

It's Not Easy Being Greenest: 10 Cities to Watch

Mayor Richard Daley might be determined to transform **Chicago** into the greenest city in America (see main story), but his tree-planting initiatives, building improvements and promises to secure 20 percent of the city's electricity from renewable sources might not be enough to outshine cities such as **Seattle** and **San Francisco**. In addition to authoring the Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement, Seattle's Mayor Greg Nickels has called for cutting his city's greenhouse gas emissions by 170,000 tons annually. **San Francisco**, meanwhile, boasts the U.S.'s largest fleet of alternative fuel vehicles and, with its overhaul of Laguna Honda Hospital, is poised to become the home of America's first green hospital. Meanwhile, smaller cities (such as **Ithaca, New York**, where methane is recovered from landfills, and even the fire stations are energy efficient) are also acting aggressively on their commitment to climate protection:

Portland, Oregon adopted its first global warming action plan in 1993, and it has now evolved to include more than 100 short- and long-term initiatives to reduce emissions. The city now gets 10 percent of its electricity from renewable energy, has built 40 high-performance green buildings, and has seen a 75 percent growth in public transit use.

Densely populated **New York** doesn't usually come to mind as an environmentally friendly city but, per capita, New Yorkers are among the most energy effi-

cient people in the U.S. Some 82 percent of Manhattan residents travel to work by public transit, by bike or on foot, and now, as a result of the Clean Air Tax Act, hybrids are being added to the city's fleet.

Boulder has the distinction of being named Colorado's first Green Power Community by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), largely due to its use of wind power. To date, approximately 5,000 households and 300 businesses purchase wind power.

Chattanooga, Tennessee uses parking revenues to fund its fleet of free electric buses in its downtown area. The buses reduce CO₂ emissions by approximately 3.5 million pounds and 600 pounds of particulate matter per year.

One of the first signatories of the Climate Protection Agreement, **Minneapolis'** Mayor R.T. Rybak also accepted the Best Workplaces for Commuters award from the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of the city. With mass transit and carpool subsidies, and approximately 85 miles of bike lanes, 60

percent of people who commute into downtown Minneapolis use alternate transportation.

In 2002, **Salt Lake City, Utah** set a goal to reduce emissions by 21 percent, and is now 76 percent of the way there. As many as 125,000 area commuters now use the bus and TRAX, the new light rail, each day, and Mayor Rocky Anderson is encouraging the building of high-density housing, methane cogeneration and capture from the city's wastewater treatment plant and landfills, and the purchase of wind power. —*Brianne Goodspeed* **E**



ly conscious city, and it's very concerned about global warming. So if we can't do it here, it's hard to imagine doing it elsewhere." CONTACT: U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, (206)684-4000, www.ci.seattle.wa.us/mayor/climate. —*J.M.*

Chicago: Following the Green Plan

Last June, when 45 American mayors heeded actor Robert Redford's invitation and showed up in Utah to describe steps they were taking to respond to global warming, the unquestioned star of the conference was Chicago's Democratic Mayor Richard M. Daley.

Since taking office in 1989, Daley has steadfastly pursued an increasingly sophisticated economic development strategy based on making America's third-largest city greener, more energy-efficient, more environmentally sensitive and more prosperous. At the Sundance Summit, Daley framed his environmental agenda around the steps he's taken to reduce emissions of global warming gases. But in other venues, he's marketed Chicago's green initiative around improvements to pub-

lic transit, water and wetland conservation, energy efficiency, park restoration, open space protection, green building design and construction, and encouraging workers and residents to walk instead of drive.

Chicago, in the mayor's parlance, is not only determined to be the "greenest city in America," it probably already is. Though Daley's environmental program started as a vigorous effort to replace the urban forest of his youth that was lost to various blights—his administration has planted more than 500,000 trees—it has blossomed into something much bigger.

One way to combat global warming, says Daley, is to erect the most energy-efficient and environmentally sensitive buildings in the country. Buildings use a third of the country's energy, after all. Daley ordered all of Chicago's new police and fire stations, schools and libraries to be certified by the U.S. Green Building Council, an initiative that spurred duplicate programs in New York, Salt Lake City and elsewhere. Since 2001, when the mayor installed an energy-conserving, heat-reducing green roof on City Hall, some 200 other green roofs covering 2.5