Town of Whitby

Whitby, ON

Mayor Elizabeth Roy

Pledge Summary

Established in 1855, the Town of Whitby is situated on the north shore of Lake Ontario, 30 km east of Toronto. The Town maintains 125 parks with 950 acres of active parkland, over 1000 acres of passive open space, and approximately 75 kilometres of trails. The estimated population is 138,500 and Durham Region predicts the population of Whitby will be approximately 200,000 by 2033. The Town of Whitby's mission to create and maintain a sustainable, healthy, and safe community/environment can be achieved, in part, through the maintenance, restoration, and enhancement of the Town's green infrastructure. A healthy habitat for pollinators is an integral component of the municipality.

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.)

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- 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

- Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Mayor Elizabeth Roy	2026	1/28/2026	
Mayor Elizabeth Roy	2025	3/3/2025	Signatories
Mayor Elizabeth Roy	2024	2/23/2024	Signatories
Mayor Elizabeth Roy	2023	4/25/2023	Signatories

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Mayor Don Mitchell	2021	12/16/2020	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.).

4863

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.)

0

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.

0.1

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.

Community parks, along trails and promoting residents to plant native wildflowers suitable for monarchs in their yards. A community garden has been granted conditional approval and will be granted final approval shortly allowing a local community group to start the Civic Community Garden to be located on the Whitby Civic Recreation Complex property.

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

We are not at this time, but with our new Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program (SNAP) this presents an opportunity for us to explore and implement in 2025.

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

To support our overall commitment to sustainability and specific initiatives including Bee City Canada and Tree Cities of the World.

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

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help expand equitable engagement in community processes and access to high-quality, usable nature?

The workshops/webinars the National Wildlife Federation held throughout the year have been helpful. However, a lot of the context has been United States based and as a Canadian municipality participating in this program it would be great to see further resources tailored to those participating from Canada. A general plan/guidance on how municipalities and residents can expand equitable engagement would be helpful.

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

Our monarch butterfly conservation efforts over the last year can be observed through our education and outreach to residents, handing out native seed packets, and creating pollinator friendly habitats throughout the Town.

Selected Action Items

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.

Mayors Monarch Pledge Social Media 5.jpg

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

Mayors Monarch Pledge Social Media 4.jpg

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

Mayors Monarch Pledge Social Media 3.jpg

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

Mayors Monarch Pledge Social Media 2.jpg

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

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Mayors Monarch Pledge Social Media 1.jpg

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

Over the past year, the Town has continued to launch and maintain a public communication effort to encourage residents to plant monarch gardens at their homes or in their neighbourhoods. This mainly involved using social media such as X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook to raise awareness about the benefit of pollinators and what residents can do to create more habitat. Also, during special awareness weeks such as Pollinator Week in June we developed a News Story on the Town's website to provide more details on how they can get involved and support our pollinators (link to the news story is no longer live).

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.

0.76

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.

This year we continued the use of Lalcide Chondro to treat European Buckthorn. Lalcide Chondro is a biological herbicide used to inhibit resprouting and regrowth from the cut stumps of alders, trembling aspen, red oak, ironwood, white birch, sugar maple, and choke cherry, and for cut and girdled stumps of glossy and European buckthorn. The active ingredient in LALCIDE CHONDRO is Chondrostereum purpureum, a naturally occurring fungal plant pathogen that infects living plant tissue, eventually killing it, while the fungus continues to develop. LALCIDE CHONDRO represents a more environmentally sensitive option and may be useful when chemical herbicides are unsuitable. Unfortunately, this was our last year using Lalchide Chondro to treat European Buckthorn since the product has been discontinued due to number of resources needed to cut and apply the product. In 2024, the Town treated invasive species at Jack Wilson Park, Deverell Park, Glen Ayr Park, Kelloryn Park, and Sato Park. For example, at Jack Wilson Park, we cleared dead limbs and invasive species such as European Buckthorn, Dog Strangling Vine and Wild Parsnip. All cleared areas were then mulched with our own Arborist Wood Chips. The cleared areas will be maintained and kept clear for two summers by timely line trimming. The fall of the second season the areas will be covered with our own leaf mulch. The following spring the areas will be ready for a matrix planting (carbon garden). After planting the areas, they will be maintained (2 to 3 visits) by the horticulture department for 3 years. The maintenance would consist of adding plants when needed, removal of invasive plants, and possible propagation of existed plants. After 3 years, the garden will be managed and inspected by a foreperson to determine if work is needed.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

Des Newman WhitBEE Park - Sign.jpg

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

LOW Darren Park 2017-04-10.pdf

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

Pollinator Garden Sign.png

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

3

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

The Town has an interactive map were residents can find all parks with pollinator gardens - https://www.whitby.ca/en/play/parks.aspx. We currently have an educational sign installed out sign of Town Hall at the Town's Serenity Pollinator Garden. This sign lists the pollinator friendly plants in the garden, indicates what is pollination, the importance of pollinators and provides common pollinators. There is another sign located at Des Newman WhitBEE Park that talks about food for pollinators. There is also a sign at Darren Park that discusses the native species conservation project and the long-term goal of the project, which is to promote a meadow habitat where mountain-mint and native plant communities can thrive and support a healthy ecosystem, including pollinator communities of bees and butterflies.

Increase the percentage of native plants, shrubs and trees that must be used in city landscaping ordinances and encourage use of milkweed, where appropriate.

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

Seeds for Bees.png

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

Internal Town of Whitby Departments - Seeds for Bees Native Plant Nursery

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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 Seeds for Bees Initiative started in 2021 to assist community planting efforts. The nursery enables the Town to sustainably grow native plant stock, which is used to expand our native plant gardens across the Town. This year, Staff helped repot 1134 native plants in June which were then planted this fall at Lynde Creek Park, Chelsea Hill and Guthrie Park. This program will continue in 2025 and beyond to increase the percentage of native plants in the Town's landscaping.

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