



Executive Summary

City Council Workshop

AGENDA ITEM: Green Step Cities
PREPARED BY: Rochelle Arvizo, Council Member
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Discussion & Decision

Summary: Embracing a sustainable future through GreenStep Cities

This executive summary provides an overview of the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program and its potential benefits for our city, to inform our upcoming city council workshop. The GreenStep Cities program is a voluntary and free initiative that focuses on continuous improvement, assistance, and recognition for cities striving to achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. It is managed through a public-private partnership and offers a flexible framework of 29 best practices tailored to the diverse needs of cities across Minnesota.

Key program highlights

- **Continuous Improvement:** GreenStep is a structured pathway for cities to progress toward greater sustainability and resilience.
- **Cost Savings and Efficiency:** It enables cities to implement cost-effective measures that reduce energy use, decrease their carbon footprint, and enhance overall resource efficiency.
- **Tailored to Minnesota:** The program is specifically designed for cities in Minnesota, providing a wealth of information and resources that cater to the state's unique needs.
- **Flexibility and Local Control:** Cities maintain complete control over which of the optional best practices to implement, ensuring alignment with local priorities.
- **Knowledge Sharing and Networking:** Access to over 4,000 reports from other participating cities facilitates learning and collaboration, according to [GreenStep Cities](#).

- **Funding and Technical Assistance:** GreenStep Cities often gain access to special funding and technical support opportunities.
- **Community Engagement:** It provides opportunities for businesses, institutions, and community members to participate in and contribute to local sustainability efforts actively.
- **Public Recognition:** The program offers public recognition for cities making strides towards sustainability, including awards and showcasing their accomplishments on the GreenStep website.

The path to becoming a GreenStep City:

Formal participation starts when a city council adopts a resolution expressing its intent to engage with the program. The program encourages the appointment of a GreenStep Coordinator to help facilitate implementation. Many cities achieve success by establishing a dedicated committee or by utilizing existing commissions to oversee the process.

Why GreenStep now?

Embracing GreenStep Cities demonstrates our commitment to responsible resource management, promoting a healthy environment, and improving the quality of life for our residents. By participating in this program, we can enhance our city's sustainability efforts, achieve cost savings, and access a supportive network of resources and expertise. This workshop offers an excellent opportunity to explore how our city can utilize GreenStep Cities to address its specific needs and accelerate its sustainability journey.