

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 roughly 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 2024

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

Program and Demonstration Gardens

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

Past Pledge Archive

Mayor Name	Program Year	Pledge Date	Achievement
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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.)

500

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).

3

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.

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

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

As a municipality, the City of Crystal Lake has not focused on engaging only one group of people in the City, but all community members. The City utilizes different forms of communication and coordinates with our local partners to help reach all members of our community. The City of Crystal Lake has resources on our website which lead to partners in our community that have information in different languages. The City also participates in free events and helps to spread the Mayors' Monarch Pledge at these events.

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

The City of Crystal Lake aims to be a good steward to 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 conservation is not a one year endeavor, but a continuous effort to make the earth sustainable for the future.

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 City utilizes social media, the City website and newsletters as a resource to help meet our goals. The City would like to continue building on our relationships with other organizations in our community to further sustainability efforts in conserving the monarch butterflies.

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

Over the past year, the City has continued efforts to achieve the Leadership Circle designation for the Mayors' Monarch Pledge. The City is continuing to work with local garden groups and the City's Public Works Department to identify areas for the expansion of native planting areas, which will result limiting the use of mowing.

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.)

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

[July 2024 Newsletter.png](#)

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

[Website 1.png](#)

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

[National Butterfly Post.jpg](#)

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

The City of Crystal Lake provides public communication to residents through the monthly newsletters, social media, and information on the City website.

Engage with community garden groups and urge them to plant native milkweeds and nectar-producing plants.

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

[Engaging Local Gardening Groups 1.pdf](#)

Please describe the groups you engaged with and how you engaged with these groups below.

The City of Crystal Lake works numerous community groups to encourage the planting of native plants. Some of these groups include the Countryside Garden Club, the Wildflower Preservation & Propagation Committee, the Land Conservancy of McHenry County, the Crystal Lake Park District, and the School Districts.

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.

[HOA Letter.pdf](#)

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

The City sent letters to about 10 homeowners associations. The City has been informed that organizations are interested in making a change but did not receive any feedback on a course of action thus far. The City will be looking for changes to occur in 2025.

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

The City encouraged the homeowners associations to visit community workshops, attend a Crystal Lake sustainability Committee meeting, initiate planting projects, and partner with local experts. A draft of the letter sent to the HOA's is attached. The Crystal Lake Sustainability Committee also had Committee members actively engaging with homeowners associations. The City is hoping to see changes to the Homeowners Associations current practices by 2025.

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 1.JPG](#)

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

[Johnny Appleseed 2.JPG](#)

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

[Johnny Appleseed 3.JPG](#)

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

100

How many people attended your event?

2500

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

The Downtown Crystal Lake Association and the Land Conservancy of McHenry County

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.

[Garden.JPG](#)

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

[Triangle Garden.JPG](#)

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

3

How many plants were planted?

50

Please describe your effort in completing this action.

The City works with different organizations throughout to Community to help maintain plants in Community Gardens. The City has three community gardens that are maintained. The City also worked with a school this year to plant left over milkweed plants in the schools garden.

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?

3

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 City is continuing efforts to change the municipal planting ordinances and practices to include more native milkweed and native nectar producing plants at City properties. The City currently plants milkweed and native nectar producing plants at community gardens and other public spaces, but no ordinance has been passed at this time. The City is buying vacant properties with the intent to keep the land native and help with drainage issues. The City is working on having an ordinance by the spring of 2025.

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?

3

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 City is continuing its efforts of increasing the percentage of native plants, shrubs, and trees that must be used in City landscaping ordinances. While the City has made efforts by planting additional native plants, there has not been an ordinance change thus far. The City allows for residents to submit permits to plant native gardens in the rights-of-way to encourage native plants. The process of the ordinance change is on-going and hopes to have this change in early 2025.