

Agenda

Day's Host: Markus Lewe, First Mayor, City of Münster

“GHG Neutrality: Minnesota goals and pathways”

MN Commissioner Grace Arnold

“GHG Neutrality: NRW goals and pathways”

Tina Völker, head of unit for climate policy and climate protection in municipalities, NRW Ministry of Economic Affairs, Innovation, Digitalization and Energy

“GHG Neutrality: Münster goals and pathways”

First Mayor Markus Lewe, City of Münster

“Climate adaptation for municipalities”

Isabel Scherer, Coordination Office for Climate and Energy, City of Münster

Mindy Granley, sustainability officer, City of Duluth

“Green Heat”

Dr. Christof Wetter, professor of environmental technology, FH Münster University of Applied Sciences

Lise Trudeau, director of emerging technology planning, Minnesota Department of Commerce

“E-mobility”

Eckhard Schläfke, head of public transit, City of Münster utilities Stadtwerke Münster

Marcus Grubbs, planner, Office of Enterprise Sustainability, MN Department of Administration

Münster City Bus Barn



Left to right: Mayor Markus Lewe, Commissioner Grace Arnold, and Sabine Engel facilitating the discussion and sharing of climate action strategies in Münster's Historisches Rathaus (Historic City Hall).



The quiet electric bus we rode in Münster in front of the Rathaus.

Go, Go, Go, Green

Münster's impressive actions towards decarbonizing transportation

Electric busses are amazing. When ours pulled up to the curb under the red, yellow, and white flags in front of the Rathaus it made NO sound. As someone who doesn't like busses because of their nauseating smell, I was pleased to realize that electric busses do not have that smell because there is no diesel. I can well imagine that a city that composed its entire bus fleet of busses with electric ones would be much quieter and have cleaner air.

According to our guide, Eckhard Schläfke, the bus drivers enjoy driving the electric busses for two reasons: one, they are proud to be contributing to the energy revolution and doing something good for the climate, and two, the electric busses vibrate less than their diesel counter-parts. This means that driving the electric busses for a whole shift is more comfortable for them than driving the diesel busses was. This also translates to a smoother ride for the passengers, which the motion sickness prone of the delegation appreciated.

Herr Schläfke told us that right now the electric busses have a diesel backup for heat, which is used on the coldest of winter days. However, new electric busses which will have enough battery capacity to run the heat electrically are coming to the streets of Münster soon. Perhaps we will also see them in the metro areas of Minnesota soon.

Münster is also developing a program where city owned ride-share cars can be ordered to shuttle people to locations. An interesting idea for applying this concept for transporting more rural Minnesotans in bedroom communities to a bussing hub where they could then take a bus into the bigger city where they are employed. It is seeing creative innovations like this that help our leaders develop ideas for transforming public transportation, and transportation in general, in Minnesota to help us meet our climate goals and improve people's lives.



Right, Commissioner Grace Arnold (L) and Mindy Granley, Sustainability Officer for the City of Duluth (R) enjoy a ride on one of Münster's electric busses.

Left, one of Münster's city owned ride share cars for faster transport, the elderly, and parents with strollers.



Beating the Cold

Here is something we care about in Minnesota...reliable heat in the winter

The weather in Münster has been lovely: lows in the 50s, highs in the upper 60s to lower 70s. This is similar to the beautiful September weather we often experience in Minnesota, and I doubt anyone here or at home is thinking about turning on the heat. But we all know what is coming: Minnesota winters and likely a polar vortex or two. In a place where winter can be dangerously cold having reliable heat is essential.

Münster is taking an impressive multi-pronged approach to this issue.

The government decided to help the people of Münster identify where they were losing heat in their homes by doing an aerial survey and providing them with information and resources for making their homes more efficient. Münster is also exploring how multiple alternative heat sources could be combined for the

best and most reliable results, including PV, biomass, and geothermal.

Lise Trudeau, Emerging Technology Planning Director at the Minnesota Department of Commerce, shared her excitement for Minnesota to be able to pursue a similar approach because of recent legislation.

One idea for heating more efficiently that I think is fascinating is the concept of centralized heat, meaning that instead of each home or building having its own heating system, a group of homes would share a system, which would bring down the cost and improve the effectiveness of keeping our homes comfortable even in the situations where we have historically lost heat. And with things like heating pumps, according to Dr. Cristof Wetter, the same system can be used for cooling

with comparatively little energy to the demand of AC units, especially for large buildings. Hearing the experts talk about the possibilities for changing the way we regulate the temperature of our homes and buildings is exciting, and I can imagine a day -- not too far in the future -- when my home is heated without contributing to climate change.



Lise Trudeau (right) and Dr. Cristof Wetter (left) leading the discussion on efficient and green heating options.



Picture Caption: To make your document look professionally produced, Word provides header, footer, cover page, and text box designs that complement each other.

Pay Now or Pay More Later

German mentality on the financial costs of climate change

Something that has made an impression on me, and many other delegation members, is the overall attitude our German friends and partners have about the financial costs of climate change. First, it must be understood the various German political parties - whether they are liberal, conservative, or moderate - all discuss climate change in their platforms and what they are going to do to address it. Climate change itself is not a political polarizer in Germany. This means that German political will is put into productive dialog and implementing

climate solutions.

The Germans we met with today shared a mentality that resonated with me. They know the climate strategies they want to do are expensive, but they know that if they do nothing, they are putting a greater financial burden on future generations who will have to pay for damage caused. This struck me as similar to many of our Indigenous tribes in Minnesota, who believe we must consider the next seven generations when making decisions, particularly about climate change and the environment.

Cultural Fun Fact

Did you know...

Münster is the Bicycle Capitol of Germany! Pedestrians and bicycles share the sidewalk, instead of bicycles and cars sharing the road. Most of the sidewalks are consequently very wide by American standards. It is easy to tell where you should walk or ride: the red bricks are for bikes and the grey cobble stones are for pedestrians. Electric scooters are also popular, and travel in the bike lanes.

Senator Senjem took full advantage of the bike-ability of Münster and rode a bicycle to the Rathaus (City Hall) for our day of climate action and idea exchange talks.



Bikes residents of Münster rode to a restaurant for dinner.