Cheltenham Township

Elkins Park, PA

Acting Township Manager Alyson Elliott

Pledge Summary

Cheltenham Township, established in 1682 as part of Philadelphia County, PA, is proud of its 300+-year history. With its prominent Abolitionist leadership, including housing Camp William Penn for Colored Soldiers during the Civil War, its integrated residential setting, two Historic Districts and 8 properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, many of Cheltenham's current population of approximately 38,000 host bumper stickers proudly claiming, "I Choose Cheltenham". Also noted with that slogan, in addition to Historic and Diverse, are the descriptors: Creative, Progressive, and Green. Cheltenham Township is a First Class Township with a Home Rule Charter in Montgomery County, PA. The Township is home to five colleges/universities, a technical school, a thriving art center and an adult school organization. Volunteers serve through Friends groups to support a number of parks, community gardens, sports teams, and libraries. Hundreds of others serve on municipal and school committees and as firefighters. With 25 parks or public green spaces over our total 9 square miles, Cheltenham residents are happy to flock outdoors. The Township's active Environmental Advisory Council continues to advocate for sustainable yards and practices, and Cheltenham was an early adopter of a Sustainability Plan, which was incorporated into our Comprehensive Plan document. Goals named in the Sustainability Plan include community engagement, ecological stewardship, sustainable development, and healthy living for all. As such, the Monarch Pledge fits well with the efforts already underway in Cheltenham to protect native habitats, reduce/reverse climate change, and engage the community toward a sustainable future. It is in this spirit that we sign onto the Mayors' Monarch Pledge.

Action Items Committed for 2022

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.)

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.

Past Pledge Archive

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Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
President, Board of Commissioners Matthew Areman	2026	3/26/2026	
Township Manager Alyson Elliott	2025	3/11/2025	Signatories
President, Board of Commissioners Matthew Areman	2024	3/5/2024	Signatories
Township Manager Alyson Elliott	2023	3/16/2023	Signatories
Acting Township Manager Alyson Elliott	2022	3/25/2022	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.).

3800

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.)

about 800 youth; remainder 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.

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.

A new pollinator habitat was created this year on the grounds of our Township Administration Building. This building is frequented by all our Staff, our taxpayers, businesspeople and developers, and visitors to the Township. A pollinator garden was also created at the Glenside Library, and is used actively through activities for multi-age groups, including Story Time for children. In addition, a couple of acres of pollinator habitat had already been created prior to this year at the large High School Park in Elkins Park. This garden continues to be expanded and enhanced each year.

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

Through our Library system and our Friends of park groups (Friends of High School Park, Friends of Curtis Arboretum,etc.), our programs are intentionally accessible and engaging to these communities.

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

This program was brought to our attention by some of our residents. It is consistent with the goals of our Sustainability Plan of 2013 and with the agenda of our Environmental Advisory Council volunteers. It's a valuable investment in our future.

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 suggested action items, combined with the knowledge and engagement of our parks staff and community partners, have been our greatest asset in making our first strides in the Monarch Pledge. If we had greater access to a variety of milkweed plants and seeds, we could do much more. As it is, we are challenged dramatically by Staff and funding shortages, so having a ready supply of these valued basics would make feasible much wider distribution and educational programs.

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

We are proud of our modest but meaningful start in this initiative. A serious grant, and/or the provision of plugs/seeds/plants would go a long way and support greater activity to create/restore pollinator habitat here in Cheltenham.

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:

March 16, 2022

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

Proclamation: Pledge of Cheltenham Township

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

2022 Monarch Pledge Proclamation signed.pdf

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

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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.

Sustainable Showcase 2022.png

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

Sustainable Yard Sign.FINAL PRINT FILE.png

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

The Township's many partners ran with this Action Item. For example, our Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) sponsored a showcase for sustainable yards, the criteria for which included pollinator and monarch gardens. It was advertised through our website, social media, and cable channels, and picked up by online local news aggregate The Glenside Local. Signs were created and awarded to sustainable spaces, stating, "My yard supports People, Pollinators and the Planet," which serve to boost various education initiatives for the public. The minutes of the EAC's public meetings indicate serious interest in and commitment to spreading the word at Township-wide events: https://www.cheltenhamtownship.org/files/documents/EnvironmentalAdvisoryCouncilMinutes03-21-22024441040122PM1740.pdf The Cheltenham Township Library System is very active in promoting awareness through many programs, including hands-on and demonstration gardens. The Library planted a dedicated pollinator garden, in addition to its front yard, which is a certified wildlife garden. They were showcased with an Outstanding Achievement Award for Sustainable Outdoor Spaces. In addition, the Library hosted a seed/plant swap on May 14 that was well-attended. Finally, in periodic email updates to Township residents, I (Ward 4 Commissioner Ann Rappoport) shared information about the Township's Pledge. We believe that our "maiden year" represented a good start, and now that we've had one round at this, our Township can expand our communication efforts on this initiative in the coming year.

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.

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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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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.

IMG_5673.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)

The Township planted a demonstration pollinator garden at the Township Administration Building, 8230 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027. The facility, and these grounds, were once the estate of the Breyer Family (of Breyer Ice Cream fame), and included extensive gardens, terraces, fountains, etc.

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

This particular demonstration garden was designed and installed by our Parks Staff (attached photos). Meanwhile, Friends of High School Park continued to maintain and expand their acreage of pollinator garden near the intersection of High School Road and Montgomery Avenue in Elkins Park. This space boasts 11 acres of native green space, and is maintained by volunteers yearround. The Township supports the efforts of this group by spreading the word about its events and volunteer workdays through our website calendar, social media, and cable channel.

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.

0.1

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.

Plant-Sale-flyer-2-6_4_22-232x300.png

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

Screenshot 2022-11-21 140958.png

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

This level of data was not collected/provided, so we'll just provide rough estimates. We'll keep the question in mind in the coming year.

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?

Our Glenside Library hosted a seed/plant swap in May of 2022. The Friends of High School Park hosted its own native plant sale on June 4, through which they shared information about the importance of pollinators to the community. Cheltenham Township supported this event by spreading the word through our social media channels. The Friends of High School Park also gave out seeds at events in the Township during the year, including at the Wall House Museum's Open House on October 23, which was hosted by the Township's Historical Commission.

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