



Working towards a sustainable environment and economy since 1995



2016 ANNUAL REPORT



main STREET green



GREEN BUILT HOME



wisconsin green GROWTH



DOING WELL @ DOING GOOD

What happens in Wisconsin if we get this right?

With the lead up to the 2016 election, it's time to move beyond the partisan rhetoric and carry out a visionary, yet realistic plan that yields results:

- More job creation and economic development
- Energy security through clean, renewable sources
- Smarter, more affordable housing
- Food security and entrepreneurship
- Reduced social/economic disparities
- Universities as sustainability hubs



clean clear waters





What is WEI?

In January 1996, a diverse group of leaders came together to formally launch a new organization. Bringing together business, government, and citizen groups to improve Wisconsin’s environment, economy and quality of life — Wisconsin Environmental Initiative was born.

The founders recognized that state and local governments, businesses, and environmental advocates often have more in common than in conflict. By bringing these groups together in programs, policy forums, and learning events, WEI focused on common values and ways to improve Wisconsin’s environment and economy.

Led by an energetic board and dedicated staff, the organization has held many policy forums over the years, covering diverse topics such as Doing Well by Doing Good, Green & Growing Strategies, Green Tier Advantage, WI Bioindustry, Quality Urban Development, Animal Agriculture, Energy and Environmental Policy, Shoreland Development, Green Building and Profit-Driven Environmental Management. World class speakers including, renowned architect Bill McDonough, Ray Anderson, CEO of Interface and green business guru Joel Makower have keynoted WEI’s events and brought national and global perspectives to state concerns.

WEI’s nationally recognized Green Built Home program, Main Street Green, and our work to develop sustainable tourism initiatives demonstrate that market based, affordable programs can help stakeholders evaluate their operations, set goals, and take specific actions towards environmental, social and economic sustainability.

WEI Board of Directors

- Richard A. Heinemann, Chair Boardman + Clark
- Jeff Simon, Vice Chair J. Simon Design Build
- Gregory Armstrong, Treasurer . . Director Emeritus, UW-Madison Arboretum
- Joann Kelly, Secretary Madison Gas & Electric
- Tom Boldt. The Boldt Company
- Tom Larson Wisconsin Realtors Association
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
- John Imes, Executive Director WEI

WEI’s 20th Anniversary event, Doing Well by Doing Good, brought together business and nonprofit leaders, elected officials, state and local government staff, UW representatives, students and faculty, and concerned citizens focused on a New Grand Strategy for Wisconsin — one led by Main Street businesses, local communities and regions — not by a broken Washington or state Capitol. The result is a progressive economic agenda, but with a conservative approach that leads to:

- More job creation and responsible economic development
- Energy security through clean, renewable sources
- Smarter, more affordable housing
- Food security and entrepreneurship
- Reduced social/economic disparities
- Universities as sustainability hubs

In the keynote address, Joel Makower and retired Marine Col. Mark “Puck” Mykleby, co-authors of a newly published book “The New Grand Strategy” shared a blueprint for innovation that offers an impressive collection of initiatives that can restore our prosperity, security and sustainability.

The free public forum included a reaction panel of Wisconsin leaders, and audience members engaged interactively on ways we can achieve a more sustainable and thriving Wisconsin. Among the many strategies highlighted, include:

- Focusing local planning, construction, and market development on making communities more walkable and livable by revitalizing our Main Streets and using green infrastructure, green power and microgrids to make our communities more resilient.
- Rebalancing our food production and distribution using more regenerative sources, including the use of urban agriculture, vertical farming and hydroponics applications.
- New business models and smart investments in clean, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing and regional clusters around issues like water sustainability and stewardship.
- Colleges and universities using integrated approaches and systems thinking to model sustainability at various scales to help transform our buildings, neighborhoods, cities and regions.
- Shifting retail from big box stores to more “place-based” and walkable Main Street areas and offer a bigger online presence.

The Doing Well by Doing Good event was presented by Wisconsin Environmental Initiative (WEI) with generous support from The Morgridge Center for Public Service and other host sponsors including: Boldt, MG&E, Boardman & Clark law firm, Veridian Homes, Sustain Dane and WisPolitics.com. Other sponsors and supporters include: American Transmission Company, DeWitt Ross & Stevens, Godfrey & Kahn, Home Savings Bank, The Madison Institute, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, WI Sustainable Business Council and WI Academy for Sciences, Arts and Letters.

Main Street Green



In 2016, as a member of the Engagement Resource Team (ERT), WEI worked with stakeholders to engage business focus groups, and identify pedestrian, bike, transit and green infrastructure opportunities for the proposed reconstruction of Monroe Street. The Greening of the Monroe Street effort is a way to showcase the potential of "green urbanism" and "green infrastructure" approaches while supporting local shops, boutiques and restaurants and preserving, highlighting, and enhancing the area's exceptional natural and historic resources.

Green Built Home



Green Built Home (GBH) is a national award-winning building initiative that reviews and certifies new homes and remodeling projects that meet sustainable building and energy standards. Since 1999, WEI has worked with stakeholders to Green Built Home certify more than 10,000 homes and multi-family units throughout the state. In 2016, WHEDA awarded Low Income Housing Tax Credits to 25 multi-family projects with 1,307 units statewide that will be built or remodeled to WEI's Green Built Home standards.

Clean Clear Waters



Each of us can play an important role improving our lakes by implementing best practices in our landscaping, lawn care and related efforts to reduce run-off and become better environmental stewards. In 2016 WEI Executive Director John Imes published "Legislative meddling leads to irresponsible development that degrades our waters and economy" to raise concerns about efforts in the Legislature to roll back and limit local control and responsible management of our lakes and shorelands. While the Wisconsin State Senate revised and removed many (but not all) of the most controversial provisions, we encourage policymakers to take a step back, and embrace a more collaborative, practical and effective way forward.

Wisconsin Green Growth



In 2016, Executive Director John Imes continued to serve as an advisor to the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters initiative that examines Wisconsin's dependence on fossil fuels and offers "pathways to progress" that support sustainable energy sources. John also attended several policy events, including the Future of Wisconsin's Economy, and gave a talk focused on ways we can restore Wisconsin's tradition of environmental stewardship — some highlights:

- Rely on good science and local control
- Promote Green Urbanism, Green Building and Green Infrastructure
- Expand sustainable business practices as a powerful force for good
- Reward good actors through economic incentives and expedited review
- Require more rigorous standards including less flexible, more effective DNR oversight combined with local enforcement for bad actors.
- Apply new stewardship tools and innovative strategies
- Make smart investments in clean, renewable energy, the emerging "bio-economy" and clean energy manufacturing.
- Develop a green benchmark and brand for Wisconsin.

We can have a green and growing economy in Wisconsin that respects our heritage and tradition of environmental stewardship if we embrace a more collaborative, practical and effective way forward.

Past Program Successes

Over the years, WEI has developed programs and forums that give stakeholders the opportunity to learn about sustainable strategies that can help Wisconsin gain a competitive advantage while protecting the state's resources and environment. Some examples of WEI's past programs and events include:

- Germany-Wisconsin Green Jobs in the New Europe
- Green Tier Advantage
- Travel Green Wisconsin
- Green & Growing Bioindustry Tour
- Wisconsin Green & Growing Bus Tour
- New Directions in Environmental Governance - Wisconsin Green Tier Bavaria
- Environmental Policy Forum
- Energy Fact-Finding Trip to Germany
- Energy Policy Forum
- Environmental Policy Forum
- Profit-Driven Environmental Management
- Agriculture and Land Use
- Shoreland Development
- Quality Urban Development



Dear Friends,

Since 1995, WEI has developed programs and events that promote a more sustainable environment and economy.

With the help of generous donations, sponsorships and partnerships, WEI has become a driving force behind Wisconsin’s sustainability movement. *With our past and current programs, we have made substantial progress in a variety of sectors throughout the state.

As our organization evolves, we look forward to developing new initiatives and programs. However, we cannot do this without your help. As a non-profit, non-partisan organization, we rely on membership donations to drive our mission.

Today I ask you to become a member and make a fully tax-deductible contribution to WEI as an individual donor. With your donation, WEI can continue Wisconsin’s tradition of environmental stewardship and move towards a more sustainable future.

Thank you very much for your consideration and support for WEI.

Sincerely,

John Imes, Executive Director

**WEI’s Annual Report is available to the public on our website at www.weigogreener.org*

Source of Funds

Memberships & Grants	\$15,817
Program/Other	\$139,918
Total Income	\$155,735

Uses of Funds

Programs	\$107,161
Fundraising	\$4,000
Administration	\$19,569
Total Expenses	\$130,730

2016 Corporate and Foundation Contributors

Madison Gas & Electric, Boldt, WisPolitics.com, Tim O’Brien Homes, Veridian Homes, Commonwealth Development, Cardinal Capital Management, Boardman & Clark, Bielinski Homes, General Capital.



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