



2022 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 on 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 have 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 means healthier communities with 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. A critical 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. In all of our work, 1000 Friends is committed to working toward a future of environmental, climate and social justice for all. Through collaborative programs we are expanding partnerships with community-based and statewide organizations that share this commitment. Our work promoting sound land use, climate and transportation policy cannot be successful without an equitable foundation.

2022 Highlights

Transportation

1000 Friends had a breakthrough year in 2022 with a number of new and ongoing projects. We started the year by launching our **Rethink 794** campaign, which envisions I-794 in downtown Milwaukee as an at-grade boulevard. After launching our website and releasing our renderings, the project garnered considerable media coverage and the mayor has signaled an openness to the idea. We continued our **work against I-94 expansion**, including speaking on webinars, meeting with elected officials and writing letters to federal officials. While WisDOT has expressed a preference for an expansion, our advocacy has improved the overall project. Changes like the Stadium Freeway (I-175) boulevard study, a smaller Stadium Interchange, and funding for 27th Street bus rapid transit would have seemed impossible at the beginning of the year.

We released **Vision 2050**, a plan 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. Our organization continues to lead coalitions including at the Wisconsin Climate Table, REAMP, and the Coalition for More Responsible Transportation (CMRT). These partnerships help us make strategic plans and advocate for policy that will make a more sustainable and equitable transportation budget.

Through our partnerships we had a very successful **Transit Equity Day** in 2022. This included proclamations about the importance of transit from Governor Evers and seven mayors across Wisconsin. Our team held a press conference with the Mayor of Madison, State Representative Jeff Smith and advocates across Wisconsin.

1000 Friends continued our **outreach** by speaking at conferences, including Climate Fast Forward 2022 and Urban Spaceship 2022. We also held our own transportation forum featuring Kevin Brubaker from ELPC, which attracted over 70 attendees. 2022 will be a record setting year for media coverage, social media following, and policy influence. 1000 Friends of Wisconsin remains well positioned to advocate for sustainable transportation in 2023.

Webinar Series

We hosted 8 webinars on a variety of topics monthly throughout the year. Topics included Effects of Climate Change in Wisconsin, Pedestrian Safety and Driving Down Emissions. These are all available on our website.

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.

There are 33 Green Tier Legacy Communities and counties across the state and the number keeps growing! The communities and counties continue to make 100 percent renewable energy commitments! These communities are leading examples in Wisconsin for combating climate change locally. 1000 Friends was a member of the Program Improvement Working Group in a year-long effort to revise the Green Tier reporting methods to include metrics and a more updated approach to renewable energy commitments.

We continued to partner with COWS and two Green Tier communities with a new **Safe Routes Project** to improve community health by addressing gaps in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to schools and parks. We are working with Stevens Point and Wisconsin Rapids to identify specific areas of concern and gather data using GIS and conducting walk/roll audits. A story map and 2 reports will be published at the end of the year detailing the project and recommendations for moving forward with infrastructure improvements.

Green Schoolyards

Five years ago, we signed on to lead a 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 coordinated a Green Schoolyard Committee made up of parents, staff, and community partners with the focus of using community input to utilize the vast green space around the school to create a safe space for learning, exploring, and gathering. The funding for the project was provided by city of Fitchburg, UW Arboretum and other local donors.

We established an amazing school garden providing produce to neighborhood families and food banks. Volunteers built raised beds, created accessible paths, and a sitting space in the garden.

In early 2022, after our 22nd committee meeting, we turned the project leadership over to the capable hands of Leopold parents, staff, and community members to take it where they want to go. With our help, the team worked on a comprehensive plan for the schoolyard to share with the staff and parent volunteers. They also continued to work with a local landscaper to create a second rain garden and provided educational signs around the schoolgrounds to help students understand the purpose of the rain gardens and the importance of pollinators. We are privileged to be a part of this amazing success story!

Many thanks to Abe Lenoach and Elizabeth Fackler and the many parents, staff and volunteers who made this dream a reality!

We continue to partner with communities in new and innovative ways.

Active Wisconsin started in 2012 as the Wisconsin Active Communities Alliance (WACA). At that time, local coalition members from around the state decided they needed a statewide active community effort, something that was missing from state government and agencies. WACA's collaborative and grassroots spirit remains an important part of Active Wisconsin today.

The [Wisconsin Active Together \(WAT\)](#) network was formed in 2017 in response to a major revision of the statewide Complete Streets law and repeal of eminent domain for bike and pedestrian infrastructure. WAT was created to build a grassroots response to these statewide setbacks, by recognizing communities for their efforts to make active living safer and more accessible for community members.

In 2020, the WACA and WAT networks merged under the leadership of 1000 Friends of Wisconsin to form Active Wisconsin. Our **Active Wisconsin** network of over 50 communities and counties continues to thrive. We host quarterly calls featuring guest speakers and offering the opportunity for members to share successes and challenges. Our monthly e-news highlights the 1k Friends webinar series, community highlights, and educational and funding opportunities.

We are part of the **Wisconsin Climate Table**, a network of more than 30 organizations across the state with the common goal of being carbon neutral by 2050. The Climate Table is coordinated by our Community Programs Director. The work in 2022 and 2023 is focused on creating a tool for equity in local climate action planning, grassroots organizing to relieve energy burden in communities in Milwaukee and Southeast Wisconsin, boosting engagement for the Clean Energy Plan, and helping local governments secure funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act.

2021 Income and Expenses

Revenues and Support without Donor Restrictions	2020	2021
Contributions and Grants	110,420	149,908
Government Grant	37,500	41,367
Fees for Services	18,500	11,250
Interest Income	70	34
Other	3,060	1,217
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>90,754</u>	43,384
Total Revenues and Support without Donor Restrictions	260,304	247,160
Expenses		
Program Expenses:		
Transportation	108,652	99,306
Sustainability	35,388	43,750
Water Quality	35,410	31,895
Total Program Expenses	179,450	174,951
Supporting Services:		
Management and General	41,739	39,787
Fundraising	<u>31,338</u>	<u>17,776</u>
Total Supporting Services	72,717	57,563
Total Expenses	252,167	232,514
Change in Net Assets without Donor Restrictions	<u>8,137</u>	<u>14,646</u>
Net Assets with Donor Restrictions		
Contributions and Grants	111,484	17,354
Net assets released from restrictions	<u>(90,754)</u>	<u>(43,384)</u>
Change in Net Assets with Donor Restrictions	<u>20,730</u>	<u>(26,030)</u>
Total Change in Net Assets	28,867	(11,384)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>150,029</u>	<u>178,896</u>
Net Assets at End of Year	<u>178,896</u>	<u>167,512</u>

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This Annual Report is available to the public at:
1kfriends.org/annual-reports-financials