Charter Township of Orion

Orion Township, MI

Township Supervisor Chris Barnett

Pledge Summary

Orion Township, Where Living is a Vacation, is a thriving community in Southeast Michigan with an estimated population of 40,000 residents. At 36 square miles, Orion Township is a slice of the best of Michigan's lakes, parks, schools, and communities - boasting more than 4,200 acres of parks and open spaces, including 42 lakes larger than five acres, more than 10 square miles of recreation, and more than 50 miles of safety path and trail ways. By signing the Mayors' Monarch Pledge, Township Supervisor Barnett has committed Orion Township, MI to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators and looks forward to engaging residents in building more pollinator habitats throughout the Township.

Action Items Committed for 2026

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 Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.
- Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- 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.

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.

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- Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.
- Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.
- Plant milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- 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.

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
Township Supervisor Chris Barnett	2026	1/7/2026	
Township Supervisor Chris Barnett	2025	1/14/2025	Leadership Circle
Township Supervisor Chris Barnett	2024	4/1/2024	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.).

300

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.)

120

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.

7

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.

Friendship Park Historic Village, Friendship Park prairie

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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?

Orion Township leverages the Mayors' Monarch Pledge to engage marginalized communities by offering inclusive, accessible educational opportunities and conservation resources throughout the year. The Township hosts a variety of community-wide events that are open to residents of all backgrounds and abilities. These events provide opportunities to connect with residents through informational booths, conservation education, and free native seed giveaways. Our programs are designed with inclusivity and accessibility in mind, ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to participate in local conservation efforts, regardless of their background or experience. We utilize multiple outreach methods, including social media, in-person engagement, and the Township's Orion Living magazine, to share information and reach as many residents as possible. By offering free resources and engaging residents through a variety of communication channels, we strive to reduce barriers to participation and encourage all members of our community to take an active role in monarch conservation.

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

Orion Township takes pride in recognizing the importance of conservation efforts like the Mayors Monarch Pledge. Efforts like this provide ecological and educational benefits to our community we’re proud to take part in. We aim to continue working on the Mayors Monarch Pledge because we understand that conservation is a continuous effort deserving of the necessary time and resources to uphold our ecosystem integrity.

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 webinar series is helpful in keeping our knowledge of pollinator issues up to date, though we would like to see information packets, brochures, or rack cards to have for our residents. When we host outreach events, it’s hard to touch on every topic we’d like to so something to hand off that’ll expand on some of the ideas we touch on in these conversations would be very helpful.

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

We have remained committed to expanding our efforts in habitat restoration through invasive species removal, interseeding, developing native gardens, in person outreach efforts, and good land management practices like prescribed burns. We plan to remain committed to the Mayors Monarch Pledge and strive to complete more action items every year.

Selected Action Items

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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.

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.

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

Create a community art project to enhance and promote monarch and pollinator conservation as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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

How many individuals were engaged in this effort? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only, e.g. 50).

Please describe the community art project that was implemented in your community and how it contributed to cultural awareness and recognition (e.g., number of art installations, type of art).

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:

01/07/2026

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

Proclamation Mayors' Monarch Pledge Day

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

01.07.26 Proclamation - Mayors Monacrch Pledge.pdf

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Facilitate or support a milkweed seed collection and propagation effort.

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

1

What species were collected or propagated?

Common Milkweed Asclepias syriaca Swamp Milkweed Asclepias incarnata

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

N/A

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

Seeds were collected at Heritage Pocket Park and Township Hall where a fair amount of milkweed grows. Swamp Milkweed is found at Heritage Park and Common Milkweed is found at Township Hall. Seeds were processed and subsequently spread in areas we're working on habitat restoration for tall and short grass prairies.

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

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_0315.JPG

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

IMG_0318.JPG

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

WildType Receipt.pdf

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

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Park entrance ways along main roads. Friendship Park (3380 Clarkston Rd. Lake Orion, MI) and Camp Agawam (1301 Clarkston Rd. Lake Orion, MI) main entrance landscape beds were planted with Butterfly Weed and other native, nectar producing plants.

How many milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants were planted? (Enter WHOLE NUMBERS only)

1349

What is the total acreage of median and public right-of-way that has been planted with milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

0.2

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

First year regular watering and follow up weeding, after first year, water as needed. There will be cut backs and garden bed maintenance every spring.

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.

01.07.26 Proclamation - Mayors Monacrch Pledge.pdf

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

Green Up - Instagram.jpg

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

Orion Green Up.png

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.

Screenshot 2026-11-04 134124.png

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Screenshot 2026-11-04 134157.png

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

Screenshot 2026-11-04 134248.png

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

Screenshot 2026-11-04 144130.png

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

Outreach.jpg

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

Communication was largely done through online outreach, physical media, and in person communication efforts. Facebook and Instagram posts, Orion Living magazine, issued proclamation, and in-person outreach.

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.

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

Master Gardner Application.pdf

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

Potentially 1 organization, we're waiting to hear back from the master gardener program

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

We have submitted an application asking for assistance with all the native plant garden beds we've worked on this year. We have yet to hear back so the application is the extent of our communication. "Volunteers are committed to improving the quality of life through horticulture-based service, environmental stewardship, food-security initiatives and community beautification efforts across the state."

Engage with Homeowners Associations (HOAs), Community Associations or neighborhood organizations to identify opportunities to plant monarch gardens and revise maintenance and mowing programs.

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

Screenshot 2026-11-04 144130.png

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

20 different HOA's in Orion Township participated at the Orion HOA forum on 10/08/26.

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

The Parks and Recreation department engaged with these groups in two ways. The first being an informational booth prior to the presentation in which the Natural Resources Specialist engaged with HOA members on an individual level and explained the importance of planting native pollinator species, invasive species management, and when to look out for native seed giveaways in the coming year among other things. The second was a brief presentation on the Township's ongoing conservation efforts, accomplishments, and why members should engage in our programs like the Mayor's Monarch Pledge.

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.

Orion Green Up.png

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

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OrionTownshipCBCW.Outreach 2.jpg

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

IMG_8863.jpg

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

110

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

280

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

Orion Township Parks: "Green Up", "Summer Sizzle", "Big Rig Gig"

Convert vacant lots to monarch habitat.

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.

Orion Township Parks - IN45177.pdf

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

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IMG_0315.JPG

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

IMG_0318.JPG

Where is the monarch habitat located? (Please provide an address, if possible)

Friendship Park, 3380 W Clarkston Rd, Lake Orion, MI 48362

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

Orion Township Parks and Recreation, America in Bloom

What is the total acreage of land that has been converted? Please limit your answer to only the number of acres in the answer field below (e.g., 2 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.

7

How many lots were converted to monarch habitat? Please limit your answer to only the number of lots in the answer field below (e.g., 3)

10

Please describe when the lots were converted to monarch habitat and the planned maintenance schedule.

This year, Orion Township received a grant from America in Bloom for a revitalization project, during which lots were converted In the Spring through the Summer and into Fall of 2026. The largest lot is separate from this grant funding and will be in progress for the foreseeable future. We had a prescribed burn at our prairie restoration area at Friendship Park which we then interseeded with native species, some of which meant to be a cover crop to out compete the less desired non-native species. Maintenance wise, we're still developing a timeline for the largest unit with lots of invasive species treatments planned and prescribed burns annually. This year, Orion Township spent $4118.32 on native plugs, and $1,141.50 on native seed for ongoing prairie restoration efforts and bid out a contract for the rest of the beds, Units 1-9. For the smaller lots, we're currently trying to partner with the master gardeners program for maintenance, weeding, watering, and pruning. Otherwise, a majority of the maintenance is done by parks staff with direction from the Natural Resources Specialist.

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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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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)

Demonstration gardens are located at Orion Recreation Center and Heritage Park. 3800 S Baldwin Rd, Lake Orion, MI 48359 & 2323 Joslyn Rd, Lake Orion, MI 48360 - Both locations are proudly displayed in locally significant areas. Residents are frequent users of both the Orion Recreation Center and Heritage park but for completely different reasons. At Heritage Park, people expect to find pollinators. Conversely, at the rec center, we've created pollinator gardens in what otherwise would be a parking lot. Considering the significance of the Recreation Center to the township, this offers a large amount of people to be exposed to monarchs, when they otherwise might not have. While we cannot restore this area to its former state, we can provide a small but significant plot for pollinators such as the Monarch Butterfly.

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

N/A

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.

0.27

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.

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IMG_0309.JPG

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

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WildType Receipt.pdf

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map_20260926.png

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

IMG_0757.JPG

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

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

Orion Township Parks and Recreation, America in Bloom

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

1391

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

New native garden beds have been added to Friendship Park around the Wedding Gazebo and Friendship Historic Village. Plugs were purchased and installed by parks staff throughout the year. All are native species, but not all were local genomes. Funding for the development of more native garden beds was provided through the America in Bloom

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grant, but preparation of beds funded by America in Bloom prior to planting was coordinated and completed by township staff. Maintenance of previously installed garden beds was conducted throughout the year with cutting back old stems in the spring and regular weeding throughout the season.

Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

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_7107.jpeg

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

IMG_0758.JPG

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants? Note: 1 acre = roughly the size of a football field.

21.47

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.

During the spring, invasive species treatment areas were assessed, and treatment plans were developed. Largely garlic mustard, common buckthorn, glossy buckthorn, tree of heaven, and phragmites. During the spring and into early summer, we hosted an invasive species removal event, where volunteers and work staff removed garlic mustard throughout Camp Agawam, one of the township's properties. We also had an Eagle Scout project work with our staff on another event where scouts and other volunteers worked to remove buckthorn in Friendship Park. After these events, we prioritized areas new native beds would be installed prior to contracting out the phragmites treatments. Utilized techniques and herbicides approved by MDARD and PennState treatment guides. Techniques used were cut stump, hack and squirt, foliar spray, and mechanical removal.

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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Heritage Signage 1.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 2.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 3.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 4.JPG

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Heritage Signage 5.JPG

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Heritage Signage 6.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 7.JPG

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Heritage Signage 8.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 9.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 10.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 11.JPG

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Heritage Signage 12.JPG

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Heritage Signage 13.JPG

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Heritage Signage 14.JPG

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Heritage Signage 15.JPG

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Heritage Signage 16.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 17.JPG

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

Heritage Signage 18.JPG

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

ORC Pollinator Garden 1.jpg

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

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ORC Pollinator Garden 2.JPG

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

20

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

Signs are located at Heritage Park and Orion Recreation Center. Educational signs at Heritage Park display species common and scientific names within the garden. Educational signs at Orion Recreation center describe a native planting site and includes a QR code with more information on native plantings, "This area has been planted with native wildflowers and grasses, providing diverse habitat for pollinators, birds, and wildlife.".

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