Village/Town of Mount Kisco

Mount Kisco, NY

Mayor Gina Picinich

Pledge Summary

Mount Kisco, located in Westchester, NY, is a vibrant community filled with green spaces, quaint neighborhoods, and a walkable downtown. Although just three square miles, it is a premier destination for dining, shopping, entertainment and award winning medical care. Lead by our Conservation Advisory Council, Mount Kisco is a part of Healthy Yards' Pollinator Pathways project that encourages pollinator friendly native plantings. Our community is committed to enhancing and maintaining a natural environment that supports Monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Action Items Committed for 2023

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 Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- 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).

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- Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- 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.

Systems Change

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.
- Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Michael Cindrich	2025	12/9/2024	
Mayor Gina Picinich	2023	3/31/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Gina Picinich	2022	3/22/2022	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.).

260

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.)

140 Adults, 120 Children

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.

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1

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.

Mainly in Leonard Park No-Mow zone, and in our Flewellyn Pollinator Garden, with some added success with private homes itional plantings in the Library Butterfly Garden

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

We did a Tree Art event for Arbor Day, and involved approximately 80 children from The Boys and Girls Club, Neighbors Link, and our MKES Elementary School in creating tree art and discussions of the value of trees and flowers to butterflies and other pollinators.

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

To preserve and restore our natural 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?

Lit and Info from NYSDEC, Northern Westchester Pollinator Pathway, and NWF have been helpful. We could use more children's material (coloring books, games, artwork, as well as study/project material for older kids

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

We have had challenges convincing some people not to cut down all the wildflower in their yards before the fall migration is finished here

Selected Action Items

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

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

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

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

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

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.

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

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)

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)

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

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

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).

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

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.

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

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Host or support a monarch neighborhood challenge to engage neighborhoods and homeowners' associations within the community to increase awareness, support community unity around a common mission, and/or create habitat for the monarch butterfly.

How many estimated individuals participated in your challenge? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 100).

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

When did this challenge take place?

What is the total acreage of habitat created? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 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.

Please describe your challenge and the results.

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)

What was the date of your festival?

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

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).

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

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

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

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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.

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

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

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

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

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.

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

Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at city properties.

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

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

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.

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

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.)

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

FLewellyn_092421_Monarch-1620051.jpg

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

MK EarthDay22_flyer.jpg

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

We have used a variety of communication methods: Info Table and Seed Giveaway at our local Farmers Market, Info Table, seed give-away and speakers at our annual Earth Day celebration, Kids Tree Art exhibit with prizes and Seed/sapling give-away at our Annual Arbor Day Celebration, A hands-on Native Plant Workshop, using our Instagram account (personal and org) to promote pollinator awareness in general and Monarchs specifically. Flyers and other communications were in both English and Spanish, and we actively sought the particpation of minority communities in our community through outreach to Neighbors Link and The Boys and Girls Club.

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.

In addition to our Earth Day Celebration and Farmers Market seed give-aways, we participated in Northern Westchester Pollinator Pathways meetings and shared our experiences with several garden groups, as well as with the Marsh Sanctuary. We also held Native Plant Workshop where local experts shared their expertise with local gardeners.

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.

NYSACC (more than 100 member conservation groups, Earth Day (more than 20 local conservation groups) including Pollinator Pathway, Save Buttonhook Forest, Westchester County Parks, Villag Manager's staff, DPW

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

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We helped NYSACC organize a Statewide meeting of Conservation Groups with over 100 attendees. We held meetings with Village Management, DPW, and other stakeholder, and engaged in a discussion which resulted in a one month extension of wildflower mowing in Leonard Park (until after southward Monarch migration was complete), as well as a plan to improve the fencing and educational signage at our Flewellyn Pollinator Garden

Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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

Arbor23_flyer_Spanish (003).pdf

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

Boys and Girls Club, Neighbors Lnk, MK Elementary School, MK Historical Society, MK Trail Team, MK Arts Council

How many individuals were engaged in this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 50).

130

Please describe the community art project that was implemented in your community and how it contributed to cultural awareness and recognition (e.g., number of art installations, type of art).

We had two nature centric art events this year. A kids Tree Art event and exhibition where approx 80 kids from around town drew, sculpted, wrote, or played art that expressed their feelings about trees, pollinators, and the environment. The second was our 6th annual Photo Exhibition, with more than 75 photos were submitted in the Nature Category, many of Monarch, other butterflies, bees, birds and other pollinators.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

Farmers_Market_CAC_Mark_07032b2.jpg

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

150

What species were collected or propagated?

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Swamp Milkweed, Common Milkweed, Goldenrod, NE Aster....

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

:Save Leonard Park, Pollinator Pathways of Northern Westchester, Healthy Yards

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

Volunteers collected and package seeds from their own gardens and the Flewellyn Garden. They were packaged in cloth wrappers or in paper, and distributed to attendees at our local Farmers Market, September Fest, Earthday, and other events.

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)

Located between Village Hall and the Library. It is called the Library Butterfly Garden

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

The Friends of the Library, Village Beautification Committee, DPW, and others..

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

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?

CAC, Friends of Flewellyn, DPW, Asst Village Manager

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

10

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Please describe your effort in completing this action.

We maintain this pollinator garden with many (20+)common milkweed, and have planted additional Butterfly Weed, and other Monarch friendly plants this year

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

Flewellyn poster (1).pdf

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).

Info about pollinators and the history of the garden

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?

CAC, Comprehensive Plan Committee, Climate Smart Task Force

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

In progress

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

We have added pollinator plant and conservation to Comprehensive Plan and NRI, and had these adopted into Village Law, but we have not yest had specific ordinance enacted to protect Monarchs and their habitat, We hope to achieve some of these within the next two years.

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