



## CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

100 North Fifth Ave. P.O. Box 8647

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48107-8647

[www.a2gov.org](http://www.a2gov.org)

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## PRESS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

**Contact:** John Hieftje, Mayor,  
City of Ann Arbor

734.994.2766 / [jhieftje@a2gov.org](mailto:jhieftje@a2gov.org)

### **ANN ARBOR MAYOR HONORED WITH ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AWARD**

ANN ARBOR, Mich., June 18, 2008 — The Michigan League of Conservation Voters 2008 Environmental Leadership Award was presented to three mayors, including City of Ann Arbor Mayor John Hieftje, at a ceremony in Grand Rapids, Mich., June 12. Previously honoring only state senators and state representatives, the organization is instead acknowledging mayors this year for their commitment to implementing innovative, yet practical, environmental solutions on a local level.

“Our state and nation are far behind in both energy conservation and in moving to renewable energy. Cities are moving forward on what state and federal officials are only talking about;” said Mayor Hieftje. “I share this award with Council Members who have supported my initiatives and with our fine staff who when given the ‘green’ light to go forward, accept the challenge and use their knowledge and talent to make things happen.”

Mayor Hieftje has been instrumental in implementing various measures to make Ann Arbor more eco-friendly. Working with other environmentalists, in 2003 he led the campaign for passage of the Parks and Greenbelt Millage to preserve open space and protect the Huron River Watershed. That same year, he took action to put Ann Arbor on the path toward developing better infrastructure for walking and bicycling — and the city has already won major awards for both. In 2005, he issued the Mayor’s Green Energy Challenge calling for Ann Arbor municipal operations to use 30 percent renewable energy by 2010 and for the entire city to reach the 20-percent threshold by 2015. By June 2006, the City of Ann Arbor was using 14.7 percent renewable energy in its municipal operations. Just a sample of other initiatives the city has in place to help reach this goal include:

- The city’s Green Fleets Policy calls for the city to select the most cost-effective, lowest emission, smallest-size vehicles that meet the city’s operational needs. Within a given year, at least 10 percent of purchased vehicles will be alternative fuel vehicles that run on natural gas, propane, bio-diesel or electricity. This policy has resulted in reduced usage of gasoline and diesel fuel by 14 percent since 2003 and lower emissions.
- The city’s fleet of AATA buses is being converted to hybrid technology for a 35 percent savings in fuel and greatly reduced emissions.

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- LED lighting is used for the city’s downtown streetlights as well as traffic signals throughout the city, making Ann Arbor one of the first in the world to make extensive use of this technology. This new technology reduces energy usage by 50 to 70 percent, and the program pays for itself in just four years.
- City residents can receive a free analysis of their homes’ solar energy potential via an online resource on the city’s Web site. Ann Arbor’s commitment to renewable energy has earned the city a Solar America Cities designation by the U.S. Department of Energy (2007), one of just 25 cities nationwide to receive the award and the federal funding that goes with it.
- Ann Arbor households recycle or compost 50 percent of their waste — double the national average — a practice made more convenient by the city’s recently expanded compost and recycling facilities.

The mayors signed the U.S. Conference of Mayors Agreement on Climate Change, confirming their commitment to reducing global warming pollution and ensuring long-term protection of Michigan’s families, Great Lakes and open spaces.

The Michigan League of Conservation Voters is a statewide, non-profit organization that works to turn environmental values into community priorities by educating lawmakers, supporting strong environmental legislation and holding lawmakers accountable

Ann Arbor has 114,000 residents, spans 27.7 square miles, and was named one of the top 25 U.S. cities to live in by CNN/Money Magazine in 2006, as well as the fourth smartest city in the U.S. by Forbes Magazine. The city’s mission statement reads: The city of Ann Arbor is committed to providing excellent municipal services that enhance the quality of life for all through the intelligent use of resources while valuing an open environment that fosters, fair, sensitive and respectful treatment of all employees and the community we serve.

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