



COLLABORATING FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMUNITIES ACROSS CHICAGOLAND JOIN TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

*95 Communities Sign Greenest Region Compact To Mark
Earth Day and Arbor Day*

Chicago, Illinois – April 20, 2018 – The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus announced today that 95 Chicago-area communities of Chicagoland’s 275 cities, towns and villages that comprise the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus have signed the Greenest Region Compact (GRC). These communities will use the GRC as a guide to implement local actions that together will promote sustainability across the region with an emphasis on creating healthy, thriving communities.

The GRC represents consensus goals that build vibrant and strong communities, and sustain healthy environments for people and nature. The common goals and practical strategies in the Greenest Region Compact come from an extensive study of what the 275 Metropolitan Mayors Caucus communities are already doing to be sustainable and what sustainability goals they have already set for themselves. Mayors contributed to and agreed to support these goals, tailored for municipal action, in ten areas that include climate, economic development, energy, land, leadership, mobility, municipal operations, sustainable communities, water, waste and recycling.

“Mayors and community leaders really put their heads together to come up with the Greenest Region Compact. Now, communities of all sizes can benefit from this collaborative planning effort and leap ahead to take meaningful actions,” said Edith Makra, Director of Environmental Initiatives at the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus.

The Greenest Region Compact assembled practical, achievable and meaningful strategies into a companion guide: the GRC Framework. This tool enables communities to evaluate their current environmental initiatives and guide future efforts. Communities that have adopted the GRC are now working together towards these common goals, using the GRC Framework to guide and track their progress.

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Examples of collaborative efforts include:

- **Goal – Advance Renewable Energy:**
A national designation program, SolSmart recognizes communities that remove local barriers to solar energy and help grow solar markets. The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus led 12 GRC Communities and three counties to work together to earn SolSmart designation by streamlining local permitting, planning and zoning procedures, to make it faster, easier and more affordable for residents and businesses to go solar. Earning SolSmart designation helps municipalities prepare for solar development, an industry that is expected to grow in Illinois by 2,600 percent by the year 2030 because of a new state law.
- **Goal – Beautiful Landscapes That Are Good For The Environment:**
The remarkable and beautiful monarch butterfly is endangered and new habitat is needed to protect them. GRC Communities are helping to restore the monarch butterfly by creating landscapes where milkweed—a plant vital to the monarch’s survival—can thrive. These landscapes support other native plants that provide nourishment and shelter for other important pollinator insects and birds. Twenty-six GRC Communities are working with volunteer groups to create pollinator habitats along railroad tracks, in subdivisions, in parks and around schools and municipal buildings. These gardens bring together residents of all ages to learn, work together and even enjoy honey from community apiaries such as those in Hanover Park and Westmont.
- **Goal – Energy Efficiency:**
Forty-four GRC Communities upgraded their own public facilities to reduce consumption of energy. To save energy and reduce carbon footprint, these communities switched lighting fixtures, upgraded ventilation, heating and cooling systems to maximize performance and energy efficiency. The Village of Schaumburg upgraded to high-efficiency lighting systems throughout their municipal facilities—from fire stations and Village Hall to the Schaumburg Airport to save at least \$150,000 each year in energy costs. River Forest replaced nearly 900 streetlights with energy-saving LED fixtures, saving 638,000 kW hours a year—enough to power 70 homes for a year. The total energy savings by all GRC Communities working together sequesters 23,802,023 pounds of carbon dioxide (CO₂). That is the amount of CO₂ captured by 12,717 acres of US forests in one year.



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“Working together across the region, our GRC Communities are having a positive impact on the environment and the lives of citizens. We strive for sustainable, healthy communities every day but celebrate this collective momentum as Earth Day and Arbor Day approach,” said John A. Ostenburg, Mayor of Park Forest and Chairman of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus Environment Committee. “My fellow mayors and I will be out at Earth Day and Arbor Day events planting trees, learning about natural landscaping, collecting recyclable materials and celebrating our role as stewards of the Earth.”

Earth Day is Sunday, April 22. This year marks the 48th anniversary of Earth Day, which has become a global event intended to raise awareness of the environment.

Arbor Day is Friday, April 27. This year marks the 146th anniversary of Arbor Day which celebrates tree-planting and the importance of trees to the health of the environment.

About Metropolitan Mayors Caucus —

The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus is a membership organization of the Chicago region’s 275 cities, towns and villages. Founded in 1997, the Mayors Caucus pushes past geographical boundaries and local interests to work on public policy issues. The Caucus provides a forum for metropolitan Chicago’s chief elected officials to collaborate on common problems and work toward a common goal of improving the quality of life for the millions of people who call the region home. For more information, visit <http://mayorscaucus.org> .

About Greenest Region Compact—

The Greenest Region Compact (GRC) promotes sustainability in Chicago communities across the region with an emphasis on building strong and vibrant communities. The foundation of the GRC are 49 high-level goals that have been reached by consensus; not only are the goals aligned with important local, regional, national and global goals, but they also have support from 95 communities that have adopted the GRC. GRC consensus goals guide municipal action, support mayors in their role as environmental leaders, and foster collaboration that will have positive impacts on the region. For more information, visit <http://mayorscaucus.org/initiatives/environment/rec>.

The complete list of GRC Communities can be found on the following page.

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Greenest Region Compact

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The GRC Communities are:

Algonquin	Crystal Lake	Lake Bluff	Park Ridge
Algonquin Township	Darien	Lake Forest	Plainfield
Alsip	Diamond	Lakewood	Polo
Arlington Heights	Elgin	Libertyville	Posen
Aurora	Evergreen Park	Lincolnshire	Richton Park
Bannockburn	Flossmoor	Lincolnwood	River Forest
Barrington	Fox Lake	Lombard	Rolling Meadows
Batavia	Frankfort	Long Grove	Round Lake
Beach Park	Franklin Park	McCullom Lake	Beach
Blue Island	Geneva	Midlothian	Schaumburg
Bolingbrook	Glencoe	Minooka	South
Braidwood	Grayslake	Mokena	Barrington
Brookfield	Hainesville	Mount Prospect	South Chicago
Buffalo Grove	Hanover Park	Naperville	Heights
Burlington	Hawthorn	Niles	Streamwood
Campton Hills	Woods	Northfield	Sugar Grove
Carol Stream	Hebron	Northlake	Thornton
Carpentersville	Highland Park	Oak Brook	Waukegan
Cary	Hillside	Oak Forest	West Chicago
Chicago	Hoffman Estates	Oak Park	Westchester
Chicago Heights	Homer Glen	Olympia Fields	Westmont
Chicago Ridge	Indian Head	Orland Park	Wheeling
Countryside	Park	Oswego	Winnetka
Crete	Island Lake	Palos Hills	Worth
	Johnsburg	Palos Park	
	La Grange	Park Forest	