



1000 Friends of Wisconsin

2020 Annual Report

Since 1996, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin has been advancing healthy communities, positive economic outcomes and environmental benefits across Wisconsin.

We do things differently. We are focused making the connection between good community design and protection of the natural environment. We know that when we make substantial improvements to our communities, we are having a bigger impact on the world we live in. Everything that we do on the land touches something else. We address policies in communities that are too frequently underestimated in their importance to protecting the natural environment. We have never strayed from our objective to curb sprawl through better use of our lands, but we have taken steps that many others tend to overlook – achieving benefits that go far beyond any one community's borders.

Our natural landscape has been transformed by our highways. Hills flattened, farms removed and wetlands drained are direct results of the highway construction that has extended the reach of the modern commute. Consequently, new housing developments and shopping malls have been created atop former farm fields dismantling many existing communities.

1000 Friends is working to rebuild communities. By focusing on the relationship between community design and transportation, we can help build better places to live. With an emphasis on developing transit connections, we can also help residents save money by reducing their dependence on cars and gasoline. A walkable/bikeable neighborhood supports local retail and improves the quality of life. It also means reduced emissions from cars that increase air pollution and contribute to climate change.

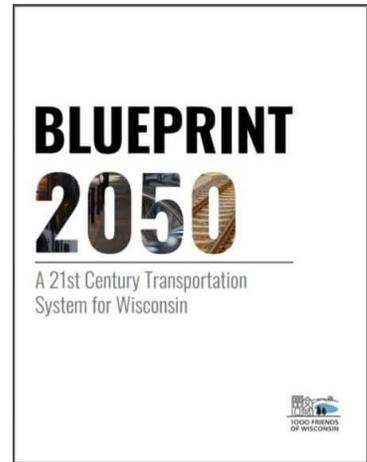
1000 Friends is working to mitigate climate change. When discussing climate change mitigation strategies, the focus tends to be on energy – i.e. switching to renewables. An important area that is often overlooked in combating climate change is urban and regional land use planning. How communities are designed and how people move around them has both short and long-term consequences for mitigating and adapting to climate change. We are at the forefront of fighting for an equitable carbon-neutral transportation future. We work to increase green infrastructure in our communities. Green infrastructure helps reduce the burden of increased precipitation that many Wisconsin communities are already dealing with, while offering additional benefits to public health and urban green spaces.

2020 Highlights

Transportation

1000 Friends worked intensively throughout 2020 to help reduce transportation emissions while building cleaner, more reliable, and inclusive transportation networks. We started the year by giving a presentation to the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change about complete streets and sustainable transportation and followed up on this by meeting with Lt. Governor Barnes and his staff. The final report included the vast majority of our recommendations, some of which were taken verbatim from our contributions. We were able to steer the conversation and make an impact.

We released Blueprint 2050, a preliminary review of climate impacts of Wisconsin's transportation system and the budgetary hurdles to creating a zero-carbon transportation system. This is a brief to the larger Vision 2050 report which will be a comprehensive look of Wisconsin's transportation system and all the necessary steps to make a more sustainable and equitable transportation network. We plan to use this report to further educate policy makers.



Our organization continues to develop relationships through the Wisconsin Climate Table, REAMP, and the Coalition for More Responsible Transportation (CMRT). These partnerships help us make strategic plans around stopping I-94's expansion in Milwaukee and pushing for a more sustainable and equitable transportation budget.

Working with other organizations that have complimentary missions has allowed us to sharpen our policy recommendations, organizing strategies, and overall knowledge on transportation policy. We hope to leverage these relationships to promote RTA-enabling legislation, restore complete streets legislation, and to guide additional funding to active and public transportation in Wisconsin.

1000 Friends is excited to welcome two active transportation networks to our program list in 2020. The two networks, Wisconsin Active Together and Wisconsin Active Communities Alliance, are currently being combined to create one, grassroots, active living network for Wisconsin. The new network will be an advocacy, resource-sharing, collaborative, and recognition network for communities that are making it easier for their residents to walk, bike, and be active. Stay tuned for a new network name, new logo, and updated website!

Green Tier Legacy Communities (GTLC)

We helped create the Green Tier Legacy Communities Charter program over 10 years ago to assist communities in developing and implementing sustainability measures leading to an improvement in the economy, environment and quality of life in the charter communities.

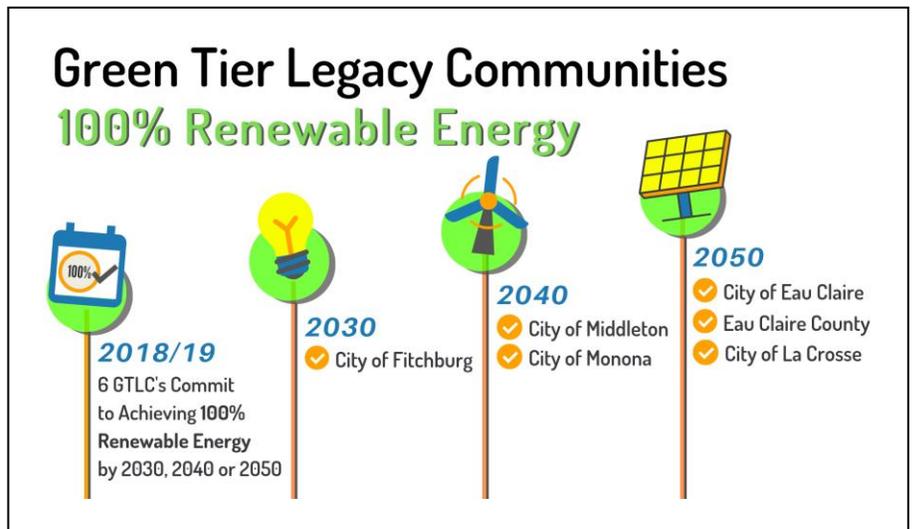
When communities sign the Green Tier Legacy Communities Charter, they agree to take actions and share information to move continuously toward a sustainable future through initiatives that promote

environmental stewardship, economic growth, public health, and social equity. There are 28 Green Tier Legacy Communities across the state and the number keeps growing!

In 2019, six Legacy communities made 100 percent renewable energy commitments! These communities are leading examples in the state of Wisconsin for combating climate change at the local level.

We continued our involvement in the Health in All Policy component of the GTLC Charter. Through the project, the Legacy Communities Alliance for Health (LCAH), we aim to improve health and health equity

through local government policymaking and programming. The goal is to help communities achieve gains in at least one of four policy areas of interest: clean water, active transportation, safe and affordable housing, and healthy and affordable local food systems.



Green Schoolyards

We continue to lead a community project at Aldo Leopold Elementary School - the largest elementary school in the Madison Metropolitan School District and one of four Community Schools – using green infrastructure to address flooding issues and help the school develop spaces for outdoor environmental education and creative play. We coordinate a Green Schoolyard Committee made up of Leopold staff, parents, and community partners.

Before the pandemic closed schools in March 2020, our committee had introduced environmental education projects to Leopold School. We helped classroom teachers partner with a UW Arboretum educator, who helped the Leopold teacher connect her literacy work to observations made on their walk with the class. 1000 Friends Community Project Director, Abe Leno, led 4 sessions of an environmental after school club (The Green Squad). We're looking forward to continuing environmental education programming when school is back in person.

We've been busy on the schoolyard with projects. Spring 2020 was the year of donated plants for our Green Schoolyard Project. We received native wildflowers and vegetables from the Plant Dane and Oak Hill Correctional Institute native plant programs. We planted the wildflowers in the vegetable garden and in our newly created outdoor staff lounge. The outdoor staff lounge is cleared and covered with woodchips, along with the native wildflowers. When staff return to school we'll be able to work with them to finish up the project and make it a new gathering space for the school.

The vegetable garden was a big hit this year, despite the pandemic. It was managed by a Leopold parent, Tanya Nosek, with help from Abe. We grew squash, tomatoes, peppers, kale, collard greens, okra, strawberries, melons, cucumbers, and eggplant – the produce we harvested was donated to the weekly food pantry at Leopold School.

The project we are proudest of is the rain garden. A rain garden has been in the plans for the Green Schoolyard Committee since we started in December 2018. After some logistical maneuvering we made it happen this year, and we're very proud of what we accomplished! It took a rented Bobcat, a full weekend, and 3 parent volunteers, a 7-year old, and Abe to install it. We have since put a few plants in the rain garden and have made some adjustments to the garden following rain storms. It will serve as an outdoor educational space and green infrastructure tool for years to come.

As we head into 2021, our committee is reaching out to other parent groups to reach a more diverse audience. Leopold School has high racial and socio-economic diversity and we want that diversity represented in the work we do on the schoolyard. 2021 will bring management and stewardship work to the outdoor spaces we've already created and expand horizons for our environmental education and community engagement efforts.

A special thanks to the members of the Green Schoolyard Committee: Leopold Secretary, Emily Michels, Leopold Community Resource Coordinator, Rosie Gittens, and Leopold parents, Elizabeth Fackler and Kirk Crawford, Katie MacDonald, and Tanya Nosek. We couldn't have completed any of this work without your commitment!

Urban Forestry

1000 Friends administered a 2018 US Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) grant with four Wisconsin communities, the Green Tier Legacy Community (GTLC) program, and Wisconsin DNR's Urban Forestry program. Our project helped protect water quality in the Great Lakes Basin by planting 350 trees across four GTLC communities in Wisconsin - Ashland, Bayside, Oshkosh and Sheboygan. We finished the project this fall and ended up with 371 new trees planted!

While we were finishing the GLRI grant, Abe Lench, our Community Project Director, was applying to other urban forestry grant opportunities and connecting with urban forestry experts around the state. Abe's work was eventually noticed statewide, as he was nominated as a member of the Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council. The Wisconsin Urban Forestry Council is an advisory council on urban forestry best practices for the Wisconsin DNR. Abe started a three-year term, representing environmental organizations on the Council, in September 2020.



At the end of 2020, 1000 Friends also received word that we have been awarded a 2021 DNR Regular Urban Forestry grant for a year-long webinar series on urban forestry. The urban forestry webinars will be geared towards Wisconsin homeowners and the general public. Each webinar will strive to educate and inspire Wisconsinites about the trees in their community's and in their yards through storytelling. We're looking forward to connecting with you on everything trees starting in late January, 2021!

2019 Income and Expenses

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|--|-----------------------|
| Revenues and Support without Donor Restrictions | 2019 |
| Contributions and Grants | 130,333 |
| Fees for Services | 8,557 |
| Interest Income | 135 |
| Other | 4,511 |
| Net assets released from restrictions | <u>172,940</u> |
| Total Revenues and Support without Donor Restrictions | 316,476 |
| Expenses | |
| Program Expenses: | |
| Transportation | 90,898 |
| Sustainability | 104,867 |
| Water Quality | <u>38,341</u> |
| Total Program Expenses | 234,106 |
| Supporting Services: | |
| Management and General | 37,821 |
| Fundraising | <u>26,316</u> |
| Total Supporting Services | 64,137 |
| Total Expenses | 298,243 |
| Change in Net Assets without Donor Restrictions | <u>18,233</u> |
| Net Assets with Donor Restrictions | |
| Contributions and Grants | 166,687 |
| Net assets released from restrictions | <u>(172,940)</u> |
| Change in Net Assets with Donor Restrictions | <u>(6,253)</u> |
| Total Change in Net Assets | 11,980 |
| Net Assets at Beginning of Year | <u>138,049</u> |
| Net Assets at End of Year | <u>150,029</u> |

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This Annual Report is available to the public at:
<https://www.1kfriends.org/annual-reports>