City of Harker Heights

Harker Heights, TX

Mayor Spencer H. Smith

Pledge Summary

Harker Heights is a City in Central Texas with a population of roughly 30,000. The city is home to many who are serving or have served in the United States Armed Forces due to its proximity to Fort Hood, one the largest Army installations in the world. Mayor Spencer H. Smith of Harker Heights, TX has committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with their signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge and looks forward to engaging residents in building more pollinator habitat throughout the city.

Action Items Committed for 2021

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

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 Michael Blomquist	2026	3/10/2026	
Mayor Michael Blomquist	2025	3/14/2025	Signatories
Mayor Michael Blomquist	2024	4/20/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Spencer Smith	2023	1/6/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Spencer H. Smith	2022	1/18/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor Spencer H. Smith	2021	12/7/2020	Leadership Circle

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.).

100

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.)

60 adults and 40 youth

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.

.25

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.

Carl Levin Park

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

We built and are renting plots from a new Community Garden in our lower-income part of town (Kern Park). We will begin offering gardening and nature classes there in 2022.

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

Our Department has been committed to educating the public about the importance of environmental stewardship. Being in Texas, the Monarch Butterfly is extremely important and we wanted to do our part to create habitat for that species.

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 best resources available to us so far has been our community itself. People want to be involved and any tools that assist volunteers are the most helpful.

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

We have also begun to transition all of our City's flower beds and gardens to native plant species. We have also begun creating signage that identifies these species so that our residents can do the same on their own property.

Selected Action Items

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:

January 12, 2020

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

Mayors' Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Mayors Monarch Pledge 2021 Proclamation.docx

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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For our community garden renters, we have created signage that designates not only the importance for native nectar-producing plants for our monarch butterflies but also for the local bee populations. Information on milkweeds was sent electronically to renters.

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.

monarchevent.png

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

The City of Harker Heights had several departments that communicated with the public about monarch gardens and the importance of the Monarch butterfly. Much of this occurred on social media and in press releases to local news agencies. At the Spring Arts in the Park event, there was a Monarch Butterfly information section set up near our Community Garden. We also created a page on our City's website that contains many resources on this topic: https://harkerheights.gov/monarchbutterfly

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.

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

pocket prairie.png

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

1 The Central Texas Master Naturalists

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

The Central Texas Master Naturalists partnered with the City in planting native milkweed/nectar plants in the Native Pocket Prairie at Carl Levin Park. They also worked with staff to design and create interpretive signage in the area.

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)

Unknown

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

100

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

The Harker Heights Public Library hosts a seed swap/seed library.

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)

Carl Levin Park Pocket Prairie is our 'Central Park.' This park is located right in the City Center of Harker Heights.

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

Central Texas Master Naturalists

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.

.25

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)

Corner of Commercial Dr and Heights Dr.

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

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20

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.

.15

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Area is maintained monthly. Landscape is designed to require minimal maintenance and watering.

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?

None

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

10

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Plants were planted around the outside and inside edges of both our Carl Levin Park Community Garden and the Kern Park Community Garden.

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

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

HHPRD 2021-2024 Strategic Plan.pdf

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

Harker Heights Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

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

In Progress

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

HHPRD staff incorporated the Mayor's Monarch Pledge into our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan (see attached).

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.

pocket prairie.png

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

2 - The Central Texas Master Naturalists and Planning & Development Department of the City. We attempted to engage with the Central Texas Master Gardeners but they were not active during COVID.

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

The Central Texas Master Naturalists partnered with the City in planting native milkweed/nectar plants in the Native Pocket Prairie at Carl Levin Park. They also worked with staff to design and create interpretive signage in the area. The Planning & Development Department has workshopped with City Council and is currently working on ordinance revisions that allow for native pollinator areas within residential properties.

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