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Mayor Christine Nuernberg

June 26, 2007

David Ullrich  
Executive Director  
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative  
177 North State Street, Suite 500  
Chicago IL 60601

RE: Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award

Dear Mr. Ullrich,

Attached is the City of Mequon's Small Cities Sustainability Best Practices Award application. Our city's population is 24,000 and is bounded on the east by Lake Michigan and on the south by several villages and the City of Milwaukee. Over 1,000,000 people live within 10 miles of the Education Center that is proposed in our application.

This project should receive the award for several reasons. First, it has introduced "sustainability" to the community through city publications and newspaper features and also to the large volunteer corps that contributed literally thousands of hours during the renovation process that turned an existing 12,000 square foot building into a sustainable structure. Second, now that the building is operating, it is providing leadership to a large metropolitan area. The facility is demonstrating how individuals can incorporate "green" features and practices in their homes and businesses. Visitors are seeing various practices, products and technologies. So we see our effort as having a significant impact well beyond our city's borders. Finally, our community, despite levy limits and financial constraints, has financially supported this project. So even in tough times, the city and its citizens recognize the benefit of sustainable structures and have generously supported this effort.

Should the City receive the award, it would use the \$5,000 to kick-off a community wide effort to vegetate the Center's roof. Specifically, we would purchase GreenPak bags and plants. This initial installation of GreenPaks will visibly demonstrate the beauty and benefits of a green roof and create an excitement to cause others to do the same. Because of the slope of the roof, all visitors will be able to easily see the roof at all times of day. Thank you for considering our application.

Sincerely,

Christine Nuernberg  
Mayor

## City of Mequon Education Center

The City of Mequon renovated a 12,000 square foot building to US Green Building Council LEED standards. The building that will serve as an education Center is located on a 438-acre nature preserve. The building will be the first platinum rated building in the state of Wisconsin should it achieve that status. The \$780,000 cost was covered by product donations; cash gifts, and 3,000 hours of volunteer labor.

Renovations include:

- New roof with R-50 insulation. The roof's upper tier has Energy-Star rated shingles. The lower sloped tier has a rubber membrane that will be planted with sedum.
- New low-flow toilets, electronic faucets, waterless urinals
- Readily renewable flooring throughout including bamboo and linoleum. Carpet content has 40 percent recycled plastic.
- Low VOC paint.
- New full-view exterior and interior doors.
- New Energy-Star and low mercury content light fixtures throughout.

A new 10kw wind turbine will provide one-third of the building's electricity.

The PieperPower Education Center is now operating. It hosts meetings of various groups such as Riveredge Nature Center lectures; Ozaukee Washington Land Trust stewardship training programs; and meetings on such topics as wetland restorations whose representatives from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, and the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association. In September, Riveredge will start conducting classes for school groups. People and groups are now visiting the building to learn more about sustainability such as the Green Tree Garden Club, a long established organization, which is interested in learning about sustainability and natural landscaping.

**Social Equity:** The Center sits in an upper income community, but sits across the street from a low-income area of the city of Milwaukee. Our Center will welcome, among others, almost 40,000 children (19,000 non-white) who live within five miles of the Center. Also, 28 schools located in Milwaukee are within five miles. The Milwaukee County Parks Department has removed its nature center from a nearby undeveloped park because our Center will now serve those visitors, too.

**Economic Vitality.** Within one mile of the Center in the City of Milwaukee are the following: a failed large enclosed shopping center; many empty storefronts in strip malls; and a subsidized housing project with drug houses and gang activity. We are working with local groups in Milwaukee to revitalize the area. As part of the effort, we secured federal highway dollars to build a paved trail to link Milwaukee neighborhoods with the Mequon industrial park thus assisting people to reach jobs. The trail will pass the Center and go through the Nature Preserve. The Mequon industrial park is one and one-half miles from the Center.

**Environmental Stewardship.** The Education Center will demonstrate sustainable practices, products and technologies. It will also house organizations whose missions include sustainability and who will provide educational programs to the surrounding communities.