

# GETTING STARTED WITH THE MICHIGAN GREEN COMMUNITIES CHALLENGE

*For communities new to the MGC Challenge*

Communities of all sizes can take the Michigan Green Communities Challenge. The MGC Challenge outlines actionable steps toward creating more environmentally sustainable, economically vibrant, and healthier communities. While many communities have ambitious goals, it can be difficult to identify where to get started. This guide highlights action items from the MGC Challenge that any community can take to start moving toward its sustainability goals.

Below are 15 action items that are require relatively minimal resources to complete. Completing any 10 of the action items will earn a community bronze-level certification. Points are also awarded for action items that are “in progress”!

The action items below are organized by the category that they fall under on the MGC Challenge. For a complete list of the action items, [please click here](#). Resources and tips for completing MGC Challenge action items can be found at the [Catalyst Communities site from Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy](#).

## Planning for Inclusive and Lasting Impacts

**Action Item 4:** Establish an internal sustainability team, made up of staff from different departments as relevant, to coordinate municipal sustainability initiatives.

**Action Item 6:** Staff, municipal commission/council members, and/or volunteer board members attend regular diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training as part of their service/employment.

**Action Item 11:** Participate in the Michigan Green Communities Network and share your community's successes and/or lessons learned.

## Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

**Action Item 1:** Conduct energy audits on municipal facilities.

**Action Item 2:** Adopt decarbonization targets for municipal operations and facilities.

**Action Item 15:** Create an inventory of municipal owned street lighting.

**Action Item 22:** Adopt and enforce an anti-idling policy for the municipal vehicle fleet.

## Responsibly Managing Materials

**Action Item 4:** Develop or adopt a municipal sustainable purchasing policy that eliminates toxics, increases the use of recycled content, and builds or supports the low-carbon circular economy.

## Sustainable Land Use and Economic Development

**Action Item 12:** Train relevant municipal staff (e.g., public works, grounds and building maintenance) in principles of sustainability.

**Action Item 15:** Adopt a policy for the municipal purchase of local goods and services as practicable.

## **Improving Health Outcomes**

**Action Item 1:** Municipal staff have attended a Health in All Policies (HIAP) training.

## **Protecting & Conserving Water Resources**

**Action Item 1:** Track local water use for all municipal buildings using ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager.

## **Communicate Best Practices**

**Action Item 1:** Create a local sustainability action website/webpage and/or social media page.

**Action Item 4:** Proactively engage traditionally underserved populations in your community in sustainability planning/initiatives.

**Action Item 6:** Provide awards or incentives to residents, organizations, or businesses who take significant steps to improve the sustainability and/or resiliency of the community.