

EXCERPTS
West St. Paul portion only with comments from Michael Orange (JMO)

GreenStep Cities Capstone Project

By

Mike Mrosla

A Capstone Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Urban & Regional Studies MA

In

Urban and Regional Studies Institute

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Mankato, Minnesota

December 2013

Conclusions that need to be confirmed are highlighted in yellow.

From Phil: Hi Michael, I'm thinking, as you help update the inventory for entry onto the GS web site, you should know the current list of entry fields, which are:

- * Attach a PDF under 1 MB that relates to action (optional)
- * URL of web page that relates to action? (optional)
- * Implementation detail (required)
- * Outcome measures/metrics? (optional)
- * Partners? (optional)
- * Make this public? [a city can enter text, keep it non-public, then go back and check the box for each action to make it public. Kind of a hassle, but some cities do this]
- * Action contact (required: enter name/phone/e-mail once for one or more people and then can select this person for relevant actions)
- * Year action initially completed (required)
- * Action completed after joining GreenStep? Yes/no

Abstract

The purpose of the GreenStep Cities Capstone Project was to help the cities of Roseville and West St. Paul become more sustainable. The authors of this paper formed the GreenStep URSI Capstone Team and served as consultants to the cities through the Urban and Regional Studies Institute at the Minnesota State University, Mankato. The Team completed the Inventory portion of the submission requirements necessary for the cities to participate in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program. The Team also recommended future actions appropriate to each city. The Team determined that both cities qualified to become Step 2 GreenStep Cities and have the potential to reach Step 3 by completing a relatively small number of required best practices, all of which are important for increased sustainability.

West St. Paul Inventory Results

Buildings & Lighting Best Practices

BP1, Efficient Existing Public Buildings: The city completed two of the Actions:

- BPA 1.3: The City meets the requirement of investing “in energy efficiency opportunities through re-commissioning/retrofitting city-owned/school buildings or by using the Guaranteed Energy Savings Program” with the RETAP Energy and Waste Management Assessment study performed on its City Hall and ice arena.
- BPA 1.5: The City’s new maintenance facility meets the requirement that the City “document that the new construction or major remodeling of public buildings has met or qualifies for a green building framework.”

BP 2, Efficient Existing Private Buildings: The city completed three Actions:

- BPA 2.1: The Xcel Energy Programs and Energy Assistance Program meet the requirement that the City “create or participate in a marketing/outreach program to promote/achieve residential energy use reduction and energy efficiency.”
- BPA 2.5: The City’s Code allows the Mayor to ban watering of lawns, meeting the

requirement that the City “conserve drinking/groundwater resources by adopting a water-wise landscaping ordinance/guidance, or a WaterSense purchasing program.”

- BPA 2.7: City policy “encourages,” that the City require new private or public developments and major renovations to achieve state-of-the-art sustainable standards,” meeting the requirement that the City “adopt policy for commercial building renovations and require that buildings receiving city financial support meet the policy.”

BP 3, New Green Buildings: The city completed one Action, BPA 3.1, because its policy “encourages,” that the City “require new private or public developments and major renovations to achieve state-of-the-art sustainable standards.”

BP 4, Efficient Outdoor Lighting and Signals: The city completed seven Actions:

- BPA 4.2: The City meets the requirement that “all new street lighting to be Dark-Sky compliant and all new traffic signals to be EnergyStar compliant,” because it has a purchasing practice/policy that specifies EnergyStar traffic signals. JMO: Does Energy Star = Dark Sky?
- BPA 4.3: The City meets the requirement that it “modify any city franchise or other agreement with a utility to facilitate rapid replacement of inefficient street lighting” as Xcel Energy has worked with the City Paul and GE Lighting Solutions on a two-year LED street lighting pilot project.
- BPA 4.4: The City meets the requirement that it “coordinate traffic signals and/or optimize signal timing so as minimize car idling at intersections yet maintain safe and publicly acceptable vehicle speeds” as it has synchronized traffic signals, flashing yellow left turn arrow signals, installation of detectors in at least 10% of city signals.
- BPA 4.5: The City will be using “LED/solar-powered lighting for a flashing sign or in a street, parking lot or park project” on Marie Avenue in 2014.
- BPA 4.6: The City meets the requirement that it “relamp/improve exterior building lighting for city-owned buildings/facilities with energy efficient, Dark-Sky compliant lighting” by addressing lighting in the West St. Paul Regional Athletics Center.
- BPA 4.7: The City has replaced 100% city-owned parking lot lighting with Dark-Sky compliant, energy efficient, automatic dimming lighting technologies, meeting the requirement of replacing “city-owned parking lot/ramp lighting with Dark-Sky compliant, energy efficient, automatic dimming lighting technologies.”
- BPA 4.8: Approximately 1/3 of the signals in the City are energy efficient LED, meeting the requirement that the City “replace the city’s existing traffic signals with energy efficient LED or equivalent lighting technologies.”

BP 5, Building Reuse: The city completed one Action, BPA 5.5, because the Renaissance Plan addressed design guidelines and development standards for redevelopment and infill.

Land Use Best Practices

BP 6, Comprehensive Plan and Implementation: The city completed two Actions:

- BPA 6.1: The City’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan meets the requirement of having “adopted comprehensive plan that is less than ten years old.”
- BPA 6.3: Cooperative agreements with other cities have existed for many years with St. Paul, South St. Paul, Lilydale and Mendota, meeting the requirement that the City

“include requirements in comprehensive and/or other plans for intergovernmental coordination addressing land use and watershed impacts, infrastructure, economic development and city/regional services.”

BP 7, Efficient City Growth: The city completed one Action, BPA 7.2, because the City’s Zoning ordinance states the intended gross density (number of housing units per acre of land) of the PRD District shall not exceed the density that would be achieved with the existing zoning district.

BP 8, Mixed Uses: The city completed three Actions:

- BPA 8.1: The City’s The Robert St. Renaissance Plan meets this requirement as it involved “community members/stakeholder input.”
- BPA 8.2: City Hall and West St. Paul Regional Athletics Center are adjacent to an existing employment or residential center, meeting the requirement that the City “locate or lease a school, city building or other government facility that has at least two of these attributes: Adjacent to an existing employment or residential center” and “accessible by regular transit service.”
- BPA 8.3: The city has two mixed use districts, meeting the requirement that mixed use be allowed.

BP 9, Efficient Highway-oriented Development: The city completed one Action, BPA 9.1, because according to the Comprehensive Plan, the City will continue to encourage involvement and utilize the expertise and creativity of the four business organizations in the City to help achieve its economic and employment goals. This meets the requirement of having participated “in regional economic development planning with representatives from surrounding townships, cities, the county and business interests to: Estimate commercial/industrial needs among all jurisdictions. Jointly implement recommendations to stage highway commercial development in order to avoid overbuilding and expensive low-density development.” JMO: May not apply.

BP 10, Conservation Design: The city completed one Action, BPA 10.1 because it plans to “conduct a Natural Resource Inventory or Assessment (NRI and NRA); incorporate protection of priority natural systems or resources through the subdivision or development process,” in 2014.

Transportation Best Practices

BP 11, Complete Green Streets: The city completed two Actions:

- BPA 11.1: The City has adopted “a complete streets policy that also addresses street trees and stormwater,” as the Comp Plan explains that it is in the process of requesting federal money for Robert Street improvements.
- BPA 11.6: Bump outs on Thompson Ave. meet the requirement that the City “implement traffic calming measures, including road diets, shared space and depaving, in at least one street redevelopment project.”

BP 12, Mobility Options: The City completed three Actions:

- BPA 12.1: With an average Walk Score of 56 and an average rating of 78 on Robert Street, the City meets the requirement that it “attain a Street Smart Walk Score for your city of at least 70 averaged over measurements taken in the center of each zoning district.”
- BPA 12.2: Kraft Ave. was a result of Safe Routes program to two local schools, meeting the requirement that the City “launch an Active Living campaign in concert with your local community health board, such as a Safe Routes to School program.”

EXCERPTS, GreenStep Cities Capstone Project, Mike Mroska

- BPA 12.6: The City meets the requirement that it “add/expand transit service, or promote car/bike sharing,” as the Comprehensive Plan Policies states that the City will strengthen coordinated transportation efforts with other communities in the metropolitan area that enhance and reinforce the location advantages of West St. Paul as a regional center.

BP 13, Efficient City Fleets: The city completed three Actions:

- BPA 13.1: City staff/departments share vehicles, meeting the requirement that the City “efficiently use existing fleet of city vehicles by encouraging trip bundling, video conferencing, carpooling, vehicle sharing and incentives/technology.”
- BPA 13.3: The City monitors all fuel usage and has a maintenance schedule policy, meeting the requirement that the City “phase-in no-idling practices, operational and fuel changes, and equipment changes including electric vehicles, for city or local transit fleets.”
- BPA 13.4: Police conduct patrols on bike, meeting the requirement that the City “phase in bike, foot or horseback modes for police, inspectors and other city staff.”

BP 14, Demand-side Travel Planning: The city completed two Actions:

- BPA 14.1: The City’s Zoning Ordinance includes “right-size or eliminate parking minimum development standards and add parking maximums in pedestrian-friendly or transit-served areas.” JMO: Needs checking.
- BPA 14.3: The City’s Zoning Ordinance meets the requirement of “7 to 8 dwelling units per acre (DUA), the minimum (population) required to economically support a bus line running at least once an hour through such a neighborhood.”

Environmental Management Best Practices

BP 16, Urban Forests: The city completed three Actions:

- BPA 16.1: City is certified as a Tree City USA.
- BPA 16.3: According to City staff, the City meets the requirement that it “budget for and achieve urban canopy/ tree planting goals.”
- BPA 16.4: Robert Street has one tree every 20 feet, meeting the requirement that the City “build community capacity to protect existing trees/plant-resilient species by certifying at least one or more local staff/volunteers.”
- JMO: Should get an additional BPA for it EAB management plan and program.

BP 17, Efficient Stormwater Management: The city completed three Actions:

- BPA 17.4: According to City staff, the City has created “a stormwater utility with variable fees.”
- BPA 17.5: The City’s website has guidelines for constructing rain gardens and other BMPs, meeting the requirement that it “adopt and implement guidelines for, or adopt required design standards/incentives for rain gardens.”
- BPA 17.6: The City has adopted “an ordinance with erosion and sediment control provisions as well as requirements for permanent stormwater treatment” as a part of its Stormwater Management erosion and sediment control measures.

BP 18, Parks and Trails: The city completed three Actions:

- BPA 18.2: The City meets the requirement of planning and budgeting “for a network of parks, green spaces, water features and trails in all new development areas” with Section 1022 Park Dedication.

EXCERPTS, GreenStep Cities Capstone Project, Mike Mrosla

- BPA 18.3: The City achieves “minimum levels of city green space,” as there are at least 7 acres of municipal parkland per 1,000 residents.
- BPA 18.8: The City meets the requirement that it “develop a program to involve community members in hands-on land and stewardship projects” through its Adopt-A-Park service program.

BP 19, Surface Water Quality: The city completed two Actions:

- BPA 19.3: The City works with other organizations to “determine quantitative/qualitative targets for lakes, streams, wetlands.” This is accomplished through the local watershed districts and DNR.
- BPA 19.4: The City’s Shoreland Management Ordinance, meets the requirement that it has “shoreland standards within development regulation or a stand-alone shoreland ordinance consistent with DNR Rules.” This is achieved by Thompson Lake regulations.

BP 20, Efficient Water and Wastewater Facilities: The city completed two Actions:

- BPA 20.2: The City meets the requirement that it “plan and budget for motor maintenance and upgrades so as to assure the most energy efficient, durable and appropriate equipment is available when upgrades or break downs occur,” as it has a motor replacement plan in place for key motors.
- BPA 20.3: The City meets the requirement that it “establish an on-going budget and program for decreasing inflow and infiltration into sewer lines,” as it has an I & I program in place.

BP 21, Septic Systems: The City completed two Actions:

- BPA 21.1: The City meets this requirements that it “works with landowners of suspected noncompliant or failing septic systems as part of an educational, informational and financial assistance and outreach program designed to trigger voluntary landowner action to improve septic systems.” **JMO: WSP has septic systems?**
- BPA 21.2: The City meets this requirements “The City has a responsible management entities for the proper design, siting, installation, operation, monitoring and maintenance of septic systems.”

BP 22, Solid Waste Reduction: The City completed three Actions:

- BPA 22.4: The City’s website contains details on what can be recycled, how to recycle, green guide, and recycling events, meeting the requirement that it “publicize, promote and use the varied businesses/services collecting and marketing used, repaired, and rental consumer goods in the city/county.”
- BPA 22.7: According to the City’s website, “there is no municipally administered garbage collection service,” meeting the requirement that it offer significant volume-based pricing on residential garbage and/or incentives for recycling.

BP 23, Local Air Quality: The city has completed one Action:

- 23.2 The City bans or enforces performance standards for specific types of burning.

Economic and Community Development Best Practices

BP 24, Benchmarks and Community Engagement: The city completed one Action:

- 24.3: The City has an environmental committee “that involves an existing city council committee or community taskforce to create an energy, environment, or sustainability city council subcommittee, advisory commission or task force.”

BP 27, Local Food: The city completed two of the Actions:

EXCERPTS, GreenStep Cities Capstone Project, Mike Mrosla

- BPA 27.1: The City has the “C” Conservancy Zoning District that is design to preserve the natural resources located in this district.
- BPA 27.2: According to the City’s Code residents are allowed to keep chickens, satisfying the requirement that the City “Facilitate home/community gardens, chickens/bees, and incorporation of food growing areas/access in multifamily residential developments.”
- BPA 27.3: The City’s has a farmers market, meeting the requirement of promoting “local food production/distribution within the city” with a farmer’s market.