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 2024 to help the beleaguered Monarch butterfly with a variety of new restoration efforts and educational programs.

Action Items Committed for 2024

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 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.
- 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).
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- 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.

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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.).

5000

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.)

2500

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.

.01

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.

New garden area on Lake Katherine grounds

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

Creating programs that are economical for people in the community to attend, and working with schools to reduce cost for buses for field trips.

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

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We have been a part of Mayors Monarch Pledge for the last several years, and have good momentum to continue.

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?

None

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

None

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.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

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.

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 (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, 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.

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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)

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

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)

1000

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

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.

Woody invasive species control, as well as reed canary and other invasive forb removal in areas regularly managed to continue to improve quality. New areas were chosen to clear woody brush to expand ground to plant and sow native seed.

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

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only), e.g. 500)

500

What was the date of your festival?

9/21-9/22

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

University of Illinois Extension, Palos Heights Islamic Center, Urban Canopy, Snapology, Son Chiquitos, Friends of the Chicago River

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).

Spread across 2 days 9am-5pm, visitors can book online or walk up on the day to see the monarch tent. Located on the main path, the garden the monarch tent was located can be accessible to people of all ages. A local senior center came in the days following the celebration to visit the tent. Partnerships increased this year, notably including a local Mexican heritage group that was able to demonstrate an Ofrenda, and show how Monarchs are important symbolically to cultures, not only to the natural environment.

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 Gardeners

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

Master Gardeners work at all gardens at Lake Katherine. The butterfly garden is continually added to, with new native plants and milkweeds.

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).

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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)

Installing pollinator gardens at schools for teachers to use for on-site programming about pollinators and native plants.

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)

4

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

Dore Early Learning - Chicago Fieldcrest Elementary - Oak Forest Bridgeview Elementary - Bridgeview Troy Shorewood Elementary - Shorewood

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

Plant lists and what species might be found at pollinator sites

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).

1800

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

None

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.

0.01

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

Communication with the school so that if they have questions or would like help with maintenance or information, that we can provide them with what they need.

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.)

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

Social media posts as well as newsletter writings that inform the public about pollinator planting and the necessity of planting milkweed and creating monarch waystations for the benefit of the Monarch.

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)

7607 W College Dr, Palos Heights, IL 60463

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

None

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.

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