Town of Morrisville

Morrisville, NC

Mayor TJ Cawley

Pledge Summary

Morrisville is located adjacent to North Carolina's Research Triangle Park - a national hub for technology, hosting over 300 companies and employing roughly 50,000 people. The Town of Morrisville continues to work toward it's 11 goals in five focus areas including energy / water, natural environment, built environment, waste / recycling, greenhouse gas emissions as part of the Master Sustainability Plan. In the 2-year span of the Sustainability program, the Town has implemented 2 renewable energy projects, integrated a building automation system at its public safety building, and recognized National Pollinator Week in support of pollinators and monarch butterflies, specifically.

Action Items Committed for 2023

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 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.
- Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

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

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- 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 TJ Cawley	2026	2/26/2026	
Mayor TJ Cawley	2025	3/28/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor TJ Cawley	2024	1/9/2024	Signatories
Mayor TJ Cawley	2023	12/15/2022	Leadership Circle
Mayor TJ Cawley	2022	12/29/2021	Signatories
Mayor TJ Cawley	2021	4/19/2021	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.).

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." (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only.)

125 young adults, 375 adults

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.

0.03

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.

Parks and outside park facilities, right of ways, Education Garden and Community Garden

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

We could use some additional guidance on how to attain this goal.

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

The Town is invested in further advocating for pollinators with a native plant and tree goal of 70% minimum natives for all Town-owned projects.

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?

A kit of social media posts, event ideas that folks can edit and use quickly would be of value. Can NWF partner with communities to perform outreach and education efforts? I would also like examples of how to reach marginalized communities.

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

We have documented an increase in our monarch population at various parks in our Town. We have multiple photos and sightings of chrysalises and caterpillars due to our collective efforts.

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:

NA

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

NA

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.)

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

We have utilized social media to promote pollinators in our community.

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

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

The Sustainability Program works closely with the Education Garden to promote pollinator and milkweed plantings across Town. In addition, the citizen advisory group, Morrisville Environment & Stormwater Committee has been supporting the idea of building a seed library in order to further advocate for native gardens.

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.

The Town actively works with the landscape designers on all projects that are Town owned and operated. Typically, we attempt to plant beyond the 70% minimum for native trees and plants on all sites. It is very much a collaborative process and the results have been positive.

Create a community-driven educational conservation strategy, initiative, or practice that focuses on and benefits local, underserved residents.

Please describe the process to create the strategy , the strategy goals and content, and/or results of implementation. Please also identify who was engaged in this process, what partnerships were established, and how you engaged these groups. Provide a link, if possible.

NA

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.

FB social post.png

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

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5 plants, 100 seed packets, 25 seed bombs

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

250

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

Zero Waste, Morrisville Community Library, Morrisville Stormwater Department, Morrisville Environment & Stormwater Committee (seed giveaways, tree quiz and giveaways), Education and Community 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?

Education Garden

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

12

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

Partnered with Education Garden to continue building and fostering monarch habitats in our Town.

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.

NA

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.

The Town is not actively removing invasive plants, but we do within our Unified Development Ordinance, provide guidance on what NOT to plant for developers and other landscape contractors.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

1

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

Sign is included in Northwest Park native plant description. The Town is planning to add native plant gardens at each of our 5 Town parks over the next year.

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.

Public Works Recommended Standards for Amenities, Building Fixtures and Sustainability Initiatives_20230920.pdf

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

Public Works, Capital Projects

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

Complete: Added goal of 70% minimum native plant material to our Standards documentation.

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.

January 2023

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.

Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

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

ToM Native Plant Sign-FINAL.pdf

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

1000002639.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)

A new native plant garden was established at Northwest Park by the Public Work's Community Enhancement Team in coordination with the Sustainability Task Force and the Morrisville Environment & Stormwater Committee (MESC). Over 200 plantings were installed including stormwater beneficial grasses, flowering annuals, and pollinator-friendly perennials. A large span of drainage rock was added to the center of the bed to control previous erosion issues and to prevent mulch wash-out from the sloped beds. This project was meant to showcase the effectiveness of combining stormwater solutions with NC native plantings. Educational signage will be created to highlight the interactions and importance between NC native pollinators and plantings, and will be posted near the Northwest Park playground for park attendees to view. The signage will also include a QR code for NC Native Plant suggestions.

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

Morrisville Environment & Stormwater Committee, Public Works leadership, Stormwater Dept.

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.

.03

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