



MN GreenStep Cities Update to City Council

January 4, 2010



Minnesota **GreenStep Cities**

What is the **GreenStep Cities** program?

- **Voluntary** challenge to MN cities from the MN PCA to help cities achieve their sustainability goals
- Provides 28 Best Practices (BPs) grouped into 5 general categories
- A city can achieve compliance with a BP by completing a number of **actions** that have been designated by the PCA
 - Some actions are required to achieve compliance, others are optional
 - Intermediate **Steps** are recognized by the PCA as cities pass benchmarks of completed actions



Minnesota GreenStep Cities

5 GreenStep Best Practices Categories

- **Buildings & Lighting:** Green Building Standards, Efficient Lighting, Building Reuse, etc.
- **Land Use:** Comprehensive Plan, Higher Density & Efficient Development, Conservation Design, etc.
- **Transportation:** Complete Green Streets, Mobility Options, City Fleets, etc.
- **Environmental Management:** Purchasing, Urban Forests, Stormwater Management, Water Quality, etc.
- **Economic & Community Development:** Community Engagement, Green Business, Renewable Energy, Local Food, etc.

More information on the GreenStep Cities website:

<http://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us>



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Example of Actions Required for a BP

- **Transportation Category**

- Green Complete Streets Best Practice (3 required Actions)

- Required Action

- Adopt Complete Streets Policy

- Also required to complete at least **two** of the following:

- Zoning language to create LEED-style Neighborhood Development credits for Walkable Streets or Street Network

- Document installation of trees and green stormwater infrastructure and utility renovations as part of at least one street reconstruction project

- Identify and remedy non-complete street segments

- Identify and remedy street-trail gaps (at least one)

- Implement traffic calming measures in at least one street redevelopment project



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Actions Required to Achieve BPs

- Northfield is a Category A city due to its size, types of municipal services, etc. (see Council packet for completed worksheet)
- Category A cities must complete roughly 36* actions to achieve compliance with all BP requirements
 - While certain BPs are required, the city has some flexibility in choosing which actions to pursue to achieve compliance
 - A total of 168 actions are listed. Most are optional.

*There is some confusion on the GreenStep Cities website about how many BPs and actions are absolutely required. This is reflected in the different number provided in the Council packet.



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GreenStep Program Requirements			City Category		
			C	B	A
Buildings & Lighting	1	Efficient Existing Public Buildings		Required	Required
	2	Efficient Existing Private Buildings			
	3	New Green Buildings			
	4	Efficient Building & Street Lighting and Signals			
	5	Building Reuse			
Buildings & Lighting BPs Required			1	2	2
Land Use	6	Comprehensive Planning and Implementation	Required	Required	Required
	7	Higher Density			
	8	Efficient and Healthy Development Patterns			
	9	Efficient Highway-Oriented Development			
	10	Conservation Design			
Land Use BPs Required			1	2	2
Transportation	11	Complete Green Streets			Required
	12	Mobility Options			Required
	13	Efficient City Fleets			
	14	Demand-Side Travel Planning			
Transportation BPs Required			1	1	2
Environmental Management	15	Environmentally Preferable Purchasing	Required	Required	Required
	16	Urban Forests		Required	Required
	17	Efficient Stormwater Management			Required
	18	Green Infrastructure			
	19	Surface Water Quality			
	20	Efficient Water and Wastewater Facilities			
	21	Septic Systems			
	22	Solid Waste Reduction			
	23	Local Air Quality			
Environmental BPs Required			1	3	4
Economic, Community Development	24	Benchmarks & Community Engagement	Required	Required	Required
	25	Green Business Development		Required	Required
	26	Renewable Energy			
	27	Local Food			
	28	Business Synergies			
Development BPs Required			1	2	3
Floating BPs (additional to required BPs)			3	2	3
Total BPs Required (including floating)			8	12	16



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Where do we stand now?

- City Council adopted a resolution (2010-049, 6/15/2010) to participate in the GreenStep Cities program as a means to achieve the city's sustainability goals
- The city has registered through the GreenStep website and has entered a few of the existing actions that the city has already completed (e.g. Comprehensive Plan)
- Northfield is currently a Step 1 GreenStep City
- The city must complete 8 BPs to become a Step 2 GreenStep City, 16 to become a Step 3 GreenStep City
- The program is evolving and the requirements for the additional Steps will be made available in 2011



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Next Steps

- City Staff will continue work to organize the required actions
 - Identify status of action (completed, nearly complete, new initiative)
 - Identify city departments, boards & commissions, local public and private bodies that can contribute and facilitate the program actions
 - Develop initial prioritization for uncompleted actions
- Seek direction from Council to initiate work by city staff, boards, and commissions on uncompleted actions
 - Work session in late January or early February
- Seek Council help in creating liaisons with local groups and governing bodies who can participate