Village of Northbrook

Northbrook, IL

Mayor Kathryn Ciesla

Pledge Summary

The Village of Northbrook is a northern suburb of Chicago with a population of over 35,000. We are proud to be the home of some of the highest quality nature preserves in Illinois: Somme Preserves. Thanks to our volunteer ecological stewards who have been dedicated to natural restoration in our area since the 1970s, many rare plants and endangered animals nest or pass by our community during migratory periods. Through the Northbrook Climate Action Plan, the Village is committed to reducing community-wide carbon emissions and fostering environmental sustainability.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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Systems Change

- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Village President Kathryn Ciesla	2026	4/6/2026	Leadership Circle
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 (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.).

250

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.)

75

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.

0.2

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.

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Private property

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

N/A

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

Leadership and residents are invested in this work and have made it a priority.

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 collateral available is most helpful, additional informational or training webinars would be helpful.

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

The Sustainability Intern was able to take the lead on the pledge this year, it was a great learning and development exercise for her.

Selected Action Items

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.

Monarchs, Milkweed, and More, Local Garden Club, the Organic Gardener

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

The Village collaborated with the Organic Gardener for our sustainable vegetable garden and ongoing hands-on educational workshops to promote earth-friendly food growing. The local groups like our Garden Club and Monarchs, Milkweed, and More collaborated to help find residents to participate in our virtual story map of pollinator habitat.

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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.

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

action 12.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)

The Village has 1) a demonstration rain garden at Village Hall 2) a demonstration eco-grass plot at Village Hall 3) a pollinator habitat vegetable garden at Village Hall and 4) a native plant garden at the train station.

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

The Organic gardener

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.

0.02

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:

April 22, 2025

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

Slow Mow May (including the Mayors Monarch Pledge)

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

A Proclamation Recognizing May as Slow Mow May.pdf

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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.)

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

action 2.1.png

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

action 2.2.png

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

action 2.3.png

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

Webpages, e-newsletter, social media

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.

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

Select Village properties, the Library and over 40 residents participated.

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

In 2025 from May 1 to June 1, the Village of Northbrook is suspending enforcement of the Municipal Code for excessive grass height and is encouraging all community members to participate in our "Slow Mow" initiative to voluntarily decrease mowing in support of wildlife.

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

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

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IMG_1118.jpeg

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

Monarchs, Milkweed and More, Garden Club

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

44

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Several community gardens in Northbrook have milkweed planted in plots and on the perimeters of their spaces.

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.png

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

action 22.1.JPG

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

20

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

Northbrook has three signs for residents to use for monarch gardens and pollinator habitats. Pollinator habitat signs has QR code to give more information on best practices. Rusty patched bumble bee and Monarch butterfly signs include information on their respective species.

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.

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action 25.pdf

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

Public Works team

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.

Village of Northbrook's Public works department has a program to plant native plants and trees on parkways and medians. This is an ongoing program.

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.

action 27.png

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

Public Works team, Go Green, Library, Monarchs, Milkweed and More, County Forest Preserves

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.

Our Climate Action Plan includes an entire greenspace category with an express goal to participate in the Mayors Monarch Pledge annually.

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

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We hope to accomplish 110 acres converted to native habitat by 2030.

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?

Public Works team

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.

This is complete as of February 2023, with the start of the new landscape maintenance contract. While the state's Illinois Pesticide Act currently prohibits municipalities from regulating pesticide usage city- wide, the Village applies a sustainable pest management policy for all Village owned/ maintained greenspace. This requires robust reporting in the event that pesticides are used alongside diligent pest prevention practices.

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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

action 29.jpg

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

action 29.pdf

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

Development and Planning Services team

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

complete

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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.

The Village now provides sustainability reviews to all new developments coming to Northbrook in need of zoning relief. Any applicable project with exterior lighting is required to comply with International Dark Sky standards for light fixtures to mitigate light pollution. These standards will be reflected in our updated Engineering Standards and Specifications for street and parking lighting as well. Additionally the Village has launched a voluntary Lights Out Northbrook campaign where community members commit to leaving their lights off after 11pm each night from now until November 15.

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.

Engaged with residents and volunteers monthly in the demonstration organic garden with Q&A sessions and hands on experiences. Engaged residents – newsletters, social media, etc.

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? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

125

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

115

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

Go Green

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

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Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

The Village has a reimbursement program in which interested residents can receive 50% or up to $5,000 off installation of native plants for a cul-de-sac conversion program. A demonstration has been installed in a residential area on Adirondack Dr.

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

25

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.

0.05

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

The reimbursement program will require a three-year maintenance contract or formal agreement between adjacent property owners for routine upkeep.

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