

June 2014 GreenStep City Notable Actions

Cumulative: 2010 – 2014

Program-wide Facts and Evaluation Notables

- ❖ **33% of the state's population** resides in the 69 GreenStep cities
- ❖ **21 cities have either joined the program or advanced** one recognition step in the past year
- ❖ **1688 actions have been completed** and reported through the GreenStep program web site since 2010

- ❖ **GreenStep cities are located in all** regions of the state
- ❖ **GreenStep cities range from** Milan, population 326, to Rochester, population 107,000
- ❖ **Just over half** of the 69 GreenStep cities are in the Twin Cities metro area
- ❖ **Half** of the cities in the Regional Council of Mayors are GreenStep cities

- ❖ **GreenStep cities skew younger**, with a higher proportion of 15-34 year olds
- ❖ **Politically, GreenStep city residents lean** Republican, Democratic and Independent just like the average MN city
- ❖ **GreenStep cities had a one percentage point lower unemployment** rate during the Great Recession, compared to the average MN city
- ❖ **35% of the state's 545 Energy Star buildings** are in GreenStep cities (192 commercial buildings as of May 2013)

- ❖ **GreenStep cities are motivated by** cost savings, peer recognition and the program's sustainability framework
- ❖ **GreenStep cities' achievements are generally driven by** a strong internal city organizational culture, which includes citizen commissions
- ❖ **The Preservation Alliance of MN** and its MainStreet MN program joined the GreenStep Cities Program Partnership in 2014

2010 - 2014 Notables

APPLE VALLEY

- ✓ First BRT (bus rapid transit) system in MN.
- ✓ Longstanding recognition of business waste reduction via the ARROW program

AUSTIN

- ✓ Bi-monthly home energy reports included in the utility bill with customized energy saving advice.
- ✓ Recognized as a Tree City USA for 34 years.
- ✓ Austin Utilities currently offers an extensive rebate program promoting the purchase of Energy Star and Water Sense appliances.
- ✓ Waste water plant saves energy by biodigesting waste to produce needed heat and electricity.

BEMIDJI

- ✓ Bemidji was recognized by the League of American Bicyclists as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the Bronze level in October of 2012.
- ✓ NiceRide bike-sharing service launches summer 2014
- ✓ Sustainability Committee reports their initiatives to the city council on a quarterly basis

- ✓ Sustainable Tuesdays offers free weekly learning opportunities to the public, in partnership program with the Indigenous Environmental Network, the Minnesota GreenCorps, the Rail River Folk School, and Bemidji State University's Sustainability Office.

BURNSVILLE

- ✓ First city sustainability plan in Minnesota.
- ✓ 17% cut in greenhouse gases from city operations: 2005-2014
- ✓ Established an Energy Efficiency Fund to match rebates and purchase energy efficient products with longer payback periods.
- ✓ Heart of the City redeveloped a former large format commercial area in a mixed use commercial and residential area
- ✓ Uses stormwater to irrigate several parks and converted four acres of turf grass to native grass.
- ✓ Adopted a Sustainable Infrastructure Policy that to review and consider sustainability features for infrastructure projects.

COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

- ✓ Grading permit required for sites over 5,000 sq ft

COON RAPIDS

- ✓ Activity Impact Measurement tool assures city values and sustainability are reflected in city decision-making

COTTAGE GROVE

- ✓ New Public Safety/City Hall building has daylighting sensors and Sage electrochromic glass to reduce energy consumption

DELANO

- ✓ Park and Ride lot will allow users to gather and to carpool to surrounding areas

EAGAN

- ✓ Reduced parks' mowed area by 10%
- ✓ Nation's first Green Globes-certified fire station

EDEN PRAIRIE

- ✓ Fuel misers committee challenges city employees to cut costs
- ✓ Participant in the National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation
- ✓ 8-acre Green Path-certified neighborhood under development
- ✓ Town center design guide and streetscape details shape quality private development
- ✓ On target to achieve 40% fuel efficiency savings of the city fleet by the end of 2015
- ✓ Participating in the PACE financing program for renewable energy with the St. Paul Port Authority
- ✓ Adopted a very thorough bee-keeping application for residents

EDINA

- ✓ First commercial PACE (property assessed clean energy) program in MN, recognized by Environmental Initiative with a 2012 award.
- ✓ Community greenhouse gas reduction goal of 15% by 2015 from 2007 baseline
- ✓ 2013 living streets policy adopted = complete streets + green streets
- ✓ National sustainable infrastructure tool Envision used for street reconstruction project

ELK RIVER

- ✓ First MN city to replace all traffic signals with cost-saving LED lights.

- ✓ Renewables account for about 20% of energy used by city operations
- ✓ Recognizes business excellence under its Energy City High Five award program

FALCON HEIGHTS

- ✓ Residents entered into a quarterly drawing for a prize to reward frequent shopping at local businesses

GRAND RAPIDS

- ✓ Recognized by the Blue Star Award program as one of the leading cities in the state taking action to protect water resources through stormwater management.
- ✓ Public Library heating supplied from waste water production at the Blandin paper mill, reducing natural gas use by nearly 70%.

HOFFMAN

- ✓ The local Lions Club ordered 672 trees, one for each resident

HOPKINS

- ✓ 2012 forestry budget of \$210,000 well-exceeds Tree City USA minimum

LA PRAIRIE

- ✓ City is a member of the Iron Range Economic Alliance
- ✓ Waste management and recycling changes have increased recycling by 80%
- ✓ Community improved recycling by an estimated 80%, expanded items that can be recycled and implemented volume-based pricing

LAKE CRYSTAL

- ✓ Renewables account for about 15% of energy used by city operations
- ✓ 0% interest business loans for energy efficiency improvements

LAKE ELMO

- ✓ 10% and 5% density bonus given to planned unit developments that preserve historic structures and adaptively reuse buildings
- ✓ City includes an agricultural zoning district
- ✓ Established over 20 nationally recognized open space preservation developments, partnering with the MN Land Trust to purchase large conservation easements

MAHTOMEDI

- ✓ Participates in the area chamber of commerce program "Doing Our Part, Saving the Lake"

MANKATO

- ✓ LED street lighting saving \$19,000 annually
- ✓ LED traffic signals saving \$50,000 annually
- ✓ City's water reclamation facility has reduced deep well water use by 50%. Between 1.5 and 2 million gallons of treated wastewater is being used by the Mankato Energy Center for cooling, which saves the city nearly 700 million gallons of water annually (about as much water as a population of 18,000 might use) and has significantly reduced phosphorous levels. Reused water is also used for activities like street sweeping, park irrigation, and sold (at \$2.50/750 gal.) to landscapers and others for reuse.
- ✓ Urban Design Guidelines created for downtown and for gateways into the city
- ✓ Orderly annexation agreements with townships limit or prohibit new urban development so as to allow for planned and most efficient infrastructure investments
- ✓ Downtown density bonuses have catalyzed commercial and residential development

- ✓ Adopted a Highway Gateway Overlay District to guide and improve quality of development
- ✓ Implements a neighborhood traffic calming program
- ✓ Honorable mention as a Bicycle-Friendly Community in 2011; required bike parking for new commercial and multi-unit residential that can cut required car stalls
- ✓ Parking lot requirements for shade trees every 50 feet along perimeter
- ✓ Stormwater infiltration-to-sanitary sewer inspection required upon property transfer
- ✓ Annual State-of-the-City report outlines progress on –year strategic plan
- ✓ Participating in the PACE financing program for renewable energy with the St. Paul Port Authority
- ✓ Staff has adopted policy that gardens in residential areas have no requirement for setback and no maximum lot coverage for garden areas.

MAPLE GROVE

- ✓ Government Center uses a closed loop geothermal system that utilizes groundwater ponds dug in a gravel mining area.
- ✓ Grant money for new construction homes that achieve an energy efficiency (HERS) rating of 40 or below
- ✓ Town Center area along Main Street - Arbor Lakes – includes retail and office uses vertically mixed
- ✓ City council has chartered a Lake Quality Commission
- ✓ Created a renewable energy financing (PACE) district covering the city
- ✓ City contributes staff time to assist with the farmer’s market

MAPLEWOOD

- ✓ First city in 20 years to shift to organized residential waste collection, estimated to save residents approximately \$1 million per year and to save the city money spent on excessive road wear and tear.
- ✓ Saved over \$100,000 by using living streets design in a street reconstruction project
- ✓ International Green Construction Code governs commercial renovation projects that require city regulatory approval
- ✓ For all of Maplewood's street reconstruction projects, the City installs rain gardens; there exist over 620 home rain gardens and over 60 rain gardens on city land
- ✓ City covers 50% or \$100 of any street shade tree purchased by a resident
- ✓ One of the city's naturalists also works as the community garden coordinator for all city community gardens
- ✓ Adopted “Living Streets” policy addressing rain gardens, traffic calming, improved walking and biking conditions, and boulevard tree standards.

MARSHALL

- ✓ Over 70 WaterSense toilet rebates given out since 2010; over 2,600 low flow shower heads distributed
- ✓ Renewable energy supplies 32% of total purchases by the City of Marshall
- ✓ \$100,000 in local dollars sold annually, redeemable at over 380 local businesses
- ✓ Launched Marshall GreenStep Business program to recognize local businesses implementing sustainability best practices

MILAN

- ✓ First rural MN year-round community-supported lettuce business.

MINNETONKA

- ✓ Development limitations in I-39 corridor based on p.m. peak hour trip generation
- ✓ Tree replacement required for removal of trees 20 ft or more beyond a building

MOUNTAIN IRON

- ✓ Rebates provided as an incentive to purchase Energy Star appliances and lighting
- ✓ Adopted a green streets policy in 2013

- ✓ Renewable and Sustainable Energy Park created to cluster and develop green companies that specialize in renewable energy

NEWPORT

- ✓ Excellent communication to residents on utility rates, zoning codes, business resources and completed GreenStep actions
- ✓ Parking maximums and minimums established; shared parking allowed
- ✓ 30% city tree canopy calculated using iTree software
- ✓ Prizes given out to residents for local shopping, using a punchcard
- ✓ Adopted Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Guidelines addressing recycled paper products, energy and water efficient products, fuel efficient vehicles, and printing services.

NORTH ST PAUL

- ✓ The city's Comprehensive Plan Vision, Living Streets Vision and other redevelopment infrastructure plans make a holistic master plan for downtown redevelopment
 - Converted half of the city's street lights to LED technology, with plans to convert the remainder in 2013.
- ✓ Partnering with the University of Minnesota Resilient Communities Project to advance sustainability projects in the city over a year.

NORTHFIELD

- ✓ First Transition Town effort in MN, involving alumni of the Blandin Community Leadership Program.
- ✓ Priority growth areas and an urban growth boundary established
- ✓ Nationally recognized complete streets policy
- ✓ One police officer, now retired lost over 50 lbs of weight by volunteering to be on the city's bike patrol

OAKDALE

- ✓ New construction or major remodel of a city facility is required to be built using Oakdale's own Generation Green building program standards
- ✓ Oakdale Environmental Commission updates its Generation Green Sustainability Plan annually, which addresses energy, water, transportation, waste, health and food, open space and urban forests; includes greenhouse gas reduction goals for city operations
- ✓ City building upgrades save over \$18,000 each year: new geothermal heating and cooling system and energy-efficient lighting for the public works building, an energy-saving rooftop air conditioner, new boilers, and solar panels for city hall.
- ✓ Permit fee reduction and expedited plan review for private buildings built to city green building or LEED standards
- ✓ Adopted mixed use design standards
- ✓ Engineering Design Guidelines for stormwater installations
- ✓ A connection required to existing trail infrastructure as part of subdivision approval
- ✓ City staff person assigned as the farmers market manager
- ✓ City staff encouraged to proposed energy saving ideas to an Innovation Committee. Staff who submit actions that are implemented city-wide are rewarded with a gift card.

PINE RIVER

- ✓ First GreenStep City and home to first hot air panels paid for by low-income heating assistance.

RED WING

- ✓ 1987-2010 electricity & natural gas savings of \$365,000 in city buildings due to energy efficiency upgrades
- ✓ Comp plan has broad energy independence goals
- ✓ Industrial pre-treatment program for businesses keeps sewer rates lower; 1 water reuse system in the city

- ✓ Higher density development encouraged in highway access management study
- ✓ No-smoking policy adopted for public housing units
 - Waives parking requirements in the Central Business District and allows for shared parking in all other developments.

ROCHESTER

- ✓ Refuse-derived combined heat & power district energy system in the city
- ✓ Public utility runs a Conserve & Save Water Rebate program
- ✓ A cooperative agreement among townships, the County and the city coordinates zoning enforcement and planning; an urban growth boundary adopted
- ✓ A road diet street project converted 4 traffic lanes to 3 and includes bike lanes, parking, bumpouts, trees, sidewalks, permeable pavement and stormwater capture
- ✓ School buses optimize routes and cost savings using Transfinder software
- ✓ Building orientation incentivized to optimize passive solar energy
- ✓ Commuter plan is to shift single-occupancy car trips from 71% of all downtown-bound work trips in 2008 to 60% in 2020
- ✓ Working in older township subdivision with small lots to construct a cluster septic system
- ✓ Regulation for construction sites to separate recyclable materials and waste
- ✓ MN Bio Business Center project, built on a former downtown parking lot with contaminated soil, supported brownfield remediation, redevelopment, and serves as a center for innovation in biotechnology

ROGERS

- ✓ at least one tree and landscape island required for every 12 parking spots in all parking lots

ROSEMOUNT

- ✓ Energy conservation addressed in city's planned unit development ordinance
- ✓ Cluster development allows at least 50% of the developable land to be permanently protected
- ✓ Point-of-sale compliance check required for septic systems
- ✓ Community gardens at public parks
- ✓ First city in MN to participate in the national STAR community rating system

ROYALTON

- ✓ 3 rain gardens be installed to handle the storm water runoff from new school parking lot
- ✓ Outdoor wood boilers regulated

ST. ANTHONY

- ✓ First MN multi-source parkland watering system (stormwater and filter backwash from drinking water plant) that reduces groundwater draws by 7 million gal./yr.
- ✓ 95 contiguous months of city building energy tracking data available for analysis to pinpoint the most cost-effective energy conservation improvements
- ✓ City has a Vital Aging Committee
- ✓ Silver Lake Village redevelopment incorporated transit as a major element
- ✓ Recycled-content materials considered as equals to virgin consumer products

ST. CLOUD

- ✓ St. Cloud State campus bike-share service established
- ✓ Nation's first public bus powered by recycled vegetable oil @ \$2.30/gal.
- ✓ Design standards adopted for rain gardens, green roofs, and green parking lots
- ✓ St. Cloud Area Sustainability Plan adopted
- ✓ St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce operates a Shop Local, Eat Local, Invest Local, Stay Local program

ST. LOUIS PARK

- ✓ City matches 50% of the utility rebates for energy efficient furnaces & other energy improvements
- ✓ Traffic management plans prepared by owners may require shared parking, ridesharing, bike/ped/transit incentive programs, variable work hours, flex-time, other SOV-reduction measures
- ✓ Thresholds for erosion control permits: 50 cubic yards or 500 square feet of site disturbance
- ✓ Developing a comprehensive city-wide system of trails and sidewalks via an initiative, "Connect the Park!"
- ✓ Developed design guidelines, addressing zoning changings, stormwater, traffic and green spaces for the Beltline, a mixed use area on the Southwest Light Rail line.

SAUK RAPIDS

- ✓ All new private parking lot lighting must be dark sky compliant
- ✓ Infill design standards for residential and downtown areas

SHOREVIEW

- ✓ Environmental Quality Commission reviews all new development plans to suggest green building practices including greywater reuse and rain water capture for irrigation
- ✓ 5% density bonus for a building employing a passive energy system, 10% for an active solar energy system
- ✓ Recognized as a Bike Friendly Community
- ✓ 100% of electricity used by city operations is renewably generated, purchased via Xcel Energy's Windsourse program
- ✓ City has joined the national WaterSense program to increase water conservation efforts
- ✓ Garbage haulers follow the recycling contractor's "zones" so residents can put out all their bins on the same day
- ✓ Participant in the Regional Indicator Initiative
- ✓ Environmental Quality Committee gives Green Community Awards annually to recognize individual and corporate efforts in three general areas: Water, Energy, and other General Initiatives
- ✓ Maintenance Facility achieved LEED Gold rating—the first city owned building in the nation to achieve that status under the 2009 rating system.

SHOREWOOD

- ✓ Narrow – 24 ft. – street allowed
- ✓ Outdoor wood boilers regulated to improve local air quality and public health

SILVER BAY

- ✓ 100 acre eco-park raises fish and vegetables year round, creates algae for biodiesel; creating and diversify living wage employment a goal
- ✓ Sustainability in elementary education curriculum includes gardens for students (growing and selling) and forestry

VICTORIA

- ✓ Downtown developments can share the public parking available to all uses in order to meet required parking
- ✓ Participant in the national Mayor's Water Conservation Challenge

WARREN

- ✓ Utilized an adjacent city lot for installation of a geothermal heating/cooling system to allow a new group home to have lower costs

WHITE BEAR LAKE

- ✓ 2010 public works building was constructed to the equivalent of LEED silver
- ✓ Over two years the average energy savings in participating restaurants was 5.8%

- ✓ Is a WaterSense promotional member; won 4th nationally in the national Mayor's Challenge to Save Water
- ✓ Supports the Rambler Revolution Demonstration project to efficiently update older homes
- ✓ Shares water, sewer, police, fire and inspections services with surrounding communities
- ✓ Infill projects are incentivized and are promoted in the comp plan
- ✓ Modifications to the City Hall and Public Safety Building cut parking by 11%
- ✓ Density bonuses for including affordable housing
- ✓ 1.5 inch infiltration standard for rainwater events

WILLMAR

- ✓ A designated MN Main Street community
- ✓ Willmar Design Center formed after a MN Design Team visit

WOODBURY

- ✓ Density bonus for including assisted living units in a development project, and for transferring contiguous wooded areas to the city free as outlots
- ✓ Planned Unit Development ordinance emphasizes mixed uses
- ✓ New/renovated commercial developments required to install bike racks
- ✓ Sustainability adopted by the city council as one of the city's seven Critical Success Factors
 - Adopted a Greenway Corridor Policy striving to connect Woodbury's natural systems and areas and voters approved over \$11 million in bonding to preserve open space.
 - Preserves 90% of the land surrounding city lakes with native vegetation surrounding lakeshores.
- ✓ Rainwater reuse system being installed for two golf courses as part of a stormwater management system for a road expansion project.
- ✓ City Council resolution adopted B3-State of Minnesota Sustainable Building Guidelines for the planning, design, construction and commission of new buildings and major renovations owned by the city.