

# Central Wisconsin Eco-municipalities

Communities working toward *economic* and *ecological* sustainability



Center for Land Use Education



[www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/)



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## What is sustainability?

Sustainable development...meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs

## What is an eco-municipality?

A municipality that aspires to develop an ecologically, economically, and socially healthy community for the long term, using the Natural Step framework for sustainability as a guide, and a democratic, highly participative development process as the method. Eco-municipalities are developed locally to meet local needs

## What is The Natural Step approach?

4 guiding principles for moving toward a sustainable society that were developed as a consensus by a Swedish children's cancer doctor and researcher and 50 ecologists, chemists, physicists, and medical doctors

## What's happening in central Wisconsin?

The movement toward sustainability is quickly gaining momentum in Wood, Marathon and Portage Counties, as evidenced by the following events:

- In 2007, the **City of Marshfield** became an eco-municipality. They are implementing recommendations regarding transportation, water quality/quantity, and green buildings.
- In 2007, the **Commission for a Greener Tomorrow** was established as a non-profit organization dedicated to advancing the sustainable efforts of communities in the Greater Wausau area. It encourages greater awareness of sustainability issues to reduce waste, promote healthier lifestyles, adopt more environmentally-friendly practices and also capture cost savings where that is possible.
- In 2007, the **Sustainable Stockton** group in Portage County was created to strive to create and implement a shared, community vision for a sustainable future, by promoting a functional and healthy economic, ecological, and social climate.
- In 2008, the **City of Stevens Point** became an eco-municipality. Approximately 250 people shared their visions for a sustainable Stevens Point, and their ideas about specific actions to achieve these visions which are captured in the report *A Path to a Sustainable Stevens Point*.
- In 2008, **Citizens for a Clean, Green, & Welcoming Community** and the **Wisconsin Rapids Area League of Women Voters** hosted an eco-municipality forum and began study circles focused on making communities more sustainable.

### GUIDING OBJECTIVES FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY, BASED ON THE NATURAL STEP FRAMEWORK

#### DEVELOP POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT ULTIMATELY:

- ◆ Reduce dependence upon fossil fuels, extracted underground metals and minerals.
- ◆ Reduce dependence on chemicals and other manufactured substances that can accumulate in Nature.
- ◆ Reduce dependence on activities that harm life-sustaining ecosystems.
- ◆ Contribute as much as we can to the meeting of human needs in our society and worldwide.

*Objectives of American Planning Association's Strategy for Planning for Sustainability, adopted April 2000.*



**A growing list of Wisconsin eco-municipalities**

- City of Ashland
- City of Baraboo
- City of Bayfield
- City of Beloit
- City of La Crosse
- City of Madison
- City of Manitowoc
- City of Marshfield
- City of Menasha
- City of Neenah
- City of Sheboygan
- City of Stevens Point
- City of Washburn
- Douglas County
- Dunn County
- La Crosse County
- Town of Bayfield
- Town of Cottage Grove
- Village of Johnson Creek
- Village of Spring Green

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- In 2008, the **Midwest Renewable Energy Fair**, attended by over 22,000 people in Custer, included 9 sessions about eco-municipalities and sustainable communities.
- Over 40 people from central Wisconsin have participated in eight-week long study circles focused on making communities more sustainable

**Central Wisconsin Sustainability Newsletter**

To stay up-to-date on local sustainability accomplishments and upcoming events, sign up for the *Central Wisconsin Sustainability Newsletter* at [www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/sustainability.html](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/sustainability.html)

**Websites for central Wisconsin sustainability groups**

- Sustain Central Wisconsin is a coalition of citizen groups, communities and businesses in Central Wisconsin using the Natural Step framework to further the region’s long-term economic prosperity and ecological health. <http://groups.google.com/group/sustain-central-wisconsin?hl=en>
- Commission for a Greener Tomorrow – greater Wausau area [gogreencentralwisconsin.com/](http://gogreencentralwisconsin.com/)
- Sustainable Stockton [sustainablestockton.org/](http://sustainablestockton.org/)
- Stevens Point Eco-municipality [www.sustainablepoint.org/](http://www.sustainablepoint.org/)



Locally grown, organic breakfast

**Resources:**

- Sustainable Community Development Capacity Center*  
[www2.uwsuper.edu/sustainability/Eco-Municipality.htm](http://www2.uwsuper.edu/sustainability/Eco-Municipality.htm)
  - Current list of eco-municipalities in Wisconsin with resolutions
  - *Toward a Sustainable Community: A toolkit for local government*
  - Recent news articles
  - Resources
- Sustainable Communities: Lessons from Wisconsin and Sweden* by Anna Haines, Center for Land Use Education  
[www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/tracker/fall2006/sustainable\\_communities.html](http://www.uwsp.edu/cnr/landcenter/tracker/fall2006/sustainable_communities.html)
- Sustainability: More about competence than values* by Dr. Karl-Henrik Robert, madison, 2008. [www.vimeo.com/1006333](http://www.vimeo.com/1006333)
- Alliance for Sustainability: Chequamegon Bay.*  
[www.allianceforsustainability.org](http://www.allianceforsustainability.org)
- Sustain Dane: Dane County.* [www.sustaindane.org](http://www.sustaindane.org)
- The Natural Step for Communities: How cities and towns can change to sustainable practices* by Sarah James and Torbjorn Lahti.
- The Natural Step Story: Seeding a Quiet Revolution* by Dr. Karl-Henrik Robert, 2003
- The Natural Step: Toward a Sustainable Society* by David Cook, 2004