City of Covington

Covington, KY

Mayor Ron Washington

Pledge Summary

Covington, located in Northern Kentucky across the river from Cincinnati, is home to over 40,000 residents and the beautiful 700-acre Devou Park, known for its prairies and pollinator gardens. The city also features pollinator gardens throughout its parks, showcasing a strong commitment to environmental conservation. In 2017, Covington joined the Mayor's Monarch Pledge under former Mayor Joseph Meyer, launching efforts to support pollinator habitats. Mayor Ron Washington has proudly continued this legacy, reaffirming the city's pledge in 2025 and leading the charge with the Community Monarch Coalition to expand gardens and implement impactful conservation initiatives.

Action Items Committed for 2025

Communications and Convening

- 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.
- 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.)

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.

Past Pledge Archive

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Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Ronald Washington	2026	4/22/2026	
Mayor Ron Washington	2025	1/13/2025	Signatories
Mayor Joe Meyer	2024	3/8/2024	Signatories
Mayor Joe Meyer	2023	2/15/2023	Signatories
Mayor Joseph Meyer	2022	1/7/2022	Signatories
Mayor Joseph Meyer	2021	12/10/2020	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.).

6000

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.)

500

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.

0.5

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.

Residences yards and parks

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

Covington includes several neighborhoods that would be considered inner city, with a higher percentage of residents who are marginalized or people of color. Because these areas often don't have a lot of green space, our pollinator gardens help bring a bit of nature back into the community. By planting native flowers and milkweed, people can actually see butterflies and other pollinators up close. We build our programs like the free workshops, plant giveaways, and kids activities to make it easy for families to get involved and learn without having to travel far or spend anything. The Mayor's Monarch Pledge helps keep us

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accountable and gives us resources so we can continue offering equitable access to pollinator education and experiences.

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

We took on the Mayor's Monarch Pledge because we want to make a real difference. It gives us a simple way to support pollinators, add more green space to our neighborhoods, and bring people together through programs. Continuing with it helps us keep doing good work for the community and the environment.

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?

One resource that has been really helpful for us is the spotlight on urban monarch conservation in larger cities. Seeing what other places are doing gives us ideas and helps us shape our own work to fit Covington's needs. Something that would really help us moving forward is access to grant-writing seminars and a list of organizations that support programs like this. Outside support has been a big part of our success, and having more of those tools would make an even bigger difference.

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

We're a small team with a small budget, but we're really trying to make a difference. This year we've seen a lot of progress and growth, and we're proud of how far the gardens and programs have come. we're excited to keep building on it and push our goals even further next year.

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.

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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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.

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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.

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

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

The event sold over $2000 worth of plants and other pollinator items and we gave away 150+ seed and seed bombs all containing native pollinators

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

150

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

Vendors at the Pollinator market: include City of Covington Parks & Recreation, City of Covington Solid Waste & Recycling, Keep Covington Beautiful, Wild Gardens, ArtMarkit, Laughing Bee, Gentle Roots, Kenton County Extension Office, Devan Horton Fine Art, Succulent Señorita, and Olla Taqueria. They all sold plants/pollinator related items, gave away seeds, and provided educational resources to the general public.

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.

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

4+ organizations, including but not limited to: City of Covington Parks & Recreation City of Covington Urban Forestry City of Covington Solid Waste & Recycling City of Covington Public Works Keep Covington Beautiful Eastside Neighborhood Association members

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

This year, we developed a Pollinator Garden Task Force made up of key stakeholders. We meet once a month to review the gardens, plan projects, and coordinate efforts to ensure the gardens remain healthy and thriving. At these meetings, we discussed this year's pledge tasks, including educational opportunities, plant sales and giveaways, garden clean-ups, adding new plants, and more. We also developed toolkits and other materials that highlight our pollinator projects and the Mayor's Monarch Pledge. These resources help the public create their own pollinator gardens and learn about the actions we're taking to protect monarchs and support pollinators.

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

City of Covington Parks & Recreation partnered with City of Covington Solid Waste & Recycling, Eastside Neighborhood Association, Cincinnati zoo, Firehouse Nursery, Natorps, and Local elementary school groups

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

115

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Please describe your effort in completing this action.

This year, we partnered with multiple local organizations and community groups to clean up our gardens and plant more than 115 native milkweed and other nectar-producing plants across four of our pollinator garden sites.

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.

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

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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 demonstration garden at Randolph Park is a meaningful spot when we think about the monarchs' story. Every one of our gardens has its own place in the neighborhoods and its own history, but Randolph Park really connects to the idea of transformation. The monarch goes through an incredible change in its life cycle, and in many ways this neighborhood has done the same. It had a rough past, but over the years we've seen a lot of growth, pride, and positive change. The garden reflects that. (226 E 8th St, Covington, KY 41011)

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

City of Covington Parks & Recreation, City of Covington Urban Forestry, City of Covington Solid Waste & Recycling, City of Covington Public Works, Keep Covington Beautiful, Eastside Neighborhood Association members, and the general public

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.

0.10

Launch or maintain an outdoor education program(s) (e.g., at schools, after-school programs, community centers and groups) that builds

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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).

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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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)

We launched a three-session program called Butterfly Explorers, where children learned about the life cycle of the monarch butterfly. The sessions took place at one of our pollinator gardens and were open to the public. The Kenton County Extension Office was scheduled to teach one of the sessions, but the program was rained out and we had to reschedule without them. Participants received seed packets, seed bombs, and take-home activity kits so they could continue learning and grow their own pollinator plants. We also hosted a Pollinator Movie Night featuring Wings of Life. Attendees received seed packets, seed bombs, and take-home activity kits as well. In addition, we partnered with an after-school girls' leadership club at Taylor Mill Elementary School to help plant and clean up one of our gardens.

How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"? (Enter WHOLE

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NUMBERS only)

2

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

Taylor Mill Elementary School General public

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

We provided the space and handled the park permits for the program. We are continuing to grow these programs and hope to provide even more support in the future.

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).

15 students and 2 educators

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

Kenton County Extension Office

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.

0.02

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

Maintenance of the garden follows the regular park maintenance schedule or is determined by the Pollinator Task Force on an as-needed basis or if there is a group wanting to work on the project.

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