

**City of Ramsey**  
**Agenda**  
**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**  
**Monday October 7, 2013**  
**6:30 pm**  
**Rum River Room, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Citizen Input**
3. **Approve Agenda**
4. **Approve Minutes**
  1. Approve Meeting Minutes Dated August 26, 2013
5. **Policy Board Business**
  1. Presentation on Greenstep Cities Program
  2. Review of 2013 Environmental Expo Event
6. **Board/Staff Input**
  - Fall Recycling Day
  - Alpine Park Rain Garden Enhancement
7. **Adjournment**

**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**

**4. 1.**

**Meeting Date:** 10/07/2013

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community  
Development

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**Information**

**Title:**

Approve Meeting Minutes Dated August 26, 2013

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**Attachments**

Meeting Minutes Dated August 26, 2013

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**Form Review**

**Inbox**

Chris Anderson (Originator)  
Form Started By: Chris Anderson  
Final Approval Date: 10/01/2013

**Reviewed By**

Chris Anderson

**Date**

10/01/2013 03:42 PM  
Started On: 09/30/2013 04:33 PM

**ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY BOARD  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

On Monday, August 26, 2013, the Environmental Policy Board (EPB) met in the Rum River Conference Room at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive N.W., Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Michael Max  
                            Board Member Bob Bentz  
                            Board Member Michael Hiatt  
                            Board Member Michael Valentine

Members Absent:     Board Member Larry Lewis  
                            Board Member Pendergast  
                            Board Member Thomas Stodola

Also Present:         Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Chris Anderson  
                            City Council Liaison John LeTourneau

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Max called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

**2.     CITIZEN INPUT**

None.

**3.     APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Bentz to approve the agenda as submitted.

Motion carried.   Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Hiatt, Valentine and Bentz.  
Voting No: None.   Absent: Board Members Pendergast, Stodola, and Lewis.

**4.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**4.01:   Approve Meeting Minutes Dated August 5, 2013**

Motion by Board Member Bentz and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to approve the regular meeting minutes dated August 5, 2013.

Motion carried.   Voting Yes: Chairperson Max, Board Members Bentz, Valentine and Hiatt.  
Voting No: None.   Absent: Board Members Pendergast, Stodola, and Lewis.

## **5. POLICY BOARD BUSINESS**

### **5.01: Environmental Expo Update**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Chairperson Max stated that Anoka Ramsey Farm and Garden was confirmed as an exhibitor and he was still waiting to hear from the USGS and Master Naturalists.

Board Member Hiatt review the Board's booth display for the expo event.

General discussion ensued about the display board.

There was consensus that the display was coming along very nicely.

Chairperson Max suggested that the mission statement of the Board be simplified, possibly using bullet points.

Board Member Hiatt stated that an aerial photo indicating the location of the two demonstration projects should be added to the display.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he could put that together.

Board Member Bentz asked if there was any type of lock for the laptop during the expo event.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated he would have to inquire about that but noted that a Board Member will always need to be at the booth to ensure that the laptop used for the survey does not disappear.

### **5.02: Consider Potential Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Housing Assistance Policy**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson presented the staff report.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that certain actions could be covered by multiple topics, for instance, the use of native plantings could fall under stormwater as well as sustainable landscapes. He requested clarification from the Board about whether to include such an action under both, which would potentially allow double credit for a single action, or just place it under the most applicable category.

The Board stated that their preference would be just to assign it under the most applicable category.

Board Member Bentz inquired if the Housing Assistance Policy and the BMPs would be cross referenced to direct the reader to other chapters that may have similar information.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that he didn't think that would be necessary as the BMPs section would not be too lengthy and that it likely would be simpler just to glance through the information.

Chairperson Max stated that he thought a great future demonstration project would be to find a partner for a rainwater harvesting system.

General discussion ensued about various stormwater practices.

## **6. BOARD / STAFF INPUT**

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson noted that ACE Solid Waste held their 3<sup>rd</sup> monthly recycling collection event at the Public Works site this past weekend. He stated that he did not have info tonnage or vehicle count info yet but did note that from the first to second event, traffic counts doubled and that leading up to the third event he had taken multiple phone calls from people with questions about the event.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that the City will be hosting the regular Fall Recycling Day event on Saturday, September 28.

Councilmember LeTourneau noted that there was going to be a public input meeting on September 16 about the upcoming Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area rulemaking process that the MN DNR is undertaking and encouraged the Board to attend if they were available.

Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator Anderson stated that both the Board's Work Plan and EAB Management Plan were on tomorrow evening's City Council Consent Agenda.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Board Member Valentine and seconded by Board Member Hiatt to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chris Anderson  
Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator

**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**

**5. 1.**

**Meeting Date:** 10/07/2013

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community  
Development

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**Information**

**Title:**

Presentation on Greenstep Cities Program

**Background:**

An action item on the recently approved 2013-2014 Work Plan is to research the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program and if appropriate, make a recommendation to the City Council that the City become a GreenStep City. A representative of the GreenStep Cities program will be attending the meeting to present information on this program. There will be a 15-20 minute presentation on the program and there will also be time for questions/answers after the presentation. Attached to this case are a couple of informational pieces for general background on the program. Additional information on the GreenStep Cities program can also be found at: <http://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/index.cfm>

**Action:**

Based on discussion.

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**Attachments**

[2013-2014 Work Plan](#)

[GreenStep Fact Sheet](#)

[Steps to Becoming a GreenStep City](#)

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**Form Review**

**Inbox**

Chris Anderson (Originator)  
Form Started By: Chris Anderson  
Final Approval Date: 10/03/2013

**Reviewed By**

Chris Anderson

**Date**

10/03/2013 09:12 AM  
Started On: 09/30/2013 04:35 PM

## **Environmental Policy Board 2013-2014 Work Plan**

As outlined in City Code, the primary objective of the Environmental Policy Board is to review, consider, initiate and recommend to the City Council such policies, plans or projects which will enhance and preserve the natural environment of the City. The Board's scope shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, matters of the preservation of the community forest, water quality, wetland preservation, ground water protection, control of soil erosion and air, noise and light pollution.

The Environmental Policy Board will focus its efforts on the following tasks for the 2013-2014 Work Plan:

- Community Awareness
  - Encourage citizen awareness and education on environmental stewardship through the Environmental Expo & Tree Sale.
  - Develop a Community Stewardship recognition program.
  - Continue public outreach through various mediums including the newsletter, website and QCTV.
- Demonstration/Implementation Project(s)
  - Work toward completing a tree inventory of street trees and trees in maintained park areas for budgeting purposes and scheduling efficiencies (in conjunction with GreenStep Cities Program).
- Public Space Improvements
  - Research Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program and forward recommendation, if any, to City Council.
  - Review Housing Assistance Policy Goal #4 and develop a series of Best Management Practices for incorporation into the policy.
- Environmental Standards (focus on one topic each work plan cycle)
  - Storm water
    - Review irrigation requirement, provide alternatives such as use of drought resistant plant materials.
    - Consider strategies to encourage water conservation practices such as rain barrels and soil moisture sensors
    - Review curb requirements, consider amendments to promote infiltration



## Minnesota GreenStep Cities



**GreenStep Cities is an assistance program for all Minnesota cities that supports and recognizes implementation of 28 sustainable development best practices.**

The best practices focus on cost savings and energy use reductions that lead cities beyond compliance and encourage a culture of innovation.

Cities that implement a minimum number of best practices, organized into five categories below, will be recognized as a GreenStep City. Each best practice can be implemented by completing one or more specific actions from a list of four to eight actions. A city's accomplishments are recognized on the GreenStep website. Implementation of additional best practices will garner additional recognition.

Visit [www.MnGreenStep.org](http://www.MnGreenStep.org) to learn more about this program, to see what cities have accomplished, and to understand how your city can become involved.

## GreenStep's 28 Best Practices

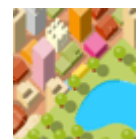
### Buildings and Lighting

1. **Efficient Existing Public Buildings:** Assess and finance energy and sustainability improvements of existing structures.
2. **Efficient Existing Private Buildings:** Assess and finance energy and sustainability improvements of existing structures.
3. **New Green Buildings:** Construct new buildings to meet or qualify for a green building standard.
4. **Efficient Building & Street Lighting and Signals:** Improve the efficiency of public and private lighting and signals.
5. **Building Reuse:** Create economic and regulatory incentives for redeveloping and repurposing existing buildings before building new.



### Land Use

6. **Comprehensive Plan and Implementation:** Adopt a Comprehensive Plan and tie regulatory ordinances to it.
7. **Efficient City Growth:** Promote financial and environmental sustainability by enabling and encouraging higher density housing and commercial land use.
8. **Mixed Uses:** Develop efficient and healthy land patterns.
9. **Efficient Highway-Oriented Development:** Adopt commercial development and design standards for highway road corridors.
10. **Conservation Design:** Adopt development ordinances or processes that protect natural systems.



## Transportation

11. **Complete Green Streets:** Create a network of multimodal green streets.
12. **Mobility Options:** Promote active living and alternatives to single-occupancy car travel.
13. **Efficient City Fleets:** Implement a city fleet investment, operations and maintenance plan.
14. **Demand-Side Travel Planning:** Use Travel Demand Management and Transit-Oriented Design.



## Environmental Management

15. **Purchasing:** Adopt an environmentally preferable purchasing policy.
16. **Urban Forests:** Increase city tree and plant cover.
17. **Efficient Stormwater Management:** Minimize the volume of and pollutants in rainwater runoff.
18. **Parks and Trails:** Enhance the city's green infrastructure.
19. **Surface Water Quality:** Improve local water bodies.
20. **Efficient Water and Wastewater Facilities:** Assess and improve drinking water and sewer facilities.
21. **Septic Systems:** Implement an effective management program for decentralized wastewater treatment systems.
22. **Solid Waste Reduction:** Increase waste reduction, reuse and recycling.
23. **Local Air Quality:** Prevent generation of local air contaminants.



## Economic and Community Development

24. **Benchmarks & Community Engagement:** Adopt outcome measures for GreenStep and other city sustainability efforts, and engage community members in ongoing education, discussion, and campaigns.
25. **Green Business Development:** Support the expansion of the green business sector in your city.
26. **Renewable Energy:** Remove barriers to and encourage installation of renewable energy generation capacity.
27. **Local Food:** Strengthen local food and fiber production and access.
28. **Business Synergies:** Network/cluster businesses to achieve better energy, economic and environmental outcomes.



*Minnesota GreenStep Cities grew out of a report to the 2009 Legislature. The program is governed by a public-private partnership of state agencies and non-governmental organizations and is led by the MPCA.*



## Organizing steps to becoming recognized as a GreenStep City

Of Minnesota's 855 cities, approximately 500 are under 1,000 in population, 83% are under 5,000 in population, and 35 have a population over 25,000. With such a diversity of cities, no one set of process steps will fit all cities in organizing work to become a GreenStep City. Depending on your city, work may start mostly at the city staff, city council or citizen commission level and fit well into existing plans and efforts, moving later to incorporate and leverage work efforts by civic organizations. Or the impetus for implementing GreenStep best practices may start with a civic group and be mostly done by community members and community organizations, with the city council in a supportive and active role as needed.

Adapt this guide as best fits your city and the individuals who are working to make your city a GreenStep City.

### 1. Build community knowledge and interest.

- Anyone can start this: a city staff person, an interested citizen, a city commission or task force member, a mayor, city council member, business association member, civic association member, environmental or public health group, renewable energy advocate, etc.
- Determine into which category your city fits. Cities with greater capacity for making civic improvements are able and challenged to implement more best practices and "harder" actions. Answer 11 simple questions to determine whether your city is in category A, B or C.
- Become familiar with GreenStep best practices and which of them other cities in Minnesota have implemented. Determine your city category so you know the minimum number of best practices your city must have implemented to be recognized as a GreenStep City, Step Two and Step Three.
- Talk with key people and organizations in your city, discuss at existing meetings, and convene special meetings to discuss as appropriate.
- Invite, as needed, a GreenStep program representative to come visit your city and talk about GreenStep. Contact the MPCA's GreenStep Cities program coordinator to find out who might be available to visit your citizen's group, or city staff, city commission, or city council.
- Inventory completed, planned and desired best practices. Some cities find it important to prepare this inventory, at a very simple summary level or at a detailed level, before seeking a city council resolution. Consider using a student intern or community volunteer to do this, or, for a more detailed inventory, contact the MPCA's GreenStep Cities program coordinator to see if a RETAP member can help you.
- Discuss with an official city body. This could be a city council, a council committee, a city commission or task force, or some other group charged by city government to work on civic improvement.

### 2. Approve a city council resolution to work toward GreenStep Cities recognition.

- Use the sample resolution and modify it as needed in discussion with city council members or in a city council committee meeting.
- Introduce a resolution to the city council. Depending on the practice in your city, more or less detail will have to be spelled out in the proposed resolution.
- Specify in the resolution – or direct city staff to determine later – (1) a GreenStep coordinator for your city (the coordinator could be an existing city staff person or entity, or task force, or an appointed community member), and (2) a short list of which GreenStep best practices the city initially plans to implement (to help the GreenStep program better understand city interests).

- E-mail your resolution/contact information. This will allow the MPCA to set up a web account on the GreenStep Cities web site for your city. If your resolution names a city entity, please include a contact person's name, phone, e-mail and postal address, which will appear on the public web site.
- *Congratulations! You are now recognized as a **Step One GreenStep City!** Use Step One recognition artwork/materials located on your city log-in page to let others know of your accomplishment.*

### 3. Post initial information on the GreenStep Cities web site.

- Enter simple information: city population, approximate number of city staff, city category, city web site address, names of any participating township(s) / school district(s), and contact information for one person who will serve as your city's GreenStep contact.
- Provide brief detail on best practices previously implemented. For example, if you check off the action *Promote biking, walking and transit* under the *Mobility Options* best practice, tell us:
  - How many, for example, bike racks the city/the city and its partners installed
  - A web address on your city web site (if any) that talks about your efforts (or upload a planning document you may have used, such as an area bike plan)
  - Any success measures (such as: bike path use increased 20% during 2005)
  - Any key partner(s) you may have worked with (for example, a local bike rack company)
  - The name and e-mail of the person most knowledgeable about this accomplishment so that other cities seeking to replicate your success can learn from it.

Some cities may find it easier/cheaper to use a student intern to gather and post this information. Contact the MPCA's GreenStep Cities program coordinator to see if a RETAP member can help you with the inventory and posting.

### 4. Get organized to begin work on implementing best practices.

- As needed, educate city staff and officials about sustainability. Sustainability may not be the term used by your city, but current actions the city may be taking to increase city resiliency to financial pressures, to increase livability and to prevent future environmental costs certainly fall under the sustainability focus of GreenStep Cities and should be understood by elected and appointed officials and staff.
- Convene a small working group. The GreenStep contact/coordinator for the city should call together key people within city government (and outside of city government as appropriate at this stage) to make decisions such as the following. This group might be an existing or new city staff green team or an existing or new citizen commission or task force:
  - How to work with existing city/civic groups and initiatives to implement best practices
  - Who should be on a GreenStep steering committee (which could be an existing group), what this committee needs to do (e.g., review progress on implementing best practices), and how often it needs to meet
  - How often the GreenStep steering committee should report back what to the city council
- Specify implementation action(s) and a few lead people. A GreenStep steering committee – which could be the initial small working group or a city commission – should take the short list of best practices the city identified in its resolution for implementation, and identify:
  - Which specific action(s) under each best practice will be investigated/worked on
  - Which people - “best practice leads” - should prepare a simple work plan for how to implement the action(s)
- Prepare a simple work plan for implementing selected best practice. Have best practice leads – these could be non-paid community members, or members of a city environmental commission -

draft a simple work plan. The work plan should specify exactly (1) *who* would do (2) *what* and (3) *when* using (4) *what* types of resources (money, volunteers, county help, utility funds, etc.). Be alert to how *proposing slight changes in what a city is already planning to do can accomplish a best practice action*. GreenSteps is mostly about doing things smarter and spending money that returns multiple benefits, not about spending more money or finding grant money. The following should make preparing the work plan easier:

- Review implementation tools on the GreenStep web site for each selected best practice action, which often include case studies, to refine how you will implement the best practice action in your city
- Talk with city staff/officials
- Talk with others from the community
- Talk with trusted resource organizations, including consultants and utilities
- Contact the MN GreenStep Cities best practice advisor for the relevant best practice as needed
- Read on the GreenStep web site how other cities have implemented a selected best practice action, and contact the people listed there to learn more information
- Present the best practice plans to your GreenStep steering committee and to a city body or to the city council as appropriate.

#### 5. Begin working to implement best practices.

- Keep everyone moving and celebrate success. At periodic meetings of your GreenStep steering committee, have best practice leads report on accomplishments, barriers, and next steps. Work together to overcome barriers, change plans as needed, and find ways to accomplish multiple actions through a common strategy.
  - Clarify, as needed, what constitutes completing an action with the MPCA GreenStep program coordinator. For example, an administrative directive is probably substantially equivalent to a city council-adopted policy, but feel free to make a phone call to clarify an issue such as this.
  - Briefly describe completed best practice actions on the GreenStep web site as you did in step 3 above when first entering information onto the GreenStep Cities web site.
- *Congratulations! When you have implemented any 4, 6 or 8 best practices (depending on your city category) you are now recognized as a **Step Two GreenStep City!***

#### 6. Keep on working and be recognized for higher steps.

- Implementing a particular best practice action may take months or years. The GreenStep Cities program requirements have been set with the expectation that any city can implement 8, 12 or 16 best practices (depending on city category) and become a Step Three GreenStep City within three years. But implementing the required best practices and the minimum number of optional best practices might take some cities longer or shorter than three years, depending on the different assets and capabilities of each city. Program requirements will be reviewed and adjusted carefully each year to keep the implementation actions for best practices challenging yet doable.
- Be alert to rare opportunities. Projects like street repaving, waste water plant breakdowns, or receiving a grant for housing loans each afford a city the chance to complete multiple best practice actions at once. Be ready with plans for making the most of these opportunities.
- Check back with the city council as needed. Ongoing or planned best practice implementation may fit in with new city efforts and can be shaped in discussion with the council.

- Report yearly to community members on GreenStep accomplishments. This is a required action for all cities under Best Practice #24. Use various media, sample reporting forms on your city's log-in page, and existing communication vehicles and venues.
- As your work proceeds, give us feedback on the program. Let us know how we can make the program materials aid you better in implementing actions.
- *Congratulations! When you have implemented 8, 12 or 16 best practices (depending on your city category, and including a few required best practices) you are now recognized as a **Step Three GreenStep City!***

#### **7. GreenStep Cities Step Four.**

- Program requirements will be developed during 2012, as we learn from cities during 2010 and 2011, to challenge recognized GreenStep Cities to implement more actions and be recognized for these accomplishments. We think GreenStep best practices will result in multiple benefits for your city and that you'll want to continuously work on best practices that make your city more sustainable.

**Environmental Policy Board (EPB)**

**5. 2.**

**Meeting Date:** 10/07/2013

**By:** Chris Anderson, Community  
Development

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**Information**

**Title:**

Review of 2013 Environmental Expo Event

**Background:**

As the Board knows, the 2013 Environmental Expo event was held on September 7, 2013 as part of the Happy Days festival. The purpose of this case is to review the expo and gather feedback from the Board about the revamped event and venue. This was obviously the first time the Environmental Expo was offered as a part of Happy Days and Staff is interested in hearing from the Board whether they liked the format, being a part of a larger community event, and any other thoughts the Board may have.

Staff has also compiled the results of the survey that was online and part of the Board's booth at the Environmental Expo. There were thirty-two (32) responses in all. Attached to this case is a summary of the results.

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**Attachments**

[Summary of Survey Results](#)

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**Form Review**

**Inbox**

Chris Anderson (Originator)  
Form Started By: Chris Anderson  
Final Approval Date: 10/03/2013

**Reviewed By**

Chris Anderson

**Date**

10/03/2013 09:12 AM  
Started On: 09/30/2013 04:34 PM

1. How green do you consider Ramsey to be, with 1 being 'needs work' and 10 being 'very green'?

Rating	% of responses
1	0
2	0
3	6.25
4	12.5
5	9.38
6	18.75
7	21.88
8	21.88
9	3.13
10	6.25

2. What is Ramsey doing well environmentally?

Generally, responses focused on trails, parks and recycling all being very good. Miscellaneous responses included multiple modes of public transportation, oak wilt program, and stormwater.

3. What could Ramsey be doing better environmentally?

Answers included revisiting the wetland buffer policy, more promotion of recycling and organic composting, more green space, promote reuse, planting of trees and native plants, programming for clubs and outdoor activities for children, composting, water conservation, protecting programs from political ups and downs, and more rain gardens.

4. Which of these environmental services have you used?

Topic	% of Responses		
	Yes	No	Didn't Know Existed
Water Conservation Tool Box	16.13	22.58	61.29
Focus on Environment Column	45.16	22.58	32.26
Updates on QCTV	21.88	31.25	46.88

5. Have you made any of the following changes for economic and/or environmental reasons?

Topic	% of Responses		
	Yes	No	Considering
Landscape with Native Plants	38.71	51.61	9.68
Use of Flow Reducers on Faucets	67.74	22.58	9.68
Monitor Irrigation Systems and Adjust as Needed	66.67	33.33	0

Turn Thermostat Down at Night	84.38	15.63	0
Use Compact Fluorescent Bulbs (CFLs)	80.65	19.35	0
Use LED Lights	75	25	0
Other	64.29	14.29	21.43