



Eau Claire County 2016 Green Tier Legacy Community Annual Report

for Eau Claire County's participation in the Sustainability Component of the Green Tier Legacy
Communities Charter

Last Revision June 2, 2017

Summary of sustainable initiatives and activities undertaken in the County in 2016:

TRANSPORTATION

- **Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan:** In partnership with Dunn and Chippewa Counties, developing a county-wide bicycle-pedestrian plan to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety, mobility, and enhance recreational and tourism opportunities
- **Multi-Modal Transportation Study:** Partnered with UW-Eau Claire Math class to evaluate viability of increased transit options, bike share, and car share program in unserved/underserved areas of the county

HEALTH

- **Health in All Policies:** Integrating Health in All Policies approach in comprehensive plan updates, including consideration of access to healthy food and recreational trails

LAND USE

- **Local Food Production:** Promoting local agriculture and ag-related businesses, including community-supported agriculture, hobby farms, ag-related tourism, etc. through more flexible agricultural zoning districts
- **Farmland Preservation:** Created *Golden Triangle* Agricultural Enterprise Area and provided information to farmers within the Area to register for the tax credit program, which provides an incentive to preserve productive farmland in the County
- **Large-Scale Non-Metallic Mining (aka Frac Sand Mines):** Assisted town of Otter Creek in developing a Comprehensive Plan update to address concerns with adverse impacts of large-scale non-metallic mines.
- **Land Conservation:** Annual participation in county conservation aids projects that are used to improve the fish and wildlife resources of the county.
- **State Natural Areas:** 1,311 acres managed in partnership with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources including Coon Fork and South Fork Barrens, Pea Creek Sedge Meadow, North Fork Eau Claire River, and Canoe Landing Prairie Areas.
- **Wilderness Areas:** Wilson, Horse Creek, and Hathaway Creek wilderness areas totaling 490 acres were created to protect areas of white pine from harvesting activity.
- **River Corridors:** Established Eau Claire River Corridor boundary which restricts clear cutting of timber from a zone extending for three hundred feet of the ordinary high water mark on either side of the Eau Claire River.
- **Wildlife Management Areas:** Multiple ruffed grouse and woodcock management areas that have been developed and enhanced to promote and create habitat for upland birds.
- **Reforestation:** Regular hand planting of pine trees on the county forest to successfully regenerate pine stands.

ENERGY

- **Solar Energy:**
 - Approved Conditional Use Permit for Eau Claire Energy Cooperative to develop 2,800 solar panels for “Member Solar” community-driven solar project
 - Eau Claire County is participating in solar garden programs from Eau Claire Energy Coop and XCEL energy. In total Eau Claire County purchases approximately 50 kW of output, or enough to satisfy all electrical needs of the Ag Center building.
 - Removing barriers to alternative energy in Eau Claire County Zoning Ordinance, including solar and wind power generation
- **Energy Efficiency:**
 - Eau Claire County tracks utility expenses monthly using EPA Portfolio Manager and monitors trends
 - Comply with a preventative maintenance program and equipment “tune-ups” to optimize the performance and efficiency of HVAC equipment
 - Our building automation system has been expanded from the core buildings to include a number of outlying facilities. The ability to schedule HVAC equipment and lighting has increased efficiency.
 - Work with Focus on Energy to maximize investment dollars on energy reduction projects
 - All HVAC equipment is replaced with more efficient models during capital budget replacements
 - Installed LED lighting/occupancy sensors at the Augusta Highway shop to replace the high bay T12 fixtures
 - Retrofit of 67 exterior overhang downlights from mercury vapor to LED
 - Retrofit Courthouse Lot A HPS parking lot fixtures to LED

WATER

- **Watershed Management:** The County worked with the West Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and the Eau Claire River Watershed Coalition to develop *A Community Strategy for the Eau Claire River Watershed* (<http://wcvrwc.org/Eau-Claire-Watershed-Plan.html>)

WASTE

- **Holiday Light Recycling:** Collected 1650 pounds of holiday lights for recycling
- **DNR Recycling Award:** Received 2016 Wisconsin DNR Recycling Excellence Award for special events recycling (including Eau Claire, Country Jam, and Blue Ox Music Festivals)
- **Expanding Recycling Services:**
 - Investigating pilot program to increase recycling drop-off site collections to include tires, oil, etc. to divert additional materials from waste stream and help address illegal dumping problem in rural areas of the county
 - Developed pilot project with City of Altoona to offer recycling bins in city parks
 - Worked in partnership with Revolution Plastics to inform farmers and dairies in county of agricultural plastic recycling services
- **Household Hazardous Waste:** Held 3 Clean Sweep hazardous household waste collection events in 2016
- **Education & Outreach:** Developing focused marketing and educational campaign targeted at college students and Millennials to increase recycling awareness and participation

- **Green Waste:** Facilitated public-private partnership with City of Eau Claire, Eau Claire County Recycling, and Boxx Sanitation to operate green waste disposal facility
- **Organic Waste Recycling/Composting:** Working with Earthbound Environmental to offer household and business organics recycling of compostable waste