City of Harker Heights

Harker Heights, TX

Mayor Michael Blomquist

Pledge Summary

Harker Heights is a city in central Texas with a population of approximately 34,000. The city is close to the Interstate 35 corridor that roughly follows the path the Monarch's migrate each year. Being in the path of the Monarch Migration, Mayor Blomquist of Harker Heights has invested in creating a pocket prairie, native pollinator gardens, and education that engages the community to help protect the Monarch Butterfly.

Action Items Committed for 2024

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 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.
- 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).
- 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 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.)

40

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.

.1

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.

Kern Community Garden

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

The Kern Community Garden is in a low-income community

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

Understanding the importance of the Monarch Butterfly and our cities proximity to its migration.

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?

Programming ideas for youth and teenagers

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

Trying to engage more community partners in our efforts

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:

February 13, 2024

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

Mayors Monarch Proclamation

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Mayors Monarch Pledge 2024 Proclamation.docx

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.)

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

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Held an in-person class teaching residents how they can establish their own pollinator garden at home. We advertised through social media, and then provided hand outs and educational materials.

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.

We worked with our local Youth Volunteer Corps to plant native nectar producing plants and one of our Community Gardens. We educated them on the importance of native pollinator plants as well.

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.

2

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

We actively engage with our local Native Plant Society on the upkeep of our 2 pollinator gardens they have helped us establish. We also have been working with our Master Gardener's to provide classes on the importance of drought tolerant and native plants, as well as creating pollinator gardens

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

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

50

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

250

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

Native Plant Society, Master Naturalists, Master Gardener's

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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)

Our City Hall 305 Millers Crossing Harker Heights, TX 76548

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

Native Plant Society

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.

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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)

Kern Community Garden Revitalization

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)

3

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

Harker Heights Elementary School Killeen Creatives (not a school) Youth Volunteer Corps (not a school)

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

We had 2 hands-on gardening days,in which we planted pollinator plants, and talked about the importance of pollinators. More resources will be provided in future workdays

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).

10 educators 50 students

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

Killeen Creatives and Youth Volunteers Corps

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.

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

water 2x a week

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?

Native Plant Society

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

40

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Maintaining 2 gardens that have milkweed and native pollinator plants

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)

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4

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

educational signs at both pollinator gardens. Explaining the importance of pollinators, the monarch life cycle, why plant native plants.

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?

Native Plant Society

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.

We will be establishing another pollinator garden at our Kern Community Garden as a part of a local parks grant that we received. The garden should start sometime in 2025.

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