



- **A free, voluntary challenge, assistance and recognition program** that provides a framework to help cities achieve their economic, environmental and quality-of-life goals. Cities choose which optional best practice actions among 175 actions to work on at their **own pace, investing whatever level of time and money** they choose. Cities freely choose to remove or add city ordinances and regulations as best fits their city.
- **Cost-savings, energy use reduction and innovation** underpin the program's 29 best practices, which are based upon what cities in MN have and can accomplish. **All information is free and available to anyone** via the web; the web site is constantly updated and refined as program staff learn from cities.
- GreenStep cities – 131 cities and 3 tribal nations statewide as of December 2019, encompassing over 47% of the state's population – adopt a participation resolution but **are in no legal relationship** now (or in the future) with the GreenStep program or with the State of MN, and the State imposes no mandates on GreenStep cities.
- **Governed by a state agency-non-profit partnership**, led by the MPCA and including the League of MN Cities, GreenStep grew out of a report to the 2009 Legislature and is a wholly-owned Minnesota effort.
- **Like Tree City USA, GreenStep has recognition minimums, not requirements. LMC formally recognizes city accomplishments** once each year at its annual June conference. Claiming credit for a handful of specific high-impact best practice actions garners recognition at Step 3. Reporting performance metrics merits Step 4/5.

BENEFITS OF BEING A GREENSTEP CITY

- ✓ **Claim credit, be transparent, invite citizen/business participation**
 - Cities joining the program can immediately claim credit for best practice actions previously completed.
 - GreenStep web site easily allows a city to show community members/businesses city accomplishments.
 - The 175 optional best practice actions provide a framework for business and citizen groups, schools and city commissions to work on actions and to assist city staff.
- ✓ **Special attention paid to GreenStep cities**
 - Yearly special financial opportunities offered to GreenStep cities have funded city fleet improvement projects, commercial business assistance, climate adaptation planning, city building energy cost-cutting, city green teams, and full-time MN GreenCorps members placed in cities.
 - Special assistance has targeted water conservation, waste water plants, EV charging stations, environmental purchasing, complete streets, stormwater, city building energy savings, renewable energy.
 - Special LMC listserv for GreenStep city contacts; each best practice has an advisor available to cities.
- ✓ **Access 40 hrs. free consultant help (MSP metro, Bemidji and Winona areas only); student interns**
 - The MPCA's Retiree Environmental Technical Assistance Program (RETAP) targets its 4 city sustainability experts to work with GreenStep cities on transportation, renewables, stormwater, trees.
 - During most semesters, undergraduate and/or graduate students are available for use by GreenStep cities.
- ✓ **Learn from other cities**
 - 4,200 reports from cities on how they have completed GreenStep actions are posted on the web site for anyone to read and learn from. Each report lists a city contact of whom one can ask further details.
- ✓ **1-stop shop for the most up-to-date action resources**
 - Information on how to complete 175 actions – in the areas of buildings, land use, transportation, environment, and economic/community development – is updated with Minnesota-specific information more often than any other web site, saving city staff time in finding actionable information.