

Village of Northbrook

Northbrook, IL

Village President Kathryn Ciesla

Pledge Summary

Northbrook got its name from being situated along the North Branch of the Chicago River and has a history of championing successful conservation efforts. Our community reignited a commitment to sustainability with the adoption of a Climate Action Plan to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and foster resiliency through planning and outreach. We believe protecting wildlife, adapting to a changing climate, and promoting responsible land management go hand-in-hand through pollinator conservation initiatives such as the Mayors Monarch Pledge.

Action Items Committed for 2022

Communications and Convening

- 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.
- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.
- 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 Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- 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.

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.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- 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).
- Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners’ associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation’s Community Wildlife Habitat program).
- Convert vacant lots to monarch 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.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.
- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Village President Kathryn Ciesla	2026	4/6/2026	
Mayor Kathryn Ciesla	2025	1/13/2025	Leadership Circle
Village President Kathryn Ciesla	2024	3/28/2024	Leadership Circle

Village President Kathryn Ciesla	2023	2/1/2023	Monarch Champions
Village President Kathryn Ciesla	2022	1/19/2022	Leadership Circle
Village President Kathryn Ciesla	2021	12/4/2020	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 (e.g., 50).

2000

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." (Only allow numerical values.)

400 youth and 1600 adults

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).

3

Where is your habitat being created? This may include residences (yards, containers, balconies, etc.), schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces and common areas or parks.

Residential gardens, community gardens, and in public spaces such as the train station, rights-of-ways undergoing public improvement projects including our downtown and subdivision redevelopments.

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

Tips from the webinar "Eco-Schools USA on a Budget" were shared with educators who run our school district's special education program environmental club. They were then able to work with the Village to implement low-cost strategies for Earth Day and follow-up programs.

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

NWF is a recognized and trusted organization and we appreciate the streamlined nature of the MMP in providing tools and recognition for communities to deploy a range of pollinator conservation strategies.

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?

A resource sharing platform for template ordinances and resolutions could be helpful; more examples of integrating equity and conservation at the municipal level would be appreciated as well.

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

Between 2021 and now, Northbrook has ramped up implementation of our pollinator conservation initiatives. With a lot of systems change actions in progress we expect much more to come in 2023!

Selected Action Items

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?

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants?

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 (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.

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?

How many plants were planted?

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

How many people attended your event?

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.

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"?

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.

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

Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.

How many estimated individuals participated in your challenge? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 100).

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

When did this challenge take place?

What is the total acreage of habitat created? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 acres). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones.

Please describe your challenge and the results.

Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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 one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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.

Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

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

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

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

3

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

Such community associations have been provided with native trees for planting on their properties; as well, they were all provided with educational materials about No Mow May and the benefits of spring-emerging pollinators when the Village decided to waive the grass height ordinance in the month of May.

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.

[FloralParkPlanting_ArticleFI-1000x563.jpg](#)

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

2: Park District and Public Works Department

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

Village sustainability staff facilitate monthly meetings with our public works department and quarterly meetings with the park district to ensure efforts to reduce mowing and increase native habitat are streamlined. New native gardens have been installed as a result of these engagements.

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.

[action 5.PNG](#)

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

5: Somme Woods Community (restoration group), Illinois Native Plant Society Northeast Chapter, Forest Preserves District of Cook County volunteers, the Organic Gardener, and local group called Monarchs, Milkweed & More.

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

The Village promotes community participation in local restoration efforts through the Somme Woods Community restoration group year-round. As well, a long-time "local celebrity" who leads the Somme group (Stephen Packard) was featured in a print newsletter for his great work establishing restoration methods from the 1970s to today. The Village worked with our local native plant chapter to develop regional eco-type recommendations for plant species. The Village collaborated with the Organic Gardener for creation of a sustainable vegetable garden and ongoing hands-on educational workshops to promote earth-friendly food growing. The local group Monarchs, Milkweed, and More is a community partner for online webinars to promote local incentives for native plant gardens.

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?

Internal Village Departments (Public Works, Planning, and Village Managers Office).

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.

The Village is currently updating its landscaping contract and Engineering Specifications and Standards documents for Village owned / maintained properties. Both of these initiatives are incorporating the Village efforts to promote pollinator habitat and reduce pesticide usage and inorganic fertilizers. Target date of completion: March 1 2023.

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.

[action 2_pic 1.PNG](#)

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

[action 2_pic 2.PNG](#)

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

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

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

[action 2_pt 17.PNG](#)

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

Northbrook continued its public awareness campaign regarding pollinator conservation through multiple platforms in 2022. We focus on actionable items our residents can take to combat the driving factors of pollinator decline (habitat loss, pesticide exposure, and lack of nutritional resources). Our social media pages, weekly e-news, and print newsletters sent to every resident every other month are the main methods of communications. Village staff also integrate these efforts with giveaways at local events and educational programming with community groups such as school environmental clubs, scouts troops, etc.

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?

School Districts, Park District, Library, Community groups, Commissions, Businesses, Community at large

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

Complete

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.

<https://www.northbrook.il.us/993/Climate-Action-Plan>

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

Our Climate Action Plan includes an entire greenspace category with an express goal to participate in the Mayors Monarch Pledge annually. We hope to accomplish 110 acres converted to native habitat by 2030.

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

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

[action 3.png](#)

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

The Village provides promotional materials for the Garden Club to display at their annual native plant sale that offer solutions to local gardening problems (deer, heavy clay soils, roadway salts, etc.)

Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.

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

[action 7 and 25.pdf](#)

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and associated opportunities to create monarch habitat.

The Village now provides sustainability reviews to all new developments coming to Northbrook in need of zoning relief. Any applicable project with a landscaping component is provided with materials on how to best create pollinator habitat. This suggests at least 70% native plants incorporated into landscaping (grass, groundcover, forbs, shrubs, and trees). Applicants must provide their species lists in Landscape Plans and are required to make revisions if any known problematic species are included. (See example attached).

Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

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

[action 8.PNG](#)

Please describe the process to create the strategy , the strategy goals and content, and/or results of implementation. Please also identify who was engaged in this process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

The Village worked with a consultant to develop a priority areas map for Northbrook. Priorities were established by weighing factors such as socioeconomic status, impervious surface coverage, tree canopy coverage, and population density. The resulting priorities indicate areas most in need of added tree canopy coverage due to the urban heat island effect. These areas were targeted during tree giveaways as being given “first dibs” on the variety of native trees and shrubs provided. An example of a partnership established through this program is that the Village now has contacts at Northbrook’s Korean

Community Volunteer Group. By creating relationships with such community members, the Village has been able to partner with them for other events. The updated map for 2022 is still in development but the results from this initiative in 2021 is attached.

Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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

[action 9.PNG](#)

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

2

How many individuals were engaged in this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 50).

23

Please describe the community art project that was implemented in your community and how it contributed to cultural awareness and recognition (e.g., number of art installations, type of art).

The Village is lucky to be home to one of the highest quality natural areas in Illinois (Somme Preserves). To encourage more residents to experience this wonderful nature, we used the site as a prompt for a photography competition hosted by the Village and our Arts Commission. Community members had to take pictures of the preserves during the week in July that the competition was being held, and we received some amazing results with 23 submissions in total.

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

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

[action 10.JPG](#)

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event?

180 native shrubs, 250 native plants, 600 milkweed seed packets, and 514 native trees through multiple events.

How many people attended your event?

1500

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

These were all Village-hosted events with numerous community partners such as ComEd, our local water district, recycling haulers, and local groups such as GoGreen Northbrook.

Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

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

[action_12_pt_1.jpg](#)

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

[action_12_pt_2.jpg](#)

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

[action_12_pt_3.jpeg](#)

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)

3 at 1225 Cedar Lane (Village Hall); 1 at 1401 Shermer Road (Train Station)

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

3

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.

1

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies

and other pollinators.

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

[action 20.pdf](#)

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants?

63

Please describe the extent of revisions or maintenance to invasive species removal programs, as well as the practices or techniques used to remove the invasive plants.

63 acres were managed for invasives control using prescribed burns in the year 2022. This year our invasive species removal program was expanded through the development of a Village webpage (<https://www.northbrook.il.us/1097/Invasive-Species>) with invasive plant identification and removal guidelines. As well, staff began a more robust enforcement program when property complaints are filed about invasive weeds growing in town.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

[action 22.jpg](#)

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located?

41

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

<https://www.northbrook.il.us/1057/Pollinator-Habitat> The Village provides a “pollinator habitat” sign to community members whose greenspace meet the following criteria: 1) Contain native plants - at least three different wildflower species. 2) Leave fallen tree leaves and dried-up vegetation for nesting insects. 3) Exclude exposure to inorganic pesticides such as weed-killers or mosquito barrier treatments.

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

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

[action 24.pdf](#)

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

GoGreen Northbrook

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

Complete

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.

https://library.municode.com/il/northbrook/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH25TRPRPRVE

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

Our grass height ordinance (https://library.municode.com/il/northbrook/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CH25TRPRPRVE) does not apply to native grasses or plants such as milkweed. The Village began a new No Mow May program in which our mowing ordinance is waived entirely during the month of May (see attached).

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

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

[action 7 and 25.pdf](#)

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

internal Village departments

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.

Due to our Climate Action Plan, all new Village projects must use native landscaping and integrated pest management. As well, the Village now provides sustainability reviews to all new developments coming to Northbrook in need of zoning relief. Any applicable project with a landscaping component is provided with materials on how to best create pollinator habitat. This suggests at least 70% native plants incorporated into landscaping (grass, groundcover, forbs, shrubs, and trees). Applicants must provide their species lists in Landscape Plans and are required to make revisions if any known problematic species are included. See example attached.

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:

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

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

Where is the monarch habitat located? (Please provide an address, if possible)

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

What is the total acreage of land that has been converted? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 acres). For reference, 1 acre = 43,560 square feet and is about the size of a football field without the end zones.

How many lots were converted to monarch habitat? Please limit your answer to only the number of lots in the answer field below (e.g., 3)

Please describe when the lots were converted to monarch habitat and the planned maintenance schedule.