



REGIONAL COUNCIL OF MAYORS
September 13, 2010

INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION—GREENSTEP CITIES AND ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE UPDATE

Looking to create a simple pathway to sustainability and a “green seal of approval” (analogous to the 1980s Minnesota Star City concept for economic development), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), launched the GreenStep Cities program at the June League of Minnesota Cities meeting. Looking to pilot the program in several metro cities, MPCA contracted with ULI Minnesota and the RCM to prioritize and test best practices and shape the program’s implementation.

Kristina Smitten, the project manager for ULI Minnesota/RCM’s involvement in the GreenStep Cities program, noted that there are 28 best practices for cities to consider and within those, there are 163 actions that can be pursued. To begin the designation process, a city must pass a resolution of support, and depending on a city’s size, it is required to implement a certain number and specific actions to receive designation. To date, excluding the pilot cities, eight cities have signed resolutions to join and another nine have indicated interest. Most cities think that implementation will take three to five years.

The pilot cities - Bloomington, Edina, Falcon Heights, St. Louis Park and Victoria – have agreed to meet quarterly to discuss implementation. Ms. Smitten also pointed out that in many cases, the best practices haven’t yet been tested or measured and this is leading to a new effort, described by architect Rick Carter as “a pilot within a pilot.” This work will test out a methodology in Falcon Heights and St. Louis Park to measure all of the energy and water consumption, waste creation and vehicle miles of travel taking place within the city’s boundaries. The information will be collected retrospectively (2008 – 2010) and measured in 2011 and will be normalized and translated in costs and tons of carbon. These results will be connected back to the GreenStep Cities best practices. Visit the GreenStep Cities project website for more details:
<http://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/>

Clean Energy Finance Program

Jay Lindgren introduced Larry Ostema of Abundant Power Systems who noted the explosive growth in the energy efficiency market—with an expected 300% increase in commercial retrofits in the next ten years and \$500B market projected by 2030 for the residential market. This new market provides an opportunity to create jobs and create tangible cost-savings and environmental benefits to companies and communities.

The PACE (Property assessed clean energy) financing programs, which Senator John Doll described in previous RCM meetings, have been taken off the table as Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae won’t secure mortgages that have an energy efficiency tax lien on them. In light of this setback, Mr. Ostema introduced an array of alternative financing options, ranging from on-bill utility loans and tariffs to revolving loan funds. Details are available in Mr. Ostema’s

presentation available on the [ULI Minnesota website](#).

JOBS INITIATIVE UPDATE

Regional Economic Development Partnership

Kathy Schmidlkofer, who is now serving us the Transition Director of Regional Economic Development Partnership (REDP), provided an update on the current priorities for this new entity.

- Launching a CEO search that is being led by DHR International.
- Pulling together founding investments, with a first year goal of \$2.8M. Currently the REDP has banked \$1M from private sector investors and has commitments for \$900K in public sector support.
- Seeking legal incorporation as a 501(c)(3).
- Engaging economic development thought leaders in the work.

The REDP is working with Tunheim Partners on an outreach strategy—aiming to do a more public launch of the REDP in late September, early October. Caren Dewar emailed the CEO position description and the investment categories for participating public sector partners to RCM mayors.

Regional Competitiveness Project

Mayor Stan Harpstead introduced the new University of Minnesota Research Assistants who will be providing support to the RCP project, Stephanie Zawistowski and Jennifer Schuller. In the second year of this project, Mayors are asked again to visit 1 -2 CEOs and the research assistants will set up the meetings. The team will also be exploring a non-industry cluster—the Corporate Headquarters Cluster – as those companies and their relationships with advertising, accounting, and law firms are important in the region.

Along with the Minnesota Bio Business Alliance, the team submitted an application for a \$600K two-year grant from the Small Business Association to advance the medical device cluster work in the region.

Brookings Institution Metropolitan Business Planning Project

Project Manager Jon Commers discussed the work of JumpStart Inc, a non-profit that has recently been retained to work with local stakeholder to design and implement a Minneapolis-St. Paul entrepreneurial accelerator. Between now and March the team will pull together an action plan with technical assistance provided by JumpStart. The December RCM meeting will focus on regional economic development strategies.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Kevin Frazell, Director of Member Services at League of Minnesota Cities (LMC), described the new “Outside the Ox” campaign which attempts to illustrate to the public that the current way of funding city services isn’t working anymore. The LMC has launched a YouTube campaign to show the public the impacts of cutting services and to engage a broad mix of Minnesotans to find better solutions for the future of the state’s communities. Watch the [video](#) and visit [Outside the Ox](#) for more information.

Mayor Rybak expressed interest in creating a regional 311 system as the current system in Minneapolis could be easily scaled upward, creating cost savings for participants. With more

participants the line could be staffed longer than the 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. hours and could provide information about other attractions and amenities beyond city services. Caren Dewar briefly mentioned the Blue Cross Blue Shield-Safe Routes to School initiative and the potential for cities to play a role in that initiative. And lastly she reported that ULI MN will focus on strategies to improve our reinvestment tools and incentives.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

If Mayor's are interested in attending any ULI annual meetings, there are scholarships available. Contact Caren Dewar if interested.

COMING UP

The October RCM meeting will be a special meeting program—opened up to ULI Minnesota members—focused on regional governance. Current Metropolitan Council Chair Peter Bell and former chairs Ted Mondale and Curtis Johnson will speak and former Metropolitan Council Administrator, Jay Lindgren will moderate. The November RCM meeting has been cancelled and Mayors are encouraged to attend the 5th Annual ULI Minnesota Economic Outlook program with Brian Beaulieu on Tuesday, November 16th, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. at Dorsey & Whitney.

ATTENDEES

Mayors

Ardell Brede, Rochester; Sandy Martin, Shoreview; Elizabeth Kautz, Burnsville; Stan Harpstead, Arden Hills; Jim Hovland, Edina; Debbie Goettel, Richfield; Marvin Johnson, Independence; Bill Hargis, Woodbury; Dean Johnson, Lake Elmo; Janet Williams, Savage; Chris Coleman, Saint Paul; Terry Schneider, Minnetonka; Bill Droste, Rosemount; Steve Lampi, Brooklyn Park; R.T. Rybak, Minneapolis; Doug Anderson, Dayton; Nick Ruehl, Excelsior; Mary Hershberger Thun, Victoria; Eugene Maxwell, Hopkins; Ken Willcox, Wayzata; John Sweeney, Maple Plain; Gene Winstead, Bloomington; Will Rossbach, Maplewood; Judson Marshall, Mahtomedi .

Staff and Contractors

Caren Dewar, executive director, ULI Minnesota; Cathy Bennett, Housing Initiative; Snezhana Bessonov, Initiatives; Mary Kay Bailey, Communications and Policy, Kristina Smitten, Environment Initiative; Jon Commers, Brookings Metropolitan Business Planning initiative.

Advisors and guests

Kathy Schmidlekofer, General Mills/Itasca Project; John Shardlow, Bonestroo; Carol Nielsen, Regional Competitiveness Project; Luke Weisberg, Greater Metro Workforce Council; Gretchen Nicholls, LISC; Rick Carter, LHB; Jay Lindgren; Dorsey & Whitney; Todd Klingel, Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce; Sarah Erickson, City of Saint Paul; Katherine Blauvelt, Office of Senator Al Franken; Beth Elliott, City of Minneapolis; Clark Arneson, City of Blaine; Burke Murphy, DEED; Stephanie Zawistowski, Regional Competitiveness Project; Jennifer Schuller, Regional Competitiveness Project; Jeremy Hanson-Willis, City of Minneapolis-Mayor's Office; Guy Peterson, Metropolitan Council; Mike Logan, Target Corporation; Barb Thoman, Transit for Livable Communities; Larry Ostema, Abundant Power; Patricia Nauman, Metro Cities; Mary-Margaret Zindren, League of Minnesota Cities; Kevin Frazell; League of Minnesota Cities; Jonathan Rogers; National League of Cities; Dwight Johnson, City of Rosemount; John S. Adams, University of Minnesota.