Manitowoc

Manitowoc, WI

Mayor Justin Nickels

Pledge Summary

Manitowoc is a historic, family-friendly city of approximately 35,000 residents on the western shore of Lake Michigan, widely known as Wisconsin's Maritime Capital. It boasts a rich industrial history in shipbuilding, particularly submarines during WWII, and now features the Wisconsin Maritime Museum, sandy beaches, a bustling marina, the S.S. Badger ferry, and attractions like the Rahr-West Art Museum. Key Features and Highlights: Location: Situated on Lake Michigan, about 40 minutes from Green Bay and 90 minutes from Milwaukee. Maritime Heritage: Known for building 28 submarines during World War II, it hosts the largest maritime museum in the Midwest, where visitors can tour the USS Cobia submarine. Attractions: Rahr-West Art Museum: Located in a Victorian mansion, featuring works by Picasso and Warhol. Mariners Trail: A 13-mile scenic walking/biking trail along Lake Michigan. S.S. Badger Lake Michigan Car Ferry: Connects Manitowoc to Ludington, Michigan. Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center: An interactive agricultural education center. Recreation: Features 36 parks, including swimming beaches (Noda and Red Arrow) and fishing opportunities. Lifestyle: A small-town atmosphere with a growing downtown, riverfront development (River Point District), and active farmer's markets. Economy: A mix of manufacturing, tourism, and agriculture. Name Origin: The name "Manitowoc" is derived from the Algonquian language, likely meaning "abode of the Great Spirit"

Action Items Committed for 2026

Communications and Convening

- 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

- Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation’s Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u681:v1.14.0.49966]

- 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

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.
- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Justin Nickels	2026	4/28/2026	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.).

0

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.

3

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.

We created monarch habitat at two distinct locations in the past year. The Maritime Bluff is a bluff along Maritime Drive adjacent to Lake Michigan within the City of Manitowoc. This

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u681:v1.14.0.49966]

bluff was planted this past fall and has just completed its first year of growth. The propertys are both public and private in a partnership that resulted in a majority of the bluff being restored in pollinator habitat. Another location that was planted this past year was in Silver Creek Park. We completed a stream restoration project and the riparian zones have been planted with native pollinators. Lastly, we continue to create and plant our downtown pollinator beds with native pollinators.

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

Our downtown planting beds are bringing native pollinators and pollinator habitat to an otherwise concrete city center. We planted numerous trees as well in this area to create better overall habitat. Downtown is considered underserved and a marginalized area of the community.

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

Creating monarch and general pollinator habitat along with planting trees has been a focus of our community for the past few years. Noticing the lack of trees, even in our parks and the large expanses of turf grass and concrete have brought a sort of native species renaissance to our community. The Mayor's Monarch Pledge just helps reinforce that ideal and keeps us on the right track to continue improving our natural and man made spaces.

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?

Our capacity, with our employment model limits our direct involvement in community outreach and community monarch initiatives. In 2027, we hope to garner some of our local Friends groups to help us reach more people. We tend to be heavier on the projects and physical plantings for monarchs, but could use some work on the initiatives and getting the public involved. Another thing we would like to see would be possible grants and funding sources to help with some of these projects.

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

The City of Manitowoc has many City Park and Natural areas that support monarch butterflies. Our goal is to continue to enhance those areas, while developing new locations to help support monarch butterflies.

Selected Action Items

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u681:v1.14.0.49966]

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

Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds awareness and creates habitat by engaging students, educators, and the community in planting native milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? If you are involved with another National Wildlife Federation program, please mention that below. (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

Please list the names of the schools you are working with.

What resources, if any, are you providing to educators?

How many students and educators would you estimate are being reached? Please limit your answer to only number of adults and youths engaged in the answer field (e.g., 200 students and 20 educators).

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

How many acres of monarch and pollinator habitat have been planted through this effort? 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.

What is the maintenance schedule to ensure planted habitat is maintained?

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

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u681:v1.14.0.49966]

below.

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

Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

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.

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?

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u681:v1.14.0.49966]

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.

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.

City of Manitowoc Parks & Recreation Department City of Manitowoc Department of Public Works

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

The Parks and Recreation Department, along with the Department of Public Works have been working to adjust existing mowing practices, while still abiding by current City ordinances. Looking at maps and setbacks, we were able to remove quite a bit of land out of mowed turf grass. Currently we are just allowing these areas to grow without any plantings to see what comes up naturally, with the ultimate goal if adding native, nectar producing plants and milkweed. With that, we are mowing less along trails and walking paths allowing natural growth to occur closer to the paths.

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.

Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership Friends of Manitowoc River Watershed Lake Michigan Bird Observatory

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

We are currently working with these groups on a regular basis to brainstorm and implement new ways we can support pollinators and monarch conservation within the City of Manitowoc. Recently we worked with LMBO to develop pollinator signs at some of our downtown native planting beds as well as pollinator signage at our newly developed

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u681:v1.14.0.49966]

coastal wetland aviary. We are currently working with LNRP to support their grant application for invasive species removal in Manitowoc County.

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 Zoo Signs (4).png

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

Parking Lot Pollinator Sign (1).png

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

2

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

We worked with Lake Michigan Bird Observatory to develop pollinator signs for our downtown planting beds along with signs for our new coastal wetland aviary at the Lincoln Park Zoo.

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

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

2026 Replacement Plantings.xlsx

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

Johnsons_MO-29791.pdf

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

Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership, Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u681:v1.14.0.49966]

750

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

We have pollinator planting beds throughout our downtown that we currently manage and maintain. This year we noticed some bare spots, so we added 311 plants to existing locations. With that, we are adding additional downtown native planting beds this fall with an additional 439 plants and trees in our downtowns area.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u681:v1.14.0.49966]