Palos Heights

Palos Heights, IL

Mayor Robert Straz

Pledge Summary

This will be our 5th year that the city of Palos Heights is committing the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. We have conducted a variety of actions over the years as part of our commitment including planting pollinator gardens, restoring landscapes, and educational programs, events and outreach. We are excited to continue this effort in 2022 to help the beleaguered Monarch butterfly with a variety of new restoration efforts and educational programs.

Action Items Committed for 2021

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 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.
- 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.
- 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.

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Robert Straz	2026	1/29/2026	
Mayor Robert Straz	2025	3/26/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Robert Straz	2024	2/28/2024	Signatories
Mayor Robert Straz	2023	2/21/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Robert Straz	2022	1/20/2022	Signatories
Mayor Robert Straz	2021	1/15/2021	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.).

27000

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.)

450 youths, 450 adults attended Monarch celebration. Additional 150 youths attended educational programs.

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.

.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.

school, shared public spaces

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

Engaging people that don't have access to nature. Galileo Academy, Chicago for example

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

To help the Monarch and encourage others to do the same

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?

Signage provided or to purchase to increase knowledge about the pledge

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

2021 has been a relatively normal year as opposed to 2020. New programs, and old programs were re-instated, increasing our butterfly conservation efforts

Selected Action Items

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).

Social media informational posts about native plants, monarch butterflies, and invasive species removal.

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.

N/A

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

N/A

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.

Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners

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

Helping with Monarch Celebration

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)

300 plants, native seeds sold in nature center

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

100

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

None

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

5

What species were collected or propagated?

Swamp milkweed, common milkweed, butterfly weed

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

Lake Katherine Volunteers

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

Weekly volunteers at Lake Katherine collected native seeds in the fall, including species of milkweed found throughout the site.

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)

Educational programs for youths during the day or after school

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

5

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

Galileo Scholastic Academy Reavis High School Southwest Christian School Springfield Elementary Palos Lutheran Church Vacation Bible School

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

Milkweed seeds, pollinator guide hand-outs

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).

1000

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

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Scout troops, school teachers

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.

.25

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

Mow or burn in fall/winter, weed in spring summer, collect and spread seed

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?

Palos Heights Library, City Hall, and Palos Heights Recreation Department

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

0

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Gardens were planted in previous years. Currently, only maintenance is done and recommendations for upkeep

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.

.5

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.

Buckthorn, honeysuckle, and other woody invasive species were removed throughout the site, as well as herbicide application to remove teasel and reed canary grass

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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)

1000

What was the date of your festival?

9/17/21, 9/18/21 and 9/19/21

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

MWRD, Master Naturalists and Master Gardeners, Monarch Butterfly Fund

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).

Fundraiser on the 17th gave money to Monarch Watch. Monarch Celebration was spread across 2 days with timed entry to a Monarch filled tent to monitor crowds and ensure safety during Covid-19. Most educational activities were outside, and indoor activities required masks. Educational displays included host plant ID, Master Naturalist/Gardener information booth, and an indoor "be a monarch" exhibit which engaged visitors to see, feel, and act like a Monarch!

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.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

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