Town of Carrboro

Carrboro, NC

Mayor Barbara Foushee

Pledge Summary

Carrboro is a progressive, vibrant community located in the Piedmont region of central North Carolina. Over 20,000 diverse residents call Carrboro home. In 2014, the Town of Carrboro stated its intention to promote healthy, sustainable habitats for pollinators by becoming the third municipality in the country to join the Bee City USA initiative. The Town recognizes the importance of avoiding and minimizing impacts of municipal operations on pollinators and other species, has been working to support and protect environmental features for over 40 years, and has been pursuing a Least Toxic Integrated Pest Management Policy since the 1990s. The Town has also committed to protecting and enhancing native ecosystems through its 2017 Community Climate Action Plan and 2022 Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Barbara Foushee has signed the Mayors' Monarch Pledge to reaffirm the Town's commitment to the environment and engage residents in creating and enhancing pollinator habitat throughout the community.

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 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.

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.
- Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

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

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- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Barbara Foushee	2025	3/11/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Barbara Foushee	2024	3/28/2024	Leadership Circle
Mayor Damon Seils	2023	3/31/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Damon Seils	2022	3/29/2022	Signatories
Mayor Lydia Lavelle	2021	4/8/2021	Signatories

Action Items

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.

8.52

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

In October, 2014, Carrboro became the third municipality in the country to join Bee City USA. Bees and other pollinators around the globe have experienced dramatic declines due to a combination of habitat loss, use of pesticides, spread of pests and diseases, intensification and industrialization of apiculture, and reduced genetic diversity. Becoming a Bee City USA affiliate publicly announced Carrboro's intention to promote healthy, sustainable habitats for bees and other pollinators. The Town has also committed to improving ecosystem health and resilience in its 2017 Community Climate Action Plan and 2022 Comprehensive Plan. The Mayors' Monarch Pledge aligns with Carrboro's commitment to promote pollinator habitat, conserve biodiversity, and improve ecosystem health and resilience. The Town has also committed to ecosystem protection and repair, open space protection, water supply and water resources planning and protection, and food production through the Carrboro Farmers Market, which has a 50-mile radius requirement for all vendors to keep food local.

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 communication resources and templates have been very helpful as well as the educational materials about native plants. Additional resources related to planting milkweed seeds would be helpful for Carrboro residents looking to create habitat at their residences. It would also be helpful for Town staff to be connected with the names of local supporters to

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build on their interests or see if they might want to be champions for this cause. It also might be helpful to have access to specific guides or resources for people at different life stages from young to more mature, from those with small gardens or those seeking to make shopping choices that are the most monarch-friendly.

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.).

155

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.

Town staff planted seeds and mature plants in roadsides, rights-of-way, Town properties, and public parks. Town residents were given seeds to plant at their residences and created seed balls to plant throughout town.

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

The Town of Carrboro joined the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) in 2018 for guidance through the process of dismantling structural racial inequity and creating equitable outcomes for all. The Town joined a North Carolina Regional Cohort of local Governments from 2019-2020, and trained staff 2021-2022 to learn how to address and change policy and institutional norms that are driving the production of inequities. The Town worked with County jurisdictions to jointly adopt a countywide Racial Equity Framework, One Orange, in 2021. The Town then adopted a Racial Equity Action Plan in December 2023. The Town utilizes this plan to help make its pollinator- and monarch-related outreach and education more equitable and reach all residents of Carrboro.

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.)

56

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

In addition to other outreach events throughout the year, the Town of Carrboro celebrated Celebrate Pollinator Week with a free pollinator movie screening, Wings of Life, on Sunday, June 22, at 3 p.m. at the Carrboro Century Center. The Town also promoted its annual Leave Your Leaves campaign (https://www.townofcarrboro.org/2610/Leave-the-Leaves) to educate residents on how this action can benefit pollinators, other wildlife, water quality, and soil health.

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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:

10/25/25

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

Mayor's Monarch Pledge Proclamation

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Mayors Monarch Pledge Proclamation 2025.pdf

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

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

75

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

Carrboro Farmers' Market

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

Milkweed Giveaway Town Social Media Post.docx

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

75 packets of common milkweed (Asclepias syriaca) seeds

Change weed or mowing ordinances to allow for native prairie and plant habitats.

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

Complete

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

Town Code Amendment to Allow Managed Natural Landscapes.pdf

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.

10/5/21 - The Town Code Amendment allows residents to plant managed natural landscapes, including native prairie and plant habitats, on their property.

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

Staff reached out to the New Hope Audubon Society and the North Carolina Botanical Garden for input on this amendment.

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)

A pollinator- and monarch-friendly rain garden is planned for Carrboro's Fire Station 1, adjoining Town Hall (301 W Main St. Carrboro, NC 27510). In addition, Town climate action and stormwater staff received a 2024-25 grant from the New Hope Bird Alliance to restore a wetland with pollinator-friendly plants, including milkweed, at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Park (1120 Hillsborough Rd, Chapel Hill, NC 27516). Multiple habitat types are present within the park's boundaries, including a stream, constructed wetland, riparian zones, woodland areas, a community garden, and recreational areas. This unique combination of habitats supports a variety of wildlife species.

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

New Hope Bird Alliance

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

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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.

8.5

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.

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

Carrboro climate action staff worked with Public Works staff to participate in No Mow May again in 2025. Signs were placed on Town medians and on Town property in areas left unmowed throughout the month in order to promote the program to the public. In addition, Town stormwater staff coordinated with Public Works landscaping crews to expand an unmowed grow zone on the perimeter of a wetland area at one of the Town's parks.

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

News Flash • Carrboro promotes No Mow May.pdf

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

N/A

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.

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

On August 16, staff held a seed ball event at the Carrboro Farmers' Market. Approximately 50 children stopped by to create seed balls to plant at their residences and around Carrboro. Staff included several species of milkweed seed as part of the seed mix for the seed balls and provided instructions to participants detailing when, where, and how to plant the seed balls for the best success.

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

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.

0.02

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Carrboro Public Works staff maintain these areas regularly through mowing, weeding, and watering when needed.

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

Milkweed seeds were planted at the following locations: Near the intersection of W Main St and Hillsborough Rd in Carrboro, (Coordinates: 35.913595, -79.079372), and 301 W Main St. Carrboro, NC 27510 (Coordinates: 35.911605, -79.077250).

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

100

Launch, expand, or continue an effort to change municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native

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nectar producing plants at city properties.

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

In Progress

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

Staff reached out to the New Hope Audubon Society and the North Carolina Botanical Garden for input on this amendment.

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

In Progress - staff are continuing to replace non-native plants on Town properties with native plants and discuss developing internal policies which promote the use of native, pollinator-friendly plants. Staff plan to explore ways to partner with local community garden participants or Master Gardeners to help inform municipal planting practices. The Town is also undergoing a rewrite of its Unified Development Ordinance. This process includes a code diagnosis step that will review existing provisions and Carrboro's Comprehensive Plan to identify ways to promote ecosystem resilience.

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