants were added including milkweed and other nectar plants to benefit Monarchs and other pollinators. In other greenspaces, nearly 100 milkweed plants were planted this fall, along with hundreds of other Missouri native plants through Brightside's Neighbors Naturescaping program. Brightside supported 18 Neighbors Naturescaping gardens with native plants and tools to care for the gardens. In addition to these newly-established gardens and enhanced community greenspaces, there continues to be significant interest in volunteers and volunteer groups helping maintain the native plants in Brightside's Demonstration Garden.

Selected Action Items

Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

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

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

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

Where is the monarch habitat located? (Please provide an address, if possible)

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

What is the total acreage of land that has been converted? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 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.

How many lots were converted to monarch habitat? Please limit your answer to only the number of lots in the answer field below (e.g., 3)

Please describe when the lots were converted to monarch habitat and the planned maintenance schedule.

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 2024, between the two native plant sales, plantings in Brightside's Demonstration Garden, other community greenspaces and the Neighbors Naturescaping native plant giveaway, St. Louisans planted 140 milkweed plants and 1,947 nectar-producing perennials in addition to 261 native grasses and sedges, 47 shrubs and three trees.

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

180

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 18 other neighborhood or community groups that established or enhanced greenspaces in their area. Missouri University Extension – St. Louis Master Gardeners program participated in the Spring sale in conjunction with the St. Louis Urban Gardening Symposium.

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)

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

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maintaining this garden became the City's new Native Plant Steward's responsibility. This year, the Nature Steward's team added approximately 4,600 square feet of native pollinator gardens at City Hall planting more than 300 native plants including milkweed. 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 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 2024, Brightside and City of St. Louis partnered with St. Louis Master Gardeners, Missouri Master Naturalists, corporate volunteer groups, organizations and other community volunteers to maintain the Demonstration Garden and the City's Nature Steward team maintained 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. There were also 18 organizations that enhanced or developed Neighbors Naturescaping gardens in 2024.

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

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

4200 Shenandoah at Tower Grove Ave – cul de sac Virginia at Interstate 55 entrance – two large, round terracotta planters in median Park and Vail – rain gardens along roadside Lafayette at Mississippi – medians 1400 North Market – median Osceola and South Broadway – triangle at intersection Osceola and Virginia – triangle at intersection

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

451

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

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Less than one acre of milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants in these seven locations.

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Community groups requesting plants for each of these locations will maintain.

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?

In 2024, Brightside and City of St. Louis partnered with St. Louis Master Gardeners, Missouri Master Naturalists and other corporate and community volunteers to maintain Brightside's Demonstration Garden. The City's new Native Plant Steward team took on the responsibility of maintaining the City Hall Monarch garden. The 18 Neighbors Naturescaping gardens were planted and are cared for by the groups that requested the native plants.

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

2398

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Through Brightside's Neighbors Naturescaping program and other planting efforts, in 2024 a total of 2,398 native milkweed and nectar-producing plants plus grasses and shrubs were distributed and planted in community gardens and other public spaces including City Hall. Brightside purchased the plants from local growers to ensure high quality and locally-sourced plants. Brightside received all of the plants at the City of St. Louis Greenhouses. Representatives from 18 neighborhood gardens came to the greenhouses on the designated pick-up days to get their plants and take them back to their neighborhood. They worked with residents in their area as well as outside volunteers for site prep and planting. Neighborhood residents take care of the community gardens on an on-going basis. In addition, some of the plants were purchased for home gardens to strengthen and better connect the butterfly byway.

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.

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

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pollinators. In 2024, Brightside worked with 18 community groups to establish or enhance community gardens. Of the 18 groups, 12 were new to the Neighbors Naturescaping program creating new gardens or enhancing existing greenspaces. The other six groups expanded their greenspaces with native plants provided by Brightside. In addition to restoring habitat at City Hall, this year the new green spaces or enhanced existing gardens included vacant lots, community gardens, city parks, public schools, street medians and a cul-de-sac, a senior citizens center, a senior citizens home, a church yard, business district, and other community greenspaces. These groups planted 92 milkweed plants and 1,343 nectar-producing perennials in addition to 261 native grasses and sedges, 47 shrubs and three trees.

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.

There were 18 community groups which stepped up to help restore native habitat in 2024. In addition, Master Gardeners, Master Naturalists, Wild Ones' members, along with the Missouri Department of Conservation and the City of St. Louis Nature Steward team helped support Monarch conservation in 2024. In addition, scores of volunteer groups helped supplement the ongoing efforts of the community groups in caring for pollinator-friendly plants. The 18 groups that participated in restoring habitat through Neighbors Naturescaping include: Academy-Sherman Park Community Garden Bell Community Garden Betty Wheeler Classical Junior Academy (City public school) Carondelet Neighborhood Association Centennial Plaza Housing complex City Forestry Nature Steward team Forest Park Southeast Neighborhood Association Hodgen Tech Academy (City public school) Lafayette Square Beautification Committee Mount Pleasant Neighborhood Association Neighbors of Old North St. Louis South Grand Community Improvement District SouthSide Senior Citizens Center St. John's Episcopal church Tower Grove South Neighborhood Association VAL Community Garden (intersection of Virginia, Alabama and Liberty) Wedge Community Garden Neighbors of 4200 Shenandoah

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

St. Louis Master Gardeners and Missouri Master Naturalists volunteered to assist with maintenance efforts of pollinator-friendly gardens. They also encouraged other neighborhood leaders at the St. Louis Urban Gardening Symposium to support Monarch conservation efforts by selecting milkweed and other native plants for their community plantings. The City's Nature Steward team leader shared progress and ongoing efforts through her presentation at the St. Louis Urban Gardening Symposium. The Symposium also featured native plant experts sharing their expertise participants. Each of the groups applying for Neighbors Naturescaping were given the opportunity to meet with technical experts prior to submitting their application to help further the success of their application and their pollinator-friendly garden.

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