

November 1, 2010

Council Report 2010 -119

**Approve Resolution 2010 - 040, Authorizing the City of Hopkins to Participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program.**

**Proposed Action.**

Staff recommends adoption of the following motion: Move that Council Adopt Resolution 2010-040, Authorizing the City of Hopkins to Participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program.

**Overview.**

Minnesota GreenStep Cities is a challenge, assistance and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability goals through implementation of 28 best practices. Each best practice can be implemented by completing one or more specific actions 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 innovation.

The City of Hopkins has a Green Team that meets once a month. The team with the assistance of a green intern discusses what needs to be done within the City of Hopkins in regards to the 28 best practices and report at each meeting what has been accomplished.

Goal # 2 of the City is to promote a livable, walkable community. A strategy under that goal is to "Go Green" and pursues this GreenStep City designation.

**Primary Issues to Consider**

- Why adopt this resolution and participate in this program?
- Are there any costs or mandates associated with this program?

**Supporting Information**

- Resolution 2010-040, Authorizing the City of Hopkins to participate in the Minnesota Greenstep Cities Program.
- Star & Tribune Article, "Minnesota Cities Take Steps to go Green", October 17, 2010
- GreenStep Cities list of 28 best practice categories.

Rick Getschow  
City Manager

Financial Impact: _____ \$0 _____ Budgeted: _____ N/A _____ Source: _____
Related documents (CIP, ERP, etc.): _____
Notes: _____

### **Analysis of Issues:**

- Why adopt this resolution and participate in this program?

The City of Hopkins would be recognized as a GreenStep City by the League of Minnesota Cities.

The goal of the City of Hopkins is to become a Green Step City, whereby, the City will enhance transportation, buildings and lighting, city parks, trails, improve water quality, reuse and recycle, strengthen local food access, assess and finance energy and sustainability improvements of existing structures, improve public and private lighting and signals, repurpose old buildings, and develop ordinances for all improvements. The requirement of being a GreenStep City is to investigate and implement projects that will save money immediately or over time while at the same time improving the quality of the environment.

- Are there any costs or mandates associated with this program?

No. The Green Step Cities is an action-oriented voluntary program offering a cost-effective, simple pathway leading to implementation of sustainable best practices. Green Step Cities include best practices in the areas of: buildings and facilities; land use; transportation environmental management; and, community and economic development.

### **Alternatives:**

**Alternative # 1:** Approve Resolution 2010-040, Authorizing the City of Hopkins to Participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program.

**Alternative # 2:** Do not Approve Resolution 2010-040 and do not pursue this initiative.

### **Recommendations:**

Staff recommends Alternative # 1, approving Resolution 2010-040.

CITY OF HOPKINS  
HENNEPIN COUNTY

RESOLUTION 2010-040

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF HOPKINS  
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MINNESOTA GREENSTEP CITIES PROGRAM

**WHEREAS**, efforts to address energy and climate issues provide an opportunity to move toward energy self-reliance and greater community resiliency; 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**, 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**, 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; and

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

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that the City Council of the City of Hopkins does hereby authorize the City of Hopkins to participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the City Green Team and a Green Intern work together to facilitate best practice implementation.

The best practices will result in energy use reduction, economic savings and reduction in the community's greenhouse gas footprint. A summary of the city's implementation of best practices will be posted on the City of Hopkins web site.

Adopted by the City Council of the City of Hopkins, Minnesota, this 1st day of November, 2010.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Mayor Eugene Maxwell

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk



# StarTribune.com

## Minnesota cities take steps to go green

New program gives cities recognition for environmental initiatives.

By MARIA ELENA BACA, Star Tribune

Last update: October 17, 2010 - 10:52 PM

Seeking to overcome the notion that it's not easy being green, a handful of cities have joined a state initiative to help germinate sustainable practices in what's envisioned as a recycled version of the Minnesota Star Cities designation.

But instead of being given for economic development, it would be for embracing green initiatives.

Though many cities have eco-conscious intentions, finding, funding and implementing ideas can be daunting. Plus, best practices elsewhere may not apply here because of climate and other differences, said Philipp Muessig of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

What might work or make sense in cities in California "doesn't play that well in

Minnesota," he said.

### Challenge from Legislature

Muessig is coordinator of GreenStep Cities, a public-private program that sprang out of a 2007 challenge by the Legislature to support and recognize cities working on the state's Next Generation Energy Initiative. That initiative requires utilities to provide 25 percent of electricity from renewable sources and cut greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent by 2025.

The MPCA, with five nonprofit partners, created the program. The consortium gathered pilot cities, including Bloomington, Edina, Falcon Heights, St. Louis Park and Victoria, to help launch it. Nine cities have passed resolutions joining the program, and more are considering them.

The program's website, [greenstep.pca.state.mn.us](http://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us), provides resources -- real and virtual -- and goals tailored to cities' resources and needs to meet requirements in five sustainability categories to become a GreenStep City. The site offers specific steps, a cost-benefit analysis and information on how to contact local experts.

The vision is that cities achieving goals will be

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recognized at the League of Minnesota Cities' annual conference and be designated in a manner similar to the Minnesota Star Cities.

and GreenStep Cities provides a really good format to get you started and down the road."

## A resource for cities

Maria Elena Baca • 612-673-4409

In the next several weeks, Muessig said, there are plans to upgrade the program's website to include cities' progress reports, creating a new resource for their peers.

The program hasn't garnered any additional state funding, Muessig said. The program's nonprofit partners are working to gather private dollars and steer cities to other funding sources, he said.

Muessig said in the past three years he's seen an unprecedented number of cities hire sustainability coordinators and create sustainable city plans and energy and environment commissions.

The Eagan City Council passed its GreenStep Cities resolution in August. University of Minnesota students are studying city practices to target likely goals and find areas the city already can check off the list, said Dianne Miller, assistant to the city manager.

"The structure has been helpful," she said.  
"There are so many places you could start,

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## GreenStep's 28 best practices


To ease of planning and tracking your best practice choices, download this list of 163 unique actions for all 28 best practices.

- Cities that implement a minimum number of best practices organized into these five topical areas will be recognized as a GreenStep City. See What's required to be a GreenStep City?
- Cities should claim credit for best practices already implemented. Adding best practices over time will garner additional recognition.
- For each best practice, and depending on city category (A, B or C), a city needs to complete one or more actions from a list associated with the best practice. See What category is my city in?


### Buildings and Lighting

- 1. Efficient Existing Public Buildings:** Work with utilities and others to assess and finance energy and sustainability improvements of existing structures. 
- 2. Efficient Existing Private Buildings:** Work with utilities and others to assess and finance energy and sustainability improvements of existing structures.
- 3. New Green Buildings:** Construct new buildings to meet or qualify for a green building standard.
- 4. Efficient Building & Street Lighting and Signals:** Improve the efficiency of public and private lighting and signals.
- 5. Building Reuse:** Create economic and regulatory incentives for redeveloping and repurposing existing buildings before building new.


### Land Use

- 6. Comprehensive Plan and Implementation:** Adopt a Comprehensive Plan and tie regulatory ordinances to it. 
- 7. Higher Density:** Enable and encourage a higher density of housing or commercial land use.
- 8. Efficient and Healthy Development Patterns:** Mix land uses.
- 9. Efficient Highway-Oriented Development:** Adopt commercial development and design standards for highway road corridors.
- 10. Conservation Design:** Adopt development ordinances or processes that protect natural systems.


### Transportation

- 11. Complete Green Streets:** Create a network of multimodal green streets. 
- 12. Mobility Options:** Promote active living 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:** Use Travel Demand Management and Transit-Oriented Design.

### Environmental Management

- 15. Purchasing:** Adopt an environmentally preferable purchasing policy. 
- 16. Urban Forests:** Increase city tree and plant cover.
- 17. Efficient Stormwater Management:** Minimize the volume of and pollutants in water runoff.
- 18. Green Infrastructure:** Enhance city parks and trails.
- 19. Surface Water Quality:** Improve local water bodies.
- 20. Efficient Water and Wastewater Facilities:** Assess and improve drinking water and wastewater 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, discussion, and campaigns. 
- 25. Green Business Development:** Document the use of assistance programs for green business and job development.
- 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.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency | Contact | Web site policy

Home | The 28 best practices | How to become a GreenStep City | City log-in

## Steps to becoming recognized as a GreenStep city

Of Minnesota's 856 cities, approximately 500 are under 1,000 in population, 83% are under 5,000 in population, and 35 have a population over 25,000. With such a diversity of cities, no one set of process steps will fit all cities in organizing work to become a GreenStep City. Depending on your city, work may start mostly at the city staff or city council level and fit well into existing plans and efforts, moving later to incorporate and leverage work efforts by civic organizations. Or the impetus for implementing GreenStep best practices may start with a civic group and be mostly done by community members and community organizations, with the city council in a supportive and active role as needed.

Thus the abbreviated list of organizing steps below must be seen as a rough guide, to be adapted by each city. For more details under each step, download the full Organizing Steps Guide.



### Build community knowledge and interest.

- Anyone can start this.
- Become familiar with GreenStep best practices.
- Talk with key people and organizations.
- Invite, as needed, a GreenStep program representative to your city.
- Conduct an inventory of completed, planned and desired best practices.
- Discuss with an official city body.



### Approve a city council resolution to work toward GreenStep Cities recognition.

- Use the sample resolution.
- Introduce a resolution to the city council.
- Specify a GreenStep coordinator and a few best practices to implement.



### Register and post initial information on the GreenStep Cities web site.

*Note: During summer and fall 2010 the MPCA may need to enter information onto the GreenStep web site for you until the web site is fully interactive and self-serve.*

- E-mail your city resolution and GreenStep contact information to the MPCA.
- Enter simple information about your city.
- Indicate which best practices the city initially plans to implement.
- Provide brief detail on best practices previously implemented.

**Congratulations! You are now recognized as a Step One GreenStep City! During fall 2010 there will be Step One recognition artwork/materials you can use to let others know of your accomplishment.**



### Get organized to begin work on implementing best practices.

- As needed, educate city staff and officials about sustainability.
- Convene a small working group.
- Specify implementation action(s) and a lead person for each best practice.
- Prepare a simple work plan for implementing each best practice.
- Have your GreenSteps steering committee review each best practice work plan.
- Present the best practice plans to a city body or to the city council as appropriate.



### Begin working to implement best practices.

- Keep everyone moving and celebrate success.
- Clarify, as needed, what constitutes completing an action with the MPCA GreenStep program coordinator.
- Briefly describe implemented best practices on the GreenStep web site.
- Request credit for any "custom actions."

**Congratulations! When you have implemented 4, 6 or 8 best practices (depending on your city category) you are now recognized as a Step Two GreenStep City! During fall 2010 there will be Step Two recognition artwork/materials you can use to let others know of your accomplishment.**



What are the benefits to being a GreenStep city?



What category is my city in?



What's required to be a Greenstep city?



Download a sample resolution.



FAQ about Greenstep details.





### Keep on working and be recognized for higher steps.

- Implementing a particular best practice action may take months 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.
- GreenStep Cities Step Four program requirements will be developed during 2011, as we learn from cities during 2010, to challenge recognized GreenStep Cities to implement more actions and be recognized for these accomplishments. We think GreenStep best practices will result in multiple benefits for your city and that you will want to continuously work on best practices that make your city more sustainable.

Congratulations! When you have implemented 8, 12 or 16 best practices (depending on your city category) you are now recognized as a Step Three GreenStep City! During 2011 there will be Step Three recognition artwork/materials you can use to let others know of your accomplishment.



### GreenStep Cities Step Four

- GreenStep Cities Step Four program requirements will be developed during 2011, as we learn from cities during 2010, to challenge recognized GreenStep Cities to implement more actions and be recognized for these accomplishments. We think GreenStep best practices will result in multiple benefits for your city and that you will want to continuously work on best practices that make your city more sustainable.



CITY OF HOPKINS  
HENNEPIN COUNTY

RESOLUTION 2010-040

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Adopted by the City Council of the City of Hopkins, Minnesota, this 1st day of November, 2010.

By: Eugene J. Maxwell  
Mayor Eugene Maxwell  
STATE OF MINNESOTA }  
COUNTY OF HENNEPIN } ss.  
CITY OF HOPKINS

ATTEST

Debra L. Spierling  
City Clerk

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, DEBORAH L. SPERLING, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE CITY OF HOPKINS, HENNEPIN COUNTY, MINNESOTA AND CUSTODIAN OF THE SEAL AND RECORDS OF SAID CITY DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE ABOVE OR FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND CORRECT TRANSCRIPT AND THAT THE WHOLE ORIGINAL RECORD THEREOF PRESERVED AND ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF SAID CITY CLERK.

DEPUTY CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF HOPKINS