

Town of Apex

Apex, NC

Mayor Jacques Gilbert

Pledge Summary

The Town of Apex is a growing area located in Wake County, North Carolina. The Town is located in the piedmont region of North Carolina and serves as a critical waypoint for the eastern Monarch migration. Mayor Jacques K. Gilbert and Apex Town Council are committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with their renewal of the Mayor's Monarch Pledge and look forward to engaging with Apex residents to continue to increase pollinator habitat throughout the Town.

Action Items Committed for 2024

Communications and Convening

- 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.
- 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.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

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

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2026	1/12/2026	
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2025	3/28/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2024	3/6/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2023	3/30/2023	Signatories
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2022	2/7/2022	Signatories
Mayor Jacques Gilbert	2021	4/1/2021	

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 (e.g., 50).

250

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.)

180

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 Park Habitat continues to expand.

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

The Town works with our DEI Department and our Strategic Plan to ensure all programs engage marginalized communities and serve ALL our residents. One of the Town's Strategic Goals is to create "A Welcoming Community". The Mayor's Monarch Pledge

helps us to create community connections where everyone can be involved in efforts to support pollinators and especially the monarch butterfly.

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

The Town of Apex NC developed a Strategic Plan for 2023 and beyond consisting of 5 overarching goals. One of these goals is "Environmental Leadership". The Town is committed to sustaining natural resources and well-being. The Mayor's Monarch Pledge provides objectives in support of this goal.

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?

Viewing other municipalities programs have been helpful in drawing inspiration of our own for writing policy, hosting community engagement events, and creating future goals for the program. When developing the new habitat recognition program, we learned a lot from Asheville and other locations that created their own programs.

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

We will launch a pollinator habitat recognition program for community members soon! This will certify resident habitats as pollinator friendly and encourage others to plant pollinator plants in their spaces.

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.

Partnered with NC State Extension Master Gardeners and Rachel's Native Plants.

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

Partnered with NC State Extension Master Gardeners to revamp pollinator garden with spring and fall plantings. Master Gardeners were present at all volunteer planting days to instruct volunteers on correct planting techniques and educate student volunteers on the importance of planting for pollinators. Worked with Rachel's Native Plants to select only

native, pollinator-friendly options for the garden. Completed two planting days adding 80+ new plants to the garden.

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.)

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

Social media posts were completed during National Pollinator month inviting community members to pollinator event, An Evening in the Garden. Pollinator Habitat Recognition Program will be communicated in e-newsletter, by flyer in community center, and on social media.

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)

Apex Nature Park - one of Apex's largest and most visited parks. The park is located at 2500 Evans Road, Apex, NC.

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

Apex Youth Council, NC State Extension Master Gardeners, Rachel's Native Plants, Apex High School, Town of Apex Park Operations Team, Girl Scout Troops, Eagle Scout

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.

0.05

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located?

5

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

Signs include information on what pollination is, why it is important, and how the viewer can help pollinators. There is additional signage marking a bee hotel and welcoming guests to the native pollinator garden.

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

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

Apex Youth Council, NC State Extension Master Gardeners

How many plants were planted?

20

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Added 5 new swamp milkweed and many other nectar-producing plants to pollinator garden.

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

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

5-10 groups and organizations

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

Environmental Advisory Board made recommendations to many developers regarding adding pollinator species and designated pollinator habitats to plans, offering additional yard options, and providing other environmental best practices. We plan to work with additional HOAs, Community Associations, and neighborhood organizations next year.

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?

Planning Department

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

Completed in previous years

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?

Parks and Recreation Department, Facilities

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 Parks and Recreation Operations team has limited the use of pesticides in spaces they maintain. We hope to explore an Integrated Pest Management Plan in the future to provide best practices for pesticide usage across Town departments.

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

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

200

How many people attended your event?

400

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

Hosted Earth Day event on Town Hall Campus and gave out native seed packs with information on Town pollinator efforts to attendees.

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?

This project is in the works!

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).

5

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).

We are in the process of adding a mural at a park location. More details will be provided in the following year.

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)

Electric byways maintained by Town staff members.

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

10

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

1 acre

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Electric Department staff add native pollinator-friendly seeds on electric byways.