**Aim Green Communities Initiative - 2017**

***Explanation and purpose of this program***

Sustainable development, energy conservation programs and low impact development can all be considered part of a green program for a municipal government. Many green concepts can save a community money, while simultaneously conserving environmental resources and improving quality of life. Improved quality of life, in turn, can help support economic development goals.

This is Aim’s tenth year implementing the Green Communities Initiative for the collective purposes of:

* Improving awareness about green options and how to implement them
* Promoting municipal efforts through a peer recognition/awards program
* Awarding the most aggressive green programs for each of the following population categories:
  + Communities with population of 50,000 or greater
  + Communities with population: 10,000 to 49,999
  + Communities with population: 5,000 to 9,999
  + Communities with population: 1 to 4,999

This Initiative is comprised of:

* An increase in the number of workshops offered each year that are focused on environmental programs, their value, and how to implement them
* A survey that can be completed by communities who are interested in meeting the program criteria
* An awards program that recognizes those communities who meet minimum criteria and honors one community that has done the most in this area

The program has been designed to be general and applicable to communities of all sizes. Since Aim may oppose the basis of current (or future) regulatory compliance programs, such as certain elements related to CSO requirements, the survey and awards program do not address environmental compliance issues; rather, they address those programs that go above and beyond regulatory compliance and permits from a municipal program and project perspective. Since legal and policy challenges may be rooted in what Aim feels to be legitimate opposition or disagreement, this program is not concerned with whether or not a community’s NPDES permit, air quality compliance, or other regulatory program is up-to-date, in court, under negotiation, etc.

***Completing this survey***

* For consideration for recognition or an award in 2017, **Surveys MUST be completed by June 23, 2017**
* While others in your community may help complete the survey, it must be submitted and approved by the highest elected official of your community
* All communities are eligible to apply every year
* Questions are grouped into the following sections:
* Procurement
* Operations/Practices
* Measuring Success
* Recent Projects or Programs

***How will my survey be scored?***

Aim’s Green Team has devised a scoring system and associated minimum criteria for consideration of being an Aim Green Community. Here is how your survey will be judged:

* All completed surveys will be reviewed by all members of the Aim Green Team, unless there is a potential conflict.
* Most questions include a requirement for explaining your answer or referencing city code, etc. This is necessary because the question could otherwise become subjective. For example, if you are asked if you have a plan or incentive program for a particular effort or program we want to know that this is a real document rather than just an idea. Points will only be given to questions that are answered completely, where explanations, examples, or references are requested. Remember, Aim will be sharing information from these surveys to all Aim members, in an effort to improve awareness and understanding of opportunities, their real value, and how to implement them.
* Each question will be worth *up to* 1, 2, 3 or 5 points. Point thresholds are based upon level of effort as well as level of impact compared to other survey questions. The number of points available is listed at the end of each question.
* The “Recent Projects, Programs, or Policies” Section is worth up to an additional 25 points.
* Points for each question will be averaged among the judges. The highest score and the lowest score for each community will be removed from the total, prior to averaging. The average for each question will then be added up for a total score for each community.
* A minimum score must be achieved to meet the criteria necessary to be recognized as an Aim Green Community. There are 213 total points available in the survey. However, there are a few questions that do not apply to smaller communities. Therefore, the point totals for those questions have been removed from the total possible points; however bonus points are available for these initiatives. Minimum point totals required to be designated as a Aim Green Community are as follows:
  + Community with population of 50,000 or greater: 115
  + Community with population: 10,000 to 49,999: 112
  + Community with population: 5,000 to 9,999 99
  + Communities with population: 1 to 4,999 74
* A plaque acknowledging each Aim Green Community will be awarded to each community meeting the minimum score during the Aim Awards Luncheon.
* The community with the highest score among all submittals (within each population category) will be awarded the Aim Green Community of the Year Award. Both a plaque and a road sign acknowledging the award will be given to the winner(s).

Questions may be directed to [aim@aimindiana.org.](mailto:aim@aimindiana.org.)

**Deadline for Survey Submittal is June 23, 2017**

**Submittal of your completed survey authorizes Aim to reproduce and publish your survey so that other Aim members may learn from your experiences**

**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

**Aim 2017 Green Communities Initiative**

**Name of City or Town: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Population: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Highest Elected Official:**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**PROCUREMENT**

P1. In the current calendar year, have you installed or started to implement

any alternative energy sources? (wind turbines, solar energy, Bio-fuels, compressed natural gas, geo-thermal, green power credit or renewable energy certificate, etc.) *Please list examples below*

Points: up to 5

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P2. Are renewable energy choices available to your citizens (offered in the private sector), possibly as a result of municipally-led policies or other promotional programs? If yes, do you promote renewable energy options to your community residents and businesses? *Please describe below*

Points: up to 5

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P3. Does your municipality encourage or require compliance with the *Dark Skies* initiative? *Provide reference of code or other means of requirement or encouragement*

Points: up to 5 (communities from 1-9,999 are not required to answer this question, however, extra credit may be received for this initiative)

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P4. Have you replaced or do you have a plan to replace any of your energy consuming equipment with high efficiency (high performance) equipment in the current or past calendar year? (lights, chillers, street lights, traffic lights, boilers, low flow water valves) *Explain; give examples or details of the plan*

Points: up to 4

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P5. Do you presently have a buy local policy for manufactured products (i.e., construction materials, cleaning supplies, paper products, etc – consider within 500 miles to be “local”)? *Explain*

Points: up to 3

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P6. Does your municipality have a green/recycled purchasing policy? *Explain/provide examples*

Points: up to 5

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**MUNICIPAL OPERATIONS/PRACTICES**

O1. Does your municipality have a designated person who is coordinating all “green” initiatives or ensuring green considerations are part of planning and design? This could be *any* existing position, with the additional responsibility assigned to them. *Provide name, responsibilities, and title, and contact information (for a future peer-sharing database) below*

Points: up to 3

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O2. Does your municipality actively educate municipal employees and citizens about local environmental issues (above and beyond permit-required education programs)? *List examples*

Points: up to 3

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O3. Does your municipality offer its citizens recycling for household or business wastes, yard wastes, etc. *Please describe*

Points: up to 5

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O4. Do municipal operations require recycling of materials, office supplies, etc within the *municipal* operations? *Explain to what extent this policy is applied*

Points: up to 3

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O5. Does your municipality have an active brownfields program that identifies, mitigates as appropriate, and seeks redevelopment rather than green field construction? *Explain and provide examples*

Points: up to 5

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O6. Does the municipality reuse existing buildings or promote the reuse of existing buildings – public or private? *Provide examples*

Points: up to 3

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O7. Provide examples of green initiatives your municipality offers incentives for (to the private sector) for green build projects, green roofs, stormwater quality credits, LEED certified buildings, etc (i.e., tax incentives, expedited permitting, etc) *describe the incentive below*

Points: up to 5

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O8. Provide examples of green initiatives at municipally-owned facilities have (or are planned to have) green build projects, green roofs, LEED certified buildings, renewable energy features, etc? *Specify facility location(s)*

Points: up to 5

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O9. Do your municipal buildings utilize low (water) flow fixtures?

Points: up to 3

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O10. Does the municipality reutilize gray water for reuse (i.e., irrigation use), etc.? *Give examples/explain*

Points: up to 5

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O11. Does the municipality have a water management plan that includes a conservation ordinance that addresses watering lawns, etc. during periods of drought or low precipitation and automated meter reading? *Cite code below*

Points: up to 5

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O12. Do you currently have programs or policies in place to reduce stormwater runoff (i.e. rain barrels, rain gardens). Cite program or policy.

Points: up to 3

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O13. Has your community created a Plan to reduce the projected amount of future water supply needs of treated water by any of the following?:  water conservation (residences, institutional and commercial),   remote meter reading & recording & water loss detection/elimination, significant City water reduction practices, restrictive water rates during drought conditions etc. and, if the answer is yes, how has the public been made aware of this Plan?  *Provide details below*

Points: up to 5

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O14. Does your municipality have a plan for sustainable growth? i.e., comprehensive land use plan that seeks to minimize urban sprawl and provide the amenities of open spaceor other formal plan that considers environmental impacts and sustainable development*? If so, please refer to the plan and elaborate*

(Communities from 1- 4,999 are not required to answer this question, however extra credit may be given for this initiative)

Points: up to 5

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O15. Does your municipality have a zoning ordinance that enforces the growth plan referred to in question O14? *Please cite the code*

(Communities from 1- 4,999 are not required to answer this question, however extra credit may be given for this initiative)

Points*:* up to 3

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O16. Are you a member of IDEM’s Clean Community challenge? http://www.in.gov/idem/prevention/2361.htm

Points*:* up to 3

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O17. How many active or passive recreational acres per 1000 population does your municipality have? Include areas such as: parks, trails, town green.

Points: up to 3

Is your ratio over 10 acres per 1000 residents?

Bonus: up to 2

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O18. Do you have a parks master plan that is less than 5 years old?

(Communities from 1- 4,999 are not required to answer this question, however extra credit may be given for this initiative)

Y or N

Points: up to 2

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O19. Do you have an urban forestry program*? Provide name of plan, date, etc.*

Points: up to 3

Are you currently a Tree City USA (or similar program) community*? Cite date of award:*

Bonus 3

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O20. Do you have a landscape ordinance that promotes native species and green stormwater infrastructure?

Y or N

Points: up to 3

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O21. Do you have a policy for pesticide management that promotes eco-friendly practices?

Y or N

Points: up to 3

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O22. Does your municipality have a program that reduces mowing or the need for mowing in parks and along right of ways? *Cite the plan or elaborate:*

Y or N

Points: up to 3

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O23. Do you have a multi-modal plan (or similar) in place for traffic calming, or zoning set up for promoting mixed use, walkable options, bike to work, bike lanes, etc. *Cite plan below:*

(Communities from 1- 9,999 are not required to answer this question, however extra credit may be given for this initiative)

Y or N

Points: up to 5

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O24. Do you have preferred city parking incentive for electric or hybrid vehicles or carpool vehicles? *If so, explain*

(Communities from 1- 4,999 are not required to answer this question, however extra credit may be given for this initiative)

Y or N

Points: up to 3

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O25. What percent of your current (and pending documented vehicle purchases) vehicles are electric, hybrid, compressed natural gas, or bio-fuel vehicles, tractors or lawn mowers?

Points: up to 5

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O26. Does your municipality have a written policy that city employees not idle vehicles excessively?

Y or N

Points: up to 3

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O27. Does your municipality have public transportation available? *Reference the transportation program (i.e., public bus system, etc)*

(Communities from 1- 49,999 are not required to answer this question, however extra credit may be given for this initiative)

Points: up to 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

O28. Do you have established guidelines or control systems for temperature settings for your buildings both when occupied and after hours? *Briefly explain:*

Y or N

Points: up to 3

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O29. Do you have a documented maintenance program for your heating and cooling equipment to maintain peak performance of that equipment?

Y or N

Points: 1

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O30. Have you done an energy study of your buildings to see where you can reduce

energy consumption and improve energy efficiency?

Y or N

Points: up to 3

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O31. If O30 is yes, have you implemented any of the recommendations? *List implemented recommendations below:*

Points: up to 5

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O32. Do you utilize environmentally-friendly de-icing options (alternatives to salt)? *What is the alternative being used? (Include list)*

Points: up to 3

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O33. Do you have traffic configurations to reduce air emissions (traffic circles, planted boulevards, or, signalization optimization, *Explain when/where*

Points: up to 5

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O34. Does your municipality actively/formally have a process that integrates the

timing of projects (regardless of project type or which department leads), i.e., where capital improvements of different years are located at or near the same location? Do municipal departments and local utilities work together to reconsider scheduling or implementing these projects simultaneously? *Explain and provide examples*

(Communities from 1- 4,999 are not required to answer this question, however extra credit may be given for this initiative)

Points: Up to 5

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O35. Does your community have a Plan in place to reduce the impacts of climate change? Examples of items included in such a Plan would include:

-Develop an Emergency Management Plan for extreme weather events

-Inventory and map municipal infrastructure in vulnerable areas with the intention to replace, remove or upgrade the infrastructure over time

-Utilize local authority to protect open/green space, farmland, wetland or riparian buffers to increase resiliency to extreme weather events

Points: Up to 5

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**MEASURING SUCCESS**

M1. Is your municipality tracking progress on your “green” initiatives and reporting this to the public? *If so, how?*

Points: up to 3

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M2. Have you performed a baseline audit on how much overall energy the municipality is using?

Y N

Points: up to 3

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M3. Have you set goals for the reduction of energy use?  *Please explain how*

Points: up to 3 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

M4. Does your municipality track the energy use of its buildings? Not just cost, but quantities used? *If so, explain how*

Points: up to 3

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M5. Have you tracked the changes in energy consumption from one month over the next, or year over year?

Points: up to 3

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M6. Are you seeing a reduction in use? *Explain below*

Points: 1

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M7. Have you performed a baseline audit of the amount of fuel used in your fleet?

Have you set goals to reduce the amount of traditional fuel (gas, diesel) used during the course of routine operations (barring unforeseen events such as large snow storms)

*If so, what are the goals?*

Points: up to 5

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M8. What percentage % of your households participates in recycling?

Points: up to 3

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**Bonus: Have you calculated your municipality’s carbon footprint?**

**Up to 5 points – Provide link or other documentation for doing so**

**RECENT PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, OR POLICIES (*within the last 12 months*)**

List and briefly describe any (up to three) projects, programs, or policies that your community has completed or initiated (**and have not already been addressed in this survey**) within the last 12 months. Enhancements or demonstrated improvements to existing programs are allowed, but please list the original start date as well as the start date of the revised program. Each listed project, program, or policy will be evaluated for three categories of sustainable benefit (community, environmental, economic), allowing for a potential total of 25 points in this Section.

Such projects, programs, or policies should be those that your municipality has voluntarily initiated for the betterment of the environment. Do not list regulatory-driven plans, permits, or projects, or programs. Discuss only those projects that you are not required to complete. Briefly describe each project, program, or policy and how it will protect the environment. While it is not required, you may provide up to 10 pages of attachments *to this section* including type-written pages and graphics. Programs, projects, or policies submitted in prior-year survey submittals, unless substantial upgrades/improvements have been made since, do not qualify and should not be submitted.

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