

Village of Wauconda

Wauconda, IL

Mayor Jeff A. Sode

Pledge Summary

Wauconda is a quaint village in Lake County, IL, a northwest suburb of Chicago with a population of 14,084 residents. Nestled around the banks of a beautiful little lake which has from earliest times been known as Bangs Lake, named in honor of Justus and Mark Bangs, Wauconda first settlers. In addition to being the home of the Wauconda Bog, Wauconda is surrounded by more than 31,000 acres of natural space managed by the Lake County Forest Preserve. In 2023, the Village of Wauconda partnered with the Wauconda Garden Club for the planting at the newly constructed Path of Honor, which commemorates military members, past, present, and future. The WGC designed a beautiful pollinator garden along the pathway to provide resources for our pollinators. The next leg of their path will be planted this summer along downtown Main Street and plans for a pollinator prairie are in the works for this fall.

Action Items Committed for 2024

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 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 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.
- 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-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.
- Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.
- Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation’s Community Wildlife Habitat program).
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

Systems Change

- Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).
- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Jeff A. Sode	2026	2/11/2026	
Mayor Jeff A. Sode	2025	12/12/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Jeff A. Sode	2024	3/27/2024	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 (e.g., 50).

50

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.” (Only allow numerical values.)

5

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).

0.05

Where is your habitat being created? This may include residences (yards, containers, balconies, etc.), schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces and common areas or parks.

Memorials, Community Gardens, Downtown Streetscapes, Village Facilities

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

We distribute materials in Spanish, provide free plants and seeds.

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

We want to promote healthy, sustainable habitat for the monarchs and other pollinators.

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 resources on the website we very helpful.

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

2024 was a great start, but we have a lot of work to do in Wauconda to expand this program throughout the community.

Selected Action Items

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.

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

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and their monarch butterfly conservation efforts.

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

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

How many people attended your event?

What species were collected or propagated?

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

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

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

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

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

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.

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)

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

Earn or maintain recognition for being a wildlife-friendly city by participating in other wildlife and habitat conservation efforts (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Community Wildlife Habitat program).

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

What program was launched or maintained to complete this effort? (Please include a link to the program, if possible)

Remove milkweed from the list of noxious plants in city weed / landscaping ordinances (if applicable).

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.

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.

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.

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:

June 4, 2024

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

Monarch Month Proclamation

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

[5F. Monarch Month Proclamation May.docx](#)

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.

[Travel Promotion Facebook Post \(1\).jpg](#)

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

In July of 2024 we ran a 'Show us your Milkweed' campaign on our socials: Show us your Milkweed! Earlier this year, Mayor Sode took the Mayors' Monarch Pledge committing to help save the monarch butterfly and other at risk pollinators. As part of that pledge, the Village partnered with the Wauconda Garden Club to plant native plants along the Path of Honor, as well as two new pollinator gardens on Main Street. If you have milkweed or other pollinator supporting plants, we want to see them. #monarchbutterflies #pollinatorgarden #MayorsMonarchPledge

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

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

[Scale Drawings Main Street Planters Phase-02 2024-06-12 with plant names-photos.pdf](#)

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

The Village of Wauconda partnered with the Wauconda Garden Club to plant a pollinator garden at the newly constructed Path of Honor memorial at Memorial Park, Wauconda.

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.

Mayor Sode, Administration, Community Development, Public Works, Park District, and Police Department.

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

Earlier this summer all of the groups listed above met to discuss expanding our pollinator pathways throughout the Village which includes the swale at the Park District, the creek behind the Jewel Osco store, at Public Works, and at the Police Department.

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

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

[Scale Drawings Main Street Planters Phase-02 2024-06-12 with plant names-photos.pdf](#)

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

Wauconda Garden Club, local residents, Cub Scouts, and the American Legion.

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

In addition to the native pollinator garden at the memorial site, a new community garden will be planted this spring. Meetings and planning are underway.

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

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event?

How many people attended your event?

75

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

Public Works, Wauconda Garden Club and LRS Recycling

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)

Path of Honor / Memorial Park located at the corner of South Main and Route 176.

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

American Legion, Village Hall, Police Department, Public Works, Chamber, and Wauconda Garden Club.

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.

0.01

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?

Village of Wauconda and Wauconda Garden Club

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

Phase one 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.

This project was completed on August 21st. The Wauconda Garden Club partnered with local Main Street Businesses to water the streetscape flowerbeds.

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

In 2024, the WGC converted one of the streetscape beds into a pollinator garden. The goal is partner with all businesses in the downtown area and plant the other 6 beds in 2025. This would be phase two of this program.

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)

The pilot pollinator garden is on Main Street just off the corner of Main Street and Bangs Street. This project was completed on August 21st. The Wauconda Garden Club partnered with local Main Street Businesses to water the streetscape flowerbeds. In 2024, the WGC converted one of the streetscape beds into a pollinator garden. The goal is partner with all businesses in the downtown area and plant the other 6 beds in 2025. This would be phase two of this program.

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted?

25

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants?

.01

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

The adjacent business owners, Public Works crew, and Wauconda Garden Club work together to water, weed, plant, replace, etc.