



La Crescent Moves Forward with Environmental Sustainability Efforts

GreenStep City receives grant and hires Winona State Student for internship

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Bill Waller

La Crescent City Administrator

BWaller@cityoflacscent-mn.gov

Monday, April 5th, 2016, La Crescent, MN – The City of La Crescent, with the assistance of a \$3,000 grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, launched their GreenStep City efforts with a “Green Team” meeting on March 30th. The team included members of the Comprehensive Planning Committee, Planning Commission, city staff, and a newly hired GreenStep intern. The team spent the day reviewing the 29 GreenStep Best Practices to determine which actions the city has already taken or plans to take and would like to reflect in their comprehensive plan. La Crescent became a GreenStep city with passage of a resolution in October of 2015.

City Administrator, Bill Waller expressed his excitement as the city’s GreenStep process “has gained legs after the first of the year” with the grant and the city council’s approval of the budget to hire Alison Bettin as an intern to help. Bettin, a junior at Winona State University will be assisting La Crescent four hours a week through December of 2016. Bettin, a double major in Public Administration and Ecology, with a minor in Sustainability, is “excited to learn about the city of La Crescent and be part of making the community better.” Bettin said that “environmental stewardship and sustainability” are important in both her “work and home life” and she looks forward to “contributing to something meaningful” through the internship.

“Alison will be a great person to help get the GreenStep program off the ground” said Professor Jeanne Franz, Director of the Sustainability Minor program at Winona State University. She offered that the internship program is an important opportunity for students to network and add marketable skills to their resume.

Among the first tasks Bettin will undertake when she starts in May, are to collect data on the city’s buildings, including size, function, and historical energy use. These will be loaded into the Minnesota B3 Benchmarking tool, which normalizes building energy use data and will allow the city to see how their buildings’ performance compares to benchmarks and their peers. This Best Practice helps cities to target cost-effective operational changes or upgrades to reduce public building energy use. Waller suggested that the La Crescent Fire Hall, which was renovated this past year, be one of the first buildings to examine.

About GreenStep Cities: Minnesota GreenStep Cities is a voluntary challenge, assistance, and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals. This free continuous improvement program is based upon 29 best practices that are tailored to Minnesota cities, focus on cost savings and energy use reduction, and encourage civic innovation. More at www.MnGreenStep.org.

###

