Town of York

York, ME

Selectboard, Chair Todd Frederick

Pledge Summary

The Town of York, comprised of Cape Neddick, York Harbor, York Village and York Beach, is in the southern tip of Maine and has a population of over 13,000 year-round residents. This coastal community is home to the Nubble Lighthouse, Mount Agamenticus, and is famous for its long sandy beaches. York also has large areas of forest, community parks, fields, and green space along with some of the highest levels of biodiversity in the state. In our recent Comprehensive Plan, a top goal is to preserve, protect, and enhance natural resources to include wildlife habitat. We are pledging to help protect and increase public awareness of Maine's native pollinators, to include the monarch butterfly, and their habitats.

Action Items Committed for 2023

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.)
- 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.

Program and Demonstration Gardens

- Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.
- Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.
- Add or maintain native milkweed and nectar-producing plants in gardens in the community.
- 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.
- 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

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properties.
- Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city's Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.
- Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.
- Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Selectboard, Chair Todd Frederick	2026	3/27/2026	
Selectboard, Chair Todd Frederick	2025	2/3/2025	Signatories
Selectboard, Chair Todd Frederick	2024	3/22/2024	Signatories
Selectboard, Chair Todd Frederick	2023	2/10/2023	Leadership Circle

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.).

515

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.)

253 youth, 262 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

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.

residences, parks, schools

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

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Programs and events put on by Parks and Recreation and Mount Agamenticus Conservation have all been free to York residents.

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

Pollinator species like the monarch are vital for maintaining healthy ecosystems. The Town was already doing work to help support and protect pollinator habitat, and the Pledge served as an inspiration to continue that work.

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 information on native plants and plant pairing was helpful. Would like to see more about maximizing small spaces/urban settings.

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

The population of York is just under 14,000 people. Numbers of adults/children noted are known participation counts from planned programming and events specifically. At the time of this report, acreage created is unknown, though we do know a number of people in town utilized the Common Milkweed seeds and plants we gave away as part of greater habitat restoration projects on private property.

Selected Action Items

Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

Seed Bomb Workshop (1).png

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

seed pod drive FB (1).png

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

40

What species were collected or propagated?

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Common Milkweed

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

Parks and Recreation, Mount Agamenticus Conservation Program

Please describe the milkweed seed collection and propagation effort that you hosted.

Conservation Program managed a milkweed seed collection drive through the Parks and Recreation Office from 9/19/2023 through 10/22/23. Residents were encouraged to collect and drop-off Milkweed seeds. Upon close of drive, Conservation Program staff harvested seeds (we ended up with Common Milkweed pods only) and then hosted two drop-in distribution and seed bomb workshop events at the Mount Agamenticus summit on November 4 and 7. Remaining seed packets and seed bombs were distributed to community members. Some were distributed in person, but most were left in summit Little Free Library for people to take, along with cold stratification and planting instructions. Additional seeds will be planted in flats by Conservation Program staff and distributed as seedlings for spring 2024.

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.

Parks Natural Resource Manager will be presenting to Old York Garden Club in February 2024.

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.

learning_lodge_pollinator1.jpg

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

learning_lodge_pollinator2.jpg

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

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cres_greenteam_monarch_pres.jpg

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

springtime surprises1.jpg

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

Mount Agamenticus Conservation Program continued ongoing educational and outreach efforts via social media accounts to encourage creating and maintaining habitat for all pollinators. Distributed Common Milkweed seeds and printed educational materials at community events in the spring: "Springtime Surprises" with Parks and Recreation on April 1 "Green Team Trash-a-thon/Fun Fest" at Coastal Ridge Elementary on April 14. Mount Agamenticus Outreach and Education Coordinator presented information about pollinator gardens to CRES Green Team on May 3. Mount Agamenticus visitor center includes two pollinator activities: 1. Pollinator tracking at Mount Agamenticus is a tangible introduction to Community Science. 2. Pollinator Garden activity introduces pollinator syndromes and shows how to attract and support pollinators through habitat creation/manipulation.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

Monarch Waystation - Whats Growing.pdf

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

2

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

The attached sign has been displayed at the summit of Mount Agamenticus since 2019. Our parking and restroom project this season meant having to relocate and replant, so this sign will be edited and put up along the trail by our overgrowth area where we will continue planting Milkweeds in the spring along with other native perennials. The plan is to eventually become an official Monarch Waystation through Monarch Watch.

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.

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

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1

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

Discussions have been initiated with the York Parks & Recreation Department to evaluate the parks, fields and other areas that are currently being mowed to identify any locations that could either be left to naturally become native wildflower or early successional areas or could be converted into planted pollinator gardens. This action item will be ongoing.

Reduce or eliminate the use of herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals that are harmful to monarchs and pollinators and urban wildlife.

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

Town of York Selectboard, York Parks & Recreation Dept, and York Conservation Commission

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 use of herbicides and pesticides have been minimized at Mount Agamenticus. Reducing or eliminating the use of all herbicides, pesticides, or other chemicals has been a topic of interest town-wide, but has not yet been discussed at length. There have been some discussion on the use of certain herbicides for invasive plant species removal, but no consensus yet on best management practices.

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?

Coastal Ridge Elementary School "Green Team," Mount Agamenticus Conservation Program

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

48

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

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Mount Agamenticus Outreach and Education Coordinator presented information about pollinator gardens to CRES Green Team on May 3, 2023. The group would like to create a community garden on campus to include pollinator habitat. This is an ongoing effort. Plant number above are those planted at Mount Agamenticus as a continued effort to include Common Milkweed in the summit field habitat.

Launch, expand, or continue one or more ordinances to reduce light pollution to benefit urban wildlife.

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

Town of York Planning Department

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 Town of York has implemented an "Outdoor Lighting" ordinance. The purpose of this ordinance is to: a) Encourage outdoor lighting practices that will minimize light pollution, glare, light trespass and sky glow in order to preserve the night sky, increase safety and prevent lighting nuisances on properties and the public right of way; b) Conserve energy and resources while maintaining nighttime safety, utility, security, and productivity; and c) Curtail the degradation of the nighttime visual environment in order to preserve the visual and natural character of the Town of York. We plan to review the ordinance for its effectiveness in benefitting wildlife in 2024.

Integrate monarch butterfly conservation into the city’s Park Master Plan, Sustainability Plan, Climate Resiliency Plan or other city plans.

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

Town of York Selectboard and Planning Board worked with the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the Climate Action Plan Steering Committee to develop both of these plans in 2022

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

In progress

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Both the Comprehensive and Climate Action Plans address the need to preserve, protect, and enhance all natural resources, including wetlands, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sand dunes, shore lands, scenic vistas, and forests. Managing existing conservation lands and expanding areas of permanently protected land in York is a goal for both plans. We will work with the groups identified to review how monarch butterfly conservation can benefit in 2024.

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.

15

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 Mount Agamenticus Conservation Program primarily utilizes hand pulling; removal methods depend on specific species. The Program's Invasive Species Report is being updated for the 2023 season, but an example from 2019 is available online as a PDF here: https://agamenticus.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Invasive-Species-Report-2019.pdf Furthermore, we are working with the York Conservation Commission in an effort to fundraise and develop an invasive plant managements plan for the Town of York. A state grant and focus parcel have been identified and we hope to continue this endeavor into 2024 and beyond.

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.

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

IMG_20231127_132654.jpg

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

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

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480

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

160

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

Old York Garden Club, Mount Agamenticus Conservation Program, Parks and Recreation

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

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

Mount Agamenticus Conservation Program, Conservation Commission

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 use of native plants, shrubs and trees were discussed and then required for the landscaping component of a construction project at Mount Agamenticus this year. It is our hope that the protocol developed for this project can be used as an example moving forward. We will be working with the local Conservation Commission to assess if this is an action item they would be interested in partnering on with us.

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.

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

Conservation Commission

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

In progress

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

We will be working with the local Conservation Commission to assess if this is an action item they would be interested in partnering on with us.

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