

Over the past 16 years the City of Hutchinson's residents, businesses, elected officials and staff have supported innovation and sustainability. The City's achievements have always been grounded in good policy, sound fiscal governance, and a can-do attitude. Recognition of these accomplishments is appreciated and it takes a village, so credit is due to everyone who had a hand in this important work. The City efforts that continue to resonate the loudest for John include the following:



1. **Energy benchmarking** all city operations beginning in 2006 was an effort that has opened both doors and eyes in our community! Benchmarking has impacted many different facets of city operations. High level functions such as operational budgets and facility capital planning paired with everyday actions such as employee efficiency awareness is due in large part to simply understanding how much energy is used throughout city operations. The sustainability journey we are on would not be as effective if the data used to support decisions and to help tell the story was not readily available. From diagnosing the cause of a high electrical bill one month to understanding the change in energy use after a facility upgrade, benchmarking continues to be a critical tool for our city. Tracking this data helps to paint a picture over time that **the city has reduced electricity consumption by 25 percent and natural gas usage by 18 percent since 2006**. Energy benchmarking is one of the simplest and effective tools that has been put to use in my time at the city!

2. The City of Hutchinson's **Brownfield to Brightfield Solar PV project in 2015** was the result of years of planning and feasibility work that resulted in Minnesota's first fully ballasted solar project built on top of a landfill. The 400 KW system incorporated zero waste concepts during construction, was a direct connection to the City Wastewater Treatment Plant behind the meter, was a Made in Minnesota system, and avoided penetrations into the ground to avoid contact with waste materials and preserve the existing landfill cap. The project also received funding from an Xcel Energy Renewable Development Fund grant.



400 kW solar array (City of Hutchinson)



Hutchinson Water Treatment Plant (City of Hutchinson)

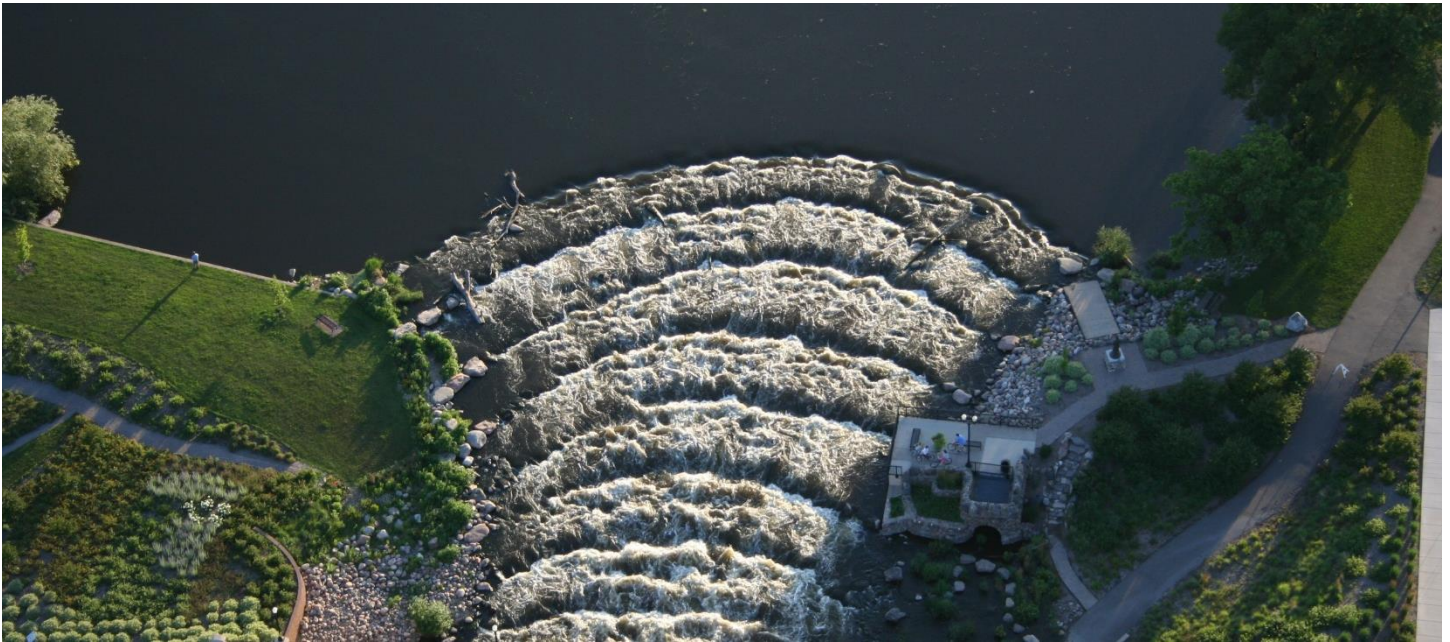
3. Like most cities, the City of Hutchinson operates **water, wastewater, transportation and storm water infrastructure** that serves the day to day needs of the community. That infrastructure needs ongoing maintenance and periodic system reviews to continue to operate properly for both existing and future conditions. It is truly incredible the amount of effort that goes into financing, operating and maintaining these systems. Keeping them running takes all hands-on deck. There have been many capital projects related to infrastructure that provide people in the community a better quality of life and is one of the most common motivators for city staff to continue to do the work. Multiple large regional stormwater ponds and stormwater system

improvements have reduced localized flooding so fewer people have to worry about water in their basement or having their vehicle stranded in a flooded street. A new water treatment plant constructed provides higher quality drinking water as well as eliminated the need to use corrosion prohibitors (corrosive ground water) that are phosphorus based, thus reducing the amount of phosphorus discharged to surface water. Wastewater plant upgrades and expansion that have greatly improved treatment effectiveness and reliability so industries can continue to grow while improving the quality of treated wastewater entering the river. Reuse of recycled asphalt is now a routine practice that greatly reduces the need to transport aggregate over longer distances, thus reducing transportation emissions, while also stretching dollars farther so that more pedestrian facilities can be built. These types of projects are just a few examples of the seemingly endless list of infrastructure projects that make our community a better place to live.



Hutchinson Wastewater Treatment Plant Membrane Bio-Reactor (City of Hutchinson)

4. In 2007 the City of Hutchinson, in partnership with the MnDNR, **removed an old spillway dam and tainter gates with a new rock riffle dam** that during normal and high flows would restore fish passage to up stream reaches of the South Fork Crow River. Not only was the old dam a danger but it was also not very nice to look at. The project addressed multiple environmental, aesthetic, floodplain and wildlife habitat concerns. Seeing how effective partnerships can lead to transforming what was once a liability into a true community asset is a thing of beauty!



Rock Riffle Dam (City of Hutchinson)