Garden City Unveils Kansas' First Augmented Reality Mural, Blending Art, Technology, and Storytelling

70-foot "Majestic Monarch Butterfly" augmented reality mural transforms downtown Garden City, Kansas, into an interactive cultural destination.

GARDEN CITY, KS, UNITED STATES, September 11, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Garden City will make Kansas history this week by launching the state's first [augmented reality (AR) mural](#), bringing immersive and interactive art technology usually found in major cities to this diverse prairie community of 31,000 residents.

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The groundbreaking project transforms artist Michael K. Knutson's massive 70-foot by 18-foot "Majestic Monarch Butterfly" mural into an immersive digital experience where visitors can scan a QR code to see 3D butterflies burst from the painted wall and swirl around them in augmented reality. The technology requires no app downloads—visitors simply use their smartphone cameras to bring the artwork to life.

The timing couldn't be more meaningful. Garden City's diverse immigrant history – with over 48% of residents being Hispanic and newcomers from Myanmar, Somalia, and Vietnam – mirrors the monarch butterfly's incredible migration journey.

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>
> *Patrick Herd, Executive Director of Garden City Downtown Vision*

and community — innovate, revitalize, and transform, " said Patrick Herd, Executive Director of Garden City Downtown Vision. "Just as the monarch butterfly travels thousands of miles to find a

new home, so many of our neighbors have journeyed here to build better lives. Now our stories literally take flight through technology, creating something magical that puts Garden City on the map as a destination for immersive art experiences.

The launch positions Garden City alongside a growing movement of immersive art installations that have captivated audiences nationwide. Meow Wolf is a leading example, with interactive exhibits in Santa Fe, Las Vegas, Denver, and Texas—all receiving thousands of 5-star reviews on Google and often earning the title of the "most rated" place in the city. Garden City's project advances this trend by bringing immersive and interactive technology to a smaller, rural community.

"We're proving that innovation doesn't require a zip code in Silicon Valley," said Moody Mattan, CEO of BrandXR, the company that's famous for inventing AR murals in 2018. "Garden City is demonstrating how smaller communities can leverage augmented

Garden City Augmented Reality Mural Sign

reality technology to celebrate their unique stories and attract visitors from around the world."

The AR experience launches just two days before Garden City's Fall Fest on September 20, providing visitors with a new reason to explore the downtown area. The AR Mural operates 24/7 year-round, transforming the mural into a continuous attraction that visitors can enjoy day or night.

Key features of the AR experience include:
- Butterfly Sanctuary Effect: 3D monarch butterflies emerge from the mural and swirl around visitors
- Dual Viewing Experience: Optimized for both close-up selfies and full-mural distant viewing
- Social Media Integration: Built-in sharing capabilities encourage visitors to spread Garden City's story
- Sponsor Integration: Local business partnerships, such as Flourish Herbals and Garden City Community College, are embedded within the digital experience
- Real-time Analytics: Tracking visitor engagement and geographic reach

The project is an investment in downtown revitalization, with built-in analytics offering measurable data on visitor engagement, time spent, and geographic reach – making it a trackable investment in cultural tourism.

Knutson's mural shows the four stages of monarch development – egg, larvae, pupa, and adult butterfly – as a metaphor for the resilience and transformation experienced by Garden City's diverse community. The AR enhancement brings this symbolism to life, letting visitors become part of the migration story.

"The beauty of AR technology is that it adds layers of meaning without changing the original artwork," Herd noted. "Michael's powerful message about transformation and resilience now has a digital dimension that visitors can experience and share with the world."

The mural is located in downtown Garden City at 202 E Laurel St, Garden City, KS 67846, and is open to visitors year-round, 24/7. QR code signs provide instant access to the AR experience using any smartphone camera.

To plan your trip to Garden City, visit https://www.visitgck.com/

For more details on Augmented Reality Murals, visit https://www.brandxr.io/ar-murals

About Garden City, Kansas
Garden City Downtown Vision works to strengthen downtown Garden City through strategic planning, advocacy, and innovative programming that celebrates the community's diverse heritage and forward-thinking spirit. To plan your trip to Garden City, visit https://www.visitgck.com/

About BrandXR
BrandXR is a leading No-Code Augmented Reality Platform and XR Studio, known for its Award-Winning Augmented Reality Murals and Augmented Reality Experiences for Out-of-Home Advertising. Learn more at https://www.brandxr.io/ar-murals

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