City of Cedar Falls

Cedar Falls, IA

Mayor Danny Laudick

Pledge Summary

Cedar Falls is a city in North East Iowa with a population of roughly 41,000. The City is home to the University of Northern Iowa, one of the three regent universities in the state, and widely recognized for it's endearing mix of bigger city amenities with a small town feel. A nationally recognized downtown and eclectic mix of both urban and rural living lend toward a feeling of home whether you've lived here all your life or are just visiting. But a part of that feeling is only possible because of the balance of city life and natural beauty that Cedar Falls has. Mayor Danny Laudick has committed to ensuring we protect our natural spaces, and part of that commitment includes protecting the native environment and wellbeing of our monarch butterfly and other pollinator species.

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

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.
- 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

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pollinator-friendly native nectar plants (i.e., National Wildlife Federation's Schoolyard Habitats program and Monarch Mission curriculum).
- 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).
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Danny Laudick	2026	2/17/2026	
Mayor Danny Laudick	2025	3/19/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Danny Laudick	2024	3/31/2024	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.).

1200

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.)

400

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.

6

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.

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Parks, Municipal landscaped areas, roadsides.

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

Planting areas and signage about pollinators is located in public spaces including schools, parks, community gardens and also FEMA buy-out lots and low to moderate income neighborhoods.

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

To demonstrate our commitment to providing wildlife habitat in an urban environment and to

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 support and engagement of community organizations and clubs. We are always looking to expand our network of partners and donors as funding for projects remains our biggest constraint.

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

Our conservation partnership with our own local Monarch Club has allowed us to achieve our goals and reach many more people in the community. Nadia Patel, was awarded the prestigious U.S. Congressional Gold Youth Medal. This is the highest honor bestowed by the United States Congress on young Americans, and was presented to Nadia in a special ceremony held on Capitol Hill, Washington D.C. This year's Gold Medal Summit, highlighted the achievements of 724 youth awardees from 47 states and territories, representing 232 Congressional districts. Through her work with The Monarch Club, which she founded and leads, Nadia has had a profound impact within our schools and across the community. During her trip to Washington D.C., Nadia had the honor of meeting Senator Joni Ernst, Senator Chuck Grassley, Representative Ashley Hinson, and Dr. James Moore from the National Science Foundation. This is the first time a student from Cedar Falls High School has received this distinguished award. In addition to the Congressional Gold Medal, Nadia was also honored with the Governor's Volunteer Award for her outstanding volunteer service. Her contributions were specifically commended during the Governor's speech at the event, highlighting the significant impact of her initiatives.

Selected Action Items

Engage with city parks and recreation, public works, sustainability, and other relevant staff to identify opportunities to revise and maintain

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mowing programs and milkweed / native nectar plant planting programs.

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

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

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.

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

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.

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)

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.

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Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

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

522 Longview St.

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

Hawkeye Community College Natural Resources Program

Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.

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.

Butterfly Garden.png

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

Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa, Cedar Falls Community School District (Butterfly Garden)

How many plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

50

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Provided staff and organizational assistance to the planning and planting process

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).

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

Hudson school visit.jpg

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

Butterfly girls.jpg

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)

"The Monarch Club" https://monarchclub.org/

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)

5

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

Orchard Hill Elementary School Hudson Community School Cedar Falls High School North Cedar Elementary School Hawkeye Community College

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

Pollinator seed packets for kids, milkweed plants for

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).

150 Students and 15 educators

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

"The Monarch Club"

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.

.5

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

school butterfly gardens are given maintenance guidance and a group of students and a faculty lead are tasked with ensuring the gardens are maintained.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

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

12

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

Signs by Monarchclub.org with QR link to their site. Pollinator information signs at Big Woods Rotary Prairie.

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

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.

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

HKGI Consulting

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

In progress

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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.

N/A

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

Select parks within the city are on a multi-year phase for design and implementation. The the plan was adopted in September of 2025 and its' implementation will begin July of 2026.

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.

Landscape design.jpg

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)

City Hall raised pollinator planting area on the 3rd Street side @ 220 Clay Street. and raised pollinator planting located at Peter Melendy Park

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

N/A

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.

0.13

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

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

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Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

Center Street from Longview Street to Lone Tree Road.

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

150

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 of a football field.

.32

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Hand weeding and trash/debris collection completed in conjunction between parks staff and neighborhood volunteer groups. Planting beds are inspected every few weeks and plants are replaced as needed.

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:

9/10/2024

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

Monarch Proclamation

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

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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.

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

Hosted an Earth Fair at Gateway Park in Cedar Falls on 4-12-25. Black Hawk County SWCD (Event Co-sponsor) Iowa State University Extension and Outreach (Event Co-sponsor)

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

380

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

1000

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

Cedar Falls Utilities, Cedar Falls City Council, Cedar Falls Public Works, ISU extension, Black Hawk Co. SWMC

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