



HIGH-IMPACT ACTIONS FOR LOW-CARBON MN CITIES

Updated September 2022 www.rccmn.co/high-impact-actions/

Comments, questions or suggestions? Please Contact:

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Annual City County Climate Action Conference

www.rccmn.co/city-county-climate-action-check-in-events/

RSVP to join us & bring a team of 3-5 or more! www.Oct6City-County-Climat Action.eventbrite.com

Meet with teams from 40 cities & find practical support for your city's next steps to implement high impact actions for low-carbon buildings, energy, transportation, resilience, equity, green jobs & zero waste

Thursday, October 6 Virtual Conference [Zoom Link](#)

- **Audience** City & county staff, elected leaders, commission & community volunteers and community, nonprofit, business, utility, watershed and university implementation partners.

Two options to attend - choose the time to attend that work best for you

- **Afternoon Session** - Noon to 3pm [Zoom Link](#) (for **city staff, council, commissions**) **Noon Keynote, 1pm Topic Sessions, 2pm County Clusters 3pm Vendor Fair & Networking** (optional)
- **Evening Session** - 6:30pm to 8:30pm [Zoom Link](#) (for **commissions & community volunteers, city council, staff**) **6:30pm Keynote, 7:15pm Topic Sessions, 8pm County Clusters**

We're asking your City's GreenStep or Sustainability Coordinator to fill out our [short survey](#) to let us know

- **which high impact actions your city has already started** (and can share on) &/or is interested in starting &
- **who on your team is working on these actions** (we'll connect them with their peers.)

During Topic Sessions on Oct 6 for each [High Impact Action](#) (25 High Impact City Actions)

- **Experienced cities** will share how they approved & are implementing the actions
- **Resource people** will share current resources & multi-city teams available to support cities
- **Together** we'll brainstorm ways to overcome barriers that would prevent cities from taking the actions
- **Learn how to join multi-city implementation teams and launch new teams** to support our cities' work

HIGH-IMPACT ACTIONS FOR LOW-CARBON MN CITIES

- **BUILDINGS** (Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Multi-Family, Public) www.rccmn.co/buildings/
- **TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE** www.rccmn.co/transportation/
- **ENERGY SUPPLY & SYSTEMS** www.rccmn.co/energy/
- **GREEN JOBS** (equitable workforce & small business development) www.rccmn.co/green-jobs/
- **RESILIENCE/ ADAPTATION, CARBON SEQUESTRATION & HEALTH** www.rccmn.co/resilience/
- **WASTE REDUCTION/ ZERO WASTE** www.rccmn.co/zero-waste/

BUILDINGS www.rccmn.co/buildings/

Existing Public Buildings

Action 1. Efficient Public Buildings - Use the State's B3 public building benchmarking tool to target energy-efficiency improvements. (**City Operations**) **Resources B3** www.b3mn.org/ [GSC BPA 1.1](#)

Existing Commercial Buildings

Action 2. Adopt an Energy Benchmarking Ordinance - for large commercial & multifamily buildings. Join the **Multi-City Team** - [Efficient Buildings Collaborative](#), Hennepin Co. & CEE [GSC BPA 2.3](#) [City of St. Paul Policy](#)

New Commercial & Public Buildings

Action 3. Adopt a Sustainable Building Policy - Require SB2030 for city and/or private new buildings receiving city financial/regulatory support. **Multi-City Team** [Efficient Buildings Collaborative](#), Hennepin Co. & CEE

- **Resources** - [SB 2030](#) Public Buildings, [GSC 3.1](#) Schools [GSC 3.2](#), Commercial Buildings [GSC 3.3](#)

New Commercial, Residential & Mixed Use Developments

Action 4. Update & use City's Planned Unit Development (PUD) Ordinance to educate/engage/incentivize developers to include priority sustainability elements in new commercial, mixed-use & residential developments (including new subdivisions) i.e. SB 2030 design, E.V. & solar ready construction (electrical panel & conduit), solar orientation, affordable housing, landscaping, storm water, bike parking, public space, etc. [GSC BPA#8.3](#) [Addressing the Sustainability Gap in the Development Review Process: Guide](#)

Existing Residential Buildings

Action 5. Require residential Truth in Sale of Housing Inspections & reporting that includes energy data.

- **Resources** - TISH/Energy Disclosure [www.mncee.org/energy-disclosure](#) [Minneapolis](#) [Bloomington](#)

Existing Commercial & Residential Buildings

Action 6. Dedicate 1-stop Residential/Commercial improvement funding for Energy Efficiency, Heat Pumps, Solar, Electric Panel Upgrades, E.V. Chargers, etc.

- **Resources** [City of Minneapolis Green Cost Share](#) & [4D Affordable Housing Incentive](#) /Green Cost Share
- **One Stop Follow Up - Support property owners to make recommended energy improvements** with partners (follow up, financing, list of approved contractors) [Home Energy Squad Follow Up Resources](#),
- **PACE** - Engage businesses to have energy audits and to use PACE to make improvements [MinnPACE](#)
- **Maximize Use of Federal IRA'22 Tax Credits** - Educate/Engage home owners, commercial and residential building owners & developers to use new federal tax credits to weatherize buildings and install air source heat pumps, electrical panel upgrades, efficient lighting, solar, E.V. charging
 - o **Resource** [Fresh Energy Overview](#) climate-friendly tax credits in Federal Inflation Reduction Act Tax

Existing Residential Buildings

Action 7. Remove Barriers/Increase Access for Low Income Households & Renters to make energy Improvements - insulation, air sealing, appliance and HVAC replacement, heat pumps, access to E.V.s

- **Collaborate with CAP agency & partners to engage more low-income households & renters with Energy Efficiency & Assistance Programs** - Utility based & expanded Federal/State Energy Assistance,
- **Resources** [MN Community Action Partnership/Directory](#) [CEE Multifamily Buildings](#) [MN Energy Assistance Program](#) [MN Citizen's Utility Board](#)
- **Participate in Centerpoint's Tariff on Bill Energy Efficiency Pilot** (if approved by PUC) to expand renter EE Participation in your city. Contact [City of Minneapolis Sustainability Office](#)/Clean Energy Partnership

TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE [www.rccmn.co/transportation/](#)

Action 8. Compact Development Adopt policy that demonstrably increases overall city residential and/or commercial density. **Resource** [GSC BP#7](#)

Action 9. Update Zoning to Enable Transit Oriented Development & Complete Neighborhoods - Adopt mixed-use by-right zoning, along with TIF districts & PUDs (Action 4) to increase complete neighborhoods. [GSCBP#8](#)

Action 10. Adopt a complete streets policy that includes green infrastructure. [GSC BP#11](#)

Action 11. Continually increase bike/walk/transit infrastructure funding. [GSC BP#11](#)

Action 12. Reduce or eliminate parking minimums & price curb and structured parking. [Resource Guide](#)

Action 13. Adopt a travel demand management &/or transit-oriented development ordinance. [GSC BP#14](#)

Action 14. Adopt make-ready EV conduit standards for parking lots and/or commercial/multi-family. [Drive Electric MN Becoming E.V. Ready](#) [Summary of Best Practices in E.V. Ordinances](#)

ENERGY www.rccmn.co/energy/

Action 15. City Purchasing Policies - Continually increase City use of renewable energy [GSC BP#15.2](#)

Adopt City purchasing policy that prioritizes energy-efficient, low-impact products & services [GS#15](#)

If a Muni, adopt accelerating targets for RE generation/purchases I.E.: [Rochester Public Utilities Goals](#)

Action 16. Certify as a solar-ready community [GSC BP#26.7](#) [MN Sol Smart Cities Guide](#)

Action 17. Adopt a PACE resolution to facilitate commercial/industrial EE/RE financing [GSC BP#26.3](#) [MinnPace](#)

Action 18. Support municipal, residential & commercial solar installation (community solar, solar group buys, solar feasibility studies) [GSC BP#26](#) Promote resident/business purchases of clean energy [GSC BP#26.2](#)

GREEN JOBS - equitable workforce & small business development www.rccmn.co/green-jobs/

Action 19. Establish purchasing preferences/scoring that support local, Minority, Disability, and Women-Owned businesses and, working with a local business association, develop a list of locally-produced products and suppliers for common purchases. [GSC BPA# 15.3](#) [MN OES](#), [Contracting for Equity: Local Governments](#)

RESILIENCE/ ADAPTATION, CARBON SEQUESTRATION & COMMUNITY HEALTH www.rccmn.co/resilience/

Action 20. Adopt, budget for & achieve urban tree canopy coverage & diversity goals [GSC BP#16.3](#)

- Diversify trees on boulevards/city land [GSC BP16.4](#) , Provide Incentives for Tree Planting on Private Property

Action 21. Adopt a [Tree Preservation Ordinance](#) &/or [Model Landscape Ordinance](#) for a Municipal Zoning Code (GS GSC BP 3.1, 3.3, 3.5, 7.5, 10.4, 10.6, 16.5) topics covered include soil and tree health, biodiversity, water infiltration, irrigation, sun and wind orientation, parking lots, and industrial buffer yards

Action 22. Protect public buildings and natural/constructed infrastructure to reduce physical damage and sustain their function during extreme weather events. [GSC BPA# 29.5](#)

- Edina [Living Streets Policy](#), [Flood Risk Reduction Strategy](#) , [Homeowner Education on Flooding & Drainage](#)

Action 23. Emergency Preparedness & Community Connections & Healthy Food Access

- **Emergency Preparedness** Prepare to maintain public health and safety during extreme weather and climate-change-related events, while also taking a preventive approach to reduce risk for community members. [GSBPA #29.1](#)
- **Community Connections** Increase social connectedness through engagement, capacity building, public investment, and opportunities for economically vulnerable residents to improve their economic prosperity. [GSBPA # 29.3](#)
- **Healthy Food Access** - Strengthen local food and fiber production and access. (1) Working Landscapes (2) Community Gardens (3) Local Food Distribution [GSC #27](#)

WASTE REDUCTION/ ZERO WASTE www.rccmn.co/zero-waste/

Action 24. Adopt policies to demonstrably increase materials reuse and/or organics collection, commercial food waste prevention [GSC BP#22](#)

Action 25. Adopt a construction and demolition waste ordinance that requires reuse/recycling [GSC BP#22.8](#) [GSBPA #29.1](#) & [GSBPA # 29.3](#)

County Cluster Related Actions

BUILDINGS www.rccmn.co/buildings/

City/County Coordinated Investments **New Commercial & Residential Buildings**

Make the most of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) and Large Site Redevelopments to advance net zero construction, affordability & equity, complete neighborhoods, district energy, ground source heat pumps, solar, transit, bike/ped, shared E.V.s, storm water/ecological restoration, community spaces

- **Resources** [MN Design Center](#), **Guide** [Addressing the Sustainability Gap in the Development Review Process](#)
- **Large Sites** - Ford Site, Hillcrest, Rice Creek Commons, Towerside, Brooklyn Center Opportunity Site, etc.
- **TOD Corridors** - BRT: A Line, Orange Line, Red Line LRT: Green Line, Blue Line **Passenger Rail** corridors

Advancing State & Federal Policies **New Commercial & Large Multi-Family Buildings**

Support Improvements to State Building Efficiency Standards & optional local stretch building code

- **Support Legislation** requiring MN state level energy building standards to upgrade every 3 years to match new model standards **Better Buildings for MN** (6 cities) www.betterbuildingsmn.org/ [Blog Post](#)
- **Support legislation** allowing Cities to adopt a **Stretch Building Code** for Commercial Buildings [Link](#)
- **Update Intl. model energy codes** - City Building Inspectors participating w ICC every 3 years [MEEA Blog](#)

TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE www.rccmn.co/transportation/

City/County Coordinated Investments

Coordinated VMT Reduction - City & County representatives meeting to coordinate & align county transportation investments and city land use policies to reduce VMT, expand access, equity, safety, mode shifts, (transit, bike, ped, telework, hybrid commuting) E.V. car sharing, mobility hubs, shared & advanced mobility and make the most of Transit Oriented Development & large site re-developments.

- **Resources** [MN Climate Action Framework](#) [Met Council Transportation Advisory Board](#), [Hennepin Co. VMT Reduction Goal](#) [County Streets for People](#) [MNDOT STAC Recommendations](#)
- **Coordinate City/County/Community planning for road improvements** (mill & overlays, reconstruction) to advance complete streets, bike/ped. safety, transit access, 3 to 4 conversions, green infrastructure, flood mitigation. **Resources** [GSC BP#11.6](#), [Richfield Sweet Streets](#), [Hennepin Co Complete/Green Streets Policy](#), [Ramsey Co Road Maintenance](#) & [Active Living Ramsey Communities](#)

City-County Coordinated E.V. Infrastructure planning & investments and vehicle procurement to expand City & County E.V. Fleets, E.V. Charging Infrastructure, E.V. Car Sharing and Electric Busses. **Resources** [MNDOT E.V. Infrastructure Planning](#) [Drive Electric MN/Cities Charging Ahead](#)

Advancing State & Federal Policies

Support sustained transit & transportation investments (federal, state, metro & county) & **monitor & re-prioritize transportation investments** to reduce VMT & GHGs & expand electrification, access & equity.

Resources [Move MN](#), [Federal IIJA \\$ in MN](#), [Bus Fleet Electrification & Plan](#), [Met Council Transit Project Plans](#)

ENERGY - www.rccmn.co/energy/

City/County Coordinated Investments

Cities, county, community & utility representatives meeting to plan ways to meet local 100% renewable energy access goals & produce renewable natural gas (anaerobic digestion, methane capture) **Resources:** [Partners in Energy Partnership on Waste & Energy|Hennepin |Ramsey|Washington](#) , [Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership](#)

Advancing State & Federal Policies

Support MN legislation to extend the [solar rewards program](#) and expand [solar on schools](#).

GREEN JOBS - equitable workforce & small business development www.rccmn.co/green-jobs/

City/County Coordinated Investments

Plan ways to wisely invest IJIA Workforce Development Funds to expand equitable access to green workforce development, hiring, business development & contracting opportunities. County Workforce Development Board brings together, cities, employers, schools, unions, utilities & minority contractors to **Example:** [St. Paul/Ramsey Co./ Unions/Chamber](#) **Resources:** [MN Workforce Development Board](#), Local [Workforce Development Boards](#), [MN WIOA Plan](#) , **Study:** [Four proven ways to invest new federal IJIA funds to create good jobs, boost equity, and support good value.](#)

RESILIENCE/ ADAPTATION, CARBON SEQUESTRATION & COMMUNITY HEALTH www.rccmn.co/resilience/

City/County Coordinated Investments

Expand tree canopy through coordinated county-city investments - focus on equity & heat islands

- Met Council [Growing Shade Tool](#) [Climate Vulnerability - Localized Flooding & Extreme Heat Maps](#)

Integrate Resilience in infrastructure through coordinated county-city investments (Fed IJIA Funds)

Update & co-implement County-Wide All Hazard Mitigation (emergency preparedness) & **Natural Resources Plans** with county, cities and community-based organizations.

- **Address climate risks** (flooding, heat, air quality, backup power). **Preserve & restore natural resources** & manage invasive species. **Strengthen community connections** (CERT Teams, Resilience Hubs)
- **Learn about & give feedback to strengthen** [Hennepin County's Natural Resources Plan](#) during our [Oct 6, City County Climate Action Conference](#) afternoon & evening **Resilience** sessions.

Address cumulative air quality impacts (and heat islands) **in priority areas through City-County-Community Collaboration.**

- In areas with high asthma & heart disease rates, conduct cumulative air quality impact studies and plan & implement actions to reduce point source & mobile source air pollution, electrify busses & heavy vehicles, prevent highway expansion, mitigate air pollution through tree planting and reach out to households experiencing asthma to improve indoor air quality & boost health care participation and health outcomes.

Resources [MPCA Air Quality](#), [MDH Air Quality](#), [Climate & Health](#),

- [MPCA Interactive Map Areas of EJ Concern](#), [MN DOT Sustainability & Public Health](#),
- [City of Mpls Health Dept. Air Quality](#) [Minneapolis Green Zones](#), [Our Streets Minneapolis/i94](#)
- [Hennepin Co. Climate Action Plan \(p. 22\)](#) [Hennepin Co. Public Health Climate Action Committee](#)
- [MN EJ Table/Frontline Communities](#), [MCEA](#), [Clean Air MN](#)

WASTE REDUCTION/ ZERO WASTE www.rccmn.co/zero-waste/

City/County Coordinated Investments

Update County-Wide Solid Waste Master Plan & expand city/county/community implementation partnerships to set and achieve ambitious waste diversion/zero waste goals.

- MN statute requires metro counties to prepare master plans every six years that identify strategies to meet the recycling goals and objectives in the state's [Metro Area Solid Waste Management Policy Plan](#).
- **Learn about & give feedback to strengthen** [Hennepin County's Draft Zero Waste Plan](#) During our [Oct 6, City County Climate Action Conference](#) Zero Waste session www.beheardhennepin.org/zero-waste-future

Advancing State & Federal Policies

Support State-Level Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Legislation

- Partnership on Waste & Energy [MN EPR Timeline](#) [2022 Legislative Platform](#)

BEST PRACTICES for CITY, COUNTY & REGIONAL GREEN TEAMS

GreenStep City Best Practice: Benchmarks and Community Engagement {BP No. 24} Adopt outcome measures for GreenStep and other city sustainability efforts, and engage community members in ongoing education, dialogue, and campaigns. (Resilient Economic and Community Development)

Greenstep Advisor BPA #24 Sean Gosiewski, Resilient Cities & Communities: 612/250-0389, sean@rccmn.co ; www.rccmn.co/commissions

Best Practice Actions

1. Inclusive and Coordinated Decision-Making: Use a city commission or committee to lead, coordinate, report to and engage community members on the identification & equitable implementation of sustainability best practices.

Great Examples

- Host an **Annual City Sustainability Work Plan Review Session** with your City's Sustainability Commission, & City Council & staff green team to review all that you accomplished in the current year and present your updated work plan for the coming year (and receive feedback to modify & strengthen it) to stay on track to meet your city's climate and sustainability goals - example - Bloomington's [Annual Sustainability Reports](#) and [City of Bloomington Sustainability Commission Annual Work Plan](#)
- Co-organize & participate in an **Annual City-County Climate Action Check In Event** - with city and county leaders, community members and implementation partners www.rccmn.co/county-clusters/
- Create a 3 to 5 year **Climate Action Work Plan for your City** (with a consultant, community & partners) Example - [Red Wing Climate Action Work Plan \(2020 - 2025\)](#) GPI post [Climate Action Work Plans Can Provide Cities More Accessible, Near-Term Strategies](#) Feb 5, 2020 Author: Abby Finis
- Create a **Regional Climate Action Plan** and **Dashboard** to guide the implementation of cities and counties in your region with your regional planning agency or MPO Examples: **Region 5 Development Commission** (North Central) www.regionfive.org [The Central Minnesota Sustainable Development Plan](#) **Region 9 Development Commission** (South Central) www.rndc.org [Sustainable Development Dashboard](#) Region 9 [Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan](#)

2. Communicating Progress on Goals: Organize goals/outcome measures from all city plans (social, environmental, economic) and report to community members data that show progress toward meeting these goals.

3. Measuring Outcomes: Engage community members and partners in identifying, measuring, and reporting progress on key sustainability and social indicators/ including energy use/greenhouse gas emissions, social vitality/social inclusion outcome measures.

Become A Step 4 & 5 Green Step City **Step 4:** Measure and report a minimum number of core and optional metrics for the previous calendar year or the most recent available data **Step 5:** Demonstrate improvement three eligible metrics measured in Step 4, from one data year to the next.

4. Public Education for Action: Conduct or support a broad sustainability education and action campaign, building on existing city & community relationships, networks & events involving:

- a. The entire community, community leaders
- b. Homeowners, manufactured home communities, landlords and tenants
- c. Community-based organizations, block clubs, neighborhood associations, front yards/sidewalks
- d. Congregations, e. Schools, colleges.

5. Planning with a Purpose: Conduct a community visioning and planning initiative that engages a diverse set of community members & stakeholders and uses a sustainability, resilience, or environmental justice framework such as: a. Strong Towns, Resiliency, Transition, Appreciative Inquiry. b. Eco-municipalities, Smart Cities, Healthy Communities. c. Environmental Justice, Race Equity, Equitable Development.

6. Engaging the Next Generation: Engage wide representation of community youth and college students by creating opportunities to participate in city government (including commissions).

7. Expanding Community Engagement: Engage Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), renters, low-income, new Americans, differently abled and other traditionally under-represented community members by encouragement, and support to participate in current and new opportunities in city government.

High Impact Actions for Oct 6, '22 Conference **Topic Group Discussions**, www.rccmn.co/high-impact-actions/ p. 6