

Irwin A. Bock Award for Excellence in Public Administration - Community Environmental Stewardship Award

2008 Award Nomination Form

Awards will be presented at NWMC Annual Banquet on June 6, 2008.

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Use additional sheets for answers if necessary

LIST SIGNIFICANT "GREEN ACTIVITIES" YOUR MUNICIPALITY/TOWNSHIP HAS ACCOMPLISHED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS (i.e., community recycling, Tree City USA, etc.).

Prioritizing Environmental Sustainability

In March 2006, after nine months of development and input from hundreds of citizens, the City of Evanston adopted a new strategic plan with a vision to make Evanston the most livable city in America. One of the three core values identified to guide the strategic plan is environmental sustainability.

The vision outlined under environmental sustainability states "Evanston will be known as "The Green City". We will embrace the best ecological practices and policies in our government, services and infrastructure." The following three goals guide Evanston's environmental sustainability value:

Goal #4: Create and maintain functionally appropriate, sustainable, accessible high quality infrastructure and facilities.

Goal #5: Protect and optimize the City's natural resources and built environment, leading by example through sustainable practices and behaviors.

Goal #6: Coordinate and influence transportation resources to provide an improved system that is safe, integrated, accessible, responsive, understandable, efficient, and meets the needs of all people.

Environmental Education & Outreach

The Evanston Ecology Center, part of the City of Evanston's Parks/Forestry and Recreation Department, has been serving the Evanston community since 1974. The Ecology Center strives to foster a greater appreciation, awareness and knowledge of the natural environment through educational programs and services. Last year, over 2,000 residents participated in the 157 programs offered through the Ecology Center. Annually, the center fields over 10,000 calls from the community on environmentally related topics and receives around 7,000 visitors.

The City publishes information on its green initiatives and efforts in addition to alerting residents and businesses of various community resources through a variety of online and print sources, from the City's quarterly newsletter, website and biweekly e-newsletter to program brochures, new resident packets and press releases to local media.

Local Food

The Evanston Ecology Center also oversees Evanston's Community Gardening program, which has been operating for over 30 years. In addition to benefiting more than 200 Evanston households, the gardens are utilized by a youth gardening group, the Talking Farm, a local effort to grow food locally in Evanston, and a soup kitchen.

The City of Evanston also coordinates and runs the Evanston Farmers Market. The Evanston Farmers Market will start its 33rd season this May. The market, which runs from May through November, hosts over 30 vendors and attracts 2,500 residents per week.

Parks and Trees

Evanston recently was designated as a Tree City USA for the 24th time. In addition, the City once again received the National Arbor Day Foundation's Growth Award. The Growth Award further recognizes those Tree City USA communities who have shown environmental improvement and higher levels of tree care. The City's parkway tree population currently stands at around 27,700 trees, with an additional 3,000 trees in our City parks. The 30,700 does not include trees on private land.

The City of Evanston has been applying minimal to no pesticides or insecticides in its municipal parks and on City owned properties since the early 1990s. However, a formal policy has never been adopted. The City of Evanston Parks/Forestry and Rec department is currently drafting formal guidelines for City managed parks and properties that follow integrated pest management principals. The policy is expected to be finalized in the summer of 2008.

Recycling

Evanston's residential recycling pick-up service started in 1986. Recycling pick-up is collected separately from refuse, by a City-contracted hauler. Initially, the City collected and processed its recyclable materials in-house. In 2000, the City contracted out the service, vastly expanding the number of materials collected through the program. The City is now in the process of converting its 18 gallon recycling containers to 65 and 95 gallon containers to increase its collection efforts. The conversion will start in 2008 and take 2 to 4 years to fully implement.

At City facilities, recycling efforts continue to expand. Several years ago the Information Systems Division started collecting printer and toner cartridges for recycling. The City now recycles up to 550 toner cartridges annually, keeping them out of landfills and reducing printing costs. The City also recently started recycling its old computers and office equipment.

Trashbusters, an annual event started in 2002, encourages City employees to take one day out of the year to clean their files, organize their workspace and recycle old documents. After five years of Trashbusters' events, the City has recycled over 70,000 pounds of paper.

Working with the Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County (SWANCC), the City is also expanding community recycling programs. The City currently hosts the ongoing collection of mercury thermometers, prescription drugs and sharps, CFLs and fluorescent lamps. The City has hosted annual document shredding events for the past 2 years with a 2008 event scheduled for June. Through these programs, the City has diverted 59 pounds of mercury thermometers, 22,840 lbs of paper, 14 drums of prescription drugs and 5 boxes of sharps.

Streets and Transportation

In the summer of 2006, the City recycled the existing concrete base into subgrade aggregate material in the McCormick Boulevard renovation project. This kept waste from the landfill and prevented emission pollution from additional truck hauling. The project saved the city a total of \$259,000 in material and transportation costs. Additionally, The City of Evanston uses the maximum amount

of recycled asphalt pavement allowed by IDOT (up to 15% on finished paving course and 25% on leveling binder) in all street resurfacing projects.

Since 2004, the Division of Transportation has been upgrading Evanston's Tallmadge street lights, which were equipped with mercury vapor lamps, to more energy efficient high-induction lamps. High-induction lamps produce the same amount of light as a mercury vapor lamp but use less electricity and last much longer, saving on both electricity costs and replacement costs. All of The project, which involved 4,000 lamps, was completed in May of 2008.

The Division of Transportation is also working to rapidly upgrade its antiquated signal systems to state-of-the-art, interconnected, demand-responsive systems. These improvements will not only improve safety, but dramatically reduce vehicle delay and air pollution. Part of these updates includes converting traffic signal lamps to LED lamps. By the end of 2007, almost half of the 99 traffic signalized intersections in Evanston will be operating with LED lamps instead of incandescent lamps. LED lamps use 80 percent less energy than an incandescent lamp and last up to 10 times longer.

Air

The City of Evanston passed Ordinance 70-0-96 amending the Evanston City Code which regulates the use of backpack-mounted or hand-held gasoline-powered leaf blower types of machines. Use of these machines is prohibited during parts of the year.

Evanston City Council adopted an anti-idling ordinance at the June 26, 2006 City Council meeting. The ordinance prohibits standing or parked vehicles that are over 8,000 lbs. in gross weight from idling their engines for more than five minutes in any 60 minute period. While the ordinance excludes City vehicles, City supervisors actively remind staff to reduce idling while operating City vehicles and equipment.

The City of Evanston Department of Health and Human Services hosted a No Mower Pollution event in May of 2006 to collect and exchange old gas cans and gas powered mowers. Evanston collected 111 lawnmowers, two leaf blowers and one trimmer/hedger. In addition, a total of 136 old gas cans were exchanged for new gas cans that minimize emission losses. The program will be offered again this spring, starting on Earth Day, April 22nd and running through Labor Day weekend.

The Department of Health and Human Services is actively employing and promoting integrated pest management principals in residential neighborhoods to address Evanston's rat issues. Residents have responded favorably to a newsletter produced by the department explaining ways to eliminate rats without the use of pesticides.

The City of Evanston's 149 diesel-powered truck engines run on B20 bio diesel. B20 has fewer harmful emissions than regular diesel. In addition, three vehicles run on compressed natural gas, and several fork lifts run on propane. The City has also retro-fitted many of its diesel engines to reduce soot, hydrocarbon and carbon monoxide emissions with the assistance of Clean Air Counts grant funding.

Water

The City has an outdoor watering ban from May 15 through September 15, Monday through Friday from 9am to 4pm. Watering your lawn and garden during the day wastes water because evaporation is highest during the hottest parts of the day. Watering instead in the early morning and late evening ensures more water is absorbed where you want it, in the lawn and garden.

Since 1987, Evanston residents and businesses have reduced their water consumption by 20%.

Energy

In 2003, the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation awarded the City \$26,775 to implement a lighting retrofit at the Fleetwood-Jourdain Community Center. The amount represents \$850 for each kilowatt of electricity demand reduced as a result of the project. Lamps, ballasts and controls were upgraded, resulting in a 45 percent decrease in electrical usage for lighting. The decrease significantly reduces pollution and saves Evanston taxpayers \$2,000 per year.

Climate Change

In October 2006, the City of Evanston unanimously voted to sign the US Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement. Signed by over 700 cities nationwide, the agreement pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 7% from the 1990 levels by 2012.

LIST SIGNIFICANT “GREEN ACTIVITIES” YOUR MUNICIPALITY/TOWNSHIP HAS ACCOMPLISHED IN 2007 & 2008 (i.e., switching to recycling carts, joined Clean Air Counts, conducted an electronics recycling event, etc.).

Prioritizing Environmental Sustainability

The State of Illinois awarded the City a grant for \$75,000 in 2007 for environmental sustainability programs. The grant was used to establish an Office of Sustainability and hire its first full-time Sustainable Programs Coordinator.

In February, 2008, the City of Evanston signed the Greenest Region Compact, a Metropolitan Mayors Caucus effort to conserve resources region wide.

Environmental Education & Outreach

In October of 2007, the Ecology Center hosted Evanston's First Annual Green Living Festival. Over 650 residents attended the event, which show-cased local green vendors, non-profit and government agencies and offered 30 minute informational lectures all day on topics including home energy audits, green design, car sharing, electric cars, sustainable lawn care and safe and sustainable pest control.

Planning for the Second Annual Evanston Green Living Festival is currently underway.

Recycling

The City won \$5,000 in 2007 to help enhance its recycling programs, for participation in the 2007 Cans for Cash National Challenge. During the one month competition, Evanston community members recycled 40,300 pounds of aluminum beverage cans.

In the summer of 2008, the City will expand its services to collect recycling at a number of public events and at one of its largest and busiest parks. If efforts are successful the City will look to place recycling containers in other parks.

Streets and Transportation

Evanston is a bicycling city and has one of the highest levels of bicycling-to-work in Northeastern Illinois. The rate of bicycling is almost six times higher than the regional average! In 2007, the City of Evanston implemented a comprehensive bike plan to improve bicycling conditions throughout the City with the help of a \$365,000 federal grant through the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. Part of the program included working with the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation to identify and evaluate bike rack locations throughout the City. The bike racks will be installed in conjunction with the citywide bike plan improvements in the Spring of 2008. Additionally, many improvements have been or are in the process of being implemented in the City's parks, improving the connection of off-road bike paths with the City's neighborhoods.

In July 2007, the City passed a new Stormwater Management Ordinance that allows developers to employ "green" approaches to stormwater management including green roofs and permeable paving, as an alternative to traditional stormwater retention practices.

The City recently completed a Travel Market Study to construct a new passenger rail station on the existing CTA Yellow Line in South Evanston that would add a projected 1,000 riders per day to the line. The line currently runs through Evanston with no stops. The City is now looking for funds to conduct an engineering feasibility study for the new station in 2008.

The City is currently in the design phase for its first permeable concrete alley to be constructed in 2008.

In February 2008, the City kicked off its Multi-Modal Transportation Plan, which will examine and assess all modes of transportation in Evanston. One of the 7 goals of the plan is to "integrate environmental sustainability with transportation needs".

Air

The City became a Silver Clean Air Counts member in 2007 and is currently working to reach Gold member status.

When the City issues its 2008 contract for cleaning services, the RFP will require the contractor employ green cleaning practices and guidelines in accordance with Green Seal™ Environmental Standard for Cleaning Services

Water

On August 13th, 2007, the City of Evanston unanimously voted in favor of a resolution that publicly stated the City's opposition to the additional dumping of pollutants into lake Michigan that was proposed by British Petroleum for the expansion of a refinery in Whiting, IN.

Energy

In 2007, the City committed to offset 20% of its electrical purchases for 2007 with 5.5 million kilowatts hours of Renewable Energy Credits (RECs).

In the fall of 2007, the City worked with its vending machine contractor to install Vendmisers on all of the vending machines located in City facilities. The new devices reduce the vending machines' energy usage by as much as 40 percent, saving an estimated 50,000 kWh per year.

In early 2008, the City of Evanston initiated new power settings on all City computers that allow computers and monitors to enter low-power states or "sleep mode" until a City employee hits the keyboard or mouse. According to Energy Star, this simple change saves the City an estimated 170,000 kilowatt hours annually.

Building Green

One of the City's five fire stations, Fire Station #5, was demolished this summer. The new one will be constructed green and the City hopes to achieve LEED silver status when construction is completed. Some of the green features include use of certified wood, water efficient landscaping, low VOC materials energy efficient building shell and HVAC system and a white roof to counter the urban heat island effect. Additionally, 100% of the electricity for the station will be offset with Renewable Energy Credits (RECs).

The new children's room at the Evanston Public Library incorporated many green features into the renovation including diverting over 75% of the material removed from the landfill by recycling it, using recycled content and salvaged building materials including gypsum board, doors, carpeting, counter tops and furniture, low VOC paints and flooring and high efficiency lighting.

Climate Change

In the fall of 2007, Evanston completed a community wide greenhouse gas emission inventory which indicates Evanston needs to reduce emissions by an estimated 13% in the next four years to meet the goals outlined in the US Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.

The City of Evanston and the Network for Evanston's Future, an Evanston advocacy group, are jointly developing an Evanston Climate Action Plan (ECAP) through a unique, citizen-based process. This plan will outline a wide range of measures and policies to reduce Evanston's greenhouse gas emissions.

Structured with nine task forces, each with one city and two citizen co-chairs, the process was launched at a public meeting on November 13, 2007, with over 130 participants. The draft ECAP will be presented to the community on May 4, 2008, and then, after revisions, presented to the Evanston City Council in the summer of 2008.

**EXPLAIN WHY YOUR MUNICIPALITY/TOWNSHIP SHOULD BE AWARDED
NWMC COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP RECOGNITION.**

When the Evanston community expressed environmental sustainability as a priority, the City of Evanston responded. As the measures above illustrate, the City is making significant strides towards integrating environmental sustainability into its policies, practices and operations. This is just the beginning. By coordinating efforts across all departments, the City is thoroughly examining itself and its practices to position itself as a leader in addressing global issues with local solutions.