



Hopkins Sustainable Building Policy

Achieving Sustainability in the Built Environment

Cities throughout Minnesota seek to improve public health, environmental justice, and environmental and economic sustainability. Many cities are taking advantage of building-related strategies to reduce carbon emissions and waste, protect natural resources, and mitigate stormwater runoff. With a sustainable building standard, cities can use public financing and their authority over land use to make meaningful progress toward achieving their sustainability goals.

To support our climate action plan goals and building investment, the City of Hopkins approved a sustainable building policy on April 15, 2025

Leveraging financial and land use incentives, a sustainable building policy establishes minimum sustainability criteria that go beyond existing state code for new construction and redevelopment. Included sustainability criteria typically target reducing pollution and conserving resources. This policy would be voluntary for developments not seeking those incentives.

What are the Benefits?

- Supports Hopkins's Energy Action Plan goal of cutting an extra 40% of energy-related greenhouse gas emissions by 2028, saving the community \$1.9 million and reducing an additional 2,008 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent compared to business as usual.
- Ensures high value of housing and building stock
- Provides greater access for high quality, environmentally-friendly housing
- Promotes energy independence

Policy Details

Policy Triggers

New construction and redevelopment projects with 20 or more residential units and/or 10,000 square feet of non-residential space

AND receive special land use approvals OR receive more than \$300,000 in funding from the following funding sources will trigger the policy:

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- City land write-downs
- Housing Redevelopment Authority
- Local affordable housing aid
- Hennepin County grants
- DEED grants
- Property tax abatements

Sustainability Rating Systems

Developers can select from the following third-party rating systems to adhere to the policy:

- LEED
- B3 Guidelines
- Green Communities
- Other rating systems as approved

Universal Requirements

In addition to building to a sustainability rating system, projects will be asked to:

- Report predicted greenhouse gas emissions.
- Evaluate feasibility of:
 - Installing a cool or green roof OR
 - Sourcing 2% of energy with on-site renewable energy. Install if cost-effective by B3 guidance.
- Meet EV standard – install or make EV-ready 5-10% of parking spots based on land use type.
- Evaluate feasibility of activities from low-salt design checklist.

Policy Framework

The sustainable building policy applies to projects that have received special land use approval or receive eligible public funding. Compliance with the policy is based on the amount of funding received and size of the project. The policy is structured to give developers the power to choose their preferred third-party rating system based on building type, as well as their expertise and experience.

Joining Sustainability Leaders

Hopkins joins the cities of Duluth, Maplewood, Minneapolis, Saint Paul, Saint Louis Park, Northfield, Eden Prairie, Edina and Rochester who all have a formal sustainable building policy. The cities of Saint Paul and Saint Louis Park have been implementing their policies for more than 10 years, providing multiple local examples of successful policy implementation.