

Town of Barnstable

Barnstable, MA

Town Manager Mark Ells

Pledge Summary

Town of Barnstable is located on Cape Cod, MA. Established in 1639, the Town is home to 50,000 year round residents and sponsors robust conservation programming and land management best practices. Upwards of 150,000 seasonal residents call Barnstable home and the Town hosts over 4 Mil visitors annually. Our Open Space and Parks/Recreational planning are asset number one; we are wholeheartedly committed to native plantings and public education concerning best land management stewardship. Climate resiliency is foremost in our thoughts towards community development and future planning goals with preservation and historical guidance.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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 gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.
- 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.
- 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

- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

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

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Town Manager Mark Ells	2026	1/23/2026	
Town Manager Mark Ells	2025	2/5/2025	Signatories
Town Manager Mark S. Ells	2023	3/30/2023	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 (e.g., 50).

350

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.” (Only allow numerical values.)

100

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).

1.5

Where is your habitat being created? This may include residences (yards, containers, balconies, etc.), schools, places of worship, rights-of-way, roadsides, community gardens, culturally-significant locations, shared public spaces and common areas or parks.

Private residences and commercial/institutional properties plus public right of way and area beach dune restoration.

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

We are engaged in a State program to plant native trees in an EJ designated zone within the urban area of Barnstable, Hyannis village.

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

To green our growth incentive zone and combat heat island effect of development. We also aim to re-populate our natural forest ecosystem with a diversity of native plants for habitat encouragement and water filtration. We are also engaged with a dune replanting and refurbishment for climate and ecosystem protection.

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?

Funding and grants are most needed as we watch public funding for climate sensitive initiatives wane. We are actively engaged with the EJ community for open space and recreational programming in Master Planning projects but need funding for implementation. As well, we are engaged with a public sewer installation across the Town and as we perform construction are presented with opportunities for pocket parks, bioswales and rain gardens. Funding is the number one priority for such projects.

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

We engage extensively with community members for free tree plantings and produced a floating garden this year in a local pond for native species habitat and added vegetative material to assist with eutrophication.

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.)

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

Engage with gardening leaders and partners (e.g., Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Nature Centers, Native Plant Society Chapters , other long-standing and influential community leaders) to support monarch butterfly conservation.

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

Please describe the extent of engagement with these groups and their monarch butterfly conservation efforts.

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.

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.

Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.

Where are the medians, roadsides and public rights-of-way? (Please provide an address or coordinates, if possible, or describe the location)

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted?

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants?

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Initiate or support community science (or citizen science) efforts that help monitor monarch migration and health.

How many estimated individuals participated in your community science effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 150).

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

Please describe the community science program that you supported or initiated. Provide a link to any relevant programs, if possible.

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?

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.

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?

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

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.

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

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?

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

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.

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

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.

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

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

[8_11_25 \(AS\).jpeg](#)

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

[20250609_101506.jpg](#)

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

[8_18_25 \(AS\).jpeg](#)

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

The Floating Garden project at Eagle Pond was a collaboration program between the Barnstable Land Trust, the Jpii High School (cience department) and Town Conservation, Planning and Development departments to design and build a vegetative floating island with native plants to help with pond filtration efforts.

How many plants were planted?

23

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

All materials were community donated: lumber for framing, native plants, labor and transportation to create a 6 X 7 foot frame that floated 15 to 20 feet off the pond edge. Students built the frame alongside local construction firms for guidance and power saw use. Corks as planting medium were secured via local restaurant donation and native plants were sourced and donated with a local nursery contractor. Permitting and public comment of abutters was facilitated with student involvement and students performed

weekly water testing of the system to monitor effectiveness. Barnstable Land Trust was a fantastic partner and advocate of the program. The floating gardens were launched in June and removed in October - a student report is underway.

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?

We are producing a Nature Guideline document for both internal and external public guidance; this will be an addendum to our existing Design Guidelines. Additionally this document stems from our, in progress and on-going, Open Space and Recreation Plan - committee formed. The Barnstable Land Trust, local Conservation stakeholders, Arts and Culture and Historic/Cemetery partners are all active in these discussions.

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.

This in-progress planning report aims to be complete by late fall of 2026. We have completed a draft outline and preliminary stakeholder discussions and engagement plans.

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.

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

[Dune plants.JPG](#)

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

The Town is involved with a sand dune relocation for climate resilience and protection of town asset: parking lot and public amenities at Sandy Neck beach. This grant funded project collaborates with school children for the replanting and habitat restoration of the dune. 10 school classes, both elementary and high school, replanted dune grass and milkweed species as part of the dune relocation scope.

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

There is no mowing program here as it is beach property and engagement is ongoing and robust with multiyear classroom curriculum. Classrooms are engaged with our Natural Resource department and Marine and Environmental Affairs department