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 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

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- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- 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.
- Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.
- 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
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.).

150

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.

.75

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.

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Golf Course, Public Works Building, drainage area, city hall, 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?

The resource center has been great for sharing information on the topic, more varied recommendations for types of habitats and resources to implement them.

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, two in progress parks projects that incorporate pollinator gardens.

Selected Action Items

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?

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

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.

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

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

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

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.

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

Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

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

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

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.

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

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?

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.

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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.

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:

June 22, 2026

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

Pollinator Week

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Proclamation pollinator Week 2026.pdf

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.

pollinator post.jpg

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

We featured a few Facebook/instagram posts in relation to planting milkweed and other pollinator gardens, included articles in our monthly newsletter, and gave seeds and information on planting and care at our city cleanup day. We also created 4 demonstration gardens throughout the city to increase awareness.

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.

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We were in contact with the Orono Community Garden and the Orono Garden Club, giving them supplies for their gardens and sharing 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.

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. We also heavily incorporated the planting of pollinators in new park projects and the restoration of land after storm and sewer work.

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. Regular planning meetings for projects also included sections on native plantings and protections.

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.

The City encouraged collaboration on native plantings, pollinator gardens, and habitat restoration within city parks and public spaces. Through partnerships with community volunteers, Parks Commission members, and local conservation advocates, Orono promoted the use of native milkweed and nectar-producing plants, provided educational opportunities, and encouraged residents to incorporate pollinator-friendly practices into their own landscapes.

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

Most of the engagement was through parks commission meetings and community outreach events.

Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

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How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

300

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

500

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

Parks Commission, City Council.

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.

city hall 2.jpg

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

city hall 1.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)

Orono City Hall 2750 Kelley Parkway Orono, MN 55356

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

Orono garden club, city council, parks commission.

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.

.2

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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)

We planted milkweed and pollinator blends in a few areas throughout the city this year, including a stormwater project near 2874 Casco Point Rd, at our public works building, 365 Old Crystal Bay Rd N, Orono, MN 55356, and at our Kenobi Pond stormwater project near hwy 12 and wayzata blvd.

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

50

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.

2

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Stormwater areas and Kenobi Pond will be monitored to ensure the plants are healthy and established, but will have minimal maintenance. The public works site will have wildflower meadow cuttings every three years if needed or controlled burns to controll weeds and overgrowth.

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?

Orono Parks Commission, Three Rivers Park District

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

50

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Purchased and helped with the plantings and supplies.

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies

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and other pollinators.

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

.5

Please describe the extent of revisions or maintenance to invasive species removal programs, as well as the practices or techniques used to remove the invasive plants.

Removed large amounts of buckthorn from the parks and restored them. Offered Buckthorn tools to residents to remove it on their own property.

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).

3 signs in the city. 2 at City Hall, that were purchased through the monarch pledge websites recommended vendors, and one at Antione Park that was created by the neighbors living near the site.

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?

DNR, Lakes Minnetonka Watershed, Three Rivers PArk District

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 completion in 2027

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Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

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

monarch post.jpg

How many estimated individuals participated in your community science effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 150).

20

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

Minnesota DNR

Please describe the community science program that you supported or initiated. Provide a link to any relevant programs, if possible.

The city encouraged residents to report monarch butterfly sightings and migration activity through community science programs such as Journey North. We also encouraged residents to monitor milkweed plants in their gardens and in the parks for monarch eggs, caterpillars, and signs of successful development. We promoted through our social media accounts the use of online reporting tools and mobile apps, such as iNaturalist, to document monarch sightings and contribute observations to larger conservation research efforts.

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