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**GreenStep Cities Log-On**

**Website:** <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/user/login>

**Password:**

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# Minnesota GreenStep Cities

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## Welcome! Guide

Steps for Starting the program – for new and transitioning staff

02/03/2020



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## Quick Resource Guide

 <a href="#">Contact GreenStep</a>	What <a href="#">category</a> is my city in?	Step 2 and 3 <a href="#">requirements that each category must meet</a> to receive recognition
Watch the guide to entering Step 4/5 data <a href="#">video</a>	Step 4 and 5 Metrics <a href="#">entry link and submittal</a>	Step 4 and 5 <a href="#">metric guidance documents</a> (click on each metric header)
<a href="#">Find actions</a> – 175 in total – grouped under 29 Best Practices. See <b>which cities</b> have implemented the action, skim <b>Implementation Tools</b> , and read what constitutes <b>action-level completion</b> at a good (1 star), better (2 stars) & best (3 stars) level	What are <a href="#">other cities</a> doing?	 <a href="#">Contact GreenStep</a>

## Overview

**GreenStep Cities is a free assistance program for all Minnesota cities that supports and recognizes implementation of 29 sustainability best practices.**

The best practices focus on cost savings, quality of life and energy use reductions that encourage a culture of innovation. Over 100 cities and (including some tribes), large and small, encompassing over 40% of the state's population, have joined and become Step One cities in this voluntary program, which was launched by the League of Minnesota Cities at their June 2010 conference. See the city council resolution through which your city became a Step One city on your city's public GreenStep page, linked to at <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/allCities.cfm>

Cities that implement a minimum number of best practices within the five categories below will be recognized as Step Two and Step Three GreenStep cities. Each best practice can be implemented by completing one or more specific actions from a list of four to eight actions. A city's accomplishments are recognized on the GreenStep website. Measuring city performance metrics will garner Step Four & Step Five recognition.

Visit [www.MnGreenStep.org](http://www.MnGreenStep.org) to learn more about this program, to see what cities have accomplished, and to understand how your city can become involved.

## What Now?

### Training Materials

*Whether you are a new GreenStep City or you are transition to a new GreenStep City Coordinator, these training materials should help you get started.*

- **GreenStep Cities 101** [Program overview PPT](#)
- **How do I enter information** (action reports, a new city GreenStep coordinator's name/contact info) onto the GreenStep Cities admin page? [Log in](#) to your city's GreenStep administrative pages (using your cityname – no spaces – as your Username) and click on Instructions and Helpful Documents to find "Data Entry onto the GreenStep Web Site," a PDF annotating screen shots from your city administrative pages

### Where is Your City Currently at?

*For those of you transitioning into a GreenStep Cities Coordinator position, be sure to get to know what your city has already accomplished and where to go from here.*

- **Locate your city on the [website](#)** and click on your city name, and then click on each best practice action report, to see what has been accomplished to date.
- On your city's page also see the ***City Assessment File*** for a best practice action summary, which also shows which best practices/actions your city needs to complete in order to be recognized at the next Step level
- GreenStep Cities Coordinators are asked to take an **annual survey** describing the work completed that year and what next steps the city may be interested in taking. As needed, to get a copy of the survey results from previous years, contact [Alexis Troschinetz](#), CERTs Behavior Change & Metrics Coordinator.

## Why is your city participating?

Becoming a GreenStep City has many benefits. Every city has different mix of reasons for being an active GreenStep City.

Consider the reasons why your city is a GreenStep City and share these with city staff, elected officials, and community volunteers and civic groups.

___ <b>Is a continuous improvement pathway</b> for cities to "go green," becoming more sustainable and resilient.	___ <b>Will save city staff time</b> in researching proven, cost-effective actions for cutting energy use, decreasing the city's carbon footprint, and accomplishing other sustainability goals that exceed regulatory requirements.	___ <b>Will save cities money</b> and deliver a stream of multiple environmental, social and financial benefits; will help cities explore how to spend the same amount of money smarter.
___ <b>Is a home-grown, independent program tailored to Minnesota cities</b> and provides maximum flexibility and choice in how to implement a proven best practice.	___ <b>Provides over 4,000 reports</b> on how Minnesota cities are taking action, making it easy to learn from and contact peer cities so as to jump-start actions in your own city.	___ <b>Opens up special opportunities</b> for funding and technical assistance, available mostly to GreenStep cities because the GreenStep program focuses on existing GreenStep cities.
___ <b>Maps out how to follow-through</b> on the various commitments cities may have made, such as the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, signed by over 40 Minnesota cities, and on the Minnesota Legislature's aggressive Next Generation Energy Act.	___ <b>Provides leadership and action roles for community</b> members, businesses and institutions so as to stretch limited city funds and strengthen a civic culture of engagement and innovation.	___ <b>Continuously prompts</b> program participants – like an exercise coach would! – to maximize opportunities to accelerate sustainability actions.
___ <b>Provides public recognition</b> of the good work being done by Minnesota cities.	___ (add your own)	___

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## The Recognition Steps



### Step 1 Recognition

*Build Community Knowledge and Interest*

*Approve a city council resolution to work toward GreenStep Cities recognition*

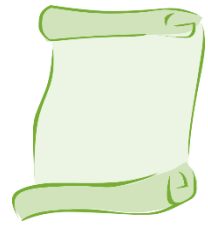
*Post Initial background information on the GreenStep Cities website*

Getting Started – click on the [Steps 1-5 page](#) to see:

- **Testimonials:** Cities share their experiences in the MN GreenStep Cities program
- **Notable Accomplishments:** GreenStep Cities 2010-Present
- **Why join GreenStep?**
- Determine into which **category** your city fits.
- Become familiar with GreenStep **best practices**.
- Talk with **key people** and organizations in your city.
- **Invite**, as needed, a GreenStep program representative to your city.
- Conduct a brief **inventory** of completed, planned and desired best practices.

### *Adopt a Resolution*

- Use the **sample resolution**.
- Introduce a resolution to the city council.
- Specify a GreenStep coordinator and a few best practices to implement.
- **E-mail** your city GreenStep coordinator information to the MPCA.



### *Visit your [Log-in Page](#)*

- Enter simple background information about your city.

### *Education and Planning*

- As needed, educate city staff and officials about sustainability.
- Convene a small working group.
- Specify implementation action(s) and a few lead people.
- Prepare a simple work plan for implementing selected best practices.

## **Step 2 Recognition**

*Document the previous implementation of, and/or newly implemented 4, 6, or 8 [best practices](#), depending on a city's GreenStep Category designation.*

- **Refer** back to your city's category.
  - Category C cities need to implement ANY 4 BP's.
  - Category B cities need to implement ANY 6 BP's.
  - Category A cities need to implement ANY 8 BP's.
- **Implementing** a particular [best practice action](#) may take a day or years.
- **Be alert** to opportunities to complete multiple best practice actions at once.
- **Check back** with the city council as needed.
- **Report yearly** to community members.

As your work proceeds, give us [feedback](#) on the program.

## **Step 3 Recognition**

*Implement 8, 12, or 16 [best practices](#) and complete a handful of specific high-impact actions, depending on a city's GreenStep Category designation.*

- See "[GreenStep recognition Steps 2 & 3](#)"
  - Category C cities need to implement an additional 4 BP's.
  - Category B cities need to implement an additional 6 BP's.

- Category A cities need to implement an additional 8 BP's.
- **IMPORTANT:** Step 3 has certain [requirements that cities in each category must meet](#) to receive recognition. Cities however are welcome to continue in the GreenStep program even if they choose not to pursue recognition at Step 3.

## Step 4 Recognition

*Measure and report a minimum number of core and optional metrics for the previous calendar year.*

- **Download** the [Step 4/5 Metrics worksheet](#).
- **Use the** [metric guidance documents](#) by clicking on each metric.
- **Watch the** [tutorial or GreenStep Workshop](#) as a guide to entering Step 4/5 data
- **For official submission of metrics**, use the [Snap Survey link](#) by May 1 to enter metrics required for Building & Lighting, Transportation, Land Use, Environmental Management, and Economic & Community Development.
- **Contact** the GreenStep coordinator [Kristin Mroz](#) with any metrics questions.

## Step 5 Recognition

*Improve three eligible city performance metrics measured in Step 4.*

- **Submit sufficient metrics to be recognized at Step 4.**
- **The green boxes** indicate metrics that are eligible for Step 5 recognition if a city shows improvement between the submittal year and a previous year.
- **For official submission of metrics**, use the [Snap Survey link](#) by May 1 to enter metrics.
- **Contact** the GreenStep coordinator [Kristin Mroz](#) with any metrics questions.

## Understanding the Website

### [Home Page](#)



**News Box** – See what events/opportunities are coming up



**Benefits** – What are the benefits of joining GSC and implementing BPs?



**Twitter** – Follow posts @GreenStepCities



## [About Page](#)

- History and development
- GreenStep Program Partners and program funders

## [Best Practices Page](#)

- Make planning and tracking easier: [download this spreadsheet](#) that lists all unique actions – approximately 175 – for all 29 best practices
- What are Step 2 and 3 [Recognition Minimums](#)?
- Search actions related to specific topics

water conservation ▼

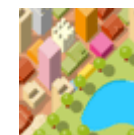
Filter

### *Buildings and Lighting*



- 1. Efficient Existing Public Buildings:** Benchmark energy usage; identify savings opportunities in consultation with state programs, utilities and others to implement cost-effective energy and sustainability improvements.
- 2. Efficient Existing Private Buildings:** Provide incentives for energy, water and sustainability improvements in existing buildings/building sites.
- 3. New Green Buildings:** Construct new buildings to meet or qualify under a green building framework.
- 4. Efficient Outdoor Lighting and Signals:** Improve the efficiency and quality of street lighting, traffic signals and outdoor public lighting.
- 5. Building Redevelopment:** Create economic and regulatory incentives for redeveloping and repurposing existing buildings before building new.

### *Land Use*



- 6. Comprehensive Plans:** Build public support and legal validity to long-term infrastructural and regulatory strategy.
- 7. Efficient City Growth:** Promote financial and environmental sustainability by enabling and encouraging walkable housing and commercial land use.
- 8. Mixed Uses:** Develop efficient and healthy land patterns that generate community wealth.
- 9. Efficient Highway- and Auto-Oriented Development:** Adopt commercial development and design standards for auto-oriented development corridors and clusters.
- 10. Design for Natural Resource Conservation:** Adopt development ordinances or processes that protect natural systems and valued community assets.

## *Transportation*



- 11. Living Streets:** Create a network of green complete streets that improves city quality of life and adds value surrounding properties.
- 12. Mobility Options:** Promote active transportation and alternatives to single-occupancy car travel.
- 13. Efficient City Fleets:** Implement a city fleet investment, operations and maintenance plan.
- 14. Demand-Side Travel Planning:** Implement Travel Demand Management and Transit-Oriented Design in service of a more walkable city.

## *Environmental Management*



- 15. Sustainable Purchasing:** Adopt environmentally preferable purchasing policies and practices.
- 16. Urban Forests:** Add city tree and plant cover that increases community health, wealth and quality of life.
- 17. Stormwater Management:** Minimize the volume of and pollutants in stormwater runoff.
- 18. Parks and Trails:** Support active lifestyles and property values by enhancing the city's green infrastructure.
- 19. Surface Water Quality:** Improve local water bodies.
- 20. Efficient Water and Wastewater Systems:** Assess and improve city drinking water and wastewater systems and related facilities.
- 21. Septic Systems:** Implement an effective management program for decentralized wastewater treatment systems.
- 22. Solid Waste Reduction:** Increase waste reduction, reuse and recycling.
- 23. Local Air Quality:** Prevent generation of local air contaminants.

## *Economic and Community Development*



- 24. Benchmarks & Community Engagement:** Adopt outcome measures for GreenStep and other city sustainability efforts, and engage community members in ongoing education, dialogue, and campaigns.
- 25. Green Business Development:** Support expansion of the city's green business sector.
- 26. Renewable Energy:** Remove barriers to and encourage installation of renewable energy generation capacity.
- 27. Local Food:** Strengthen local food and fiber production and access.
- 28. Business Synergies:** Network/cluster businesses to achieve better energy, economic and environmental outcomes.
- 29. Climate Adaptation and Community Resilience:** Plan and prepare for extreme weather, adapt to changing climatic conditions, and foster stronger community connectedness and social and economic vitality.

### [Steps 1-5 Page](#)

- **A summary** of the actions needed to progress steps
- **Background information** on the program to share with others in your city

### [Recognition Page](#)

- **Annual summaries** of city recognition, BPAs completed, notable accomplishments by cities
- **Individual city photos** from the annual June League of Minnesota Cities GreenStep recognition event
- **GreenStep Award Sponsors**

### [All Cities Page](#)

- **Click on** a city name to see city contact and background information and detail on completed actions
- **View** total number of completed actions for each city

### [Ordinances Page](#)

- **Model ordinances** organized under the 5 Best Practices

### [Contact Page](#)

- **Ask questions** to better understand the GreenStep Cities program
- **Clarify** where to find different types of resources on the web site
- **Request** a personal visit to your city
- **Ask for help** in connecting volunteers to needed work in GreenStep cities
- **Send in** your GreenStep City contact information via e-mail
- **Get help** with online documenting of your accomplishments
- **Make suggestions** for improving the GreenStep program
- **Report errors** on the web site and identify broken web links
- **Contact information** (phone and email) for the GreenStep Cities co-directors and best practice advisors

### [News Page](#)

- **Read** current and past news items
- **Register for** upcoming workshops/webinars and view past workshops
- **Sign up** for the GreenStep Quarterly Newsletter
- **View/sign-up** for MyLMC MemberLink listserv for GreenStep city coordinators
- **Read recent media** coverage about GreenStep and GreenStep cities

### [City Log-In Page](#)

- **Your Username** is your cityname with no spaces
- **Enter the Password** you previously chose
- **Reset your password** as needed
- **Click on Instructions and Helpful Documents** to find "Data Entry onto the GreenStep Web Site," a PDF with annotated screen shots from your city administrative pages. This PDF shows how to enter

information (action reports, a new city GreenStep coordinator's name/contact info) onto your GreenStep Cities admin pages.

## Resources

### Staff and Partners

*The GreenStep Cities program is a partnership of many state agencies, organizations, and volunteers. Get to know them all, below.*

<p><b>Minneapolis Pollution Control Agency (<a href="#">MPCA</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GreenStep <a href="#">Co-Director</a></li> <li>• Provides a number of <a href="#">Best Practice Advisors</a></li> <li>• Maintains web site</li> <li>• Approves Best Practice Actions entered on website</li> </ul>	<p><b>Great Plains Institute (<a href="#">GPI</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GreenStep Co-Director <a href="#">Abby Finis</a></li> <li>• Monthly Workshop Coordinator</li> <li>• Steps 4 and 5 Assistance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Environmental Quality Board (<a href="#">EQB</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Government Coordinator &amp; GreenStep Co-Director <a href="#">Kristin Mroz</a></li> <li>• Connecting state agency and organizations to community needs</li> </ul>
<p><b>League of Minnesota Cities (<a href="#">LMC</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Awards Ceremony at LMC Conference</li> <li>• Provides model ordinances, policies, and other resources</li> <li>• Provides networking between cities and local government organizations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Clean Energy Resource Teams (<a href="#">CERTs</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statewide assistance with energy conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable energy technologies and practices for homes, businesses, and local institutions</li> <li>• Communications for GreenStep (newsletter, stories, etc.)</li> <li>• Regional Coordinators provide 1-on-1 assistance to communities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Department Of Commerce (<a href="#">COMM</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Division of Energy Resources provides information and assistance related to energy technology</li> <li>• Provides financial and technical assistance</li> <li>• Assistance in energy efficiency and weatherization</li> </ul>
<p><b>Izaak Walton League (<a href="#">IWLA</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides assistance in outdoor conservation of natural resources</li> <li>• 1-on-1 assistance with Greater MN communities</li> </ul>	<p><b><a href="#">Rethos</a> (formerly Preservation Alliance of MN)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotes connection between people and historic places, promoting community vitality</li> <li>• Downtown revitalization</li> </ul>	<p><b>Urban Land Institute MN (<a href="#">ULI</a>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides assistance with community land use and real estate development</li> </ul>

<https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/page/minnesota-greenstep-cities-program>



## Data Entry Resources

*Who can help your city enter GreenStep Cities reporting data? GreenStep Cities use a number of resources to enter in information for the GreenStep Cities program. We find that this may be the most time consuming and tedious part of being a GreenStep City.*

**1. Dedicate a city staff person to update data for GreenStep Cities.**

This may be the GreenStep Cities Coordinator, a communications staff, administrative staff, or any other position that can take the time to get to the know the GreenStep Cities best practice actions and is also familiar with the environmental and sustainable work the city is doing. It is recommended to include this duty in the staff member's annual job duties and/or workplan.

**2. Hire a part-time staff person or coordinate a shared staff person.**

Cities like Grand Marais have hired staff to coordinate GreenStep Cities and other sustainability/climate work for as little as 4 hours/week, a very minimal cost to the city. Another possibility it to coordinate with a local city, county, or organization to co-hire a staff person to work on GreenStep Cities and other environmental efforts.

**3. Hire an Intern.**

A GreenStep City intern can serve as the city's champion to complete the initial online recordkeeping, kick start a plan for future activities, and familiarize city staff with the program. See the [GreenStep Cities Intern Manual](#) for assistance on how to find an intern, how to set up their work plan, etc.

**4. Apply for a MN GreenCorps Member.**

[GreenCorps](#) members are coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency as part of the AmeriCorps program. Members work in host communities full time for 11 months on environmental projects. Members can assist GreenStep Cities with specific Best Practices and reporting. Cities need to provide a workspace for the member; AmeriCorps covers salary and benefits. Applications are typically due early spring with members starting in early fall of each year.

**5. Coordinate with local youth.**

This may be a partnership with a local high school class, environmental club, or honors association. Connecting with students or staff may foster assistance with implementing Best Practice Actions, reviewing and analyzing data and reports, or entering GreenStep Cities data and reporting metrics.

**6. Coordinate with local citizen volunteers.**

Your city may already have an organized environmental or sustainability commission which can assist the GreenStep Cities advancement and members may offer to assist with data and metric entry. Your city may also have a non-government citizen group that would be interested in assisting the GreenStep Cities Coordinator. If your city does not have an environmental-related group in place, think about starting one or finding one or two champion citizens in your community that would be interested in participating with the GreenStep Cities program.

## Online Resources

- Start on the [homepage](#) of the GreenStep Cities website
- Note that every 8 months all Implementation Tools and their web links to help cities complete best practice actions are reviewed for relevance and accuracy.

## Social Media and Listserv Resources

*Track the latest GreenStep news and add your own at:*



[Facebook](#) @mngreenstep



[Twitter](#) @GreenStepCities

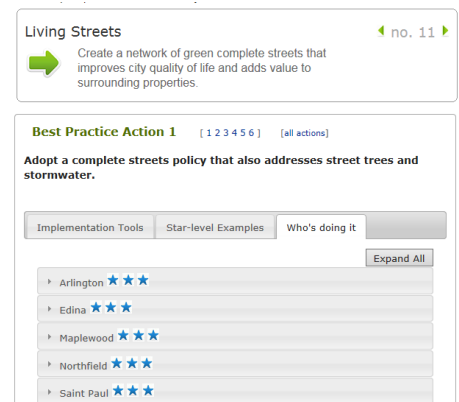


Email listserv – a resource for GreenStep Cities Coordinators to connect. If you are not receiving a listserv message roughly once per month let [GreenStep Cities](#) know.

## Communities – Who’s doing it?

*One of the best ways to plan implementation of a new Best Practice Action is to see how other cities have implemented that action.*

- **Click on one of the 29 [Best Practices](#)** – think of a Best Practice as a subject area - **and click on one of the Best Practice Actions** that you are interested in.
- **The “Who’s doing it” list will display**, at the bottom of the action page, the GreenStep Cities that have implemented the action and a rating of whether the action was completed at a 1-star (good) rating, a 2-star (better) rating, or a 3-star rating (best). Click on the name of the city to read their best practice action report.
- **Click on the Star-level Examples tab** to read what sorts of city accomplishments constitute completion of the action at a 1,2, and 3-star level.
- **GreenStep Cities are always willing to help** out another GreenStep City! Use the contact information listed to reach out to the city staff who can assist you with questions, planning, implementation, and other questions.



- **Alternatively, use the GreenStep Cities email listserv.** Occasionally, GreenStep staff and partners will send out important information like upcoming events, deadlines for funding, or other resources. This listserv can also be used as a communication tool between GreenStep cities!
  - Note: If you reply-all, your email will be sent to everyone on the list. If you need to contact the sender, email them directly.
- **Click on the Implementation Tools tab** for each best practice action to see resources for taking the action

## Reporting and Recognition

### Reporting

*Once a Best Practice Action or Metric is ready to report, use the following tools. Direct any questions to the contacts below.*

- **Step 1:** E-mail the [MPCA GreenStep Co-director](#) the name and e-mail of your city's GreenStep coordinator.
- **Steps 2-3:** Add Best Practice Actions by [Logging-in](#) to your city's account and using the online forms
- **Steps 4-5:** Submit metrics via the Snap Survey link and direct questions to the [EQB GreenStep Co-director](#).

### Recognition

*Your hard work has paid off! Get recognized for any achievements in the following ways:*

- **Attend the annual GreenStep Cities Awards Ceremony** at the [League of Minnesota Cities](#) Conference (each June).
- **Let GreenStep Cities write a story** about your project success! Contact [Dan Theide](#) with any suggestions.
- **Write a newsletter story** for your city's newsletter. See [recent media coverage](#) for ideas.
- **Write a press release** to your local paper to let your community know about it. See a template under Instructions and Helpful Documents on your city's GreenStep admin page.
- Follow GreenStep Cities on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). We will happily share your story!
- Create a GreenStep Cities webpage on your city website.

