City of Sheboygan Green Tier Legacy Community Sustainability Plan

City of Sheboygan
spirit on the lake.

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Complete List of Short- and Long-Term Action Steps

The City of Sheboygan is pleased to become the 11th community to join the Green Tier Legacy Charter. The City recognizes that being truly sustainable is a difficult challenge in today's society. We have found that acting sustainably means a balanced-approach; that not only protecting the environment, but improving human health and spending taxpayer dollars wisely are very important.

Defining Sustainability

The first step in defining sustainability for the City is to decide what we want to sustain into the future. In May 2008, the City of Sheboygan Common Council adopted a resolution establishing a Sustainable Sheboygan Task Force (SSTF). The purpose of the task force is to study and make recommendations to the Common Council regarding strategies to be adopted by the City for creating and maintaining a sustainable Sheboygan. The SSTF focuses on topics such as recycling, green purchasing, energy conservation, waste management, sustainability measures, and raising community awareness on environmental stewardship, which will result in cost savings and reduced consumption on resources throughout the City. Below is a list of Sheboygan attributes that are worth sustaining, or changing to become sustainable:

- Energy Production from renewable resources
- Local food production, sales and consumption
- The City's natural resources
- A safe and healthy atmosphere
- Safe, efficient, and environmentally sound transportation
- A local economy that attracts new businesses and encourages existing businesses to balance profit, people and planet
- Cost-effective, socially responsible and environmentally sound governmental practices to meet community needs

Public Declarations and Commitments

- Common Council passed an Eco-Municipality Designation (Oct. 2007)
- Common Council passed a State "Energy Independent Community" resolution (Oct. 2009): the resolution commits the City to obtain 25% renewable energy by the year 2025
- The City of Sheboygan's Harbor Centre Marina becomes a "Wisconsin Clean Marina" - The Wisconsin Clean Marina Program provides guidance and education that enable marina and boat yard operators to protect the resources that sustain their livelihood — clean water, clean air, and healthy fish and wildlife communities
- "Green Team" Resolution of 2010
- Common Council passed a resolution to join the "Green Tier Legacy Community" program (Jan. 2014)

In 2011, the City adopted an updated Comprehensive Plan that included a Sustainability component. The criteria set forth in this plan for building a self-sustaining economy include:

- Actively pursue economic diversification to increase professional level employment in the community.
- Advance economic initiatives based on place-based assets such as regional foods initiative.
- Strengthen the industrial and manufacturing sectors that founded Sheboygan.
- Tout Sheboygan's high quality of living including quality of living including quality schools, large park and recreation system, and destinations to foster economic development.

Goal

Improve the quality of life in Sheboygan by incorporating sustainability practices to meet the environmental, economic and social needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Objectives

- **Energy:** Foster energy conservation and local energy production from renewable resources.
- **Local Food:** Promote local food production, sales and consumption.
- **Natural Resources:** Protect and enhance the City's natural resources.
- **Atmosphere:** Provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for all living things and the planet.
- **Waste:** Promote awareness, reduce initial consumption, promote reuse, increase recycling, and reduce the amount of substances entering the landfill.
- **Land Use and Planning:** Guide and promote sustainable city-wide development patterns and incorporate sustainable features into buildings and grounds.
- **Transportation:** Enhance and promote mobility alternatives to the automobile; design safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation infrastructure; and connect to other local and regional networks.
- **Economic Development:** Enhance the local economy by attracting sustainable business and green-collar jobs, and encouraging existing businesses to become more sustainable.
- **Government:** Lead by example and foster sustainability policies and actions for cost-effective, socially responsible, and environmentally sound governmental practices to meet community needs.

Action Plan for 2014-2019

An action plan provides direction for accomplishing the objectives of the Sustainability Plan. For the 2014-2019 5-Year Action Plan, the Sheboygan Sustainable Task Force in conjunction with the Strategic Fiscal Planning Committee of the Common Council has endorsed the action items associated with each objective. Action steps have been divided into two groups, short-term (implementation in 0-3 years) and long-term (implementation in 4 or more years). The Task Force will work with City department personnel to implement the action steps and prepare an annual report to brief others on the accomplishments from that given year. The Task Force and Strategic Fiscal Planning Committee will update this Action Plan annually with input from all affected City staff, Common Council and citizens.

ENERGY

Objective: Foster energy conservation and local energy production from renewable resources.

Energy comes in various forms. Some sources are widely available and renewable such as the sun or wind. Other sources are less accessible, such as fossil fuels like coal, oil, natural gas or radioactive minerals that need to be extracted from the parts of the earth where they occur. Modern industrial societies use very large amounts of energy to heat and cool buildings, provide lighting, produce food, transport people and goods, run machines, and provide communications. The top energy sources for Wisconsin are oil (33%), coal (28%), natural gas (24%) and nuclear (7%), with several renewable sources providing the remaining 8%.

Cities need to import energy for their concentrated human populations. Transporting energy via roads, rail, ships, pipelines or wires takes energy, land and money and carries environmental risks. A more sustainable city would get more of its energy locally. The term "energy independence" has been coined to cover both import reduction and development of domestic energy sources. For a state like Wisconsin, which has no coal, oil, natural gas or uranium resources, energy independence is a call to develop state and local energy resources that build local economies. Wisconsin-based renewable energy resources include sun, wind, hydropower, geothermal, and biomass. All are renewable. Shifting away from fossil fuels has the significant benefits of avoiding pollution that negatively impacts health and increases greenhouse gases.

Energy conservation is a beneficial, achievable, and necessary step towards a sustainable energy system. On average, Americans and Canadians use about twice as much energy per person, and energy per dollar of economic activity, as competing industrialized countries. Our inefficient use of energy makes our way of life more expensive and more polluting. The technical means to improve energy efficiency is available and ranges from simple insulation to complex electronics. Ways to finance conservation improvements are also well known, and can be combined with government or private incentives and assistance. Considering economic, environmental, and social impacts, energy conservation investments are often more effective than expanding the energy infrastructure. Energy conservation should take top priority because the lowering of energy demand makes energy independence easier to achieve.

Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Buildings: The largest users of energy in most US cities are buildings. The City of Sheboygan currently ranks among the top three cities in Wisconsin with the most Energy Star Certified buildings per-capita. Sheboygan Area School District is the proud owner of 17 Energy Star Certified buildings, and is in the the top 10 Energy Star building owners in Wisconsin. Sheboygan's Madison Elementary School recieved an Energy Star score of 100 - the most efficient score a building can recieve. Sheboygan will continue to encourage sustainable green building practices, the wider use of Energy Star and other sustainable-labeled building materials, appliances and electronics (e.g. programmable thermostats, lighting fixtures, insulation, heating, water heaters, etc.) as well as conservative energy use in all buildings. The City will continue to stress the importance of measuring performance and promote methods and best practices individuals can implement concerning responsible engery usage, such as utilizing meterhero.com.

Outdoor Lighting: Sheboygan recognizes the need for energy conservation through responsible outdoor lighting practices. The City of Sheboygan was an early adopter, like many other communities, of high-efficiency light-emitting diode (LED) lamps in traffic lights. The City will continue to upgrade outdoor lighting to high efficiency lamps (street lighting, parks, athletic fields). The City will also continue to consider effieciency standards for outdoor lighting for all new and existing construction, especially as new technologies become available.

Pooled Resources: Pooling resources aids in achieving greater energy efficiency and putting less of a strain on existing resources and the environment. The Sheboygan Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility has become a nationally recognized leader in energy independence, and is a model for pooling energy resources. The Wastewater Treatment Facility (WTF) occasionally produces more energy than it uses, and has achieved Net Zero Energy Status. The WTF sells extra energy produced back to be used elsewhere, thus pooling resources for the betterment of the region. Sheboygan is committed to continuing to explore collaborations that provide opportunities to use energy more efficiently.

Renewable Energy: Sheboygan will focus on increasing use of renewable energy. Sheboygan offers reduced building fees for projects that include renewable energy systems. Sheboygan encourages and supports the development of renewable energy sources and is committed to increasing the portion of imported energy from renewable sources. The City will also parter with groups such as Focus on Energy and Alliant Energy's Second Nature Program that help residents install renewable energy projects. Focus on Energy is Wisconsin utilitie's statewide energy efficiency and renewable resource program. Alliant Energy's Second Nature Program is a voluntary program that allows Alliant Energy customers to purchase electricity generaged from renewable resources by dedicating a percentage of their electricity usage to that which comes from renewable sources.

Local Participation: Achieving a more sustainable Sheboygan will require buy-in from local residents and businesses alike. The City of Sheboygan will continue to encourage businesses and homeowners to work with Alliant, Wisconsin Public Service and Focus on Energy Programs. It is important to the City to raise awareness on the issue of sustatainability, and ways each person can contribute.

Energy Action Steps

Short Term (0-3 years)

- Develop an internal policy that when a new street light/park light is replaced, it is replaced with energy efficient lighting, such as LED fixtures.
- Ensure that building codes allow for development of solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass energy sources, with guidelines to protect public safety and maintain community standards for aesthetics.

LOCAL FOOD

Objective: Promote local food production, sales, and consumption

The local food movement is aimed at connecting consumers back to the land, providing fresh and nutritious food, protecting the environment and supporting the local economy. Locally grown food is considered sustainable because it reduces the need for processing, storing, shipping and retailing. This generally translates into reduced water use, pesticides, packaging, shipping, waste, fuel usage and emissions. Urban support for local food efforts continues to grow. While Sheboygan has relatively few acres zoned for agriculture, Sheboygan County provides substantial opportunity for agriculture, and the Northeast Wisconsin region contains significant farmland. Increasingly, locally grown food supports the regional economy and provides a healthy alternative to processed food.

Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Community Gardens: Gardens not only beautify and utilize unused property, but also encourage interaction and a sense of ownership in neighborhoods. The community garden movement, which began in the City in 2012/2013, established three thriving gardens in various neighborhoods. The City is committed to continuing partnerships, privideing land, education, and various other services for gardens within the City. Apart from public gardens, the City of Sheboygan encourages private food plots and gardens on residential, buisiness, industrial and institutional properties. Local greenhouses are encouraged to donate starter plants for community gardens or food plots in mixed to low income neighborhoods.

Local Food Co-op: Goodside Grocery, Sheboygan's local food Co-op is operating with approximately 3,500 members, is open year-round and offers a variety of local in-season products to the public. Sheboygan supports the operation and growth of the food co-op and will continue to do so into the future.

Local Food Stands: Local food stands provide farm-fresh, local food directly to consumers. These stands bolster local economic activity and provide residents with affordable and nutritious produce. Many local farmers from the surrounding area come to Sheboygan to sell fresh produce at temporary local food stands.

Local Food Markets: The Farmers Market is popular, accessible, and brings local residents and local farmers together. Sheboygan has two farmers markets run by Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization, one in the summer, and one in the winter to bring local food to residents all year.

Education and Partnerships: Sheboygan is home to organizations focusing on sustainable eating, farming, and growing the local food movement. One of these programs, Nourish, by the Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization, connects local farmers to residents, provides fresh local food for schools and homeless shelters, and educates everyone on the importance of eating well, eating local, and practicing sustainability. Sheboygan will continue to support these groups.

Local Food Action Steps

Short Term (0-3 years)

- Support sustainable gardening by creating an example set of rules against artificial fertilizers and pesticides and encourage community gardens to adopt these rules to protect people, water, and wildlife.
- Revise the zoning code ordinance to address community gardens, temporary or permanent, as permitted or conditional land uses in all districts.
- Partner with the Sustainable Task Force to provide food education for citizens to learn about the importance of growing, preserving and buying local and organic food, local food safety, such as advisories on fish eaten from the Sheboygan River.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Objective: Protect and enhance the City's natural resources

The City's natural resources provide a variety of necessary functions. Lake Michigan gives us our drinking water and carries effluent from the City's wastewater treatment plant. The Sheboygan River and Lake Michigan receive our storm water. These water bodies also provide habitat for fish and other wildlife. Woodlands, marshes, open spaces and parks provide places for ground water recharge and purify water of pollutants. Trees of the urban forest remove ozone, nitrogen oxide, and fine particulates from burning fossil fuels in buildings and vehicles. Urban wildlife habitat supports year-round resident and large populations of migratory birds. Urban birds, bats and insects control nuisance and disease-carrying pests.

We attempt to sustain these ecological functions in two ways, by federal or state regulation and by local choice. To protect and improve our local waterways, the city is under federal regulation on managing storm water and sewage treatment for pollution control.

Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Waterway Protection: Sheboygan's waterways are the heart of the City. Not only do they provide ecological functions, but also recreational, economic, and scenic benefits. Sheboygan mitigates harmful effects of flooding and pollution on our waterways by implementing a regular street sweeping program to remove total suspended solids. Sheboygan also continues to encourage education and citizen awareness and involvement in programs protecting Sheboygan's waterways.

Stormwater Management and Flood Control: Effective stormwater management helps to protect Sheboygan's waterways, drinking water, and prevents harmful erosion. Sheboygan requires best management practices be designed, installed and maintained to control pollution carried in runoff from post-construction sites and to reduce the risk of flooding, and this same ordinance protects sensitive areas near protected waterways from disruptive development. Sheboygan will continue to implement stormwater management plans to reduce pollution and mitigate flooding, especially high priority measures including construction of detention ponds, swales, and vegetative buffers.

Water Efficiency: Sheboygan is committed to water conservation efforts, one of those being water efficiency. Sheboygan will continue programs to quickly identify and eliminate leaks in the public water supply system.

Impervious Surfaces: Sheboygan promotes the use of subsurface drainage chambers, permeable pavers, and pervious pavement on appropriate soils. Increasing pervious surfaces helps to mitigate flooding, reduce runoff, erosion and pollution by allowing stormwater to filter into the ground, rather than redirecting the water.

Waterfront Development: Waterfront development is important to sustaining Sheboygan. Development will continue to be sensitive to the environment, and will continue to be accessible and serve the local residents. Development will continue to be respectful to protected waterways and wetlands and Sheboygan will continue to enforce best management practices at these sites. Sheboygan will continue to enforce sediment and erosion control requirements at construction sites and make public access to waterways a priority.

Native Landscaping: It is important to incorporate natural lanscaping as native plants generally require less water, maintenance, and are more suited for our climate. Native landscaping is a beautiful, sustainable choice. Sheboygan encourages native plantings on sites to reduce irrigation, protect shorelines and provide natural beautification. The City of Sheboygan has a natural demonstration Site, Maywood Environmental Center, that showcases natural plantings. Sheboygan will continue to incorporate native platings and seeds in roadside mixes to reduce maintenance.

Natural Resource Action Steps

Short Term (0-3 years)

- Consider developing maximum impervious thresholds for all zoning districts based on total building and hard surface lot coverage.
- Install low-flow faucet aerators and toilets at municipal sites.
- Review City building codes to update standards for water conserving plumbing fixtures.
- Offer education about how residents can reduce water useage and collect water for use.
- Include educational brochures with quarterly billings.
- Create a rain barrel program allowing citizens to purchase and learn how to use rain barrels.
- Compile and distribute a resource containing a list of hardy native plants appropriate for landscaping, and the importance of rain gardens.
- Review City weed and tree ordinances to ensure they do not discourage native landscaping practices.

Long Term (3 + years)

- Consider a program offering City stormwater utility rebate/credits for exceeding requirements for on-site stormwater management.
- Review ordinances to ensure the City is able to address drought situations by curtailing or banning non-essential water uses.
- Control non-native invasive species in right-of-ways, parks and other pubic areas.
- Offer innovative incentives for water conservation improvements such as plumbing fixtures.

ATMOSPHERE

Objective: Provide a safe and healthy atmosphere for people, nature and planet

The atmosphere includes the air we breathe, the sounds we hear, the odors we smell, the greenhouse gases that keep the planet habitable, weather systems that deliver water, and the high stratospheric ozone layer that protects us from harmful ultraviolet sunlight. People and cities can overload this atmosphere with pollutants, e.g., toxins, smog, allergens, noise, additional greenhouse gases, and ozone-depleting chemicals that diminish our health, harm wildlife, damage agriculture and structures, lower property values, and present new risks from changing climate.

Atmospheric pollution creates local and distant problems. Local effects in and near Sheboygan include indoor air pollution as people spend most of their time indoors; noise pollution from vehicles, trains, construction equipment, power tools and other human activity; air pollution from factories, buildings and motorized vehicles and small engines; and air pollution carried in from other cities (e.g. acid and mercury pollution of local waters and fish from coal-fired plants). Climate change may also be impacting Sheboygan in subtle ways, as Wisconsin has seen warmer winters, more precipitation, longer growing seasons, and shorter lake ice seasons. Air pollution from Sheboygan also contributes to global climate changes stressing other parts of the world, particularly for societies less affluent and able to adjust, and ecosystems less resilient than ours.

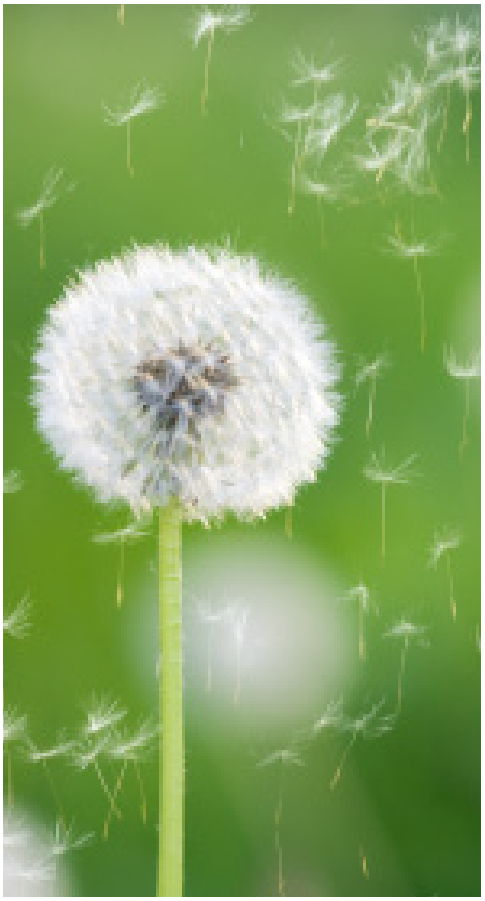
Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Air Quality: Sheboygan will continue to provide the bus transit service, Shoreline Metro, which reduces the need for car trips by individuals, thus reducing pollution. Sheboygan County is the only county in Wisconsin designated as “non-attainment” which can be costly to local businesses burdened with the added paperwork, time and costs. Continued support by Local/State Government officials and the Sheboygan County Chamber of Commerce can assist in removing this designation for the county. Additionally, the coal-burning power plant in Sheboygan, owned by MG&E and Alliant Energy Corp, is in the process of reducing the emission of pollutants linked to smog, asthma, heart attacks and premature deaths. The Environmental Protection Agency has required these reductions in emissions, which will improve the quality of life for everyone in Sheboygan. The City of Sheboyan will continue to educate the public on ways to reduce non-point source pollution and how they contribute to pollution, and how to mitigate their effect. Sheboygan continuously reviews and maintains high standards and ordinances against odor-producing sites and activities.

Greenhouse Gasses: Fossil fuel burning is the largest source of greenhouse gases, therefore it is important for the city and its residents to focus on energy conservation improvements, to build and purchase with energy efficiency in mind, and to develop renewable energy options. Reducing emissions from transportation related activities will help reduce the amount of greenhouse gasses produced. Sheboygan focuses on the reducion of fossil fuel burning transportation, and has seen an increase in various other transprotation options with Sheboygan County’s Non-motorizedprogram and the expansion of trails in Sheboygan and the surrounding area. Sheboygan stresses the impotance of waste reduction to help mitigate greenhouse gasses produced by landfills and waste transport, and encourages tree planting and urbanforest cover to help remove carbon dioxide, the dominant greenhouse gas produced by humans.

Indoor Air Quality: Residents of Sheboygan spend the majority of their time indoors, especially in winter months, which makes maintaining clean and healthy indoor air a priority. Indoor air quality has seen steady improvement as public areas have been cleaner due to tightening of rules against tobacco smoke, including a statewide smoking ban. Indoor air quality is important to the health of all Sheboygan residents, and improving indoor air quality and pollutants can help reduce health concerns such as allergies and asthma, as well as improve overall health. Sheboygan enforces health ordinances as well as state and federal laws regarding indoor tobacco smoke, combustion products, molds, and radon. Sheboygan also discourages use of paints, glues, caulks and other materials with high levels of volotile organic compounds (VOC's), flame retardants, hazardous cleaning products and other chemicals that may negatively impact air quality. Indoor living plants in municipal buildings exist, and are encouraged, to reduce air pollution. Sheboygan will continue to educate homeowners, landlords, and renters in resolving indoor air quality issues and preventing potential hazards.

Noise Pollution: Controlling noise pollution leads to a greater quality of life. Sheboygan's Comprehensive Plan provides a land use plan that carefully considers the placement of land uses in regard to reducing the instance of noise nuisances to residents. Provisions are also made to reduce the nuisance of noise during development practices. Sheboygan's Police Department developed a community policing effort that includes Neighborhood Officers who respond to noise complaints.



WASTE

Objective: Promote awareness, reduce initial consumption, promote reuse, increase recycling and reduce the amount of substances entering the landfill.

Waste disposal practices have changed substantially over the past 40 years. Much of the unwanted material households and businesses produce returns to productive use through recycling, composting and beneficial use. Hazardous wastes are carefully separated for special handling. Businesses have reduced the waste they generate. Still, it is necessary to landfill solid wastes for which no recycling or reuse is currently available.

Today, solid waste landfills in Wisconsin are professionally designed, constructed and operated to minimize the risk of pollution. There are now fewer than 80 active landfills in the state compared to thousands of town dumps and other disposal sites a few decades ago. The DNR regulates landfills to prevent negative impacts to people and the environment. Landfills must collect and treat liquids and gases they generate before releasing them to the environment. Landfill operators must monitor their facilities to detect any contamination, report monitoring data to the DNR and respond quickly to any problems. Money is set aside during landfill operation to ensure that monitoring and maintenance continue after the landfill closes. DNR staff inspect landfills regularly. While Landfills have come a long way, recycling is an important factor in a sustainable community, along with promoting the reduction of initial use as well as the reuse of materials.

Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Education: Helping Sheboygan residents understand the impact their waste has on the environment, as well as effective ways to reduce that impact is pivotal in reducing waste. Sheboygan's Sustainable Task Force educates on and promotes reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery of waste materials. Information is made available to increase consumer produt awareness and environmentally preferrable purchasing. Sheboygan distributes information about proper disposal of hazardous waste, drugs, e-waste, and other items.

Recycling: An important component to reducing waste is to recycle. The City of Sheboygan currently provides a Single Stream Recycling program with curbside pickup on garbage collection days. Single stream recycling accepts glass, aluminum, steel, tin, plastic containers, paper products, newspapers & magazines, as well as cardboard. This recycling program has diverted over 40,000 tons of materials from our landfills since 1996 and currently accepts various materials including all types of plastics.

Special Events: Special events can produce large amounts of waste. Opportunities exist to reduce the amount of waste produced, as well as advertise and educate other sustainable practices at special events. Some events in Sheboygan elect to be more environmentally conscious by providing recyling bins, and using recycled materials.

Composting: Another way to reduce waste that ends up in a landfill is to compost. Food scraps and yard waste make up 20-30% of what we throw away and are the largest category of municipal solid waste going into landfills, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. Composting can also help gardening efforts and to promote sustainability and local food. Sheboygan has a drop-off site for community composting of leaves and yard debris. Residents are encouraged to compost food scraps at home.

Waste Action Steps

Short Term (0-3 years)

- Explore the merits of a pay-as-you-throw policy for material disposal programs, evaluating either weight or volume of waste such as purchased City garbage bags.
- Consider recycling containers in public areas and at public events next to waste barrels.
- Provide education on setting up and maintaining compost bins at home, community gardens, and the workplace for organic waste (e.g. grass, leaves, brush, fruit and vegetable trimmings and garden debris).

Long Term (3 + years)

- Explore a plastic bag reduction program.
- Provide informatin and incentives to promote recovery, reuse, and recyling of demolition debris and building scraps at construction sites.
- Create a pilot project to make an established community event zero-waste by using products that are bio-based, recycleable, or compostable using glass, bio-plastics and paper products instead of plastic and styrofoam. Go on to include sustainable practices at all events, and create incentives to promote zero-waste events.
- Offer innovative incentives for water conservation improvements such as plumbing fixtures.

LAND USE & PLANNING

Objective: Guide and promote sustainable city-wide development patterns and incorporate sustainable features into buildings and grounds.

The physical layout and land use of our communities is fundamental to sustainability. Over the past several decades, two main land use practices have converged to generate unsustainable trends in urban sprawl: (1) zoning that separates each type of land use discouraging mixed-use neighborhoods and isolating employment locations, shopping, services and housing from each other and (2) low density growth planning aimed at creating automobile access to increasing expanses of land. Community sustainability requires a transition from poorly-managed sprawl to Smart Growth planning. This entails land use practices that create and maintain efficient infrastructure, ensure close-knit neighborhoods, and preserve natural and agricultural systems. In Wisconsin, the Smart Growth law has begun to move communities in this direction. Smart Growth's vision is to promote denser settlement while providing mixed uses, open space and transportation choices--the antithesis to sprawl.

Sustainable development not only addresses the broad view of community land use, but also the detailed view of sustainable sites and buildings. Emphasis is on building with nature in mind, exemplified by the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System and the EPA's ENERGY STAR ratings for homes, appliances, and fixtures. LEED promotes a whole-building and neighborhood approach to sustainability. It recognizes performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. Green rating programs are showing up more frequently in communities across the country and have proven to be a reliable tool to standardize the language of "green" buildings. Housing, too, is being influenced by new sustainable ideas as developers begin to employ such concepts as "life-cycle" design.

Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Promote Sustainable Development Patterns: One way to promote sustainable development is through planning and zoning. The City of Sheboygan continually reviews policies to provide more sustainable development patterns such as denser dwelling units per acre for single family development, while providing mixed -uses, open space, and transportation choices.

Neighborhoods and Mixed-use Corridors: Sheboygan will continue neighborhood improvement strategies, developing healthy, compact neighborhoods with mixed uses and housing types. Ideally, neighborhoods should have a mix of amenities close by with walkable streets, affordable housing with multi-unit and single-family homes, public spaces and well-connected streets serving pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and drivers. Integrating multiple uses into an area can create walkability, reduce reliance on automobiles, as well as create a more desirable place to live, work, and shop. Sheboygan identifies high traffic corridors and targets them for redevelopment utilizing underused buildings, strip centers, and parking lots.

Green Buildings: Buildings use a large amount of energy, accounting for 40% of energy consumed in the U.S., Sheboygan to focuses on reducing its building's impacts on the environment. Sheboygan encourages and promotes sustainable building practices using the LEED program, Energy Star or a similar system. Sheboygan partners with utility companies, Energy Star, and others to offer energy efficiency education and will continue to consider offering incentives to improve energy use in buildings. The City of Sheboygan encourages the recovery of all recycleable building materials and promotes adaptive reuse and renovation of older buildings while restoring historic integrity. Another sustainable building practice Sheboygan promotes is the utilization of building materials and products found in the immediate area or surrounding region.

Land Use & Planning Action Steps

Long Term (3 + years)

- Explore LEED's Neighborhood Design Rating System to help plan for more compact and complete neighborhoods.
- Consider green building for all new city building and remodeling projects.
- Consider offering incentives for green building and remodeling projects or requiring green buildings in Tax Increment Districts.
- Consider a green roof pilot project on a city building. Green roofs absorb and clean rainwater, provide insulation, create habitat for wildlife and help to lower urban air temperatures.

TRANSPORTATION

Objective: Enhance and promote mobility alternatives to the automobile; design safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation infrastructure; and connect to other local and regional networks.

Sustainable transportation generally refers to enhancing alternatives to the automobile– transit, bicycling, walking and rail – to reduce pollution, conserve energy, and decrease traffic congestion. It also implies attention to environmentally friendly infrastructure, alternative fuels and new transportation technologies. More and more communities around the country are incorporating these concepts into their transportation networks with increased support from state and federal funding.

Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Public Transit: In Sheboygan, only 1% of residents use public transportation to get to work. Sheboygan is focused on increasing ridership and functionality of public transportation. In Sheboygan, people can utilize Shoreline Metro, the area's bus transit. Shoreline Metro services all of Sheboygan as well as connecting Sheboygan with the nearby towns of Sheboygan Falls and Kohler. Sheboygan will continue to improve traveler information, comfort and convenience to attract locals, visitors, as well as the transit dependent. Sheboygan explores alternative fuels in fleet vehicles when financially feasible, and supports efforts to expand intercity bus service linking our area to areas througout the state.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities: Sheboygan County received a federally funded grant as a part of the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program, which funds Sheboygan County Nonmotorized (NOMO) program. NOMO is investing in nonmotorized facilities and outreach initiatives that make bicycling and walking more convenient throughout Sheboygan County. The program is still developing its network of nonmotorized transportation facilities that connect neighborhoods, retail centers, schools, recreational amenities, and employment centers to give people transportation choices that encourage a mode shift from private automobile to biking or walking. Sheboygan will continue to maintain bycycle and pedestrian facilities as well as seek opportunities to increase connectivity and access to facilities. Sheboygan has recently installed pedestrian wayfinding signs to aid in pedestrian navigation throughout the downtown business district including South Pier. Sheboygan promotes programs such as Safe Routes to School, which encourage walking and biking to school.

Street Design, Maintenance, and Traffic Enforcement: Sheboygan will continue to build and maintain infrastructure to serve a range of users – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and automobiles. Sheboygan encourages elements of green design when reconstructing or building new streets, e.g. LED street lighting, landscaping, native vegetation, wider terraces, narrower pavements, biodegradable paint and pedestrian amenities. Sheboygan explores newer types of construction material and road design to reduce stormwater impacts or increase the lasting quality of the street. Sheboygan also has an aggressive street cleaning program to protect water quality, maintain pavement, and reduce the burden on the sewer system. Sheboygan currently enforces erosion control policies and practices, and will continue to do so into the future. Continued strict enforcement of speeding and other traffic laws will ensure streets are safe for all travelers – autos, pedestrians, and bicyclists – and reduce maintenance costs.

Parking Facilities and Trip Reduction: Sheboygan considers bio-filters and other sustainability practices when rebuilding or developing parking facilities, making such decisions on a development by development basis. Sheboygan encourages the development of parking facilities to incorporate pervious material where clay subsoil does not inhibit drainage, and the inrocporation of landscaping for aesthetics and stormwater control, LED lighting, bike racks and other items to conserve energy and protect the environment. Sheboygan employs integrated land use planning and sprawl reduction policies to make destinations more pedstrian, bicycle, and transit friendly to reduce personal automobile trips.

Transportation Action Steps

Short Term (0 - 3 years):

- Address polluted run-off issues related to salt usage and other methods of snow and ice removal.

Long Term (3+ years):

- Provide incentives and flexibility for city employees and local businesses to use transit.
- Support statewide efforts to permit transit agencies to create their own funding authorities to improve mass transit options.
- Coordinate spur lines with industrial park sites, where applicable.
- Encourage rideshare programs and telecommuting.
- Explore the feasibility of adding infrastructure for future electric fueling/plug-in stations.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Objective: Enahance the local economy by attracting sustainable business and green-collar jobs and encouraging existing businesses to become more sustainable.

The numerous factors motivating individuals, companies, and governments to act and invest more sustainably are also creating demand for new "green" products, services and jobs. The City is developing a strong social network to support less-fortunate residents, including innovative institutions providing an economic safety net through community funds, food banks, housing, re-use of donated materials, and services for women, children, and the homeless. We also have corporations proud to proclaim their sustainability. On the federal level, the 2007 Green Jobs Act authorized $125 million to train workers for green-collar fields, with additional funding anticipated. In the face of such activities, equipping Sheboygan as a green business center makes good financial sense.

Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Green Economic Planning, Green Collar Jobs and Attracting Green Businesses: Sheboygan identifies products and sectors for a sustainability-related manufacturing and production niche in Sheboygan. Sheboygan Area School District partners with area colleges and universities to bring together discussions on developing ways to grow the green collar industry. Sheboygan encourages the adoption of green building practices for new construction and renovation, which contributes to the number of green collar jobs. Sheboygan encourages synergistic businesses to locate in the City, including seeking out businesses to use by-products of other processes or whose wastes can be used as raw materials for other industries. Sheboygan encourages businsesses to reuse processed water or make use of solid waste for materials or energy production and to maintain natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation, minimizing the disruption of natural systems.

Buying Local: Sheboygan promotes the buying of local and regional products to help strengthen our economy. Sheboygan is evlauating the potential for the creation of a Buy Local promotional campaign simiar to the State of Wisconsin's "Something Special from Wisconsin" program. Sheboygan emphasizes educating residents about the importance and benefits of supporting local businesses. There are many ways Sheboygan fosters the local buying movement, those include: increasing government purchasing of local products, devloping tools to connect local suppliers with businesses, consumers, and government, promoting the sale of local food and drinks at events, encouraging the development of unique local shops to foster a distinct Sheboygan identitiy, and by supporting the creation of a store or display showcasing Sheboygan's local products. Sheboygan has a Sustainability Directory that includes green collar companies and companies with improved sustainability. Sheboygan also has a strong art culture, and encourages local artists to work with businesses to display their products. Sheboygan supports businesses and non-profits offering products and services from people with disabilities, in local institutions or with other social needs.

Green Tourism: Sheboygan is working to attract and expand business-related eco-tourism, such as those related to waterways, biking and other outdoor activities. Sheboygan also encourages businesses to increase participation and certifiaction in the Travel Green Wisconsin program, a voluntary program providing opportunities to be recognized as a green business.

Triple Bottom Line: Called "Triple Bottom Line" (the Planet or Natural Capital, People or Social Capital, and Profit or Economic Capital), this accounting approach has been endorsed by the United Nations and International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) as a bona fide technique to measure corporate and governmental sustainability. Sheboygan encourages institutions and businesses to measure their success not only by financial profit, but by environmental and social performance as well. All levels of curriculum in schools and universities across Sheboygan are working toward developing a green or green business curriculum.

Low-income Needs: Sheboygan provides Community Development Block Grant funds to support social services based on yearly identified need in the community to make sure the monies are being targeted to the largest need for that year. Sheboygan supports programs for housing, transportation, education, work and social networks to improve the economic status of people in need. The Sheboygan Housing Coalition applies for federal assistance for new opportunities, emergencies, disaster relief, faith-based initiatives, etc. Sheboygan continually focuses on efforts to provide local warming shelters and adequate facilities for the homeless.

Economic Development Action Steps

Short Term (0-3 years)

- Promote, expand, and offer business incentives to attract green-collar companies including special funding and financing options.
- Work with the Sheboygan County Economic Development Corp. and the Chamber of Commerce to develop a marketing piece aimed at attracting industry in the sustainability sector.
- Create a sustainable best practices hand out for event planners, and work to attract sustainability-related conventions and events.
- Compile a list of companies in the region who show the value of the triple bottom line.
- Collaborate with the Chamber and local colleges to hold an annual conference to promote sustainability.

Long Term (3 + years)

- Establish venues for disseminating information to consumers on environmental product labeling.
- Create partnerships with area businesses to assist in informing consumers on environmentally and socially responsible choices.
- Inventory existing job training programs and link them to information provided in the green jobs needs assessment.
- Develop a strategy to secure available government and private funding to grow the industry.
- Analyze the potential for a "green business" incubator in the city.
- Highlight and market the Sheboygan's infrastructure and amenities attractive to green technology businesses.
- Encourage local businesses to adopot sustainable accounting practices by leading by example and sharing successes.
- Promote the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Green Tier Program which supports environmentally innovative companies who go beyond compliance with minimum regualtory standards while improving their bottom line.
- Follow standardized environmental management procedures, such as International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14001.

GOVERNMENT

Objective: Lead by example and foster sustainability policies and actions for cost-effective, socially responsible, and environmentally sound governmental practices to meet community needs.

With many employees and City-owned buildings, the City of Sheboygan has numerous opportunities to lead by example in sustainability efforts. This section provides sustainable policies and actions for city staff and departments to incorporate into daily operations and municipal projects. It also suggests administrative procedures to facilitate community actions. Some internal sustainability measures are already underway.

Current Policies, Programs and Actions

Energy Management: The City of Sheboygan believes it is best to lead sustainability efforts by example. The City has a demonstration site for alternative energies at Maywood Environmental Park, as well as energy conservation policies for city facilites. The City of Sheboyan is committed to planting and maintaining trees and native plats around city buildings and within and adjacent to city parking lots. The City of Sheboygan considers energy conservation and savings in purchasing equipment, computers and appliances. The City also uses a refill purchasing policy, replacing consumables instead of stocking excess, and uses recycled materials whenever possible. To reduce paper and ink use Sheboygan encourages use of electronic documents and email rather than generatingn paper copies.

Environmental Considerations: The City of Sheboygan considers environmental impact of daily operations and municipal facilities. The City replaces low flow faucet aerators and high efficiency toilets in municipal bathroom in need of new fixtures to conserve water. Sheboygan municipal buildings provide bubblers to encourage the use of city water. Sheboygan also considers a fleet replacement program incorporating the use of hybrid, electric, flex-fuel, and bio-fuel vehicles.

GREEN TIER

Communication and Training: For sustainability practices to expand in Sheboygan it is important for many groups to communicate, learn, and share best practices related to sustainability. Officials in Sheboygan who attend Green Tier events and training are expected to report what they learned to all City department heads so that useful information can be disseminated to all City employees. The Sustainable Sheboygan Task Force is in the process of making informational videos about sustainable practices in the City of Sheboygan that will be posted online and available for anyone to view.

Human Resources: The City of Sheboygan's sustainable human resource practices include hiring and promoting people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives, offering incentives for use of biking and ride-sharing, as well as empowering employees to think creatively, to generate ideas, and to share suggestions on municipal sustainability.

Government Action Steps

Short Term (0-3 years)

- Officially designate a City staff member as the Sustainability Coordinator responsible for coordination of sustainability activities.
- Incorporate sustainability responsibilities in job descriptions for relevant city staff.
- Form a green team of representatives from each department under direction of the Sustainability Coordinator to evaluate and implement internal sustainable actions.
- The Common Council shall designate the Sustainable Task Force to move the Sustainability Plan forward, provide information for the public, and review pertinent resolutions going before the Common Council.
- Continue to involve the public in sustainability activities through the website, online surveys, social networks, governmental meetings, and workshops. Review the Sustainability Plan annually. Present an update of how well the city is meeting sustainability targets at the State of the City event presented by the Mayor.
- Review and adopt recycling practices at all municipal facilities.
- Encourage use of 100% post-consumer recycled content products.

Long Term (3 + years)

- Require energy modeling as part of architectural design in all new public building construction to help determine the greatest efficiencies for energy conservation.
- When possible, utilize Full Cost Accounting (FCA) to analyze all costs, advantages, and alternatives. Define 'cost' not just as the monetary cost, but also include social, environmental and life cycle costs. Use this process rather than relying solely on the low bid process.
- Eventually reduce or eliminate non-green products and cleaners.
- Demonstrate environmentally safe landscaping practices by using natural fertilizers and no chemicals in areas surrounding city buildings.
- Reduce mowing wherever possible. Install rain barrels and rain gardens at city facilities to reduce runoff.

City of Sheboygan
spirit on the lake.

Department of City Development
828 Center Ave.
Sheboyan, WI 53081
(920) 459-3377
www.sheboyganwi.gov

ACTION STEPS

For the 2014-2019 5-Year Action Plan, the Sheboygan Sustainable Task Force in conjunction with the Strategic Fiscal Planning Committee of the Common Council has endorsed the action items associated with each objective. Action steps have been divided into two groups, short-term (implementation in 0-3 years) and long-term (implementation in 4 or more years).

Short - Term Action Steps

Energy

- Develop an internal policy that when a new street light/park light is replaced, it is replaced with energy efficient lighting, such as LED fixtures.
- Ensure that building codes allow for development of solar, wind, geothermal, and biomass energy sources, with guidelines to protect public safety and maintain community standards for aesthetics.

Local Food

- Support sustainable gardening by creating an example set of rules against artificial fertilizers and pesticides and encourage community gardens to adopt these rules to protect people, water, and wildlife.
- Revise the zoning code ordinance to address community gardens, temporary or permanent, as permitted or conditional land uses in all districts.
- Partner with the Sustainable Task Force to provide food education for citizens to learn about the importance of growing, preserving and buying local and organic food, local food safety, such as advisories on fish eaten from the Sheboygan River.

Natural Resources

- Consider developing maximum impervious thresholds for all zoning districts based on total building and hard surface lot coverage.
- Install low-flow faucet aerators and toilets at municipal sites.
- Review City building codes to update standards for water conserving plumbing fixtures.
- Offer education about how residents can reduce water useage and collect water for use.
- Include educational brochures with quarterly billings.
- Create a rain barrel program allowing citizens to purchase and learn how to use rain barrels.
- Compile and distribute a resource containing a list of hardy native plants appropriate for landscaping, and the importance of rain gardens.
- Review City weed and tree ordinances to ensure they do not discourage native landscaping practices.

Waste

- Explore the merits of a pay-as-you-throw policy for material disposal programs, evaluating either weight or volume of waste such as purchased City garbage bags.
- Consider recycling containers in public areas and at public events next to waste barrels.
- Provide education on setting up and maintaining compost bins at home, community gardens, and the workplace for organic waste (e.g. grass, leaves, brush, fruit and vegetable trimmings and garden debris).

Trans.

- Address polluted run-off issues related to salt usage and other methods of snow and ice removal.

Economic Development

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Long - Term Action Steps

Natural Resources

- Consider a program offering City stormwater utility rebate/credits for exceeding requirements for on-site stormwater management.
- Review ordinances to ensure the City is able to address drought situations by curtailing or banning non-essential water uses.
- Control non-native invasive species in right-of-ways, parks and other pubic areas.
- Offer innovative incentives for water conservation improvements such as plumbing fixtures.

Waste

- Explore a plastic bag reduction program.
- Provide informatin and incentives to promote recovery, reuse, and recyling of demolition debris and building scraps at construction sites.
- Create a pilot project to make an established community event zero-waste by using products that are bio-based, recycleable, or compostable using glass, bio-plastics and paper products instead of plastic and styrofoam. Go on to include sustainable practices at all events, and create incentives to promote zero-waste events.
- Offer innovative incentives for water conservation improvements such as plumbing fixtures.

Land Use & Planning

- Explore LEED's Neighborhood Design Rating System to help plan for more compact and complete neighborhoods.
- Consider green building for all new city building and remodeling projects.
- Consider offering incentives for green building and remodeling projects or requiring green buildings in Tax Increment Districts.
- Consider a green roof pilot project on a city building. Green roofs absorb and clean rainwater, provide insulation, create habitat for wildlife and help to lower urban air temperatures.

Economic Development

- Establish venues for disseminating information to consumers on environmental product labeling.
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- Develop a strategy to secure available government and private funding to grow the industry.
- Analyze the potential for a "green business" incubator in the city.

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