

# Village of Wauconda

Wauconda, IL

Mayor Jeff A. Sode

## Pledge Summary

The Village of Wauconda is a northwest suburb of Chicago and has a population of 14,084 residents. In addition to the beautiful 304 acre Bangs Lake, it is also surrounded by the Wauconda Bog Nature Preserve, Lakewood Forest Preserve, and Millennium Trail and Greenway. Additionally Wauconda has been designated a Tree City USA member since 2007. In 2021 the Village reevaluated some of its priorities to include sustainability and conservation programs.

## 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.
- 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 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.
- Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

### 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.
- 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).

- 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.

## 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.
- 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
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).**

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.” (Only allow numerical values.)**

50

**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).**

1

**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.**

Community Gardens, right-of-ways, public spaces

**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?**

2025 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

**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 20, 2025

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

Garden for Wildlife Month

**Upload a copy of your proclamation.**

[4A. Garden for Wildlife Month Proclamation.pdf](#)

**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.**

[Wauconda\\_Newsletter\\_Spring2025\\_web\\_updated.pdf](#)

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

[VillageofWauconda\\_Newsletter\\_Summer\\_2025\\_PRINT\\_update\\_v3.pdf](#)

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

Community-wide newsletter, reaches 7500 households and businesses.

**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.**

Wauconda Garden Club, Village of Wauconda, Public Works, and Main Street Beautification Group.

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

The Village hosts a compost giveback event each year and hands out materials to residents. The garden club also gave out native seed packets.

**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.**

[VillageofWauconda\\_Newsletter\\_Summer\\_2025\\_PRINT\\_update\\_v3.pdf](#)

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

In addition to the newsletter that went out encouraging HOAs to implement natural shorelines, the information was emailed directly to HOA contacts.

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

Staff published a summer/lake themed newsletter than stresses the importance of native plants, natural shorelines, avoiding pesticides, etc.

**Engage with developers, planners, landscape architects, and other community leaders and organizers engaged in planning processes to identify opportunities to create monarch habitat.**

**Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and associated opportunities to create monarch habitat.**

I don't have anything to upload, but I know that our Village Engineers have been encouraging developers to be more environment focused and they have added native plantings to their plans.

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

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

100 plants, 100 seed packets

**How many people attended your event?**

200

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

Garden Club and Public Works

**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)**

We are slowly but surely replacing all of our landscaping around the Village Hall with native flower/plant beds.

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

Mayor, staff, Garden Club, Public Works

**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.**

.25

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

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

Village of Wauconda and Wauconda Garden Club

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

15

**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).**

In progress

**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)**

In progress

**How many schools, community groups, leaders, or centers were engaged in this effort? How many of these collaborations and partnerships are "new"?**

5

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

Wauconda Middle School, Wauconda Grade School

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

In progress

**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).**

20

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

United Partnership, Garden Club, D118

**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.**

.25

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

In progress

**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 (e.g., 500)**

2000

**What was the date of your festival?**

TBD

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

Public Works, Wauconda Garden Club and LRS Recycling

**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).**

We are in the planning stages

**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?**

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.**

Discussions

**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.**

In progress

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

In progress. We have been working with our community development department to look into what other communities allow and/or require.

**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?**

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.**

In Progress

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

We are in research phase/discussions with the Garden Club and Community Development