



# Resilient Cities & Communities

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## Resources for High Impact Actions for Low Carbon Cities

MN GreenStep Cities - From Policy to Reality: Updated Model Ordinances for Sustainable Development <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/page/ordinances>

### Met Council

- **Thrive Indicator Dashboard** - Annual community-wide data soon to be available for Metro cities to track their progress on climate and social vitality! An interactive dashboard for continuous improvement, public accountability, and dialogue. Covers the five Thrive outcomes; Stewardship, Prosperity Equity, Livability and Sustainability  
Contact: Mauricio León, Senior Researcher, Met Council, Regional Indicators 651 602-1146 [mauricio.leon@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:mauricio.leon@metc.state.mn.us)  
<https://metro council.org/Planning/Projects/Thrive-2040/Thrive-Indicator-Dashboard.aspx>
- **Met Council Resources** - fact sheets, best practices, links to effective actions.  
[https://metro council.org/Handbook/Resources.aspx#tab\\_3](https://metro council.org/Handbook/Resources.aspx#tab_3)
- **PlanIt Workshop Handouts** <https://metro council.org/Handbook/PlanIt/Workshops.aspx>
- **Expert Articles** <https://metro council.org/Handbook/PlanIt/Expert-Articles.aspx>

**Urban Sustainability Directors Network: High Impact Practices** <https://www.usdn.org/projects.html>

### Drake University Sustainable Development Code Project

<https://libguides.law.drake.edu/c.php?g=151009&p=6764030>

**Ordinance Research Tips** <https://libguides.law.drake.edu/c.php?g=151009&p=992721>

**Sustainable Development Code (SDC)** <https://sustainablecitycode.org/>

is organized into 32 subject areas (called subchapters), such as climate change, wind energy, energy conservation and efficiency, urban forestry, and coastal hazards. For each subchapter, the SDC lists 30-40 concrete policy actions local governments can take to become more sustainable in that particular area. The policy actions are listed in a three-by-three grid and are categorized by: creating incentives; removing obstacles; & filling regulatory gaps (listed as good, better, best.)

**Xcel Energy – Community Energy reports (community wide annual energy use data**

[https://www.xcelenergy.com/working\\_with\\_us/municipalities/community\\_energy\\_reports](https://www.xcelenergy.com/working_with_us/municipalities/community_energy_reports)

## High Impact Actions for Low Carbon Cities – RCC leader conversations

Resilient Cities & Communities convened leaders from 30 metro cities to prioritize high impact actions their cities could implement together to achieve their 2040 Comp Plan climate goals. A summary of these goals follows.

- **West Metro Cities Climate Action Conversation** Wed Jan 22, 2020 St. Louis Park City – with 60 citizen leaders and/or city staff from 14 cities joined us
- **East Metro Cities Climate Action Conversation** Thurs Feb 13, 2020, Roseville - with 60 citizen leaders and/or city staff from 16 cities



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## High Impact Actions for Low Carbon Cities

### Energy Efficiency / High Performance Buildings - related resources

[www.rccmn.co/buildings](http://www.rccmn.co/buildings) [Buildings Group Packet](#)

New building construction and existing building retrofits

Action 1. **Adopt an Energy Benchmarking Ordinance**

Action 2. **Commercial & Multifamily Engagement** Partners in Energy, PACE, Cost Share Grants

Action 3. **Adopt a Sustainable Building Policy** Performance construction with city investments

Action 4. **New Buildings - Educating Developers** Xcel design assistance, PACE funding

Action 5. **Supporting Legislation or Statewide Policy Improvements** net-zero construction

Action 6. **Truth in Sale of Housing Inspections** Adding an energy audit and energy score

Action 7. **Cities comments on Inclusive Financing docket with the PUC** Completed June 2020

### Clean Energy - related resources [www.rccmn.co/energy](http://www.rccmn.co/energy) [Energy Group Packet](#)

City operations, local solar, community-wide access to renewable energy

Action 1. **Procuring Renewable Energy for City Operations**

Action 2. **Solar Ready Building Construction** City owned buildings, businesses, multifamily

Action 3. **Expanding Rooftop Solar within City** Businesses, Institutions (schools), Residents

Action 4. **Support Legislation to Continue Xcel Energy's Solar Rewards 2021**

Action 5. **Cities commenting on Xcel's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)** October 2020 deadline

### Low Carbon Transportation / Land Use - related resources

[www.rccmn.co/transportation](http://www.rccmn.co/transportation) [Transportation Group Packet](#)

Electric vehicles, transit investment, bike, walkability, equitable TOD, in-fill redevelopment

Action 1. **Support sustained state, regional & county transit investments** Reprioritize spending

Action 2. **Prioritize pedestrians, bikes, transit in public right of ways** complete streets

Action 3. **Plan for equitable in-fill redevelopment** Net Zero, Equitable, Walkable, TOD

Action 4. **Support increased adoption of Electric Vehicles** City Fleets, E.V. Charging Ordinance

Action 5. **Shared Mobility** Joint powers agreements to regulate shared mobility modes

**Future Conversation Topics:** We will convene city leaders to prioritize together high impact actions to cover additional areas including climate adaptation and resilience, including urban carbon capture, solid waste management, green economic development, and equitable development strategies.





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## West Metro Cities Climate Action Conversation

**Wed Jan 22, 6:30pm to 8:30pm** at the St. Louis Park City Hall - Co-Hosted by the St. Louis Park Environment and Sustainability Commission – 60 citizen leaders and/or city staff from 14 cities joined us for lively conversations. Including Bloomington, Champlin, Chanhassen, Chaska, Edina, Eden Prairie, Golden Valley, Hopkins, Minnetonka, Minneapolis, Plymouth, Richfield St. Anthony Village, St. Louis Park and Wayzata. [www.afors.org/westmetro](http://www.afors.org/westmetro) [www.rccmn.co/westmetro](http://www.rccmn.co/westmetro)

### AGENDA & Introduction to RCC [Jan22ProgramWestMetroCities](#)

#### Notes and Next Steps – Jan 22 [Jan22NotesWestMetroCitiesClimateConversation](#)

- **Clean Energy Supply** – Erin Niehoff & Stacy Miller – Mpls, Dan Katzenberger – Eden Prairie, Nicole Ciulla, St. Louis Park Handouts [Energy. Final Group Packet](#)
- **Efficient Buildings** – Tim Sandry – Bloomington, Leah Hiniker – Hennepin County, John Dunlop, Minneapolis/MREA Handouts [Buildings. Final Group Packet](#)
- **Transportation** – Jennifer Munt Mtkka, Brian Ross GPI, Jeff Meek MnDOT Handouts [Transportation. Final Group Packet](#)

[Notes and Next Steps](#) **March 18** zoom meeting on Hennepin County's Resilience Plan with leaders from 6 cities with 3 Hennepin County Commissioners efforts

## East Metro Cities Climate Action Conversation

**Thurs Feb 13, 6:30 pm 2020**, Roseville Library <http://afors.org/eastmetro/> Co-Hosted with Resource staff from Ramsey County, GreenStep Cities and the Met Council - 60 east metro citizen leaders and/or city staff from 16 cities joined us for lively conversations. Including Arden Hills, Falcon Heights, Maplewood, North Oaks, Roseville, Shoreview, St. Paul, St. Anthony Village, White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights, Columbia Heights, Coon Rapids, Fridley, Eagan, Inver Grove Heights, Mendota Heights [www.afors.org/eastmetro](http://www.afors.org/eastmetro) [www.rccmn.co/eastmetro](http://www.rccmn.co/eastmetro)

- **PROGRAM** [Feb13EastMetroCitiesClimateActionProgram](#)
- **Clean Energy** – Mary T'kach Ramsey County Energy Manager [Energy Group Packet](#)
- **Efficient Buildings** – Kurt Schultz St. Paul PED, Peter Lindstrom Met Council [Buildings Group Packet](#)
- **Transportation & Land Use** – Phil Muessig, Barb Thoman [Transportation Group Packet](#)

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## 32 High-Impact Policy Options for Low-Carbon Cities

Compiled by Phil Muessig, 612 437-8415 [pmuessig@yahoo.com](mailto:pmuessig@yahoo.com) RCC Board Member and co-founder of Mn GreenStep Cities

While Minnesota has made significant strides to mitigate climate change - renewable energy now accounts for 21% of in-state electricity generation - we missed the Legislature's 2015 greenhouse gas emission target and will miss the 2025 target without additional work. **Fully one-third of these state GHG emissions will be determined by and occur within cities.** 32 action options, focused on **policies cities can choose to adopt**, are recommended by the MN GreenStep Cities program for city consideration. Analysis shows that these 32 actions deliver (1) significant GHG reductions, (2) long-term and (for many actions) short-term cost savings, and (3) sustainability co-benefits such as improved quality of life for community members and environmental benefits such as improved local ecosystems. Actions supportive of these policies - such as community sustainability education and engagement, and work with the local school district and businesses - are included on the GreenStep web site.

See online model ordinances, policies and related resources linked to each policy option below. Each option is a unique GreenStep best practice action, whose number is noted.

### Building Policy Options

- ❖ For existing buildings
  - [Use the State's B3](#) public building benchmarking tool to target energy-efficiency improvements {1.1}
  - [Require commercial building energy benchmarking](#) (using Hennepin Co. registry) to incentivize energy- efficiency improvements averaging 1.7% per year {2.3}
  - [Require Truth-in-Housing](#) residential reporting to incentivize and better price more energy-efficient housing {2.3}
  - [Dedicate residential/commercial improvement](#) funding for energy efficiency and renewables {2.6}
  
- ❖ For new buildings
  - [Require the Sustainable Buildings 2030](#) state energy standard for city, and/or commercial/industrial, and/or residential properties that {3.3}
    - receive city financial support, and/or
    - require city regulatory approval (planned unit developments, conditional use permits, rezonings, variances)
  - [Proposed State Legislation to Enable MN Cities to adopt a uniform stretch code](#)  
This provision was included in the House Energy/Jobs Bill in 2019 but not approved) with support from Minneapolis, St. Louis Park and other cities. <https://fresh-energy.org/whats-happening-at-the-legislature-march-update/> The 2016 EQB CSEO report quantifies the financial, energy and carbon savings of new residential and commercial buildings in MN being built to meet SB 2030 standards. <https://www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/climate-change>



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## Land Use Policy Options

- ❖ For one or more zoning districts
  - [Increase urban residential density](#) with accessory dwelling units, single-resident occupancy units, smaller lots, multi-family buildings by-right, senior housing, co-housing, low square-footage houses / apartments {7.2}
  - [Increase urban commercial density](#) by adopting floor-area ratio minimums/bonuses, zero lot-line setbacks {7.3}
  - [Adopt mixed-use zoning](#)/require mixed-use PUDs and/or a form-based zoning code/overlay district {8.0}
  - [Stage city-edge development](#) with an adequate public facilities (concurrency) ordinance {10.2}
  - [Zone for rural residential](#) clusters; adopt density bonuses, authorize transfer/purchase of development rights {10.4}

## Transportation Policy Options

- ❖ For living streets
  - [Adopt a complete streets policy](#) that includes street design standards & maximizes urban tree canopy {11.1}
  - [Expand transit](#) / transit hub coverage and use over time to meet increasing mode-shift targets {12.6}
  - [Improve bike/walk](#) infrastructure over time, by means such as lane reconfigurations (road diets), to meet increasing mode-shift targets {12.1} and {11.6}
- ❖ For downtown, commercial nodes, corridors
  - [Reduce or eliminate parking minimums](#) and/or add parking maximums {14.1}
  - [Price curb & structured parking](#) to aim for a 15% vacancy rate in parking spaces on each block, and favor electric vehicles and for pay-per use vs. monthly contracts in lots, ramps {14.1}
  - [Allocate boulevard & curb space](#) for bike parking and vehicle passenger pick-up/drop-off as part of planning for shared mobility services (bus, taxi, Uber, Lyft) and (shared) autonomous vehicles {6.0}
  - [Adopt a travel demand management / transit-oriented development](#) ordinance {14.4}
  - [Require electric vehicle charging](#) capacity (at least conduit) in new commercial/single, multi-family developments and require the installation of charging stations to mirror the regional electric vehicle adoption rate {3.4}
  - [Prioritize fiber](#) telecommunications infrastructure {12.5}



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## Carbon Sequestration and Waste Reduction Policy Options

- [Adopt urban tree canopy](#) coverage & diversity goals that increase over time {16.3}
- [Implement organics collection](#) (residential food and yard waste) and associated composting {22.5}
- [Provide food waste prevention assistance and](#) food waste management assistance to help restaurants, to help food stores rescue food for food shelves, to help make food-to-hogs arraignments, and to increase food waste composting {25.2}
- [Increase materials reuse](#) with dedicated city staff time and funding to support second-hand/repair stores, Fix-it Clinics, organized garage sales, organized scavenging before large-item trash collection, Community Education classes {22.4}
- [Adopt a construction and demolition waste ordinance](#) that requires a level of recycling and reuse for building materials {22.8}

## Energy Supply Policy Options

- ❖ For city operations
  - [Increase renewable energy](#) purchases/installed generation capacity over time to meet a net-zero greenhouse gas goal; purchases via community solar gardens, renewable energy credits or other means; generation via solar panels and anaerobic digestion, on city buildings and at waste-water treatment plants {15.2} and {26.5}
  - [Adopt a sustainable purchasing policy](#) that prioritizes energy-efficient, low-impact products and services, [such as electric vehicles, for city operations](#) {15.1} and {13.3}
- ❖ For community-wide
  - [Adopt wind energy and/or biomass ordinances](#) that allow, enable or encourage appropriate renewable energy installations {26.1}
  - [Certify as a solar-ready community](#), including an expedited permit process for residents and businesses to install solar energy systems {26.7}
  - [Participate with utilities](#) in their energy-efficiency/renewable energy programs for residential customers {2.1}
  - [Adopt a Property-Assessed Clean Energy](#) resolution to facilitate commercial energy-efficiency / renewable energy financing {26.3}
  - [Assess district energy/co-generation](#) system options on a periodic basis for feasibility {26.6}
  - [Adopt \(if a municipal utility\)](#) accelerating targets for renewable energy generation to meet a net-zero greenhouse gas goal {6.5}

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### Options selected from a review of:

- **Best Practice Actions and City Action Reports** (MN GreenStep Cities <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us>)
- **Climate Solutions and Economic Opportunities** (MN Environmental Quality Board: 2017) at <https://www.eqb.state.mn.us/content/climate-change>
- **High Impact Practices** (Urban Sustainability Directors Network: 2019) at <https://www.usdn.org/public/page/6/Projects>
- **Drawdown Solutions** (Project Drawdown: 2017) <https://www.drawdown.org/solutions-summary-by-rank>



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## MN GreenStep Cities List of High Impact Ordinances

<https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/page/ordinances>

## From Policy to Reality: Updated Model Ordinances for Sustainable Development

### Buildings and Lighting

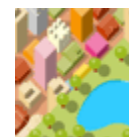
**Energy Efficiency Ordinance** (BPAs [3.1](#), [3.3](#)) The energy efficiency ordinance provides examples of how to incorporate energy efficiency into development regulation and zoning, including setting incentives, setting energy efficiency standards for community participation in private sector development, and using energy efficiency certification programs in development regulation.



**Renters Right to Know Ordinance** (BPA [2.3](#)) Some local utilities send customers (including residential renters and owners) statements listing their energy use/costs in comparison to last month, last year and in comparison to similar building types. To help a would-be rental customer pick an energy-efficient apartment, work done in Bemidji during 2016 by Fresh Energy resulted in a sample ordinance through which a city would require landlords to disclose the energy usage for residential rental properties.

### Land Use

**Agriculture and Forest Protection District** (BPAs [10.2](#), [10.3](#), [10.6](#), [16.5](#), [27.1](#)) The Agriculture and Forest Protection District provides language to protect the economic value of agricultural and forestry resources as a primary and preferred land use. The district is geared toward county and township areas, although the language can be used for cities that want to permanently protect these economic natural resources rather than simply maintaining an urban reserve.



**Model Community Conservation Subdivision District** (BPAs [5.5](#), [10.1](#), [10.5](#)) The conservation subdivision language applies the concepts of conservation design to a zoning district or subdivision ordinance. The model discusses how conservation design is a broad category of development ranging from very urban to very rural. This model provides an example of how conservation design principles meet conservation goals in one type of community; an exurban or agricultural area that is under development pressure.

**Downtown Mixed-Use District** (BPAs [8.3](#), [8.5](#)) The DMU district provides basic language for creating a deliberately mixed use and dense development pattern geared to urban downtown areas.

**Planned Unit Development Ordinance** (BPAs [7.1](#), [7.2](#), [8.3](#), [8.5](#), [10.1](#), [14.2](#), [16.2](#), [18.2](#)) The PUD ordinance is modeled after a typical suburban PUD ordinance and identifies how to incorporate sustainable development concepts such as protection of natural assets, energy efficiency and



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renewable energy, green buildings, state-of-the-art stormwater management and selectively increasing density.

[Highway Commercial District](#) (BPAs [9.3](#), [9.4](#)) The Highway Commercial District demonstrates one example of preferred use standards and design concepts for highway commercial development.

[Village Mixed Use District](#) (BPAs [8.3](#), [8.5](#)) The Village Mixed Use district provides basic language for creating a deliberately mixed use and higher density development pattern geared to very small towns, villages, hamlets, and townships that might not have centralized water or wastewater.

## [Natural Resources Performance](#)

[Standards](#) (BPAs [5.5](#), [10.1](#), [10.3](#), [10.5](#), [10.6](#), [11.1](#), [11.2](#), [16.5](#)) The Natural Resource Performance standards provide examples of designing development around priority natural features, treating natural systems with the same attention as transportation or other built infrastructure. The standards show how local governments can integrate development with specific types of natural features or natural systems that are local priorities.

[Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance](#) (BPAs [6.2](#), [6.3](#), [10.2](#), [11.1](#), [11.2](#)) The APF Ordinance provides language for ensuring that development at the edge of a city or urban area is appropriately staged, consistent with the city's infrastructure capacity and expansion plans.

[Model Code for Accessory Dwelling Units](#) (BPA [7.2](#)) Jurisdictions across the country are responding to a groundswell of public sentiment in favor of this small, discreet, affordable, traditional, and environmentally friendly form of housing, sometimes called alley houses or granny flats. See model language from a national non-profit and a link to a model the AARP and the American Planning Association prepared in 2000.

[Model Landscape Ordinance for a Municipal Zoning Code](#) (See under Environmental Management)

## Transportation

### [Design Standards for Pedestrian-Oriented Districts and](#)

[Corridors](#) (BPAs [9.1](#), [9.4](#), [11.2](#), [14.2](#), [14.3](#)) The pedestrian-oriented design standards identifies methods of incorporating pedestrian-friendly design into development regulations, and provides examples of pedestrian-friendly design.



[Travel Demand Management Performance Standard](#) (BPAs [9.4](#), [14.2](#), [14.3](#)) The Travel Demand Management ordinance provides language for requiring investment in and expansion of infrastructure supporting non-single-occupancy-vehicle travel options during the development process. The ordinance is geared to dense areas or larger cities.

[Transit-Oriented Development](#) (BPAs [9.4](#), [14.2](#), [14.3](#), [14.4](#)) The TOD ordinance provides language for ensuring that development near transit infrastructure has an appropriate mix of



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land uses, sufficiently high density to support the public investment in transit infrastructure, and transit-friendly design of buildings and accessory uses.

[Best Practices in Electric Vehicle Ordinances](#) (BPAs [3.3](#), [9.4](#), [14.1](#)) EV-friendly city zoning ordinances encourage the development of infrastructure necessary to address market barriers to widespread EV adoption by drivers. Developed by Great Plains Institute in 2019, best practice ordinance examples are summarized under eight categories: charging stations as permitted land uses; make-ready standards; supply equipment standards; parking space design & location; parking capacity & minimums; parking use standards; signage & safety; definition of terms.

[Model Snow and Ice Management Policy](#) (BPAs [11.2](#), [17.6](#)) Language developed in 2016 by snow and ice management professionals from cities and counties in diverse areas of Minnesota, watershed districts, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the Minnesota Nursery and Landscape Association, and other stakeholders. The policy balances public interests including public safety, equipment and material cost, and environmental impact. See also a shorter [model Snowplowing Policy](#) from the League of MN Cities.

## Environmental Management

[Chloride Reduction Model Ordinance](#) (BPAs [17.6](#)) Model ordinance language covering four regulatory areas, developed in 2019 by the MPCA and the Nine Mile Creek Watershed District, TetraTech, and several local cities and watershed organizations: (1) Occupational Licensure for Winter Maintenance Professionals; (2) Deicer Bulk Storage Facility Regulations; (3) Land Disturbance Activities; (4) Parking Lot, Sidewalk and Private Road Sweeping Requirements.



[Outdoor Wood Boilers: Model Zoning and Nuisance Ordinances/Codes](#) (BPA [23.2](#)) The MPCA prepared these in 2016 and they include legally defensible performance standards, Minnesota Fire Code language, and permanent or interim bans affecting nuisance, zoning, construction, and operation of wood boilers.

[Natural Resources Performance Standards](#) (See under Land Use)

[Stormwater and Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance](#) (BPA [17.3](#)) The stormwater and erosion control ordinance provides detailed language for integrating a stormwater ordinance with the 2009 Minnesota Construction General permit for stormwater management and erosion control. The ordinance links local standards to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Urban Stormwater Manual.

[Landscaping and Maintenance of Vegetation](#) (BPAs [2.5](#), [10.6](#), [16.5](#), [17.5](#), [18.5](#), [27.1](#)) The landscaping ordinance is modeled on a typical nuisance ordinance, but distinguishes native plantings and other alternatives to turf grass, and defines edible landscaping as a substitute for lawns. The ordinance requires a plan, setbacks, and maintenance of native landscaping to address the nuisance concerns that typically accompany alternatives to turf.

[Solid Waste Ordinances](#) (BPA [22.3](#)) Developed by foth.com of Lake Elmo, MN and GreenStep, this package of model document documents was prepared in 2015 that has: (1) "good," "better" and "best"



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license templates for legal language that would be adopted by ordinance; (2) three RFP Scope of Services Frameworks for use in soliciting solid waste services, and (3) a template for a solid waste services license a city would sign with a service provider.

## [Model Landscape Ordinance for a Municipal Zoning](#)

[Code](#) (BPAs [3.1](#), [3.3](#), [3.5](#), [7.5](#), [10.4](#), [10.6](#), [16.5](#)) Language here, developed by ORANGE Environmental and reviewed by state organizations, regulates the review process for new developments. Based upon Burnsville and Minneapolis code, topics covered include soil and tree health, biodiversity, water infiltration, irrigation, sun and wind orientation, parking lots, and industrial buffer yards.

## Resilient Economic & Community Development

[Solar Energy Standards](#) (BPA [26.7](#)) Ordinance guidance and language is covered in this "Grow Solar Local Government Toolkit: Planning, Zoning, and Permitting."



[Local Food Networks](#) (BPAs [10.2](#), [10.3](#), [10.6](#), [16.5](#), [27.1](#)) The Local Foods ordinance focuses on land use standards that protect food production businesses in agricultural areas under development pressure. The ordinance is geared to suburban and ex-urban communities where residential development and small commercial agriculture occupy the same area.

[Model Wind Energy](#) (BPA [26.1](#)) Prepared in 2017 by the Minnesota Department of Commerce and the Great Plains Institute, the Minnesota Local Government Wind Toolkit provides a model ordinance.