City of McAllen

McAllen, TX

Mayor Javier Villalobos

Pledge Summary

The City of McAllen is a city in south Texas with a population of roughly 142,000. It is the largest city in Hidalgo County of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, a region known for its high biodiversity and as an ecotourism destination. Mayor Javier Villalobos of McAllen, Texas has committed to conserving the monarch butterfly and the pollinator community that are so important to ecosystem and economic health. Mayor Villalobos looks forward to engaging residents and creating more pollinator habitat in the city.

Action Items Committed for 2026

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 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.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- 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.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Past Pledge Archive

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Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Javier Villalobos	2026	12/2/2025	
Mayor Javier Villalobos	2025	12/10/2024	Leadership Circle
Major Javier Villalobos	2024	1/11/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Javier Villalobos	2023	3/30/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Javier Villalobos	2022	4/19/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor Jim Darling	2021	3/19/2021	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.).

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.)

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.

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.

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

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

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?

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

Selected Action Items

Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other

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long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.

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

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

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

What species were collected or propagated?

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

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

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)

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

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.

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)

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

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

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of a football field.

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

How many estimated individuals participated in your community science effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 150).

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

Please describe the community science program that you supported or initiated. Provide a link to any relevant programs, if possible.

Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field ((Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only), e.g. 500)

1500

What was the date of your festival?

4/25/2026

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

American Forests, Edinburg Scenic Wetlands, National Butterfly Center, Native Plant Society of Texas, Texas A&M Forest Service, Texas Master Naturalists, Texas Parks & Wildlife, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Valley Nature Center

Please describe the details of your monarch butterfly festival and how you ensured the event was accessible by all residents in the community (e.g., events, length, notable successes, outreach, location).

The McAllen Monarch Festival is an annual event held each spring at Quinta Mazatlan in McAllen, focused on celebrating monarch migration through the Rio Grande Valley and educating the community on what we can do to help support monarch populations and other pollinators. It has a variety of features, including a the Mayors Bug Parade, native plant sales, environmental education booths, garden tours, family activities, live music and

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performances, and a marketplace. The event is accessible primarily through the City of McAllen's broad outreach for the event, ease of getting to the grounds, and low cost of admission.

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)

1000

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

3000

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

We include native plant sales and giveaways with many programs and events, including Monarch Fest, Chicharra Fest, Native Plant Month, and as part of our regularly native plant gardening workshops. We partner with local native plant growers, the Native Plant Project, and others in the community. The number of people above represents a rough estimate of people attending the various programs and events with native plant sales. We do not have specific numbers for the plant sales of our native nursery partners, but it is a low-end estimate extrapolated from a data subset.

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:

4/13/2026

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

Mayors Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2026 Mayors Monarch Pledge Proclamation.docx

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Proclamation.jpg

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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).

Quinta Mazatlan continues to share monarch and pollinator-friendly gardening information with our community via in-person programming, printed media (brochures, flyers, newspaper), and through digital media (social media, blog posts, video). Programs include native plant gardening workshops, walk with a naturalist tours, school field trips, mini-festival events, and other seasonal activities. We've specifically offered multiple rounds of our popular "Plant Propagation" and "Garden Design" workshops this year. Please view Quinta Mazatlan's website and social media for examples of our programs and events. We wrote an "Easy Monarch Gardening Design" post that includes plant recommendations and arrangements. We also provide lots of downloadable information on our website about native plants good for wildlife (https://quintamazatlan.com/cue-ecology/native-plant-resources). In person visitors to the park have the opportunity to pick up a free trifold that lists many plants that are beneficial to monarchs and other pollinators.

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