City of Orono

Orono, MN

Mayor Bob Tunheim

Pledge Summary

Orono is a city in Minnesota with an approximate population of 8,000. Nestled on the western shores of Lake Minnetonka, it is renowned for its lush, wooded landscapes and expansive lakeside properties, which create a stunning blend of natural beauty and architectural elegance. Mayor Bob Tunheim has committed to protecting the monarch butterfly and other pollinators by signing the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. He looks forward to engaging residents in building more pollinator habitats throughout the city.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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

Systems Change

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

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Mayor Bob Tunheim	2026	2/18/2026	
Mayor Bob Tunheim	2025	4/22/2025	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.).

300

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.)

15

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.

0.5

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.

Right-of-way road sides, community garden, and parks.

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

Our program has been engaging marginalized communities through social media and clean-up events.

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

Improve habitat for pollinators and better educate the community on the subject.

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?

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The resource center has been great for sharing information on the topic. Would like to see more initiatives to help organizing volunteers and examples from other cities on what programs they are implementing.

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

Improved awareness with our elected officials and in turn the residents in our city.

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.

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

We featured a few Facebook posts in relation to planting milkweed and other pollinator gardens, and we included articles in our monthly newsletter, and gave seeds and information on planting and care at our city cleanup day.

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.

We were in contact with the Orono Community Garden and the Orono Garden Club, giving them supplies for their gardens and shared info that they distributed to their members and the public.

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.

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Parks and public works both participated in updating their standard practices to include additional milkweed planting throughout the city and in modifying maintenance and mowing techniques to minimize disruption to current milkweed and other pollinators already present in the city.

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

We had regularly scheduled meetings to discuss sustainability and mowing techniques. Native planting areas were identified and protected from right-of-way mowing, and areas in parks were marked and protected from mowing and other disruptions.

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)

We planted a pollinator garden on our city hall grounds at 2750 Kelley Parkway in Orono.

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

Members of the Parks Commission and local volunteers helped design and plant the garden.

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.

0.05

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)

3

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

They are labeled as pollinator-friendly habitat, we would like to add more informational signs next year with more information included.

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

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

Orono Parks Commission, Three Rivers Parks District, Minnesota DNR.

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

We are currently in the process of completing a comprehensive review of all chemicals that are used in the city and their effect on pollinators and other wildlife. Parks and the golf course have already switched to safer chemicals, and the department has greatly reduced the use of chemicals in parks and trails.

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?

Orono garden club, DNR

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

The city is completing a new sustainability initiative that will be included in the next master plan, which is currently beginning development for 2027 completion

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