Village of Northbrook

Northbrook, IL

Village President 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 2026

Communications and Convening

- Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.
- 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.
- Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.
- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- 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 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

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- 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.
- 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.

Systems Change

- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and 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 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.

0.21

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

We were motivated by goals outlined in our Climate Action Plan as well as the goals stated in our Slow mow May Proclamation

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?

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The outreach materials currently available have been incredibly helpful. Moving forward, having access to more informational or training webinars would be a great way to support our goals and help expand equitable community engagement and access to nature.

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.).

350

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.

Private property, Yards, Village greenspaces, ETC.

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

N/A

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.)

125

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 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.

Facilitated monthly interactive garden sessions and expanded resident engagement through the Northbrook Sustainability Commission

Launch or maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighborhoods. (If you

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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.

Action1.png

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

Action 1.png

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

The Village of Northbrook Webpage Link:https://www.northbrook.il.us/1239/Pollinator-Habitat

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 28th, 2026

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

Slow Mow May Proclamation

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

SlowMow MayProclamation.pdf

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

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

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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.

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

Northbrook Public Works Team

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?

Northbrook Public Works, GoGreen Northbrook, (Monarchs, Milkweed, and More), Cook County Forrest Preserves

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

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

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.

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

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

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

In Progress

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

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

• Public Works team

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.

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)

15

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

Any pocket of greenspace can serve as vital habitat for wildlife. Free yard signs are available at Village Hall (1225 Cedar Lane) on the second floor in the Department of Development and Planning Services. Sign recipients must register their garden by contacting the Village Sustainability Coordinator at 847 664 4134 or by email. Sign recipients must to commit to the following for their pollinator garden: Contain native plants - at least three different wildflower species, such as Coneflower, Milkweed, or Black-eyed Susans. Refer to this webpage for Village native plant recommendations. Leave fallen tree leaves and dried-up vegetation for nesting insects. Exclude exposure to inorganic pesticides such as weed-killers or mosquito barrier treatments. https://www.northbrook.il.us/1239/Pollinator-Habitat

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

Monarch Way Station Sign (1).png

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

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

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

644

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

In collaboration with the Northbrook Sustainability Commission, we gave away 644 native milkweed and nectar-producing plants to Northbrook residents.

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

Northbrook Sustainability Commission

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

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.

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)

35

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

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

200

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

Go Green Northbrook, Northbrook Garden Club, Northbrook Sustainability Commission, Northbrook Park District

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

Tree giveaway 2026 - 2.JPG

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

Tree giveaway 2026 - 3.JPG

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

Tree giveaway 2026 - 4.JPG

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

Tree giveaway 2026 - 5.JPG

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

Tree giveaway 2026 -1.JPG

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

Tulip poplar.JPG

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

Trees: 210 (May 22, 2026) Native plants: 644 plugs (May 30, 2026)

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

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

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.

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

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

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.

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

Slow Mow May: What is Slow Mow May? Don’t spring into mowing too fast! For pollinators’ sakes, the Village wants you to take it slow for Slow Mow May by mowing less frequently (once every 2-3 weeks) this springtime. In our area, pollinators start to emerge in early May. They rely on flower nectar and pollen for food, but floral blooms are scarce at this time. With reduced lawn-cutting, you are creating habitat and forage for the beneficial insects that desperately need our help due to the concerning trend of pollinator decline. In 2026 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. This may result in ground-cover exceeding the established ordinance height restrictions of eight inches, which is why enforcement is suspended for May for registered participants.

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.

8.5X11 Sign Slow Mow May V3 (1).pdf.png

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

Go Green Northbrook, Monarchs, Milkweed and More and Northbrook Garden Club, Northbrook Sustainability Commission Northbrook Community Commission

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)

The rain garden is located at Village Hall, 1225 Cedar Ln, Northbrook, IL 60062

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

Northbrook Sustainability Commission, Northbrook Garden Club and Go Green Northbrook.

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

villagegarden.jpg

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.

0.05

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

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

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1+

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.

To assist with removal efforts, the Village offers free curbside collection of cut buckthorn branches when removed by the resident. Dozens of residents utilize this service annually. Additionally, the Village is developing a cost-share program to support the removal of Buckthorn from private property at larger scales and a pilot program to support the planting and maintenance of monarch and pollinator gardens on highly visible public property and roadsides.

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

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