



1000 Friends of Wisconsin

2019 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.

2019 Highlights

Transportation

1000 Friends worked intensively throughout 2019 to help reduce transportation emissions while building cleaner, more reliable, and inclusive transportation networks. We developed two toolkits to help local governments reduce their carbon footprint. One toolkit focused on electric vehicle adoption and the other on multi-modal transportation, with the goal of helping Wisconsin communities adopt policies to fight climate change. These toolkits have provided a pathway for local governments to meet their emissions benchmarks.



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 climate change in Wisconsin. 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.

We continue to develop research and reports outlining a better transportation system for Wisconsin. 2019 was a year of planning and development. We expect 2020 to be an exceptional year for publications. This will be led by our Blueprint 2050 report which will provide a framework and design for a future transportation system that addresses our ongoing climate crisis. We plan to use this report to further educate policy makers on the potential for a more sustainable and equitable transportation network.

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 are leading 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 helping 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.



Research shows that when kids are exposed to nature and green schoolyards they have improved academic and health outcomes. There wasn't any exposure to environmental and outdoor education before our Green Schoolyard Project. We've connected a second grade classroom teacher with an environmental educator to help serve as a mentor and also started an environmental after school club to provide access to outdoor learning at Leopold.

This project will also address watershed protection issues in the area since Leopold School sits in two watersheds - Lake Wingra and Lake Monona. We're planting trees with a local urban forestry nonprofit, installing a rain garden and planting native pollinator gardens to combat runoff and introduce green infrastructure strategies on the schoolyard.

Urban Forestry

Starting in 2018, 1000 Friends administered an 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. The project will be completed by fall 2020.

Urban forests provide a myriad of benefits to communities and their residents. Street trees are important tools for climate change adaptation and mitigation by slowing rainfall infiltration, reducing runoff and capturing nutrients, sequestering greenhouse gases, improving air quality and providing shade. They also provide a number of other benefits that improve public health and urban green spaces.

We advocate for healthy and accessible urban and community forests across the state of Wisconsin. We work regularly with the Wisconsin DNR Urban Forestry Program and urban forestry nonprofits and professionals to improve the maintenance of our urban and community forests and advocate for their protection and growth.

As we continue our advocacy and outreach efforts, we're always seeking funding for similar projects to the GLRI grant to help communities grow and maintain their urban and community forests.



2018 Income and Expenses

Unrestricted Revenues and Support	2018
Contributions & Grants	95687
Fees for Services	13583
Other	15978
Net assets released from restrictions	74436
Total	199684
Expenses	
Personnel	167499
Conferences/Meetings	2044
Office Expenses	12544
Membership Dues & Subscriptions	1196
Occupancy	14210
Professional	6703
Insurance	1629
Advertising	596
Other	2228
Total	208649
Change in Unrestricted Net Assets	(8965)
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	
Contributions	93825
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	(74436)
Change in Temporarily Restricted Net Assets	19389
Total Change in Net Assets	10424
Net Assets Beginning of Year	127625
Net Assets End of Year	138049

Program Services	
Sustainability	48255
Transportation	90350
Water Quality	14033
Management/General	32519
Fundraising	23492
Total	208649

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

