

Press Release

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26 Michigan Communities Recognized for Sustainability Achievements

LANSING, Michigan – More than two dozen Michigan communities were recently honored in the statewide [Michigan Green Communities Challenge](#) for commitment to sustainability projects, from green infrastructure improvements to renewable energy projects.

The Michigan Green Communities Network (MGC) celebrated 26 communities during a June 6 event in Muskegon on clean energy and environmental leadership.

The Network aims to connect community leaders through training, education, and communications. The MGC is a partnership of the [Michigan Municipal League](#), [Michigan Municipal League Foundation](#), [Michigan Association of Counties](#), and [Michigan Townships Association](#).

The original Challenge, launched in 2009, emphasized energy efficiency projects. In 2016, MGC network members, with support from the [C.S. Mott Foundation](#), revised and relaunched the MGC Challenge. Program benefits include creating a roadmap for sustainability initiatives; establishing benchmarks for your community's progress toward sustainability initiatives; and the motivation of comparing and competing with other Michigan communities. The Challenge competition occurs annually, but is available year-round as a tool for communities to benchmark sustainability.

This year, many communities completed the MGC Challenge for the first time, including Clinton Township.

"Clinton Township is honored to achieve a silver certification from our first MGC challenge," said Elizabeth Vogel, deputy supervisor for Clinton Township. "We are proud of the work we have accomplished, especially storm water runoff mitigation efforts achieved by investments at the Township Civic Center. Indeed, these 'green' infrastructure investments will improve water quality in the Clinton River and benefit the health of residents."

As part of the Michigan Green Communities Challenge, participating local governments were awarded Gold, Silver, and Bronze certifications. In this year's Challenge, communities involved in the program had the chance to win one of three prizes. The City of Traverse City received the randomly-drawn \$3,000 prize for being a new participant. The City of Grand Blanc received the randomly-drawn \$3,000 prize for returning participants. Additionally, Muskegon County received a \$1,500 prize for "most-improved community" for making the most progress from the 2016 to 2017 Challenge.

Below is a breakdown of the recipients by level.

Gold Certifications:

- **City of Ann Arbor:** Recently adopted a community-wide anti-idling ordinance.
- **City of Dearborn:** Integrates sustainability as a basic component of the City of Dearborn 2030 Master Plan.
- **City of Novi:** Incorporates sustainability into its capital improvements planning process.
- **Delhi Charter Township:** Completed recent audits of all township buildings and converted township lighting to LED.
- **Pittsfield Charter Township:** 2020 Sustainable Vision prioritizes sustainable initiatives and projects for the township.

Silver Certifications:

- **City of Battle Creek:** Recently implemented a new curbside recycling program that residents love. The increased volume numbers speak for themselves. With 46 percent more recycling in under a year, we can only hope that this continues.
- **Charter Township of Meridian:** Currently working to benchmark energy use in municipal buildings.
- **Clinton Township:** Invested in green infrastructure at the Township Civic Center to improve water quality in the Clinton River and benefit the health of residents.
- **Muskegon County:** Internal Muskegon County Sustainability Plan is focused on sustainability within county facilities.

Bronze Certifications:

- **City of Brighton:** Partnered with Waste Management to offer an unlimited recycling program for residents.
- **City of Caro:** Installed bike racks in the business district to encourage non-motorized transportation.
- **City of Ferndale:** Sustainability items are incorporated throughout the city's Master Plan that was adopted on January 23, 2017.
- **City of Flint:** Recently restored a wetland and installed interpretive signage for the Max Brandon Eco-Park Project, and is implementing similar projects in Flint parks.
- **City of Grand Blanc:** Completed an energy audit of city facilities and is implementing energy-saving measures.
- **City of Ithaca:** Helped construct a new 7-mile multi-use path connecting Ithaca and Alma.
- **City of Petoskey:** Working with the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council to install a demonstration rain garden as part of the Downtown Greenway Corridor.
- **City of Pleasant Ridge:** Collaborated with EcoWorks to establish energy consumption benchmarks, and actively tracks energy use of all local government buildings with the Energy Star Portfolio Manager program.
- **City of River Rouge:** Established a revolving energy fund to support energy improvements at the public library.
- **City of Traverse City:** Adopted a resolution committing to use of 100 percent renewable energy for municipal electricity use, and established a green team made up of public, nonprofit, and private stakeholder-authorities.
- **Charter Township of West Bloomfield:** Encourages and requires the use of low-impact design and green infrastructure through local ordinances.
- **Village of Milford:** Implementing recommendations from recent tree inventory and assessment of urban forest.
- **Village of Quincy:** Offers a new compost site open to residents.

Honorable Mention:

- City of Kalamazoo
- City of West Branch
- Howard City/Reynolds Township
- Monroe County

View the MGC website, <http://migreencommunities.com/>, for more details. For more information, including photos of the award recipients who attended the June 6 event, contact Matt Bach, Michigan Municipal League communications director, at mbach@mml.org and (734) 669-6317.

Michigan Municipal League is dedicated to making Michigan's communities better by thoughtfully innovating programs, energetically connecting ideas and people, actively serving members with resources and services, and passionately inspiring positive change for Michigan's greatest centers of potential: its communities. The League advocates on behalf of its member communities in Lansing, Washington, D.C., and the courts; provides educational opportunities for elected and appointed municipal officials; and assists municipal leaders in administering services to their communities through League programs and services. Learn more at mml.org.