City of Jefferson

Jefferson City, MO

Mayor Ron Fitzwater

Pledge Summary

The City of Jefferson, with a population of approximately 42,600, recognizes the critical importance of pollinators, including monarch butterflies, to our ecosystem. These essential species contribute significantly to the health of our environment by supporting biodiversity and aiding in the reproduction of plants through pollination. However, pollinator populations are declining at an alarming rate due to habitat loss, climate change, and other environmental pressures. In response to this pressing issue, the City of Jefferson is determined to take proactive measures to conserve and support pollinator habitats. Our efforts include: Habitat Restoration: The city plans to increase green spaces and native planting zones to create a welcoming environment for pollinators. This includes planting milkweed and nextar-rich flowers to provide essential resources for monarch butterflies throughout their lifecycle. Public Education and Engagement: We aim to involve the community by having informational sessions and signage to raise awareness about the significance of pollinators and how residents can contribute to conservation efforts. Partnerships: The city will collaborate with local organizations, schools, and environmental groups to implement conservation initiatives that ensure a lasting positive impact on pollinator populations. By taking these steps, the City of Jefferson hopes to create a model for sustainable pollinator conservation. We invite our residents to join us in this vital mission to safeguard the future of monarch butterflies and pollinators, ensuring a healthy and vibrant ecosystem for generations to come.

Action Items Committed for 2025

Communications and Convening

- 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

- 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.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Ron Fitzwater	2026	1/9/2026	
Mayor Ron Fitzwater	2025	4/30/2025	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.).

700

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.)

30

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.

13

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.

Along a roadside where a road was expanded. A new landscape area was made due to an installation of a playground, in native areas at city golf course, native areas created in a newer park that has been around for 3 years, and in a Bioswale in a park, in park open spaces to reduce mowing.

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

Natives including milkweed being incorporated in our parks.

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

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To educate the community the importance of pollinators including Monarchs.

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?

It would be helpful to give ideas how to engage our community.

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

Will plant about 100 milkweed this fall that is divided into two locations.

Selected Action Items

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

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

NATIVE PLANT SALE 1.jpeg

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

NATIVE PLANT SALE 2.jpeg

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

NATIVE PLANT SALE 3.jpeg

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

Native Plant Sale.docx

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

2050

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

679

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

Grow Native, Missouri Department of Conservation, MO Prairie Foundation

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 demonstration gardens supporting monarch conservation are located at: Binder Park Playground 200 Campground Court Jefferson City, MO 651019, Edgewood Greenway: 3337 West Edgewood Jefferson City, MO 65109, Oak Hills Golf Course 932 Ellis Blvd, Jefferson City, MO 65101 Native plantings are distributed throughout the course, enhancing habitat across multiple areas. Deborah Cooper Park 130 W. Capitol Ave, Jefferson City, MO 65109 Native plantings are concentrated in the main portion of the park 🌼 Cultural Significance of the Monarch Butterfly. The monarch butterfly is a symbol of transformation, resilience, and ecological interdependence. Its annual migration—spanning thousands of miles from Canada to Mexico—is one of nature's most awe-inspiring phenomena. By establishing native gardens in public spaces like West Edgewood Greenway, Oak Hills and Deborah Cooper Park, Jefferson City honors this cultural icon while fostering environmental stewardship and community engagement. These gardens serve not only as ecological sanctuaries but also invites residents and visitors to witness the monarch's lifecycle and migration firsthand.

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

Missouri Department of Conservation

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.

13

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?

Missouri Department of Conservation, Public Works, and Central Missouri Master Gardeners

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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 Binder Playground and Deborah Cooper locations is scheduled to be completed next spring of 2026. Milkweed was planted at both Binder Playground and Deborah Cooper already. Additional milkweed will be planted this spring and seed will be sown this winter. Along the Monroe Street roadside expansion, native flower and milkweed was sown. Hoping the plants will emerge next spring. It could take couple of years to make is area successful. Hoping to completion is spring of 2027. The Golf Course has been a work in progress the last couple of years. Indian Grass has taken over, and we have been incorporating native flowers the last couple of years. Dormant milkweed will be planted late fall. Additional milkweed seed will be winter sown in. We hope to have it near completion in spring of 2027.

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.

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

Natives on Monroe 25.pdf

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

Parks and Recreation and Public Works

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

Jefferson City’s Parks and Recreation and Public Works teams continue to collaborate on transforming underutilized spaces into thriving native habitats through thoughtful revisions to mowing and planting programs. Parks and Recreation converted a field. A previously mowed field is being transitioned into a native area, reducing routine mowing and increasing ecological value. Invasive Species Removal: Staff removed a dense stand of bush honeysuckle, restoring the area’s ecological integrity. Winter Sowing: Native seeds—including milkweed critical for monarch habitat—will be sown this winter to establish diverse pollinator-friendly vegetation. Public Works did a slope restoration: Above a retaining wall, staff regraded a steep slope to reduce erosion and improve safety and sowed native seed transforming a previously underutilized space into a functional and biodiverse landscape. Maintenance will be performed in a couple different ways. To ensure long-term success and ecological health, maintenance will include hand pulling of invasive or unwanted species, selective herbicide application to target persistent invasives while

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protecting native growth and prescribed burning to rejuvenate native plant communities and control woody encroachment. These efforts reflect a citywide commitment to sustainable land management, monarch conservation, and community-centered environmental stewardship.

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?

Public Works, Parks, and Missouri Department of Conservation

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

780

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

There are over 5000 nectar producing at Deborah Cooper Park. This year we are adding 100 milkweed plants late fall and winter sowing additional milkweed. At Binder Park we planted 130 nectar producing plants and 15 of them were butterfly weed milkweed plants due to a new playground landscaping being installed. The Oak Hills Golf course is a work in progress. Indian Grass has taken over and we have been incorporating more native flowers yearly. We plan on planting 50 dormant common and butterfly weed milkweed plants late fall. Public Works expanded width of a section of Monroe Street by adding walls and sidewalk to prevent rock bluff from sluffing off. Above that area they graded the area to less of a drop off and added native seed. In that mixture of nectar producing plants there is also about 500 common and swamp milkweed were incorporated. Native area at W. Edgewood was maintained by editing out some of bergamot and other undesirables. Common milkweed seed was sown late this fall.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

pollinator signs.docx

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

16

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

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There are 10 no mow pollinator habitat restoration signs installed at Deborah Cooper Park, W. Edgewood Greenway(1) and road islands(5), and two at Linc Facility hillside. One sign is a stormwater bioswale that states this feature filters stormwater and supports wildlife at McClung Park. Five signs that say pollinator habitat restoration area are at Lavinia Park (1) and Deborah Cooper Park(4).

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