

### Duluth and Tecklenburg

Duluth's participation in CSM has led to significant climate progress, including: the creation of a citizen-based Energy Plan Commission to advise the City on energy and climate action, the hiring of Duluth's first ever Sustainability Officer to expand community engagement, development and implementation of an intern program between the City of Duluth, University of Siegen, and University of Minnesota Duluth.

Since the Energy Fund was created, Duluth has invested in renewable energy, including a 420-kilowatt Community Solar Garden subscription and over 50 kilowatts of City-owned solar and adopted policies to save energy within the city, including an Owner's Performance Requirements for city projects and a robust Building Control Systems policy. Through CSM, Duluth has a strong start to rethinking and implementing changes in other city practices and operations. These well-established relationships and practices are important to continuing the City of Duluth's progress towards becoming a Climate Smart Municipality.

Tecklenburg is not Duluth's partner city, but it is looking to join the CSM family, and they are searching for a city in Minnesota to connect with. Tecklenburg is a small, charming Medieval town that has a rich theater, music, and festival culture. Tecklenburg also has ambitious climate and modernization goals. The town is making progress on decarbonizing their electricity sources and brought broadband to all its residents this year. Simultaneously, they are preserving their history and culture because this is as important to them as being part of the green revolution.



Stefen Streit, First Mayor of Tecklenburg telling the delegation about his successful initiative to bring broadband to all the houses of this charming Medieval town.



The charming center of the Medieval town of Tecklenburg.

## Deutsche Perspektive

Stefan Streit, First Mayor of the Festival Town of Tecklenburg

**Q:** Today we are seeing historic Tecklenburg and hearing about the history and the climate programs that are being implemented here. Why is this exciting?

**A:** The international exchange with guests is very exciting for me myself because I get input for our own development. We are a historic town and we also rely on renewable energy, but nevertheless we must take into account the rural areas around us and we have to do this while protecting this monument and the buildings. For instance, on the roofs of the buildings we are not allowed to install solar power systems, so we must find other solutions to climate, to energy related self-sufficiency. We have a climate management protection officer who supports all this, which ranges from the e-bikes to charging stations.

**Q:** You are the Mayor of Tecklenburg. The IPCC report indicates that we all need to be more ambitious and faster in achieving climate goals. Clearly, Tecklenburg is doing a lot. But what is the next project that will help achieve your climate goals that you're most excited about?

**A:** The next run trick, which is, for instance, enhancing the front-end service for our open-air stage, in order to reduce individual traffic and ICEs (internal combustion engines) here, because we also live off our clean air because we are a certified air therapy city. So that's very important for tourism reasons.

Then we have many old houses dating back to the 1960s and buildings that are centuries old, but the buildings from the 60s are very inefficient. And we are also providing advice and consultants to help people install better windows and insulation or heating systems. There are many state grants but, nobody has a general idea, an overview of this. Of course, this is very expensive for normal people, and it would be a lot of work or too difficult to depend only on a single company who just want to make a quick buck.

**Q:** What do you like about working with the Minnesotans?

**A:** Well, I am very impressed by this cooperation with the climate municipality of Saerbeck, which you have had for many years. I have to tell you that only because of your visit I could see for myself how intensive this is, also with the cooperation with universities. Actually, I as the mayor of Tecklenburg could also well imagine a close cooperation with you. I am very eager to learn more about your ideas which you contribute, and which would also help us in our efforts. Because of this visit we can have closer links. We have the close cooperation with Saerbeck, but up to now, only Saerbeck has had this international cooperation.



Left to right: Joe Miller, Elke Wirtz (International Officer for the City of Münster), and Lauren Jensen (Sustainability Coordinator for the City of Rochester) at the tour of the Stadtwerk power plant.

## City council member excited by possibilities

Joe Miller, Facility Operations and Maintenance Supervisor with the City of Duluth



Joe Miller

**Q:** Today we visited the York Barracks and learned about Münster’s plans for sustainable construction, renewable heat, and efficient buildings. What is something that captures your attention?

**A:** I think what sticks out to me the most is the fact that when we look at this, a lot of what we compared to the Germans is similar. I came

over here thinking that oh there's going to be these huge differences, it's going to be completely different than what we do. And it's really not as different as I thought. But what I did notice though is that there's a lot of little things that are different that make a big difference. So, like that gentleman was showing us where there was the concrete wall, and then the insulation, and then the brick façade, it's similar to what we do in a lot of ways, although they use eight inches of insulation, and we'll use like two. So, we're that close to getting it right, but we still miss the mark by that little bit.

**Q:** How do you think looking for opportunities to do these small differences that add up to larger payoffs would help the people of Duluth?

**A:** I think it comes to the everyday stuff. It is the little things. We talk a lot about changing direction as a whole, or making this big change on how we see the world or how we create these huge projects, but I think a lot of things start with little pieces and making these little changes first that I see over here. Making these little changes, shifts our mindset and gets us thinking in the right direction, which lays the foundation for bigger projects and making major changes. And over time, we start moving in that direction, then then we look back in 20 years like, 'wow we

came a long way', instead of everybody sitting there doing nothing and then all of a sudden saying 'we need to do something very grandiose,' that doesn't work that way.

**Q:** What is valuable about seeing these techniques and projects and being able to talk with your German counterparts? What would be lost if you could not be here in person?

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“There’s a lot of little things that are different that make a big difference.”

- Joe Miller

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**A:** I think it brings it all home. In some ways I feel a little bit like we do a lot of talking about stuff, and we don't act. By coming here and talking with these guys, seeing how they are doing it, and getting that aha moment, it solidifies it - it brings it home. You feel like 'oh I got something I can make action with'.