City of Highland Park

HIGHLAND PARK, IL

Mayor Nancy Rotering

Pledge Summary

Highland Park is a small city on the shores of Lake Michigan 25 miles north of Chicago. With towering lake bluffs, secluded ravines, and wooded lots, the city has always had a special relationship with nature and the character of the city is defined by large old oaks and hickories. Mayor Rotering has committed to increasing pollinator habitat by removing invasive species such as buckthorn from public land and replacing it with native perennials, shrubs, and trees.

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.
- 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

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.
- 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).
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Systems Change

- 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.

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- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Executive Assistant Jennifer Dotson	2026	4/29/2026	
Mayor Nancy R. Rotering	2024	3/14/2024	
Mayor Nancy Rotering	2023	3/27/2023	Signatories
Mayor Nancy R. Rotering	2022	4/21/2022	
Mayor Nancy R. Rotering	2021	2/5/2021	

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.).

500

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.)

125 youth / 375 adult

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.

1.5

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.

Parks, parkways, and rights of way including Sesquicentennial Park and McClory Bike Trail

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

n/a

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

To provide ecologically productive and sustainable habitat to native flora and fauna. Acting as an example of how to implement productive and aesthetically pleasing landscaping to residents and visitors.

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 dedication of City Forester Ben Miller and partner organizations

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

Continuing and building upon programs and initiatives previously implemented

Selected Action Items

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.

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?

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.

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?

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.

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:

April 10, 2023

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

In Support of Monarch Butterflies

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2023 Monarch Butterfly.pdf

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)

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(1) 40 St. Johns Avenue, (2) 700 St. Johns Avenue, (3) 1201 Park Avenue West, and (4) 845 Deerfield Road

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

Park District of Highland Park, Volunteer Pool of Highland Park, HPHS Interact Club, Northwood Gives Back

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.

5

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.

Park District of Highland Park, Volunteer Pool of Highland Park, HPHS Interact Club, Northwood Gives Back

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

The City hosted a volunteer stewardship planting event. Participants planted native forbs, shrubs and trees along the McClory Bike Trail as part of the City's McClory Trail Pollinator Garden Initiative.

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)

~40 St Johns Ave and ~700 St Johns Ave

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

1000

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

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of a football field.

1

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Intermittent mowing and invasive species management

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).

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

APR MAY 2023 FINAL 6.pdf

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)

This program is a continuation of the City's McClory Trail Pollinator Garden initiative, alongside numerous other native-centric landscaping efforts throughout City & Park District properties.

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)

3

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

Highland Park High School, Northwood Middle School, Green Bay School - All were long-term partners in the City's volunteer initiatives.

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

n/a

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).

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25

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

Park District of Highland Park, Volunteer Pool of Highland Park, HPHS Interact Club, Northwood Gives Back

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.

98

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

The McClory Bike Trail is inspected routinely and natural areas management contractors are brought in to address any invasive species control issues.

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.

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.

Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

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

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

ATTACHMENT 2023 Arbor Day Native Tree Giveaway.pdf

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

White Oak Seedlings (300) by City of Highland Park + Milkweed (300 plants) by Park District of Highland Park

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

300

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

Park District of Highland Park, Go Green HP/Habitat HP, Ravinia Festival, Working Bikes, Davey Tree Care Experts, Advanced Tree Care, Bartlett Tree Care Experts, SWALCO, ComEd, Northern IL Raptor & Rehab, Lakeshore Recycling Systems

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

Where is the monarch habitat located? (Please provide an address, if possible)

The City hosted a volunteer stewardship planting event. Participants planted native forbs, shrubs and trees along the McClory Bike Trail as part of the City's McClory Trail Pollinator Garden Initiative.

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

Park District of Highland Park, Volunteer Pool of Highland Park, HPHS Interact Club, Northwood Gives Back

What is the total acreage of land that has been converted? 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.

98

How many lots were converted to monarch habitat? Please limit your answer to only the number of lots in the answer field below (e.g., 3)

1

Please describe when the lots were converted to monarch habitat and the planned maintenance schedule.

Fall 2023, Intermittent mowing and invasive species management. 98 acres is my approximation of pollinator garden + vacant lots + the preserve (PDHP) The Preserve of Highland Park is a former municipal golf course that has been converted to natural space with walking trails and native plantings.

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