



City of Columbia Heights | *Community Development*

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March 11, 2025

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road N
St. Paul, MN 55155-4194

MPCA Staff:

The City of Columbia Heights Sustainability Commission is pleased to express its strong support for the City's host site application for the Minnesota GreenCorps Program. The City, along with members of the Sustainability Commission, developed an Energy Action Team through Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy process amongst other sustainability initiatives.

Through a series of five workshops the past year, the City created focus areas for the Energy Action Plan to provide opportunities for residential, commercial and municipal operations such as; energy efficiency, reducing energy burden for low-income residents, renewable energy, and beneficial electrification. Other outcomes from the workshops have included identifying stakeholders, communication channels, trusted places and groups, and key audiences that should be engaged as part of the Energy Action Plan.

Columbia Heights intends to increase energy program participation by at least 30% between 2025 and 2030 to save the community an estimated \$4.6 million and increase energy savings 63% by 2030. The City is in a position to actively support a Minnesota GreenCorps member by integrating their workplan into different aspects of city processes and provide a pathways for interested people to work in a local government setting.

Our community has identified critical needs to implement a multi-lingual outreach campaign to educate residents and highlight programs/resources that residents and businesses can participate in or benefit from; assist in developing a public-facing GIS dashboard to track sustainability initiatives; and identify opportunities to integrate sustainable practices into existing city workflows and recommendations for staff to pursue.

We are eager to support the AmeriCorps program and serve as a host site for a member to participate as part of our diverse community. This program represents a significant opportunity to advance our city's community readiness and outreach. The City is also participating in SolSmart and is a MN GreenStep City seeking to achieve Step 3, so there will also be opportunities to engage with those programs and include progress towards Step 3 as part of the workplan.

Thank you for considering our letter of support.

Sincerely,

Chairperson Jensen Christen