

City of Crystal Lake

Crystal Lake, IL

Mayor Haig Haleblian

Pledge Summary

The City of Crystal Lake is located in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, IL with a population of over 40,000 residents. Crystal Lake is home to two public lakes, multiple public parks, and community gardens. Mayor Haleblian has committed to saving the monarch butterfly and other pollinators with the signing of the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. The City of Crystal Lake looks forward to engaging with residents in building more pollinator habitats in the City.

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

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.
- Launch, expand, or continue an invasive species removal program that will support the re-establishment of native habitat for monarch butterflies and other pollinators.
- Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.
- Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

Systems Change

- 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
Mayor Haig Haleblian	2026	1/22/2026	
Mayor Haig Haleblian	2025	3/6/2025	Leadership Circle
Mayor Haig Haleblian	2024	3/13/2024	Signatories
Mayor Haig Haleblian	2023	2/17/2023	Leadership Circle
Mayor Haig Haleblian	2022	12/22/2021	Signatories
Mayor Haig Haleblian	2021	3/31/2021	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).

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." (Only allow numerical values.)

900 youths, 3,100 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).

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.

Rights-of-way, community gardens, City-owned properties, and shared public spaces.

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

The City has not focused on engaging only one group of people in the City, but all community members. Through publication of information on social media, partnership with the local park district, partnerships with local schools, and involvement at public events, a wide range of the City has had a chance to interact with the City's program.

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

Crystal Lake aims to be a good steward of the environment, and understands the important role that monarch butterflies and other pollinators play in the ecosystem. We continue these programs as we understand that success is not a one year endeavor, but the culmination of many years of effort.

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?

We have found that social media is a very helpful tool to help meet our goals. Something that could improve this would be materials and resources created by the NWF that can be shared across all of social media. To help with equitable engagement, market materials should be useable in both electronic and print mediums.

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

Over the past year, the City has expanded its action item goals under the Mayors Monarch Pledge. The City has taken a long-term approach to accomplish action items over multiple years. For example, efforts to create or enhance a pollinator garden in front of City Hall, we have engaged in a new dialog between our Public Works Department and local community gardening groups. This has improved the use of items like pesticides in surrounding areas to reduce any negative impacts on pollinator habitat.

Selected Action Items

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

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

[2030 Comp Plan chapter 11 .pdf](#)

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

Sustainability Committee, Engineering Staff, the Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Commission

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

Complete, Ongoing Review

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.

The City's 2030 Comprehensive Plan was originally created in 2012.

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

The City's Engineering Staff reviews the plan annually to evaluate progress and future goals.

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.

[IMG_3036.JPG](#)

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

To encourage the planting of monarch gardens in the City, the City's Sustainability Committee has been communicating with residents at public events on how to plant native plants on their property. Conversations with members of the community at these events covered the topics of planting milkweed and other native plants, along with how community members can create, grow, and maintain monarch gardens at their houses. These communication efforts also involved the gifting of native seed plant packets to event participants.

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.

Members of the City's Sustainability Committee bring a plethora of connections to community garden groups in the City. Since the City accepted the Mayor's Monarch Pledge, Sustainability Committee members have increased the focus of their conversations and discussions with community groups on the importance of planting native milkweed and nectar producing plants.

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

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

[2023 Mayors.png](#)

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

The City partnered with local classrooms and the Crystal Lake Parks District.

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

300

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).

Beginning with our Community "Johnny Appleseed" event that occurs in the fall, the Sustainability Committee handed out monarch butterfly coloring sheets and seed packets. These sheets contained information about the migration routes that monarch butterflies fly. All coloring sheets were then asked to be turned into City Hall as a part of a large display. Children submitted approximately 300 butterflies which were used to create a hanging display that will be featured at City Hall for one month. Next to the display is information about monarchs and other pollinators.

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.

[Johnny Appleseed Table.jpg](#)

How many plants were sold and/or given away at your event?

400

How many people attended your event?

2000

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

The City worked with members of the Xerces Organization, McHenry County, Crystal Lake Park District, and the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County.

Plant or maintain a monarch and pollinator-friendly demonstration garden at City Hall or another prominent or culturally significant community location.

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 City's pollinator garden is located in front of the Crystal Lake City Hall, 100 W. Woodstock Street, Crystal Lake, IL.

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

We have partnered with the Wildlife Preservation & Propagation Committee for the maintenance of the space.

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.

0.5

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.

[2013-08-08 06.30.36.jpg](#)

What is the total acreage of land treated to remove invasive plants?

Over 12 acres.

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.

In 2022, the City accomplished the action item that called for removing Milkweed from the City Code's prohibited plant list. This change was incorporated into the natural areas maintenance plan overseen by the City's ecological management provider. The City, along

with the Sustainability Committee, are continuing to assess the plants originally determined to be invasive, and monitoring for new invasive plants.

Host or support a monarch butterfly festival that is accessible to all residents in the community and promotes monarch and pollinator conservation, as well as cultural awareness and recognition.

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

[Monarchs and Music.png](#)

How many estimated individuals attended the event? Please limit your answer to only the number of individuals reached in the answer field (e.g., 500)

300

What was the date of your festival?

May 6, 2023

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

The Downtown Crystal Lake Main Street Association

Please describe the details of your monarch butterfly festival and how you ensured the event was accessible by all residents in the community (e.g., events, length, notable successes, outreach, location).

The Downtown Crystal Lake Main Street Association held their annual butterfly festival at a public park. The City's Sustainability Committee provided pollinator seed packets and information regarding pollinators to event attendees. The event was marketed by the City in the monthly newsletter and on social media, and the park was accessible to all community members to participate.

Display educational signage at monarch gardens and pollinator habitat.

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

[Colors and Butterfly.jpg](#)

How many garden signs are being displayed and where are they located?

1

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

The City has installed a sign in front of the monarch garden in front of City Hall. Our sign contains a QR code that can be scanned and will direct the scanner to information on what pollinators are, and what goes into making a pollinator garden. This is stage one for our QR code sign. The next stage will be adding a third page to the link with a map of what is in the garden, and a fourth page that shows other pollinator gardens, rain gardens, and bio-swales in the community.

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?

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources

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 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.

In Progress

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

This action item will have no exact completion date, and will remain an ongoing action item for the foreseeable future. Following internal review of our City policy, we found that milkweed had been listed as a noxious plant that was being removing from City property. Since the review, the City has removed milkweed from the prohibited list and the City is actively encouraging the planting of milkweed, along with native nectar plants, across the City.