

# YOUNG LEADER VISION PROJECT

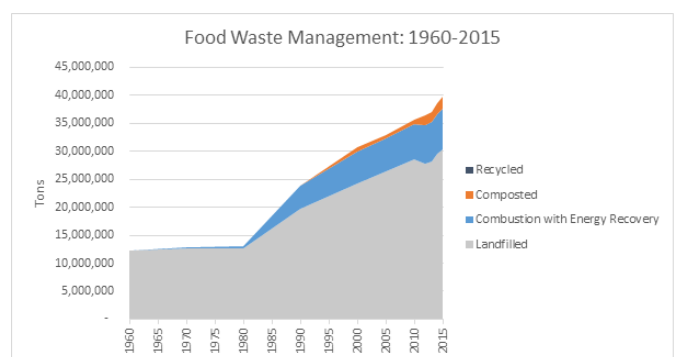
## FINAL REPORT AND FINDINGS

### VISION

My original vision for the project was to, in general, make my community more sustainable and environmentally friendly. Through conversations with city officials and community leaders I became aware that there are many initiatives dedicated to making this vision a reality -- many cities in Minnesota that show dedication to sustainability are given the "GreenStep" qualification. Unfortunately, policy often moves more slowly than what is necessary for progress, so my vision morphed into a more focused sustainability. With food waste being a major contributor to atmospheric warming and economic loss in our world, I stumbled upon organics recycling and the positive effect it has on communities. My vision is now to see communities recycle their food waste sustainably and reduce their carbon footprints through local investments into the earth.



### Minnesota GreenStep Cities



### THE COMPOST LOOP >>>>>>



### ACTION STEPS

#### SYSTEMS

Today, it is the responsibility of every public institution (at every level) to implement actions and policies that will support the longevity of its communities. Whether it's the Comprehensive Planning process (Met Council), state regulations (legislature), grant opportunities (counties), or independent programs, systems have the ability to control major environmental changes of the future.

#### COMMUNITIES

The actions of individuals and small groups can have major impacts on the environment, especially when it comes to participation in programs provided to citizens. Whether a public or private institution provides access to sustainable resources, it will not be successful without participation from citizens. Organics recycling programs are simple and user-friendly. Grant programs are available statewide.

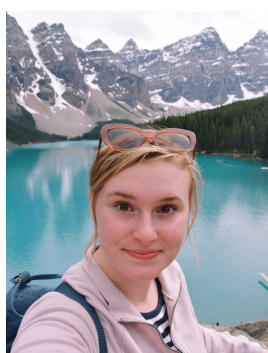
#### BUSINESSES

Businesses and private entities that impress upon consumers can also contribute to a vision of sustainability. Strong efforts to eliminate single-use plastics, reduce water usage and pollution, and stopping overproduction are only a few ways that companies can reduce their carbon footprints. Innovations, like organics recycling and residential solar energy are also extremely beneficial.

### INSIGHTS

As with any form of government or bureaucracy, I've learned that the Comprehensive Planning process moves slowly. I've learned that progress towards more sustainable communities is slow -- even if the clock for "making change" is ticking. However, regional planning is so necessary to zoning and structuring our communities. In Metropolitan District 10, there is an incredible diversity of need.

Suburban cities like North Oaks and Blaine have vastly different populations and issues than first-ring suburbs like Falcon Heights and New Brighton, but somehow, equity and sustainability are not nearly prioritized enough in any of these communities. I have learned that regional planning is a meticulous, stubborn process that quite literally never ends.



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#### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

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- Sean Gosiweiski, MN Alliance for Sustainability
- Trista Matas-Castillo, Ramsey County Commissioner
- The City Planners of Blaine, New Brighton, North Oaks, Arden Hills, Shoreview, and St. Anthony

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