Town of Arlington

Arlington, MA

Town Manager James Feeney

Pledge Summary

The Town of Arlington is a community of approx. 50,000 located west of Boston, Massachusetts. The Town is a leader in mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects, and has a proud tradition of environmentalism.

Action Items Committed for 2025

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 milkweed and pollinator-friendly native nectar plants along roadsides, medians, or public rights-of-way.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Systems Change

- 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 James Feeney	2025	4/30/2025	Signatories

Action Items

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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.).

100

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.)

10

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.

0.01

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 Town helps residents convert yard space through its Sustainable Landscape Handbook. Volunteers maintain publicly owned open spaces and the Town maintains green infrastructure within the right of way.

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

Arlington regularly engages with low-income and POC residents in its planning procedures. Many of the Town's Pledge commitments come from previously vetted planning processes.

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

Arlington is a regional leader on environmental issues; the Pledge formalizes the Town's commitment.

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?

Knowing more about the available resources would be useful

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

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The Town has institutionalized many practices and we employ the community in achieving them. Very often, the community leads and the Town formalizes their efforts.

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 24, 2025

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

Town of Arlington Public Commitment to Monarch Pledge

Upload a copy of your proclamation.

Monarch Press Release.docx

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).

Arlington's Sustainable Landscape Handbook provides guidance on ecological and pollinator-friendly landscaping practices, from a wholesale redesign to simple techniques for providing habitat. Hundreds of homeowners have committed to the pledge to implement the practices on their properties. Information about the program can be found here: https://www.arlingtonma.gov/Home/Components/News/News/12848/2651?backlist=%252Fdepartments%252Fplanning-community-development

Host or support a native seed or plant sale, giveaway or swap.

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

30

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

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100

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

Arlington Garden Club

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)

Data were tracked for four sites, a subset of the total Town-supported activities. Two sites are in bioswales on Egerton Road while two are located along the Minuteman Bikeway, one at the Ryder Street entrance and the other at the Bow/Frazer Street entrance.

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

60

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.

0.05

Please describe the maintenance schedule for these planted areas.

Bikeway planting areas are managed for invasives monthly, have protective fencing installed for rabbit deterrence, and have a regular watering schedule dictated by the rain. The bioswales are professionally managed as well as by volunteers, with monthly monitoring and upkeep, as well as seasonal.

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.

226

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.

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The Town performs aquatic management of invasive species across 220 acres. This is a mix of manual removal (water chestnut harvesting) and chemical (algaecide, herbicides). Volunteers, supported by the Town, manage another 6 acres, approximately, purely with mechanical methods.

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?

Arlington Conservation Commission, Park & Recreation Commission, Open Space Committee, Sustainable Arlington, Arlington MA Invasives, Mystic River Watershed Association, Mass. Pollinator Network, Charles/Mystic Pollinator Pathway, others

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's Master Plan, Open Space and Recreation Plan, Public Land Management Plan, and many other documents already include such criteria. An update to the Master Plan is ongoing, as is one for the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Both will reflect the priorities expressed in other Town plans, including support for the habitats monarchs rely on. Both are expected to be completed in the coming calendar year. A native planting bylaw for public lands is in the works, to be voted on in April at Town Meeting.

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