

GreenStep Cities Municipal Stormwater Management Assessment

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in answering 45 questions that assess the degree to which your city is taking both simple and innovative actions to improve stormwater management, improve water quality, and adapt to climate changes in Minnesota. Questions in this Snap Surveys tool cover broad green infrastructure areas that are generally not covered by government regulatory programs. After completing this questionnaire, a score between 1 and 100 percent will be reported to you. A second score, based on your answers to 23 of the questions related to resilience to climate change, will also be reported.

Taking this assessment and receiving a score can be used in several ways:

- (1) To quickly learn about a wide range of stormwater management options, via the questions and associated informational links to the MPCA's Stormwater Manual site
- (2) To see Minnesota cities' collective stormwater management efforts
- (3) To gather a baseline measure of actions, and to compare that to a subsequent year (which could be 2 or 3 years later) when you retake the assessment
- (4) To report your score, and subsequent improvement, to community members and to your city council
- (5) To claim credit for the GreenStep best practice # 17, under BP action 17.2
- (6) To claim credit for GreenStep Metric # 9, which is required for recognition at Step 4 and Step 5 in the GreenStep Cities program. Metric # 9 has two data elements, which are calculated for you after you complete this Assessment: the **Stormwater Assessment Score** based on all 45 questions, and the **Climate Adaptation Stormwater Score**, based on 23 of the 45 questions.

Instructions

For your convenience, you may find the PDF version of this questionnaire [here](#).

NOTE: As you progress through the assessment, the questionnaire saves your progress automatically as long as you stay in the same session. If you wish to end your session and return to the questionnaire at a later time, you **must** click the SAVE button before closing the browser window. Doing so will generate a unique link, which you can then use to continue the assessment at a later time or share it with others in your city who may better answer certain questions.

Do not lose this unique link as GreenStep Cities staff cannot retrieve it for you, and you will lose your progress!

In order to accurately score your assessment, the questionnaire requires you to answer all questions, and as such, you may select “I don’t know/not specified” for most questions. Please note that selecting this option will assign 0 points for that question.

Upon completion of the assessment, you will receive your scores and be asked to submit these results under one or both of the GreenStep best practice action 17.2 and the GreenStep Step 4/5 metrics 9.1 and 9.2. Anonymous responses from all cities may be shared with MPCA staff, but NOT associated with your city name, in order for staff to provide better stormwater assistance to cities. Your honesty in answering these questions is important, and your privacy will be respected. The goal of this assessment is city self-directed improvement complementary to improvements pursued under city programs and under various government regulatory programs.

The assessment will be active until May 1, 2020, and a new web link will be sent out to all GreenStep cities, and to other interested cities, on July 1, 2020 for the next assessment year, which ends on May 1, 2021.

Should you have any questions or comments about this assessment or individual questions in it, feel free to use the GreenStep Cities contact page at <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/contact>. The GreenStep Cities and MPCA program staff value your feedback and will use it to improve the assessment questions (and points per question) each year.

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SECTION ONE – PLANNING & PRESERVATION

Water Friendly Development Patterns

1. Does your community comprehensive plan allow the following **sprawl-limiting strategies**? ([link for information](#))
(*Select all strategies that apply*)

<input type="checkbox"/> Mixed-use development by right	(1 point [pt])
<input type="checkbox"/> Compact development outside of the downtown zoning district (greater than 3 residential units/acre)	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of development rights	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> Other applicable	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> No	(0 pts)
<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know / not specified	(0 pts)

2. Does your community have any of the following incentives specifically targeted to **brownfield** development and redevelopment sites? ([link for information](#))
(*Select all that apply*)

<input type="checkbox"/> Density bonus	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> Funding for remediation	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> Streamlined permitting	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced impact fees	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> Tax increment financing	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> No	(0 pts)
<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know / not specified	(0 pts)

3. In your stormwater ordinance is there a definition of **green infrastructure or low-impact development (LID)** -- better management of stormwater while aiming to achieve other environmental, public health, social, and economic benefits? ([link for information](#)) (*Select one*)

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> No	(0 pts)
<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know / not specified	(0 pts)

4. Does your community have a **climate adaptation** plan in place to address potential impacts of climate change on community water resource management? ([link for information](#)) (*Select one*)

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, we have our own plan.	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, we follow a regional plan from another agency.	(1 pt)
<input type="checkbox"/> No	(0 pts)
<input type="checkbox"/> I don't know / not specified	(0 pts)

Natural Resource Preservation & Management

5. Does your community comprehensive plan include an inventory of high quality natural resource areas and are land-use decisions guided by the **natural resource inventory** in order to protect these areas from development? ([link for information](#))

(Select one)

- Yes, a Natural Resource Inventory or Natural Resource Assessment is incorporated into the subdivision or development process (4 pts)
- Yes, high quality natural resource areas have been inventoried (1 pt)
- No (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)

6. Does your community allow **filling for development within the floodplain** and if so, are restrictions imposed that include excluding storage of hazardous materials and requiring compensatory flood storage capacity to offset the fill? ([link for information](#))

(Select one)

- No fill within FEMA and locally defined floodplain allowed (3 pts)
- No fill within FEMA floodplain allowed (2 pts)
- Fill allowed with the above restrictions (1 pts)
- Fill allowed without restrictions (-1 pt)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
- Not applicable in my community (N/A)

7. Does your community protect high quality or sensitive **wetlands** through a resource management plan or wetland management plan? ([link for information](#))

(Select one)

- Yes, plan exceeds state Wetland Conservation Act standards (2 pts)
- Yes, plan meets state standards (1 pts)
- No (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
- Not applicable in my community (N/A)

8. Do your **buffer standards** for lakes, streams, constructed ponds, wetlands include any floodplain, steep slope, vegetation or resource quality considerations ([link for information](#))

(Select all that apply)

- Additional buffer width to encompass 100-year floodplain (1 pt)
- Additional buffer width in areas with slopes 9% or greater (1 pt)
- Buffer language clearly specifies vegetated cover requirements (1 pt)
- Expanded stream buffer requirements for sensitive resources, such as high-quality wetlands, trout streams and/or Outstanding Resource Water Bodies (ORVWs) (1 pt)
- No (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
- Not applicable in my community (N/A)

9. Does your community have land use protections and/or development restrictions that preserve **slopes 18% or greater** in a stable, undisturbed vegetated state? ([link for information](#))

(Select one)

- Yes (2 pts)
- No (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
- Not applicable in my community (N/A)

10. Does your community encourage the establishment and sustainability of **urban forests** through the following strategies: ([link for information](#))
(*Select all strategies that apply, then check appropriate score box below*)
- Insect & disease control, including ash preservation
 - Increased care during tree establishment
 - Increased indigenous diversity of tree species
 - Tree protection and replacement ordinance
 - Street reconstruction (including road diet lane conversions) that increases width of boulevard tree right-of-way
 - Standards that address soil compaction during and after development/redevelopment of private land, and of public land like street boulevards?
 - Stable funding for shade tree program, goals for increasing canopy coverage, or Tree City USA
- At least 5 of the above strategies including soil compaction standards: (8 pts)
 - At least 4 of the above strategies including tree program/goals/Tree City: (5 pts)
 - At least 4 of the above strategies: (3 pts)
 - At least 3 of the above strategies: (2 pts)
 - At least 2 of the above strategies: (1 pt)
 - One or none of the above strategies: (0 pts)

Stormwater Management Funding & Incentives

11. Does your community have any of the following stable, ongoing, yearly stormwater management **funding** mechanisms? ([link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Stormwater Utility User Fee (3 pts)
 - Other mechanism (provide a sentence of explanation below) (3 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
12. Does your community provide **incentives** (e.g., a reduced stormwater utility fee for sites that reduce their impervious surface) for retrofitting stormwater best management practices in previously developed sites? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes, for commercial, industrial, institutional and residential (3 pts)
 - Yes, for only commercial, institutional and industrial (2 pts)
 - Yes, for only residential (1 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
13. Has your community established a stable funding mechanism for **land acquisition** of high quality natural resource and/or riparian buffer areas? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes, land is placed in a land trust (5 pts)
 - Yes (1 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)

SECTION TWO – STORMWATER MANAGEMENT STANDARDS, POLICIES & PRACTICES

Impervious Cover Management

14. For public, residential access and sub-collector streets (with fewer than 500 annual average daily trips) what is the **minimum roadway pavement width** allowed in your community? ([Link for information](#)) (Select one)
- 24 feet or less (4 pts)
 - 25-26 feet (2 pts)
 - 27-28 feet (1 pt)
 - Greater than 28 feet (-1 pt)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
15. Does your community allow **proof-of-parking or shared driveways** to minimize impervious surface? ([Link for information](#)) (Select one)
- Yes (1 pt)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
16. Does your community have any of the following **off-street parking lot/ramp regulations** (for example, number of required parking spaces per 1000 sq. ft. or per seat) in its zoning/development code? ([Link for information](#)) (Select one)
- Parking space maximums exist and there are no parking space minimums city-wide (8 pts)
 - Parking space maximums exist city-wide and there are no parking space minimums in select zoning districts/for select development types (6 pts)
 - Parking space maximums and parking space minimums exist in select zoning districts/for select development types (4 pts)
 - City has parking space minimums city-wide, or in select zoning districts/for select development types, AND gives a parking stall reduction credit for installed bicycle parking (2 pts)
 - City only has parking space minimums city-wide, or in select zoning districts/for select development types (1 pt)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
17. What are your standard **parking space dimensions** ([Link for information](#)) (Select one)
- Stalls 8.5' x 18' with 22' maximum aisle and driveway widths (3 pts)
 - Stall width 9 feet or less (2 pts)
 - Stall width 9.1 to 9.9 feet (1 pt)
 - Stall width greater than 9.9 feet or dimensions not regulated (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
18. Does your community encourage curb-cuts, ribbon curb, roundabouts, or right-of-way swales for infiltration and conveyance of stormwater runoff **in lieu of curb-and-gutter** along residential roadways? ([Link for information](#)) (Select one)
- Yes, allowed and encouraged (5 pts)
 - Yes, allowed (2 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
19. For new residential lots, does your community require or encourage impervious surfaces like roofs and drive ways to **drain to vegetated areas**? ([Link for information](#)) (Select one)
- Required (3 pts)
 - Encouraged (1 pt)

- No (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
20. Does your community require or encourage **parking area landscaping** with vegetated practices (e.g. bioretention, curb-cuts, ribbon curb, tree trenches, rain gardens, or swales) for stormwater volume and/or water quality management? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Required (3 pts)
- Encouraged (1 pt)
- No (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
21. Does your community allow & encourage **pervious/permeable surfaces** on residential/commercial area sidewalks and parking lots? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select all that apply*)
- Yes, on residential/commercial sidewalks (1 pt)
- Yes, on residential/commercial parking lots (1 pt)
- No (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
22. How does your community address **native vegetation and turf alternatives** on residential and commercial sites? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- We incentivize native plantings, including turf replacement (3 pts)
- We promote native plantings, including turf replacement (2 pts)
- We allow native plantings, including turf replacement (1 pt)
- Not addressed (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
23. Does your community encourage **green roof installations** as part of its building permit process? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes, green roofs (with or without a cistern) are incentivized by financial and/or regulatory measures (3 pts)
- Yes, green roofs are encouraged and allowed by-right if they meet certain engineering standards (2 pts)
- Yes, green roofs are allowed and information about green roofs is made available to developers (1 pt)
- No mention/encouragement of green roofs (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)

Stormwater Management Policies

24. For new development, does the permitting agency apply community stormwater management **standards to all new impervious surfaces**, or is a minimum threshold (de minimis) included? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Standards apply to all new impervious surfaces (10 pts)
- Standards apply to 10,000 sq. ft. or more of new impervious surface (8 pts)
- Standards apply to .5 acres or more of new impervious surface (4 pts)
- Standards apply to 1 acre or more of new impervious surface (1 pt)
- Standards apply to any net increase of impervious surface in a development project (1 pt)
- No (0 pts)
- I don't know / not specified (0 pts)

25. For new development, does the permitting authority apply community stormwater standards requiring rate control based on the difference between a **baseline-condition** and post-development runoff condition? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes, our baseline condition is Pre-European settlement (5 pts)
 - Yes, our baseline condition approximates woods/prairie grass in good condition (3 pts)
 - Yes, our baseline is pre-development (existing) conditions and it is consistent with MIDS (2 pt)
 - Yes, our baseline is pre-development (existing) conditions (1 pt)
 - Yes, our baseline is consistent with MIDS (1 pt)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
26. Does your community require best management practices (BMPs) for all new development that will result in at least 90% reduction in **total-suspended-solids** (TSS) *and/or* at least 60% reduction in **total phosphorous** (TP)? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes, my community follows MIDS or a more stringent/protective standard (3 pts)
 - Yes (2 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
27. Are post-construction sediment and nutrient loading requirements **customized to downstream water resources**, such as critical habitat, impaired waters, Outstanding Resource Water Bodies (ORVWs)? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes (3 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
28. Are there post-construction **runoff volume requirements** for downstream river erosion protection? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes, no runoff volume increase for the 10-yr, 24-hr event (6 pts)
 - Yes, no runoff volume increase for the 5-yr, 24-hr event (4 pts)
 - Yes, no runoff volume increase for the 2-yr, 24-hr event (2 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
 - Not applicable in my community (N/A)
29. (*for non-MS4s only*) Has your community adopted an **erosion and sediment control ordinance** that aligns with MS4 permit requirements? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes (10 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
 - If an MS4, select not applicable in my community* (N/A)
30. Do your community stormwater management standards specify **pretreatment sizing standards** for stormwater prior to discharge into all permanent structural best management practices (BMPs)? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes (2 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)

31. Do your community stormwater management standards apply to **redevelopment**, which includes reconstruction of linear projects? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes, we apply MIDS or a more stringent/protective standard to all redevelopment (9 pts)
 - Yes, standards apply to all redevelopment (7 pts)
 - Yes, standards apply only to redevelopment projects with a net increase in impervious surface (4 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
32. Does your community encourage or require any of the following **water conservation strategies** ([Link for information](#)): (*Select all that apply*)
- Stormwater reuse incentives (5 pts)
 - Stormwater reuse standards (3 pts)
 - Encourage or require irrigation systems to be retrofitted with Smart irrigation systems that track weather patterns and mitigate unnecessary watering (2 pts)
 - Use of low-water vegetation (1 pt)
 - Water Conservation Rate Structure that exceeds DNR minimum requirements (1pt)
 - Other water conservation strategies (1pt)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
33. Does your community require & enforce **maintenance agreements for privately** maintained stormwater facilities? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes (3 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)

SECTION THREE – STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION

Education & Community Programs

34. Does your community participate in stormwater pollution prevention **education & outreach programs** such as ([Link for information](#)): (*Select all that apply*)
- Metro Blooms educational workshops or Blue Thumb program participation (*within last 3 years*) (1 pt)
 - The NEMO Program (*within last 3 years*) (1 pt)
 - The Clean Water Minnesota Media Campaign (*annually*) (1 pt)
 - Other similar programs (1 pt)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
35. Does your community have **residential and business education efforts** such as ([Link for information](#)): (*Select all that apply*)
- Educational stormwater pollution prevention workshops for residents (2 pts)
 - Education and outreach program for local businesses (2 pts)
 - A storm drain stenciling program (2 pts)
 - Sponsorship of community education events and/or clean ups (2 pts)
 - Adopt-a-Storm Drain program (2 pts)

- Stormwater BMP demonstration sites with educational signage (2 pts)
 - Regular utility bill inserts with stormwater educational messages (1 pt)
 - A city newsletter or social media effort that regularly includes a variety of stormwater pollution prevention messages at least 4- 6 times each year (1 pt)
 - A city website with that regularly includes a variety of stormwater pollution prevention messages at least 4- 6 times each year (1 pt)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
36. Does your community promote and/or provide **financial assistance** for the implementation of stormwater pollution prevention & treatment practices and projects for residents or businesses? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes, promotion & financial assistance (3 pts)
 - Yes, promotion only (1 pt)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
37. Which of the following **certification and training** opportunities does your community make available to municipal staff on a regular basis? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select all that apply*)
- MIDS training (e.g. MIDS calculator, ordinance and BMP trainings) (1 pt)
 - Erosion & sediment control certification (1 pt)
 - Illicit Discharge detection & elimination training (1 pt)
 - NEMO Stormwater U (1 pt)
 - None (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)

Inspection & Enforcement

38. [*for non-MS4s only*] Is your community's (public and any private) **stormwater system mapped**? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes (1 pt)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
 - If an MS4, select not applicable in my community* (N/A)
39. [*for non-MS4s only*] Does your community have an **inspection & maintenance schedule** for stormwater management practices - including catch basin sumps & stormwater ponds? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes (2 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
 - If an MS4, select not applicable in my community* (N/A)

Source Control

40. Which of the following **certification and training** opportunities does your community make available to municipal staff on a regular basis? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select all that apply*)
- MPCA Smart Salting Level 2 Training (2 pts)

- MPCA Smart Salting Level 1 Training (1 pt)
 - Other Smart Salting Training (1 pt)
 - Fertilizer & pesticide use minimization training for staff, and/or for institutional, parks, residential or commercial property managers (1 pt)
 - None (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
41. Which of the following **salt management strategies** does your community use? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Salt Savings Assessment tool (SSAt) to track BMPs related to chloride use (3 pts)
 - 5-year BMP implementation plan to improve salt or chloride management practices (3 pts)
 - Salt or Chloride Management Plan (2 pts)
 - Salt use tracking (1 pt)
 - None (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
42. Does your community **street sweeping program** include the following? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select all that apply*)
- Sweep four or more times per year, **OR** (2 pts)
 - Sweep two or three times per year (1 pt)
 - Utilize vacuum sweeping technology (1 pt)
 - None of the above (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
43. Does your community **prioritize street sweeping** in areas where water flows directly into lakes, streams, wetlands and Wellhead Protection Areas? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes (2 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
44. Does your community **prioritize inspections of permitted businesses** storing/using hazardous and/or toxic chemicals that are in areas where water flows directly into lakes, streams and wetlands, and to Wellhead Protection Areas? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Yes (2 pts)
 - No (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)
45. What type of **residential yard waste collection** program does your community have? ([Link for information](#)) (*Select one*)
- Curbside pick-up available to all residents by default (5 pts)
 - Elective pick-up available (3 pts)
 - Collection site at which residents drop off yard waste (2 pts)
 - None (0 pts)
 - I don't know / not specified (0 pts)

