MICHIGAN GREEN COMMUNITIES

Kalamazoo

Community Sustainability Profile Spotlight - Catalyst Leadership Circle

As a Michigan Green Communities Gold Certified community, the City of Kalamazoo is eligible to participate in the Graham Sustainability Institute's Catalyst Leadership Circle (CLC). The CLC is a group of local governments that are leading the way to sustainability across the state. By participating in the CLC (available to all silver, gold, and platinum MGC Challenge certified communities), communities can expand their office capacity and work with a graduate-level scholar during the CLC Fellowship (CLCF). This summer program matches communities with students attending institutions around Michigan and a technical advisor to complete an advanced sustainability or clean energy project.

In the summer of 2024, Kalamazoo was matched with a graduate fellow to work on a CLCF project. Kalamazoo's fellow was charged with researching environmentally friendly methods to pest management for Kalamazoo to consider. Participation in the CLC program helped the City boost capacity and perform a deep dive analysis into a specific sustainability topic.

The CLC and CLCF programs are a valuable resource to Michigan communities motivated to move forward in their sustainability journeys. Since the fellowship program began in the summer of 2022, it has supported 28 projects to date. All projects and their deliverables are available to view online in a project database on the Graham Sustainability Institute website.

Kalamazoo, MI

Population (2020 Census): 73,598
Governance: Commission-Manager
Location: Southwest Michigan, Kalamazoo County

Case Study Highlight:

Kalamazoo's CLC fellow project aimed to identify ways to broaden the community's awareness of ecological systems and how they help control pest populations, with a specific focus on bats. Their fellow developed a community engagement strategy that recommended implementing an Integrated Pest Management framework and other ways to conserve local species that aid in pest management. In a guidebook, along with this strategy, are public-facing materials, planning documents for bat conservation, and an ArcGIS model with bat habitat suitability maps.

