City of Perris

Perris, CA

Mayor Michael Vargas

Pledge Summary

The City of Perris is deeply committed to monarch and pollinator conservation through initiatives like Grow Perris, which promotes sustainable practices and green community development. The city continuously develops and proposes green spaces and community gardens to create habitats for pollinators while practicing responsible gardening techniques, such as avoiding pesticides, to maintain pollinator-friendly environments. Through educational programs, Perris engages youth in learning about the critical role pollinators play in ecosystems and their overall impact on biodiversity. Additionally, the city provides ample pollinator areas within its community spaces and gardens, ensuring support for pollinator populations. These efforts align with the goals of the Mayor’s Monarch Pledge and highlight the city's dedication to environmental stewardship.

Action Items Committed for 2025

Communications and Convening

- Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species’ need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.
- 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- 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).

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Michael Vargas	2026	4/14/2026	
Mayor Michael Vargas	2025	12/6/2024	Signatories

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Mayor Michael Vargas	2024	2/20/2024	Signatories
Mayor Michael Vargas	2023	3/22/2023	Signatories

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.).

250

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.)

130

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.

School community gardens

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

Through Grow Perris the City intends to achieve the following goals: (1) reduce risk of chronic diseases amongst Perris residents and improve their overall wellbeing, (2) increase accessibility and affordability of healthy foods to underserved communities, (3) develop 31 food gardens throughout the City to create a sustainability platform of crop development, sale, and health education, (4) create platforms for promoting healthy behaviors through collaboration with community-based organizations and City health education programs at community garden sites.

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

The motivation for the pledge is to create healthy, sustainable habitats for pollinators, while educating residents about how they can make a difference at home and in their community.

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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?

We hope to see additional webinars and even possible videos to continue expanding the education for schools on the importance of growing native plants.

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

Mayor Vargas continues to partner with the school districts in Perris to expand community gardens. These gardens serve as a beacon to continue educating students on the efforts of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. Students can continue to learn the importance of growing native plants.

Selected Action Items

Issue a proclamation to raise awareness about the decline of the monarch butterfly and the species' need for habitat. This proclamation must incorporate a focus on monarch conservation.

Date of Proclamation:

September 25, 2025

Title of Proclamation (i.e. – Monarch Day or Pollinator Week):

Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Proclamation - Monarch Pledge Day.pdf

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.

The City of Perris established the Community Garden Demonstration Center in 2016 as part of the "Grow Perris" initiative. The garden promotes sustainable, pesticide-free growing methods and provides horticultural and nutrition education for youth, adults, and seniors. With recent Urban Greening Program funding, the City is expanding the garden to include additional native plants and a dedicated pollinator area. The City also offers "Yoga in the Garden," a free wellness program for all ages, and hosts workshops led by UCCE Master Gardener Christine Lampe to teach practical gardening skills and the importance of

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pollinators. In partnership with the Perris Elementary School District, Innovation Horizon Charter School, and the Rob Reiner Children & Families Initiative, the City launched new community garden spaces to strengthen hands-on learning, youth engagement, and environmental awareness. These gardens support school-based nutrition education and give students direct experience with sustainable growing practices 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.

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

Parks and Community Services, Public Services, Public Works, Code Enforcement, Beautification Committee.

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

The City is working toward strengthening pollinator-friendly maintenance practices. The City is planning on revising mowing schedules to avoid disturbing habitats during key pollinator seasons and increase the planting of milkweed and native nectar-producing plants throughout parks, open spaces, and community garden areas. These efforts will support local pollinator populations, improve environmental sustainability, and align city operations with ongoing community garden and educational initiatives.

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)

Perris Green City Farm, an urban community demonstration garden located on City Hall Campus, new school gardens at Innovation Horizon and Rob Reiner.

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.

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Innovation Horizon Charter School and Rob Reiner Children and Families Center

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

Educators are provided horticulture and nutrition education and information on planting pollinator-friendly plants. They are also provided tips on how to start their own garden and how to build awareness on the importance of pollinator-friendly plants.

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).

130 students and 5 educators

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

UCCE Master Gardeners

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?

The Perris Green City Farm is maintained weekly by Public Services staff.

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