Community: <mark>Click here to enter text.</mark>
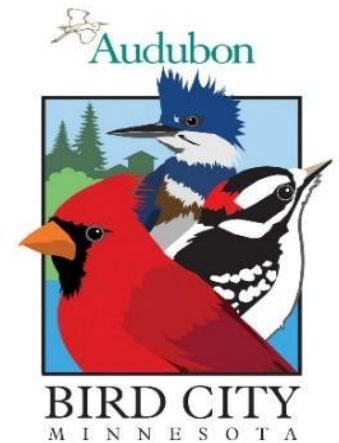
Application date: <mark>Click here to enter text.</mark>

Bird City Minnesota | Full Checklist (v2019)

Requirements: Bird City communities are recognized for meeting at least 8 of the 19 criteria including 1 required action and 7 best practices (BP) in 3 categories as specified below. Examples of actions for each best practice are provided.

Instructions: Check only completed actions. For each action checked please provide a complete narrative description in a separate document that reflects the same format of this checklist with categories, best practices, and actions.

Note: Actions from the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program have been incorporated into Bird City Minnesota as indicated by the numbers assigned to them in GreenStep program (ex. GS #18.1 refers to GreenStep Best Practice #18 action 1). If your community is a GreenStep City and has already fulfilled this action, you may count it as a Bird City action.

Required of all Bird City communities (complete 1 of 1)

☐ Adopt an official resolution and hold a celebration recognizing International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD). See *www.migratorybirdday.org* for ideas. Sample resolution available.

Please complete entire section

☐ Resolution Date (attach a copy):

☐ IMBD Event and Date: Event Attendance Outcomes:

☐ Register your event at https://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org/register-your-event

☐ Event description:

Category I: Educate and engage citizens in birding and conservation (complete at least 2 of 5)

☐ *Best Practice #1:* Increase awareness of birds in your community

Examples of actions to meet this best practice - or detail "other" action for consideration

☐ (a) Create a map and/or information about birding locations in your area and make it available to citizens and tourist outlets in print and/or online.

☐ (b) Develop a birding checklist for your area and make it available to citizens and tourist outlets in print and/or online

☐ (c) Install and maintain a birding kiosk and / or signage that identifies birding locations in your area

☐ (d) Share regular social media posts about birds and birding

☐ (e) Promote Important Bird Areas (IBAs), birding hotspots, birding trails and phenomena (ex. Raptor, waterfowl or songbird migration, Chimney Swift roosts in your area

☐ (f) Install or promote local nest cameras (but take care if/when disclosing nest locations to avoid disturbance).

☐ (g) Work with municipal or private landowners to allow access to birding hotspots such as wastewater treatment ponds, special habitats or water features.

☐   Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice.

Best Practice #2: Involve residents in conservation and stewardship projects

☐   (a) Create and maintain and/or encourage bird feeding stations at parks, nature centers, schools and tourism / lodging sites.

☐   (b) Illustrate how your community has a program that involves schools, garden clubs, or other organizations in bird conservation activities.

☐   (c) Develop a program to involve community members in hands-on land and stewardship projects. (GS #18.8)

☐   (d) Research Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in your community and encourage stewardship activities within them (ex. Bird and/or habitat monitoring, restoration, invasive species removal, advocacy).

☐   (e) Support the creation of a stewardship group for important birding resources in your community - an Important Bird Area (IBA), Bird Sanctuary, Birding Trail or similar.

☐   Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

Best Practice #3: Educate and engage youth / young adult audiences

☐   (a) Promote the creation of a youth birding club / support their activities

☐   (b) Demonstrate that educators are incorporating birds and bird conservation into their formal and informal learning environments on their own or through existing curriculum like *Flying WILD*.

☐   (c) Sponsor or facilitate training for educators in the *Flying WILD* curriculum

☐   (d) Provide bird related programs for children, youth and families

☐   Other - Demonstrate actions that meet this best practice in an attached narrative

Best Practice #4: Promote community science monitoring and research

☐   (a) Demonstrate that your community is represented in at least one community science bird monitoring program such as the Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, or other.

☐   (b) Attach a summary of bird monitoring results and/or other data obtained from researchers or local volunteers at sites within the municipality.

☐   (c) Create an eBird account for your community, designate your local birding areas as hotspots and encourage park visitors, volunteers and staff to submit sightings

☐   (d) Encourage bird monitoring (ex. In conjunction with regular park programming or in cooperation with local birding groups) and submit sightings to eBird

☐   (e) Encourage / support nest box and feeder monitoring through Nestwatch, FeederWatch or equivalent

☐   (f) Facilitate citizen participation in water quality monitoring (ex. WHEP - Wetland Health Evaluation Project)

☐   Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

Best Practice #5: Ensure access to nature

☐   (a) Work to encourage traditionally underserved communities to visit and enjoy birding in your parks

☐   (b) Offer multilingual programs and/or materials on birds and birding

☐   (c) Develop one or more accessible nature / birding trails

☐ (d) Identify and remedy gaps within your community's system of parks, off-road trails and open spaces. ([GS #18.1](#))

☐ (e) Plan and budget for a network of parks, green spaces, water features and trails in all new development areas. ([GS #18.2](#))

☐ (f) If your [community's has a park score,](#) make a plan to increase your score.

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

Category II: Protect, restore and enhance bird habitat (complete at least 3 of 7)

☐ *Best Practice #6:* Practice conservation planning

Examples of actions to meet this best practice - or detail "other" action for consideration

☐ (a) Certify your community as a [GreenStep City](#)

☐ (b) Develop/fund a conservation easement program, such as a purchase of development rights program, in collaboration with a land trust ([GS#10.5](#)) or otherwise protect existing bird habitat through ordinances, easements, fee title acquisition and other methods

☐ (c) Include ecological provisions in the community's comprehensive planning process that explicitly aim to minimize open space fragmentation and/or establish a growth area with expansion criteria ([GS BP#6.4](#)).

☐ (d) Demonstrate that the local Chamber of Commerce (or a similar group) takes an active role in the planning process for protecting and enlarging favorable bird habitat.

☐ (e) Conduct a Natural Resource Inventory or Assessment ([NRI or NRA](#)); incorporate protection of priority natural systems or resources through the subdivision or development process ([GS BP#10.1](#))

☐ (f) Document that current community planning seeks to provide additional bird habitat.

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #7:* Create and protect habitat

Examples of actions to meet this best practice - or detail "other" action for consideration

☐ (a) Attach ordinance or other evidence that existing bird habitat has legal protection.

☐ (b) Increase the amount of bird habitat in the community by enlarging existing habitat, acquiring new and/or restoring parcels - creating connections wherever possible

☐ (c) Ensure that local rules do not restrict [brush piles](#) that provide essential cover for birds

☐ (d) Provide information to property owners on how to create and enhance backyard habitat for birds and/or participate in bird-friendly habitat certification programs (ex. [National Wildlife Federation](#), [National Audubon Society's Plants for Birds](#))

☐ (e) Assess your acreage of manicured green space (mowed grass) and document conversion of some of that area to low maintenance turf or native landscaping. (similar to [GS #18.5](#))

☐ (f) Restore habitat in power line and pipeline rights-of-way.

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #8:* Promote use of native and beneficial plant species

☐ (a) Develop and disseminate recommendations for citizens on preferred plantings for birds

☐ (b) Create demonstration areas with signage to promote bird-friendly plantings

☐ (c) Participate in existing "pollinator friendly" programs and / or develop a program to provide pollinator habitat

☐ (d) Adopt local landscaping/nuisance ordinances that promote, rather than create barriers for, native vegetation including taller grasses and forbs which provide important food and cover for birds.

☐ (e) Increase the number and proportion of locally sourced native plants used in city projects and encourage similar standards for new development

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #9:* Control invasive and detrimental species

☐ (a) Show how the community offers the public information on control and removal of invasive plant species (ex. buckthorn, garlic mustard and purple loosestrife).

☐ (b) Actively manage species that are having a detrimental impact on habitat or wildlife (ex. Cats, White-tailed Deer, etc.)

☐ (c) Actively manage invasive plant species (ex. buckthorn, garlic mustard and purple loosestrife)

☐ (d) Educate citizens about management of invasive plant species on private property (ex. Conduct a workshop and/or involve citizens in invasive species removal projects)

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #10:* Create and protect nesting opportunities

☐ (a) Develop a policy to avoid trimming of trees and shrubs on city lands from early May until mid-July to allow tree and shrub nesting species to complete nesting. Encourage this practice on private lands as well.

☐ (b) Develop a policy to delay mowing of road ditches, storm water retention ponding basins and other grasslands until August 1st to allow ground nesting species to complete nesting

☐ (c) Develop a risk tree management policy that allows, whenever possible, dead trees to remain standing as a nesting and foraging resource for birds

☐ (d) Encourage the use of nest boxes / structures including not only creation, siting, and installation but also maintenance and monitoring. Keep records of structures and usage.

☐ (e) Inspect structures for nesting evidence of species like the Common Nighthawk (flat rooftops) and Chimney Swift (chimneys) and reduce disturbance to allow these declining species to succeed.

☐ Other - provide details for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #11*: Ensure best management of urban forests

☐ (a) Certify your community as a Tree City USA (GS#16.1)

☐ (b) Work with city or contract foresters to manage intact plots of land with a diversity of over-story and understory trees and shrubs including native and beneficial species

☐ (c) Develop a list of recommended tree and shrub species, at least 1/3 of which are native and beneficial to birds

☐ (d) Work with local growers / suppliers to increase / ensure local supply of native trees / shrubs / plants

☐ (e) Build community capacity to protect existing trees/to plant resilient species by certifying at least one or more local staff/volunteers as MN Certified Tree Inspectors from the MN Dept. of Natural Resources. (GS BP#16.6)

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #12:* Ensure clean water in natural waterways

   ☐ (a) Maintain set-backs and buffers of at least 50 feet from wetlands, rivers and lakes

   ☐ (b) Encourage and support the creation of rain-gardens on private and public land

   ☐ (c) Host / sponsor training on planting for clean water

   ☐ (d) Allow high and low water oscillation to best mimic the natural system

   ☐ (e) Adopt low-impact design standards that infiltrate or retain all 2 inch, 24-hour storm water events on site. (GS #18.4)

   ☐ (f) Use sources of non-potable water, or surface/rain water for irrigation. (GS #18.5c)

   ☐ (g) Support a multi-party community conversation around improving local water quality. (GS BP#19.2)

   ☐ (h) Create/assist a Lake Improvement District. (GS BP#19.7)

   ☐ (i) Adopt goals to revegetate shoreland and create a local program or outreach effort to help property owners with revegetation. (GS BP#19.5)

   ☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

Category III: Reduce Threats to birds (complete at least 2 of 6)

☐ *Best Practice #13: Reduce collisions with windows*

   Examples of actions to meet this best practice - or detail "other" action for consideration

   ☐ (a) Demonstrate that your community provides property owners with information on how to protect birds from window-strikes

   ☐ (b) Adopt bird-friendly design practices for all new municipal owned and operated buildings

   ☐ (c) Assess all current municipal owned and operated buildings for bird collision problems

   ☐ (d) Develop an action plan for fixing existing collision problems at municipal buildings

   ☐ (e) Implement action plan for fixing existing collision problems at municipal buildings

   ☐ (f) Develop comprehensive guidelines or requirements for addressing bird-safety in the design of both municipal and private buildings in the community.

   ☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #14: Reduce threats from other man-made structures*

   ☐ (a) Follow federal guidelines for siting and operations of wind power facilities to study and reduce impacts on birds and other wildlife

   ☐ (b) Follow federal guidelines for siting and operations of power lines to study and reduce impacts on birds and other wildlife

   ☐ (c) Follow federal guidelines for siting and operations of communication towers study and reduce impacts on birds and other wildlife

   ☐ (d) Document how new bridge projects were planned to consider their potential impacts on birds.

   ☐ (e) Where vehicle collisions with birds occur, reduce speeds, post signage and/or modify corridor to reduce this threat

☐ (f) Require open pipes be capped or filled to protect birds and other animals from entrapment. Incorporate capping/filling into regulations and permit conditions, and local building codes. Remove pipes that are not in use, cap with wire or netting or fill with sand or rocks. Examples of open pipes include mining claim markers, residential rooftop plumbing and heating pipes, irrigation system vents etc.

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #15: Reduce light pollution*

☐ (a) Adhere to Lights Out operations according to Audubon's Lights Out program; sign each municipal building on; encourage participation community-wide

☐ (b) Inventory all municipal lighting (building, facility, street) for Dark Sky compliance

☐ (c) Develop a plan for Dark Sky compliance including a timeline and priority actions

☐ (d) Implement plan to replace inefficient fixtures (exterior building, street, parking lot/ramp and traffic lighting) with Dark-Sky compliant, energy efficient, automatic dimming lighting technologies (GS#4.6, 4.7 and 4.8)

☐ (e) Require energy efficient, Dark-Sky compliant new or replacement outdoor lighting fixtures on city-owned/private buildings and facilities (GS#4.1)

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #16: Reduce disturbance and predation by free-roaming pets*

☐ (a) Develop an educational program to control free-roaming cats and/or actively publicize the "Cats Indoors!" program about the danger of free-roaming cats and the benefits of keeping cats indoors

☐ (b) Provide "Cats Indoors" educational materials in print with every spay / neuter (at city, veterinary offices, local NGO and private facilities)

☐ (c) Require owners of every cat adopted from local facilities (city or NGO) to sign a pledge to keep cats indoors or enclosure or leashed when outdoors

☐ (d) Prohibit Trap-Neuter-Release programs

☐ (e) Prohibit free-roaming cats in your community (ex. Cat leash law)

☐ (f) Limit off-leash dogs in natural areas where disturbance threatens ground nesting birds and waste degrades habitat and makes areas inhospitable to wildlife.

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #17: Reduce the threat of pesticides and other toxins*

☐ (a) Demonstrate that the city's pesticide management program reduces the use of toxins, takes advantage of the least toxic choice(s) and that you are following manufacturers guidelines in application (GS 18.5a).

☐ (b) Adopt USFWS Pollinator Guidelines or similar pollinator-friendly ordinance / policy.

☐ (c) Encourage and promote the use of non-lead tackle and ammunition. Work with local sportsman's clubs to include related education in hunter education / gun safety.

☐ (d) Reduce toxins in the environment by coordinating clean up of lead ammunition on gun ranges and lead tackle at fishing areas. (Pick up fishing line to reduce this entanglement and ingestion risk).

☐ (e) Prohibit the use of lead ammunition and tackle on municipal land

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice

☐ *Best Practice #18: Reduce climate impacts*

☐ (a) Develop a climate action plan as part of comprehensive plans or in a separate policy document to reduce energy use and carbon emissions ([GS#6.5](#))

☐ (b) Ensure residents have the option of purchasing green energy

☐ (c) Demonstrate a decrease in energy use and carbon emissions through operational or building design changes.

☐ Other - provide details of other actions for consideration to meet this best practice