

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT & EDUCATION

VISION STATEMENT

Stevens Point will be a model sustainable community through citizen involvement and education.

GOAL 1: Stevens Point will create a culture of sustainability by involving and engaging residents.

Objective 1.1 Upon designation of Stevens Point being an Eco-Municipality, create and maintain a Civic Involvement and Education Subcommittee on the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality Task Force to help direct ideas and plans in the future. On this subcommittee create and maintain equal representation by all community interests.

Action 1.1.1 On the Stevens Point Task Force and the Civic Involvement and Education Subcommittee, include representation from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and other appropriate community educational institutions. This action will maintain continuous connections and collaboration between the city and university relations. Eco-Municipality activities in the community should reflect the sustainability actions on the UW-SP campus and vice versa.

Objective 1.2 Establish a small grants program to support local eco-municipality initiatives.

Action 1.2.1 By 2010, establish an Eco-Municipality Grant Fund by working with the Community Foundation or other similar organizations.

Objective 1.3 Assist and support specific community events that promote Stevens Point Eco-Municipality initiatives.

Action 1.3.1 Beginning in 2008, annually target two large community events to assist them in “greening” their event and educating the public.

Action 1.3.2 Develop an “event assistance guide” and make it available online by January 2009 to be used by all community event planners and coordinators.

Objective 1.4 Develop mechanisms to communicate with neighboring communities such as Plover, Whiting, and Park Ridge in regard to eco-municipality efforts.

Action 1.4.1 Include local community leaders on recipient list for regular eco-municipality communications.

Action 1.4.2 Continuously include eco-municipality news in other regular city communication with neighboring communities.

Objective 1.5 Specifically target *residents with lower incomes* to help them participate and benefit from eco-municipality efforts.

Action 1.5.1 Develop an outreach plan which includes incentives that efficiently and effectively encourage involvement of and benefits to this target audience in eco-municipality activities by July 2009.

Action 1.5.2 Develop partnerships and outreach plans with agencies who specifically work with this target group.

Action 1.5.3 Distribute eco-municipality information in appropriate target group locations throughout the community. Possible locations should include: central kiosks or bulletin boards downtown, Portage County Health and Human Services Building, CAP Services, Lincoln Center, Age and Disability Resource Center, Salvation Army, Operation Boot Strap, St. Vincent's, Goodwill, and other appropriate locations.

Objective 1.6 Specifically target residents who are *first or second generation Americans* to engage and involve them in eco-municipality efforts.

Action 1.6.1 Develop an outreach plan which includes incentives that efficiently and effectively encourage involvement of and benefits to this target audience in eco-municipality activities by July 2009.

Action 1.6.2 Develop partnerships and outreach plans with agencies who specifically work with these target groups.

Action 1.6.3 Distribute eco-municipality information in appropriate target group locations throughout the community. Possible locations should include: central kiosks or bulletin boards downtown, Portage County Health and Human Services Building, CAP Services (Hmong and Hispanic Services Program), Literacy Council, Asian and Hispanic Markets, and other appropriate locations.

Objective 1.7 Specifically target *students and teachers in the K-12 schools* to educate them and engage them in the eco-municipality efforts.

Action 1.7.1 Engage and involve 7th-12th grade students in a contest to develop an eco-municipality logo the spring of 2008.

Action 1.7.2 Develop a basic presentation (PowerPoint or other formats) on the eco-municipality effort, its goals, and positive ways students can become involved by August 2009. This should be made available to schools

upon request. The presentation should include a list of suggested ideas for sustainability projects.

Action 1.7.3 Create a guest speaker list for the superintendent, principals, and teachers to access. Guest speakers would be volunteers in the community willing to present in the classroom to educate about eco-municipalities and the efforts currently in the community.

Action 1.7.4 Invite high school students to actively participate on eco-municipality subcommittees

Action 1.7.5 Develop a Stevens Point Area School Recognition Award and present it annually to a school or student group that meets various award criteria such as carbon footprint reduction at the school, improvement of schoolyard environment, creative learning opportunities for students in regards to education for sustainability, active student participation in eco-municipality activities, etc.

Objective 1.8 Specifically target *post-secondary students and professors at Mid-State Technical College and UWSP* to educate them and engage them in the eco-municipality efforts.

Action 1.8.1 Develop a basic presentation (PowerPoint or other formats) on the eco-municipality effort that targets this audience to be used in higher education courses. It should include a list of positive ways students can become involved in eco-municipality efforts.

Action 1.8.2 Work with the UWSP Chancellor's office and other appropriate administration officers to inform and garner support for local eco-municipality efforts. Ask the chancellor to invite eco-municipality presenters and other speakers who support eco-municipalities and the sustainability movement to university events, such as commencement. Provide a list of possible presenters.

Action 1.8.3 Invite UWSP and Mid-State Technical College students to actively participate on eco-municipality subcommittees.

Objective 1.9 Specifically target *local businesses* to educate and encourage them to support and practice sustainable initiatives.

Action 1.9.1 Develop a basic presentation (PowerPoint or other formats) about the eco-municipality effort, its goals, and positive ways businesses can become more sustainable and involved in the effort to be delivered on request.

Action 1.9.2 Target various business and industry groups with eco-municipality presentation and information, such as Portage County Business Council, Stevens Point Area Inn Keepers Association, Restaurant Association, Tavern League, and other appropriate business and industry associations.

Action 1.9.3 Create a Sustainable Business Practice workshop for business owners to educate them about profitable and sustainable business practices by January 2010.

Action 1.9.4 Identify a community business representative who already practices sustainable techniques, to serve as a willing contact for other businesses by January 2009.

Action 1.9.5 Develop a Stevens Point Area Green Business Award and present it annually to a business that meets various award criteria such as solid waste and carbon footprint reduction, improvement of employee working environment, use of local or regional products, customer education program on sustainable purchasing practices, etc.

Action 1.9.6 Host an annual business forum to share ideas of economically and environmentally viable options on how to do business.

GOAL 2: Stevens Point will commit to promoting and providing access to information and networks to encourage sustainable practices among homeowners, businesses, government officials, and schools.

Objective 2.1 Maintain a website that serves as the primary information center for local sustainability efforts that includes information, tips, ideas, and upcoming events related to eco-municipality efforts in Stevens Point.

Action 2.1.1 By September 2008, the City of Stevens Point should allocate at least a 25% time paid position to assist with the maintenance, upkeep, and improvement of the eco-municipality website. Position duties should include the support and accomplishment of this objective and action items.

Action 2.1.2 Maintain active links to all local sustainability oriented web sites and other appropriate institutions and organizations web pages with similar missions.

Action 2.1.3 On the web site, create a method so local groups and individuals can submit pertinent information regarding sustainability issues and eco-municipality related information to contribute to the web site.

Action 2.1.4 Include information suggested by all of the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality Subcommittees outlined throughout this document.

Objective 2.2 Create a sustainable living, green guide specifically for Stevens Point.

Action 2.2.1 Create a specific green guide for long-term residents to be distributed and posted on the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality web site by the summer of 2009.

Action 2.2.2 Create a specific green guide for students and other temporary residents to be distributed and posted on the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality web site by the fall of 2009.

Objective 2.3 By 2010 create an eco-center in downtown Stevens Point that helps develop, initiate, and educate community-wide education programs for residents, schools, and businesses to engage and involve residents in sustainable choices.

Objective 2.4 Create various methods of maintaining a continuous presence within the community and at all community events to continue the education and involvement of community members.

Action 2.4.1 Create a mobile information booth that will be displayed at different community events and locations at least once each month starting November 2008.

Action 2.4.2 On an annual basis work with Stevens Point event coordinators to create a timeline for the location and viewing times of the mobile information booth.

Action 2.4.3 Create a bi-weekly eco-municipality column in the Stevens Point Journal to update residents on recent eco-municipality efforts and news items. This column could include tips regarding sustainable practices, updates from eco-municipality subcommittees, and any other pertinent information that would help residents become more aware and contribute to the goals and objectives of the Eco-Municipality Task Force.

Action 2.4.4 Create an Eco-Municipality News and Updates column in the Mayor Halverson's newsletter to the residents of Stevens Point and the surrounding areas.

Objective 2.5 Maintain existing study groups and offer more opportunities for residents to learn about eco-municipalities.

Action 2.5.1 By 2009, purchase two sets of 10 books, *Natural Step for Communities*, so community members can engage in study circles without having to purchase more books each time.

Action 2.5.2 By 2009, purchase a set of 10 books, *Natural Step for Businesses*, and encourage business owners and members to participate in sharing circles.

Action 2.5.3 By August 2008, create reading circles specifically for City Council members, Alderpersons, and key government officials to read and discuss the book *Natural Step for Communities*.

Objective 2.6 Work with and support efforts of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Campus to create an Institute for Sustainability.

Objective 2.7 Encourage and promote neighborhood groups to maintain the “small town” feel of Stevens Point as the population grows.

Action 2.7.1 Create a communication tool for parents and local school districts to learn about and create walking school buses by August 2008.

Action 2.7.2 Gather and distribute information on community gardens to various neighborhoods by May 2009.

Action 2.7.3 Encourage and support neighborhood groups.

Objective 2.8 Create a sustainable business team to discuss, share, and develop new ideas for growing business in a sustainable way.

Action 2.8.1 Invite business representatives to actively participate on the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality Task Force and its subcommittees, including the Civic Involvement and Education subcommittee.

Objective 2.9 Provide easy access to information for K-12 schools in Stevens Point and the surrounding areas to learn about and participate in eco-municipalities.

Action 2.9.1 Invite school representatives such as teachers, principals, and school board members to actively participate on the Stevens Point Eco-Municipality Task Force and its subcommittees, including the Civic Involvement and Education subcommittee.

Action 2.9.2 Distribute information and updates regarding eco-municipality efforts through school newsletters 2-3 times a year.