Cheltenham Township

Elkins Park, PA

Township Manager Alyson Elliott

Pledge Summary

Cheltenham Township is the first suburb of Philadelphia, home to a population of over 37,000. Cheltenham proudly maintains over 20 parks or open green spaces for residents to enjoy, and also has many resident volunteers who work to support and protect native plants and wildlife in the parks. Encouraged by its active Environmental Advisory Council, Sustainable Cheltenham committed to a list of 10 Sustainability Goals in 2013, including Ecological Stewardship. Cheltenham's Board of Commissioners first committed to the Mayors Monarch Pledge in 2022, and looks forward to strengthening the efforts of our community to support monarch and pollinator habitat in the years to come.

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.)

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.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Past Pledge Archive

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

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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.).

4000

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.)

500 youth, 3500 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.

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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.

The monarch garden created in 2022 around the perimeter of a patio at the Township's Administration Building thrived again this year, and was supplemented by a beautiful course of annuals set below the patio. The Public Works Parks Department has plans to expand the monarch gardens on more Township property next year. The Glenside branch of the Cheltenham Township Library system maintains its new pollinator garden and engages the community through various events such as story time for children and teen volunteer sessions helping with the garden. The Friends of High School Park, with the support of the Township, continue to cultivate and expand a pollinator garden habitat at the 11-acre park enjoyed by countless neighbors year-round. As a result of educational efforts, habitat is slowly being created at residences as the public obtains native plants and seedlings through plant swaps and sales.

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 Friends of parks groups, our programs are intentionally accessible and engaging to these communities.

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

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Sustainability is one of the core tenets of Cheltenham's values, and is in line with the Sustainability Plan adopted by our community in 2013. While the Township has many other substantial priorities at this time, such as upcoming capital investment in all its facilities, the Township recognizes the Monarch butterfly as a sign of environmental health and is committed to ensuring the presence of habitat supportive to its survival.

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?

As far as the education action item, graphic resources shared by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources have increased the information the Township has shared with its residents through social channels this year. The Township's efforts in the Pledge have widely been supported by passionate and engaged volunteers such as our Environmental Advisory Council and leaders in the Friends of High School Park. Their knowledge background and sourcing of resources has helped time-strapped Township staff with our commitment to sharing information in support of Monarch habitat. Continued staffing and funding shortages have impacted the Township's ability to take on more action items or to increase pollinator garden acreage, but these efforts will be part of the Township's ongoing commitment. The Township has relied on the provision of milkweed by volunteer residents for plant swaps, so a useful resource would be more access to this vital plant and/or its seeds for equitable distribution. Another beneficial resource would be content geared toward library programs, which our Library System could incorporate into its offerings for wide and equitable reach.

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

In this second year of the Monarch Pledge, the Township maintained its first year's action items and added the action item of educational signage at its monarch garden. While just a small step, it is an eye-catching educational piece to help promote pollinator gardens. The Township's efforts to educate the public about the importance of pollinators and monarchs was much more intentional this year and we look to continue education efforts in coming pledge years. As we look to get back to appropriate staffing levels, we will look toward reviewing ordinances and practices which may be affecting pollinator habitat.

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 15, 2023

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

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Monarch Pledge 2023

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

EAC - 2023.03.15 - Proclamation - Monarch Pledge.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 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.

2023 Spring Newsletter Excerpt.png

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

Capture 2023 03 15.PNG

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

Capture 2023 03 17.PNG

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

Capture 2023 03 29.PNG

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Capture 2023 06 09.PNG

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

Capture 2023 06 14.PNG

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

Capture 2023 09 12.PNG

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

Capture 2023 09 28.PNG

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

Capture 2023 10 19.PNG

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

Capture 2023 10 26.PNG

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

Sustainable Yard Signs Webpage.PNG

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

Instagram 2023 03 17.PNG

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

Instagram 2023 05 09.PNG

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

Instagram 2023 06 14.PNG

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Instagram 2023 09 14.PNG

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Instagram 2023 10 26.PNG

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

Twitter 2023 03 14.PNG

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

Twitter 2023 03 17.PNG

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Twitter 2023 06 12.PNG

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Twitter 2023 06 20.PNG

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Twitter 2023 07 27.PNG

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

X 2023 10 18.PNG

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

X 2023 10 26.PNG

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

The Township's Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) continued its Sustainable Yard Sign initiative, which is featured on the Township website, social media, and was highlighted in

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the Township's spring edition print newsletter mailed to 14,300+ residents and businesses. The initiative welcomes residents to apply for a sign indicating which items out of a checklist of criteria apply to their yards. Keeping a pesticide-free yard and planting native plants are two such criteria. Approximately 50 signs have been awarded, which read "My Yard Supports People, Pollinators, and the Planet," so this effort also serves to promote sustainable practices and curiosity to passersby of those residences. In further support of this public education, the EAC members located resources for creating pollinator gardens and shared them on Facebook under the page "Residents for a Sustainable Cheltenham" which were then shared by the Township's official channel. The Township also looked for opportunities to cross-post resources from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources on social media to guide the public in support of monarch and pollinator habitat. Finally, a Friends group to one of our Township parks (Friends of High School Park) started its own "Year of the Pollinator" initiative in September 2023, and the Township plans to support this effort and share the resources throughout the year to come and into next year's pledge window.

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.

2023 Master Gardener Plant Sale.PNG

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

Capture 2023 05 03.PNG

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

Capture 2023 05 09.PNG

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

Capture 2023 05 10.PNG

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

Capture 2023 05 31.PNG

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

Glenside Library Plant Swap.PNG

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

Instagram 2023 05 09.PNG

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

Plant Swap_flyer2023 (8.5 × 11 in) (1).png

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

Twitter 2023 05 09.PNG

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

50-60

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

42

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

The Township's Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) partnered with the Cheltenham Township Library System (CTLS) to put on a plant and seed swap on May 13, 2023, and the Township promoted this event through its website and social media channels. This event accounts for the numbers reported above in this section. The Township was also contacted by the Penn State Extension Master Gardeners of Montgomery County to promote its annual Plant Sale (May 6, 2023), which was shared on the Township's website calendar. The Township also shared via Facebook word of the Friends of High School Park's Plant Sale on June 4, 2023, an annual event which attracts many more attendees, and at which 767 plants were sold this 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.

IMG_3573.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 garden is located at the patio of 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 garden was maintained as a pledge item from our original pledge in 2022, and the garden was planned, planted, and maintained by the Township Public Works Parks crew. In addition to the butterfly seed mix, annuals were planted which attracted pollinators well into the fall season. Meanwhile, the Friends of High School Park maintains - and plans to expand - its acreage of pollinator garden within an 11-acre park at the intersection of Montgomery Avenue and High School Road in Elkins Park. The Township supports the efforts of this group by spreading the word about its events and its many volunteer workdays through the Township's 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.

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Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

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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).

The Township created and purchased one 18"x24" informational sign from Vacker Signs (https://vackersign.com). The information on the sign was compiled with the help of the Chair of the Environmental Advisory Council and the Executive Director of the Friends of High School Park, a group which maintains its own beautiful pollinator garden. Information includes stating the Township's commitment to sustainability and the Monarch Pledge, tips on creating a monarch garden at home, and the names of the plants in the Township's monarch garden (some perennial, some annual - the Township's Public Works team is committed to supplementing the annuals each year).

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