

CITY OF ELK RIVER – ENERGY CITY 2024 ACTION PLAN

Our Goal is to make Elk River the most energy responsible city in Minnesota

Ambitious, necessary, and possible – this is the Energy City Action Plan for the City of Elk River. This plan outlines the steps toward realizing a healthy, prosperous and sustainable future for our city. It challenges residents, business, and city leaders to create a better future for the next generation.

This plan sets out a clear vision of that future, with concrete targets and the steps and metrics needed to achieve each one of them. Between now and 2024 there will be much to learn and accomplish to achieve our goal of making Elk River the most environmentally friendly and energy responsible city in Minnesota. But the Energy City Commission has little doubt that the results will improve our quality of life and make us even more competitive in the future economy, while enabling us to live a better balance with Earth’s natural systems, truly being Powered by Nature.

The Energy City Action Plan is divided into 4 goals with each one having identifiable objectives and high priority action tasks. Together, these 4 goals address promoting the City of Elk River, economic development within Elk River, education through demonstrations, and engaging the residents and businesses of the community. The goals of this plan are centered on three areas of focus: reducing carbon, managing waste more efficiently, and reducing human impacts on the environment.

Summaries of each goal are provided in the following pages, highlighting targets, and the strategies to accomplish the goals. This document shall be reviewed annually for validation and congruence with annual budgets. At that time, amendments may be approved by the Energy City Commission and Economic Development Authority. In 2024, the Energy City Action Plan will be amended as needed and re-approved by the Commission and City Council.

GOAL 1: Promote the City of Elk River as the “Energy City” - The city of Elk River was established as the “Energy City” in 1996 and received a federal trademark in 2008. This designation reinforces its standing within the state and region as a hub of energy technology, renewable energy manufacturing, renewable energy demonstrations, recycling, use of green products, and education.

	Objective	High Priority Action Tasks
A1	Promote Elk River as center for "Green" and "Lean" manufacturing	Expand the "Energy City" campaign by promoting 2 expos, lectures, conferences, and/or events yearly
A2	Develop and maintain City's reputation as supportive of Sustainable ("Green") Building practices	Identify and promote 4 sources of energy and water efficient and cost-effective building materials annually (as long as they do not have negative impacts on the longevity of a building) to alleviate environmental impacts on new construction or remodeling projects
A3		Participate in 2 "green" city competitions by 2024 (Land Lab, Green Step Cities, Living Cities, Cities of the Future, etc.)
A4		Encourage businesses to reduce their solid waste impact by 5% per incident when remodeling, building, or deconstructing structures by donating, recycling, or re-using materials. Require all businesses to record and report all solid waste abated during remodeling, building, or deconstructing by 2024
A5	Invest in the community in a way that is sustainable for the community; focused on providing services at the lowest cost, and that characterizes the City of Elk River "Powered by Nature" theme.	Create a Climate Action & Resiliency Plan in collaboration with the Climate Smart Municipalities partnership.
A6		Work diligently with new development areas to maximize the preservation of prime vegetative communities with diversify to encourage landscape sustainability. Increase public outreach of sustainable landscapes that are specific to its site, includes a variety of species adapted to the local climate, and uses minimal fertilizers and pesticides. Encourage public participation in programs and incentives supporting this objective.
A7		Work with area agencies, residents, businesses, and community organizations to plant 500 trees and 100 acres of native vegetation throughout the city by 2024
A8		Educate the public through 2 public meetings annually on land development and redevelopment through promotion of sustainable land use. (Areas of special concern are wetland protection, storm water management, low impact landscaping, etc.)
A9	Support public transportation and active transportation planning	Complete a bike trail between Downtown Elk River and the Elk River Northstar Station by 2024
A10		Contract with a bike share business to provide bikes at the Elk River Station and downtown for commuters and tourists coming into Elk River by 2024
A11		Promote walking and biking in the City of Elk River by conducting a study on sidewalks and trails (mileage, links, safety, etc.) by 2018
A12		Implement 50% of the recommendations from the sidewalk/ trail study by 2024, including connections through private areas
A13		Invest in public electric vehicle charging stations. Convert at least 1 fleet vehicle to an EV based on 2017 results of Fleet Carma pilot program.

GOAL 2: Economic Development of the "Energy City" - As a leader in the state for energy efficient products and services, the city should continue to develop incentives, training, and resources for the expansion of the economic base.

	Objective	High Priority Action Tasks
B1	Increase the number of "Green Collar" jobs	Develop and expand a microloan program to encourage 50 new green collar jobs by 2024
B2	Increase the number of companies that actively engage in reducing their environmental impacts	Increase by 5 the number of companies that are actively manufacturing products or components of products that are directly or indirectly used in renewable energy or energy efficiency by 2024
B3		Provide training to 10 business (owners and employees) annually on reducing environmental impacts
B4	Provide expertise of gov't policies, procedures, and codes that reduce barriers and provide incentives to participating residents, businesses, and community organization to incentivize "green" building	Create and maintain a list of local, state, federal, and/or non-governmental grants and incentives available for "green" building practices by 2015, updated annually
B5		Review all local policies, procedures, and codes to reduce barriers for "green" building practices biennially
B6		Independently review the Energy City website to be a more user friendly and interactive tool for users periodically

GOAL 3: Showcase Ideas of the “Energy City” - The City historically has been home to green and renewable energy products and services. Water, wind, sunlight, gas, geothermal, and solid waste have powered the community for ages. “Green” homes, businesses, and products are respected worldwide. The “Energy City” will aid, create, promote, endorse, sponsor, and facilitate the next generation of ideas.

	Objective	High Priority Action Tasks
C1	Promote and utilize sustainable Green building techniques, materials, and practices	Encourage businesses and residents to participate in ERMU Phone Audits. Distribute ERMU Energy Guides to businesses and residents; monitor and report survey results.
C2		Provide 10 tours to school groups, residents, businesses, investors, and/or fellow local, state, federal, and international governmental and non-governmental employees annually
C3		Adopt "Green" standards/guidelines for all large purchases ((ex: electronics (printers, printing supplies), wood products, food, cleaning products, paints/coatings/adhesives, carpets, furniture, paper products)) by the City by 2024
C4		Achieve the next Step in the GreenStep Cities Program by 2024
C5	Identify and promote renewable energy resources	Explore neighborhood energy systems (PV Systems, Water Collection Systems) and make a plan for improvements by 2024
C6		Explore District Heating Systems and make a plan for developments by 2024
C7		Achieve 15% above State/Federal mandates of renewable energy city-wide by 2024
C8		Construct a solar demonstration site (rooftop, ground mount, or other) by 2024.

GOAL 4: Public Engagement in the “Energy City” - Good ideas are nothing if they are not pushed to the users and decision makers. The “Energy City” will develop and manage educational programs to promote the City’s goals and work toward the continuing education of the public with respect to energy technology, energy manufacturing, energy demonstrations, recycling, use of green products and education.

	Objective	High Priority Action Tasks
D1	Develop education and enforcement programs to keep recyclables out of the waste stream	100% of new residents and businesses will receive educational materials about recycling and organics recycling within the City of Elk River
D2		Increase residential curb-side recycling to 95% of households and residential organics to 25% by 2018
D3		Develop enforcement policies for recycling and organics by residents and businesses by 2024
D5		Provide solid waste, recycling, and organics recycling receptacles for community events. 25% of community event will provide the receptacles by 2016, 50% by 2018, etc.
D6	Develop and implement enhanced water education, incentive, and conservation programs	Promote implementation of water conservation practices (rain gardens, bio swales, green roofs, porous pavement, greenways, wetlands, and stormwater tree trenches, low maintenance native landscaping, grey water systems, etc.) by educating residents, businesses, and City of Elk River employees by 2024
D7		By 2018, develop one public demonstration site for porous pavement, a rain garden, green roof, and other water conservation practice; Provide education for area businesses and homeowners to do the same.
D8	Solicit gifts and contributions	Apply for on average 1.5 grant(s) a year for use of "Energy City" funding of energy technology, energy manufacturing, energy demonstrations, recycling, use of green products, and/or education
D9		Advertise and support the adoption program (adopt a park, storm pond, wetland, greenspace, etc.) and have 6 adoptions by 2018
D10		Enroll in the Sustainable Communities partnership with the University of St. Thomas by 2024