

RESOLUTION 16-91

Introduced by Councilor Baker

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CITY OF ALBERT LEA TO PARTICIPATE IN MINNESOTA GREENSTEP CITIES PROGRAM

WHEREAS, Minnesota GreenStep Cities is a voluntary challenge, assistance and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. GreenStep is a free, continuous improvement program, managed by a public-private partnership, and based upon 28 best practices. Each best practice can be implemented by completing one or more actions at a 1, 2 or 3-star level, from a list of four to eight actions. These actions are tailored to all Minnesota cities, focus on cost savings and energy use reduction, and encourage civic innovation; and

WHEREAS, uncertainty in energy prices and the transition away from fossil fuel energy sources present new challenges and opportunities to both the City of Albert Lea and to the economic health of its citizens and businesses; and

WHEREAS, climate changes have been observed in Minnesota and have the potential to negatively impact local, regional and state economies; infrastructure development; habitat; ecological communities, including native fish and wildlife populations; spread invasive species and exotic diseases; reduce drinking water supplies and recreational opportunities; and pose health threats to our citizens; and

WHEREAS, local governments have the unique opportunity to achieve both energy use and climate change gas reductions and cost savings through building and facilities management; land use and transportation planning; environmental management; and through economic and community development; and

WHEREAS, efforts to address energy and climate issues provide an opportunity to move toward energy self-reliance and greater community resiliency and quality of life; provide environmentally healthy and cheaper-to-operate public buildings; encourage new economic development and local jobs; and support local food and renewable energy production; and

WHEREAS, steps taken toward sustainable solutions aim to improve community quality of life, building community capital and increasing government efficiency, accountability and transparency; and

WHEREAS, the City of Albert Lea has adopted a complete streets policy that addresses street streets and stormwater as well as numerous other environmental protection measures; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota Session Laws 2008, Chapter 356, Section 13 directed the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency ("MPCA") and Office of Energy Security in the Department of Commerce ("Office of Energy Security"), in collaboration with Clean Energy Resource Teams ("CERTs"), to recommend municipal actions and policies that work toward meeting the State's greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals; and

WHEREAS, the Next Generation Act of 2007, Minnesota Session Laws 2007 - Chapter 136:

- (1) sets State greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals of cutting emissions to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2015, 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2025, and 80 percent below 2005 levels by 2050;
- (2) sets a State energy conservation goal of achieving annual energy savings equal to 1.5 percent of annual retail energy sales of electricity and natural gas;
- (3) establishes an energy policy goal that the per capita use of fossil fuel as an energy input be reduced by 15 percent by the year 2015, through increased reliance on energy efficiency and renewable energy alternatives;
- (4) establishes an energy policy goal that 25 percent of the electricity used in the state be derived from renewable energy resources by the year 2025; and

WHEREAS, a broad coalition of public and private stakeholders including the League of Minnesota Cities, the MPCA, Office of Energy Security and CERTs responded to the 2008 legislation by establishing the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program to provide a series of sustainable development best practices focusing on local government opportunities to reduce energy use and greenhouse gases; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program assists in facilitating technical assistance for the implementation of these sustainable development best practices; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program provides cost-effective sustainable development best practices in the following five categories: (1) Buildings and Lighting; (2) Transportation; (3) Land Use; (4) Environmental Management; and (5) Economic and Community Development;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALBERT LEA, MINNESOTA:

Sec. 1. That the City Council of Albert Lea does hereby authorize the City to participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program that offers a free, voluntary continuous improvement framework. Passage of this participation resolution allows the City to be recognized as a Step One GreenStep City.

Sec. 2. That Jerry Gabrielatos be appointed to serve as the City's GreenStep coordinator for best practice documentation/implementation.

Sec. 3. That the City will facilitate the involvement of community members and other units of government as appropriate such as Freeborn County in the planning, promoting and/or implementing of GreenStep Cities best practices.

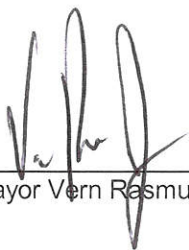
Sec. 4. That grants to the GreenStep program's buildings advisor read-only access to the City's B3 Benchmarking Database so as to facilitate analysis and cost-savings advice to the City regarding its buildings' energy use.

Sec. 5. That the City will claim credit for having implemented and will work at its own pace toward implementing any four GreenStep best practices that will result in energy use reduction, economic savings, quality of life improvement, reduction in the City's greenhouse gas footprint, and recognition by the League of Minnesota Cities as a Step Two GreenStep City. An on-going summary of the City's implementation of best practices will be posted by the City on the Minnesota GreenStep Cities website.

That the motion for the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly seconded by Councilor Anderson, and upon a vote being taken thereon, the following voted in favor thereof: Councilors Schulte V, Baker, Marin, Olson, Anderson, Brooks and Mayor Rasmussen Jr.;

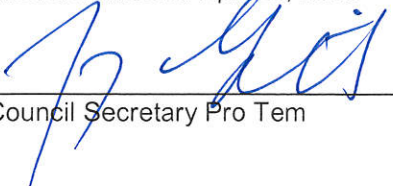
and the following voted against the same: None.

Introduced and passed April 25, 2016



Mayor Vern Rasmussen Jr.

Filed and attested April 26, 2016



Council Secretary Pro Tem