

## For Immediate Release

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### **Rosemount, MN Named One of the Nation's Most Sustainable Cities**

*National organization recognizes Rosemount as a leader in sustainability*

**Rosemount, MN (March 25, 2015)** – Today, Mayor Bill Droste announced that Rosemount, MN has been awarded a 3-STAR Community Rating for national leadership in sustainability. Rosemount is the smallest U.S. city to achieve certification under the national STAR Community Rating System (STAR). The STAR Community Rating System is a robust sustainability rating system for cities, towns, and counties that helps communities evaluate themselves across seven areas related to sustainability, such as built environment, economy and jobs, health and safety, and natural systems.

“Several years ago Rosemount was working on several fronts connected with sustainability,” Mayor Droste said. “But we lacked a tool to measure progress. The STAR Community Rating System provided the structure we were looking for. It points to areas where we need to focus.”

“Sustainable cities provide a healthy environment, support a strong economy, and continually improve the well-being of the community,” said Hilari Varnadore, Executive Director of STAR Communities. “The data and information that Rosemount gathered through the process should help them continue to make improvements that benefit the whole community.” Nearly 100 communities are actively using the STAR Community Rating System, with more than 60 engaged in the certification process. Rosemount is the first community in Minnesota to achieve STAR certification.

Communities pursuing STAR certification accumulate points for their achievements across seven goal areas that are used to determine their rating. There are three STAR certification levels: 3-STAR Community (200-399 points); 4-STAR Community (400-599 points); and 5-STAR (600+ points). Rosemount received a score of 324.9, which qualifies them as a 3-STAR Community, recognized for “sustainability leadership.” Other 3-STAR Communities include Cleveland, OH; Des Moines, IA; Fort Collins, CO; and Indianapolis, IN.

Staff from several City departments coordinated by Rosemount Community Development spent one year performing a thorough assessment of the community's sustainability and gathering the data required for certification. Notable achievements within the assessment include:

- **Parks and public spaces:** Rosemount has over 21 acres of park and open space per

1,000 residents and over 97% of homes are within a ½ mile walk distance from a park or public space;

- **Community Water Systems:** Rosemount’s Comprehensive Water System Plan assesses the capital improvement needs to support a growing population and helped the community to meet national standards for wastewater and stormwater management, as well as drinking water quality.
- **Food Access and Nutrition:** Rosemount is increasing the amount of food produced through local agriculture and has 49 community gardens and has increased the ability of low-income families to access low-cost, healthful food.
- **Regional Collaboration and Innovation:** Rosemount is collaborating regionally on affordable housing issues with the Metropolitan Council of the Twin Cities and is also working on greenhouse gas mitigation and energy efficiency through their participation in the Regional Indicators Initiative, which is a partnership of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Regional Council of Mayors.

Mayor Droste thanked contributors to the data that made Rosemount’s application possible, including the Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan Public Schools, the Dakota County Community Development Agency, the Rosemount Area Arts Council, and the Community Action Partnership.

“The City Council will begin a review of our successful outcome in the STAR Community Rating System in the next few weeks,” the Mayor said. “We will look for opportunities to build on Rosemount’s progress in sustainability as identified by this comprehensive assessment and review of our local efforts.”

Staff from the City of Rosemount will be analyzing the STAR results, with an emphasis on areas where the city must improve. Rosemount’s 3-STAR Community Rating is effective for three years, at which point the city will be reevaluated.

To learn more about the STAR Community Rating System, visit the STAR website at [www.STARcommunities.org](http://www.STARcommunities.org). To learn more about sustainability in Rosemount, visit [www.ci.rosemount.mn.us/STAR](http://www.ci.rosemount.mn.us/STAR).

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**STAR Communities** works to evaluate, improve and certify sustainable communities. The organization administers the STAR Community Rating System, the nation’s first framework and certification program for local sustainability. For more information, visit [www.STARcommunities.org](http://www.STARcommunities.org). Like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter [@STARCommRating](#).