Village of Oak Park

Oak Park, IL

President Vicki Scaman

Pledge Summary

Oak Park is a thriving community of about 54,500 people located immediately west of the City of Chicago and known for its architectural heritage and diverse population. Within its 4.5 square miles live one of the region's most diverse mixes of cultures, races, ethnicities, professions, lifestyles, religions, ages and incomes. Our community climate action, resiliency, and sustainability plan, Climate Ready Oak Park, commits to enhancing or protecting thirty percent of our community land for biodiversity.

Action Items Committed for 2023

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.
- 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
President Vicki Scaman	2026	3/27/2026	
Village President Vicki Scaman	2025	3/7/2025	Signatories
President Vicki Scaman	2024	3/15/2024	Signatories
President Vicki Scaman	2023	4/28/2023	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.).

30000

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.)

unknown

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.

0

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.

residences, public spaces

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

The Village worked with a local resident of Mexican heritage to create a video that highlights the cultural symbolism of monarchs.

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

The community values biodiversity and wants to support pollinators. This is reflected in the community Climate Ready Oak Park plan:

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https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b4f6e9bdfd864b31b28072156d6d6bcf

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?

The guide with examples of how communities can achieve various actions was helpful, and it sparked some ideas.

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

Our projects related to the Mayor's Monarch Pledge included a community biodiversity survey, a pesticide-free pledge, outreach at community events with monarch origami handouts, a video featuring monarchs and Hispanic heritage, and a painting by a local artist featuring monarch migration.

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:

May 15, 2023

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

Monarch Butterfly Month, May 2023

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Monarch Butterfly Month Proclamation - Signed 5-15-2023.pdf

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.

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

PW Pollinator Plants SOP 102623.pdf

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

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Village of Oak Park Public Works staff

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

Village staff created a Standard Operating Procedure that describes how Public Works will create and support pollinator habitat in Village landscape areas.

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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

Environment and Energy Commission: https://www.oak-park.us/your-government/citizen-commissions/environment-energy-commission

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.

The Environment & Energy Commission has taken a couple steps towards advising on an ordinance that would reduce light pollution. On August 1, 2023, a light pollution specialist presented to the Environment & Energy Commission on Dark Sky concepts, including the impacts of light on wildlife and humans, the lack of correlation between brighter outdoor light and crime, energy usage, and solutions to reducing light pollution. On September 5, 2023, Village staff presented to the Environment & Energy Commission on the Village's existing policies related to exterior lighting. Meeting minutes and recordings can be found here: https://www.oak-park.us/your-government/citizen-commissions/environment-energy-commission

Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

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

Public Works butterfly garden web page.PNG

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)

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A butterfly garden was created at the Oak Park Public Works Center in 2021. The address is 201 South Blvd, Oak Park, IL 60302. A video about the garden can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LHeE03HucUo.

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

This project was funded by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) a part of the Green Infrastructure Program.

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.

0.1

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?

the Environment & Energy Commission

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.

An ordinance has not yet been passed yet. The Village currently has an ordinance that restricts grass height to 8 inches maximum, and in May 2023 the Village completed a demonstration for No Mow May. This involved designating two Village-owned lawns as demonstration sites, where the grass was not mowed during the month of May. Educational signage was displayed at the lawns and a survey was available online for public feedback. The Environment & Energy Commission also provided feedback. More information can be found here: https://engageoakpark.com/no-mow-may

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

monarch_waystation_sign_400.png

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

rain garden design file.jpeg

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

rain garden sign.jpg

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

1

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

There is one educational sign at the Public Works Center butterfly garden. It explains the rain garden benefits, including "create habitat for birds, butterflies, dragonflies, and many beneficial insects". Images of the sign are attached. The garden is also a certified Monarch Waystation.

Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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

N/A

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.

There have not yet been changes to ordinances regarding pesticide use. However, the Village is encouraging residents to take the pesticide-free pledge. Details can be found here: https://www.oak-park.us/your-government/environmental-sustainability/natural-lawn-care/pesticide-free-pledge

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

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

Climate Ready Oak Park was developed with extensive community involvement. Read about the details under the Community Involvement section of the plan: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b4f6e9bdfd864b31b28072156d6d6bcf

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

Complete

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.

August 2022

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

The Climate Ready Oak Park plan includes goals and actions related to protecting and enhancing biodiversity. Under the Parks, Plants, and Biodiversity impact area, Goal #3 is Prioritize Native Species over Non-native Species. Action NN04 under Goal 3 is to Encourage biodiversity by identifying and marking a trail of informational "pollinator waystations" across residential land and public, institutional, and commercial campuses. Link to the plan: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/b4f6e9bdfd864b31b28072156d6d6bcf In 2023, the Office of Sustainability and Resilience released a Community Biodiversity Survey as a starting point to gather information on existing biodiversity projects in the Village of Oak Park. Learn about the survey here: https://www.oak-park.us/news/village-launches-biodiversity-survey Climate Ready Oak Park also includes a commitment to establish 30% of Oak Park's land as green infrastructure or enhanced park management by 20230.

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.)

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

Biodiversity Survey - Facebook.PNG

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

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Butterfly Migration - enews.pdf

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

Leave the Leaves - enews.pdf

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

Monarch Blitz - Facebook.PNG

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

monarch migration PDOP - website.PNG

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

Monarch Pledge - Facebook.PNG

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

National Pollinator Week - Facebook.PNG

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

Pesticide Free Pledge.pdf

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

Pesticide-free pledge - Facebook.PNG

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

VOPMonarchOrigamiv2.pdf

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

WCWO - website.PNG

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

Monarch side 2.jpg

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

Monarch-related communications were shared via social media, Village e-news, and the Villages bimonthly printed newsletter. Examples of these communications are attached. Information on the importance of monarch gardens was also shared via tabling at 5 in-person community events. Pesticide-free pledges were shared (attached), and monarch origami papers were shared. Many in-person and virtual events related to monarch butterflies and biodiversity were shared via the Village's sustainoakpark.com community calendar. Additionally, a local artist, JessTimeless, painted a photo board for use at events including the Oak Park Farmers' Market. One side of the board is painted with monarchs and milkweed. It also references migration between 3 countries by using words from Spanish, English, and French. A photo of the painting is attached.

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