# City of Mount Rainier Maryland
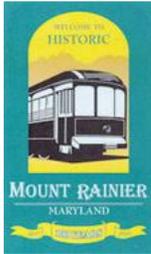
One Municipal Place
Mount Rainier, MD 20712
www.mountrainiermd.org
Municipal Government
*Member since April 2011*

## Management and Leadership

☑ **Environmental Policy Statement**

The City passed its "going green" ordinance February 2011. The Mayor and Council are committed to planning for a green and sustainable Mount Rainier. For the Mayor and Council, sustainability is not just about energy efficiency, green building or land preservation, it is a way of life, and one that is inclusive of all of our residents. By going green and establishing Mount Rainier as a sustainable community, we are paving the way to ensure that our environment stays healthy, that our trees are preserved, that we contribute to saving our water resources and ensure a healthy tomorrow for all our residents. This ordinance is the foundation for guiding the City's current and future green, sustainable initiatives, green infrastructure and sustainability efforts.

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED THAT the City of Mount Rainier will*

A. Continue to ask its residents to recycle, but will expand its recycling efforts to include schools, churches, apartments, and commercial businesses that deliver goods and services to our residents.
B. Promote "green streets" as a strategy for transforming the City's traditional transportation infrastructure into a green infrastructure.
C. Plant and treat trees as an integral part of our community's infrastructure and consider trees and/or tree planting in our plans, ordinances and capital improvement projects.
D. Preserve its open space and continue to focus on development around concentrated main streets, transportation areas, and mixed-use town centers.
E. Coordinate events, activities, and distribute information to residents and those seeking to live, build, and/or do business in Mount Rainier relative to Mount Rainier's green initiative goals.

*The more informed our citizenry, the better the participation. Residents are critical to the success of the City's green initiative and must be afforded the information necessary to participate effectively. Therefore, this information will be posted online in a regularly updated inventory to promote partnerships and the sharing of ideas related to the greening of Mount Rainier; featured in our newsletter, the Message; carried on cable and FIOS channels, and distributed at all City sponsored events when feasible.*

F.  *Encourage alternative forms of transportation that will help to conserve energy and support Mount Rainier's going green initiative and will encourage residents to walk, use bicycles, and form carpooling groups.*

G.  *Conduct a planning study that will help to set municipal priorities for investments in sustainable modes of transportation by locating and improving common walking and bike routes as well as placing bike racks around the City's commercial establishments and public buildings in order to facilitate the use of local businesses and recreation facilities.*

*The Mayor and Council recognize that the majority of bicycling and walking trips are local in nature. The City will focus on these modes of transportation to enhance local mobility on the bike and on foot and promote projects that enhance people's ability to choose cycling and walking for trips to the Metro, shopping, and schools in our neighborhoods.*

H.  *Create a more environmentally friendly workplace for its employees as part of its going green project.*

*This will take planning, funding and time to achieve maximum results. Therefore Mayor and Council will use a smart approach to accomplish this objective, i.e., as the City revitalizes its buildings, purchases cars and equipment, and makes improvements, it will strive to use materials and services that are in keeping with this ordinance's objectives. For example, when budgeting for police cars, the City will strive to purchase and place into use at least one alternative fuel or hybrid vehicle; purchase recycled paper; install energy efficient lighting, etc.*

*Creating a sustainable office environment will reduce the City's overhead and operating expenses, conserve resources, and increase awareness of the environmental impacts of our day-to-day operations on our environment. The savings will be realized over time.*

***NOW BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED**, that the Mayor and Council shall have responsibility for oversight and implementation of this ordinance and will work closely with the Environmental Protection Board to insure adherence to best practices in this area, and provide assistance to City staff in its implementation.*

☑ **Environmental Team**

*The City created the Mount Rainier Green Team, in 2012, to advise the City on environmental issues, conduct outreach to the community, apply for the Sustainable Maryland Certification and implement the City's Sustainability Plan. The Green Team meets once a month and is made up of Mount Rainier residents, a Council and City staff liaison.*

☑ **Annual Environmental Goals**

*The City will post and maintain its Sustainable Maryland Certification, and the City's Green Team will prepare an annual report on progress and accomplishments on achieving sustainability goals.*

*In addition to a number of other annual environmental goals and initiatives, Mount Rainier will assess and track the City's carbon footprint. The City of Mount Rainier prides itself as a leader in sustainability efforts and continually looks at ways to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors. The City began a commitment to improve air and water quality and establish an environmentally friendly City in the early 1970's. Through adopted legislation and municipal codes, the City has routinely shown that it supports greening initiatives and Maryland smart growth goals.*

*Mount Rainier created a Sustainability Plan to serve as a working document that addresses the significant components of sustainability – environmental, social, and economic factors. The focus is to implement ways that both City leaders and residents can proactively impact their surroundings. To date, this has been done through several activities, programs, and initiatives, including, but not limited to: the 2011 Green Home Initiative, the Preserve Our Planet Corn Bin, the Mount Rainier Bicycle and Tool Shed Cooperatives, the City's recycling efforts, the rain garden at the Mount Rainier Nature Center, the annual replanting of native and new City street trees, the installation of solar panels on the City's municipal building, the residential composting program and the construction of one of the first "green" police facilities in the country. To further the City's environmental goals a Green Infrastructure Plan and Bicycle Master Plan was adopted in the fall of 2013.*

*This sustainability plan reflects the City's priorities for improving energy efficiency, reducing waste and fostering a healthy community through wellness and local economic development programs. In addition to the benefits this will provide to our residents, we became one of the very first "Sustainable Maryland Certified Communities," a designation that brought much deserved recognition for the ongoing innovative work of the City of Mount Rainier.*

*The City will post its Sustainability Plan, and the Green Team will provide annual work plans and accomplishment reports to the Mayor and City Council. The City will maintain its Sustainable Maryland Certification by apply for re-certification every three years.*

☑ **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing**

*Our objective is to engage in purchasing practices that minimize environmental impacts within businesses and throughout the supply chain. Specifically, we will*

1) *Buy toilet paper, tissues and paper towels that have 35%-100% post-consumer recycled content.*
2) *Implement a "just-in-time" purchasing policy (inventory reduction purchasing) and a "first-in/first-out" chemical usage policy (using older chemicals first) to use old material first.*
3) *Replace aerosols with non-aerosol alternatives (such as pump sprays for fresheners and cleaners).*
4) *Buy low or no volatile organic compounds (VOC) paints, coatings, adhesives, and sealants for renovation projects.*
5) *When replacing furniture, phase in low-VOC furniture.*
6) *Use green cleaning techniques and products, including low-toxic, biodegradable cleaners, and properly dispose of expired materials.*
7) *When renovating, use eco-friendly flooring, such as the Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) launched Green Label Plus to identify carpets that are tested by an independent, certified laboratory and meet stringent criteria for low chemical emissions, (e.g., CRI Green Label carpet pads and Floorscore certified flooring (bamboo, natural linoleum, cork, etc.).*
8) *Institute a written policy regarding the rental of office equipment where appropriate. Businesses that lease equipment tend to use more durable items, salvage reusable parts, refurbish, recycle, or donate used equipment that can no longer be leased.*
9) *Purchase copy, computer or fax paper, letterhead, envelopes and business cards with at least 35% post-consumer recycled content.*
10) *Purchase boxes and bags for retail use or shipping made from recycled paper or plastic (or reuse old boxes and bags).*
11) *Where possible, use non-toxic water-based markers rather than toxic permanent ink markers/pens.*
12) *For shipping items, use shredded paper or corn starch pellets for packaging needs instead of purchasing Styrofoam pellets, bubble wrap or other packaging materials; also reuse, in your own packaging, packaging materials received.*
13) *When purchasing new printers, buy ones with duplex capability. 14) Maintain (and adhere to) a sustainable purchasing policy (Energy Star equipment and appliances; recycled content, biodegradable paper products; energy efficient, low-mercury lamps; plastic products; food products;*

*building/renovation materials). Consider and favor products that are recyclable at the end of their useful life.*

15) *Choose vendors who can articulate sustainable practices.*
16) *Use local businesses for products and services whenever possible.*
17) *When purchasing garbage pails or garbage bags, find ones that use recycled plastic (e.g., high molecular weight – high density polyethylene (HDPE) trash liner bags instead of low density polyethylene (LDPE) or linear low density polyethylene (LLDPE).*
18) *When possible, arrange to order environmentally friendly items from vendors who make deliveries for several items.*
19) *In order to improve indoor air quality, ban smoking from interior spaces and designate exterior smoking areas at least 25 feet from building entries, outdoor air intakes and operable windows, with cigarette butt disposal units.*
20) *Serve locally-grown and/or organic food at workplace events when possible.*

☑  **Environmental Restoration or Community Environmental Projects**

*The City understands the impact of water run-off and has consistently engaged in preserving the City's tree stock by planting of new and native tree species. The City passed a new ordinance in 2013 to further protect the City's Urban Forest. The City has retained its Tree City USA designation since it was awarded in 1990 and has planted more than 500 trees throughout the City to enhance and maintain our urban canopy.*

*The City receives funding regularly through the Prince George's County Re-Leaf grant. This year the City of Mount Rainier was able to purchase and plant 63 trees on tree boxes along our City streets. Using Casey Trees "Tree Benefit Calculator" the City of Mount Rainier has estimated that these new trees conservatively will help capture 5,500 gallons for stormwater and 910 pounds of carbon dioxide this year.*

*In 2012, the City installed permeable pavement to help with stormwater infiltration in the City's municipal lot and neighboring alley. In 2014 the City received a grant for $242,000 from the U.S. EPA, Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Chesapeake Bay Trust through the Green Streets, Green Towns, Green Jobs Initiative for the Buchanan Green Street.*

*In 2014 the City of Mount Rainier and the Prince George's County Department of the Environment held a stormwater audit and Rain Check Rebate workshop where over 30 residents attended.*

*Saving both chemical and fuel usage, the City has used goats to clean poison ivy from one of our parks.*

*The City is committed to environmental outreach and hosts regular green awareness events for the residents of Mount Rainier.*

## Waste

☑ **Solid Waste Reduction and Reuse**

*Our objective is to reduce the volume of waste generated. Specifically, we will*

1) *Supply water through a fountain, cooler or tap; eliminate bottled water. 2) Eliminate disposables (plastic utensils, coffee stirrers, paper towels) by using permanent ware (mugs, dishes, utensils, towels/rags, coffee filters, etc.). 3) Maintain (and adhere to) a written policy of "green printing practices," including duplex printing, draft printing, and utilization of scrap paper.*
4) *If a facility still has an old printer without duplex capability, use only for single page documents and ensure multipage documents are printed on a duplex printer. 5) Encourage employees to read, highlight and comment on documents on the computer screen whenever possible.*
6) *Keep a stack of previously used paper near printers. Use it for drafts, scratch paper or internal memos or designate a draft tray on printers with multiple trays. 7) Write to or call senders requesting removal from the mailing list to reduce junk mail.*
8) *Return labels from duplicate mailings and subscriptions requesting all but one be removed.*
9) *Write "refused" on unwanted first class mail and return to sender.*
10) *Purge our own mailing lists to eliminate duplication.*
11) *Institute a policy that switches to electronic forms, eliminate excess forms and make paper forms more efficient.*
12) *Where possible, reuse envelopes as both send and return envelopes: cover up old addresses and postage, affix new and/or use two way or 'send and return' envelopes.*
13) *Eliminate fax cover sheets by using "sticky" fax directory notes or use software that allows you to send and receive faxes directly from the computer without printing.*
14) *Institute written policies encouraging the use of the size reduction feature in photocopying (e.g., print two pages of a book on one page).*

15) *Minimize misprints by posting a diagram showing how to load special paper, such as letterhead.*
16) *Donate or exchange unwanted but usable items (furniture, supplies, electronics, scrap materials, computer disks, etc.) to schools, churches, hospitals, libraries, non-profit organizations, museums, teacher resource organizations, etc., or enroll in a waste exchange program.*

☑ **Recycling**

*In addition to reducing waste, our objective is to recycle as much as possible. We have 87% recycling participating rate among residents, and in our own facilities we will do the following:*

1) *Recycle food and beverage containers (all glass, #1 - #7 plastic and aluminum containers).*
2) *Recycle (or reuse) all paper products that recycling vendors will accept.*
3) *Recycle Tyvek (high tech polyethylene) envelopes*
4) *Recycle toner cartridges, cell phones, and dry cell batteries*
5) *Make it easy for employees to recycle by placing clearly marked collection bins in convenient locations. Post signs and/or train employees regarding recycling policies and procedures in the office.*
6) *We have also increased the size of the recycling bins we issue to all residents to encourage recycling.*

*In 2015, the City's Green Team began working with the two elementary schools to help support recycling efforts and programming.*

☑ **Composting**

*In 2013 the City began to offer discounted compost bins to City residents to allow for backyard composting as part of a three-year goal for 225 Mount Rainier Single Family Homes Composting (25%). The City of Mount Rainier purchased Earth Machine compost bins direct from the manufacturer for $40 each, which generally retail for $80 and above. Residents who wish to purchase a compost bin must pay a $20 fee and limited to one (1) bin per household while supplies last.*

*This program is fiscally responsible, saving the City on tipping fees while being environmentally friendly. It reduces landfill waste volume and the production of methane, a greenhouse gas that occurs when food scrap waste decomposes in a landfill.*

In the two years since the program started, 114 compost bins have been purchased by Mount Rainier Single Family Homes. According to the EPA, the average household generated 474 pounds of food waste a year. Assuming the households are turning this food waste to compost, the City is diverting 54,036 lbs or 27 tons of food waste that otherwise would be disposed of in a landfill. Further, the City is saving as estimated $1,594 per year by not disposing of this waste in a landfill. Currently, the tipping fees are $59/ton. The program plans to continue next year as we continue to try and reach our goal of 225 households.

## Energy

☑ **Energy Efficiency**

Our objective is to reduce energy use at the facility.  Specifically, we will

1) Conduct an informal internal energy audit of our facilities (assess and implement simple measures to reduce energy consumption).
2) Maintain (and adhere to) a written policy that ensures blinds and curtains are closed during peak summer period (white reflects) to reduce A/C load. 3) Institute and/or maintain a written maintenance program: Inspect permanent filters every three months and clean permanent filters with mild detergents when necessary (change replaceable filters every three months); check the entire system for coolant and air leaks, clogs, and obstructions of air intake and vents; keep the condenser coils free of dust and lint; keep the evaporator coils free of excessive frost.
4) Implement weatherizing policy and measures (i.e., weather stripping, caulking, sealing unused space, not heating/cooling unused space). 5) If appropriate, apply window film to reduce solar heat gain.
6) Maintain (and adhere to) a written policy to turn off office lights when leaving for more than 15 minutes and post reminders until motion lights are installed.
7) Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent or LED lights. Use halogen lamps only for low wattage task and spot lighting.
8) Arrange your workspaces to take advantage of areas with natural sunlight, and design for increased natural lighting when remodeling (workspace within 30' of natural light).
9) Use "task" lighting with energy efficient bulbs where extra light is needed, rather than over-lighting an entire area with ambient light.
10) Replace standard fluorescent lights with low- or no-mercury fluorescent lights that are higher efficiency.
11) Disconnect unused ballasts in de-lamped fixtures and replace burned out lamps to avoid ballast damage.

14) *Clean lighting fixtures, diffusers, and lamps so that they are lighting as effectively as possible (dirt can reduce lighting efficiency by up to 50%).*

12) *Replace magnetic ballasts with electronic ballasts and install T-8 or T-5 lamps.*

15) *Increase natural lighting through installing sidelights or lowering cubicle and non-structural walls that block lighting to interior workstations.*

16) *Set all office equipment to go to standby mode when not in use (e.g., energy saver buttons on copiers). Turn off equipment when not in use for long periods of time (end of the workday).*

17) *Establish purchasing program to buy only EPEAT certified computers and LED monitors that consume approximately 1/3 less energy than larger CRT monitors. 17) Establish purchasing policy to only purchase Energy Star or energy efficient equipment and appliances.*

18) *Set refrigerator temperature between 38ºF and 41ºF and freezer between 10ºF and 20ºF.*

19) *Install "instant-on" hot water in new or renovated structures.*

*The City of Mount Rainier has also established a Green Home Initiative. We partnered with State Neighborhood Revitalization Program and received $75,000 grant award to install weatherization improvements to 15 homes including new windows and doors, and Energy Star Appliances in the amount of $5,000 for each home.*

☑ **Renewable Energy**

*We have installed solar panels on City Hall. The City's Green Team also held its first solar workshop September 2018 and numerous residents have installed solar panels on their homes.*

## Transportation

☑ **Employee Commute**

*The City has a Bicycle Coop to encourage residents to use bikes. Our objective is to reduce the carbon footprint of our own employee travel by encouraging alternative commuting and fuel economy. Specifically, we will*

1) *Encourage commuter alternatives by informing employees, customers and others who visit your office about various transportation options (post bicycle route maps, transit schedules, commuter ride sign-ups, etc. in a visible area for employees).*

2) *Offer secure areas for bicycle storage for both employees and customers.*

3) *Offer lockers and showers for employees who walk, jog or bicycle to work. Provide locker rentals and showers, if possible.*
4) *Institute flextime and work-at-home days for employees who commute by a car when feasible.*
5) *Provide commuter/shuttle service to and from the metro, train, and/or light rail stops.*

*In 2013 the City adopted a bicycle infrastructure plan developed by the Green Team and has since installed over 100 pieces of bike lock infrastructure within the City. The City also upgraded sidewalk handicap ramps throughout the City during sidewalk improvements.*

*The City's commitment to supporting bike and pedestrian friendly commuting options is paying off. According to the 5-year America Community Survey, the number of bike commuters in Mount Rainier went from 42 in 2011 to 68 in 2013, a 62% increase. Since then, the City has continued to support biking by partnering with the County to install the new BikeShare program.*

☑ **Efficient Business Travel**

*We will also encourage fuel economy for our employees while at work. Specifically, we will*

1) *Have written policy to use hybrid cars during business travel when it is necessary to rent a car.*
2) *Use teleconferencing to cut down on the amount of business travel.*
3) *Carefully plan delivery routes and errands to eliminate unnecessary trips.*
4) *Encourage carpooling for trips to meetings and when touring the City.*

☑ **Fleet Vehicles**

*The Mayor drives a Ford Escape Hybrid, and we are working to purchase hybrids for the police fleet. The first ones will be purchased this fiscal year.*

## Water

☑ **Water Conservation**

*Our objective is to reduce the business's aggregate water use by encouraging the following:*

1) *Post signs in restrooms and kitchen areas encouraging water conservation.*
2) *Regularly check for and repair all leaks in your facility (toilet leaks can be detected in tank toilets with leak detecting tablets. Train your staff to monitor and respond immediately to leaking equipment.*
3) *Understand your water bill and review it monthly for indications of leaks, spikes or other problems.*

☑ **Stormwater Management and Site Design**

*Our objective is to reduce business' discharge of pollutants into storm water runoff by encouraging the following:*

1) *If you need to use water to clean concrete or asphalt surfaces, use "dry sweeping," water efficient "spray brooms," or low flow (<3 gpm – gallons per minute) spray nozzles with automatic shut-off rather than a garden hose.*
2) *Use pervious materials for paving, repaving and other work on streets.*

*A permeable alleyway and parking lot with pervious pavers were installed adjacent to City Hall to improve stormwater runoff. In 2014 an urban forestry chapter was adopted by the City Council to maintain the urban canopy to improve stormwater management.*

*Notification about the County's Rain Check Rebate program for residents was made available through the City Newsletter and listserve.*

*In 2014, we received $240K for the Buchanan Street Green Street via the Green Streets, Green Towns, Green Jobs Initiative with funding through EPA, DNR, and CBT. The entire project is designed to reduce stormwater flows in to the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River, promote groundwater infiltration, expand the tree canopy and native plantings, while educating the community about the ecology of the watershed, and enhancing pedestrian and bicyclist accessibility and safety. This project has been completed and serves as a centerpiece for green infrastructure improvements in the City.*

*Renewed emphasis is being placed on storm water management as the City starts surveying its storm water runoff areas.*

## Green Building

          *Mount Rainier has the first green police station in the State of Maryland. Although it is not LEED certified, it was built from all recycled materials. (See February 13, 2003, Washington Post article by Jamie Stockwell, "Mount Rainier Opens Police Station; Nation's First 'Green' Headquarters Improves Working Conditions"). We are working to ensure that all City buildings become LEED certified for New Construction or for Commercial Interiors, and any newly built buildings.*

          *In addition, five net zero energy projects in Mt Rainier have been completed, purchased and occupied. [Four net zero energy townhomes](#) were developed by Flywheel Development, and one [single family net zero home](#) was developed by Urban Green. Both sites used existing vacant lots and serveds as models of sustainable living in Mount Rainier and Prince George's County.*

## Environmental Certification Programs, Awards and Other Activities

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- *Mount Rainier is a Founding member of [Sustainable Maryland Certified](#) and was first certified by the program in 2012. It was recertified in 2015 and again in 2018.*
- *Member of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability*
- *Member of Tree City USA since 1990*
- *Prince George's County Tree ReLeaf Grant Award winner*
- *Green Streets, Green Towns, Green Jobs Initiative Grant Award winner*
- *Member of Anacostia Trails Heritage Area*
- *Mayor served on WSSC's Community Advisory Board*
- *Partnered with the Anacostia Waterkeeper and Prince George's County to install the first [Bandalong Litter Trap](#) in the State of Maryland and the seventeenth in the United States*
- *Partnered with MNCPPC to acquire an additional vacant lot/park to convert into a community garden and add two additional adult swings to 30th Street Park to encourage older children to swing and exercise.*

### *Profile Updated October 2018*

*Help build a greener, more sustainable Maryland through voluntary practices that reduce environmental impacts and save money.*

*Learn more at green.maryland.gov*