Palos Heights

Palos Heights, IL

Mayor Robert Straz

Pledge Summary

The City of Palos Heights is committed to 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, conducting educational programs, events and outreach. We are excited to continue this effort in 2025 to help the beleaguered Monarch butterfly with a variety of new restoration efforts, educational programs, and pollinator planting programs.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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 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.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

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).
- 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.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u455:v1.14.0.49966]

- 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.).

2000

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.

.25

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.

Habitat on Lake Katherine property continues to be restored and milkweed seeds spread and planted.

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u455:v1.14.0.49966]

Creating programs that are economical for people in the community to attend, some free, some on weekends or evenings to give everyone an opportunity.

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

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

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).

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.

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

Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

Please describe the process to create the strategy , the strategy goals and content, and/or results of implementation. Please also identify who was engaged in this

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u455:v1.14.0.49966]

process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

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)

400

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?

None

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

10

What species were collected or propagated?

Common milkweed, butterfly weed, prairie milkweed, whirled milkweed

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

University of Illinois Extension

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

Full-time restoration and garden volunteers conduct seed collection in fall

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).

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u455:v1.14.0.49966]

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. A shade structure was completed at Lake Katherine to encourage allow for outdoor education for youth and adult programs.

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)

2

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

Serena Hills Elementary Charles Hughes Elementary

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

Plant lists of what species are found at pollinator sites so they can teach their students

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).

500

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

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.

Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u455:v1.14.0.49966]

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 in 3 managed gardens that contain milkweed and pollinator plants. They engage with the public, and maintain and propogate milkweed

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.

Remove invasive species every Monday, as well as during work days from community organizations in active restoration sites or new sites to increase acreage of managed land. Techniques include cutting down completely, removing seeds, and herbiciding.

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?

September 20 and 21

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u455:v1.14.0.49966]

University of Illinois Extension, Islamic Center, Friends of the Chicago River, Son Chiquitos

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).

A two day celebration with a monarch tent for people to engage and learn about monarchs, as well as educational and cultural exhibits regarding the monarch

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)

3

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

In the Butterfly and Herb Gardens at Lake Katherine, highlighting species type and importance

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)

City Hall

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.

0.01

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

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u455:v1.14.0.49966]

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

Schools

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

300

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Worked with local schools to add a pollinator garden to their school site. 3 gardens were installed for a total of 300 ft of new pollinator garden space.

Created with the DynamicPDF Essentials Edition. [u455:v1.14.0.49966]