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Lafayette named one of Top 25 Greenest Cities by The Newsweek Daily Beast Company

Lafayette, Ind. – April 26, 2011 – Lafayette earned the 16th spot in The Newsweek Daily Beast Company's Top 25 Greenest Cities in the United States, named April 24, 2011, in the online publication, The Daily Beast. It was the only Indiana city listed.

Rankings were determined by five equally rated criteria: percentage of eco-conscious residents; percentage of residents who say they are not eco-conscious; percentage who recycle; average weekday trips on public transportation; and homes with solar heat.

Of Lafayette's residents, 25 percent say they think and act eco-consciously; 18 percent say they do not. Sixty percent of residents recycle, and .03 percent of homes are solar heated. Use of public transportation averaged 21,511 riders on CityBus each weekday for the 4th quarter of 2010.

“Our city's long-standing commitment to green practices is paying off with this national recognition,” said Lafayette Mayor Tony Roswarski. “Besides the criteria measured for this Top 25, Lafayette has taken a lead in protecting our environment through numerous projects. These include rain gardens, LED streetlights, our underground tunnel project that is reducing combined sewer overflows and bicycle racks we've installed downtown, to name just a few.”

The city also renovated the historic building at 515 Columbia St. following Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. The building houses the city's economic and community development departments.

CityBus is a major player, too, with its campaigns to increase ridership, its fleet that is now 25-percent hybrid buses, and installation of wind turbines now under way on its campus to generate electricity for its facilities.

(more)

Lafayette/Greater Lafayette Commerce/City Bus
Lafayette: Top 25 Green Cities
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“Using public transportation is one of the greenest steps a resident can take,” said CityBus General Manager Martin Sennett. “Our agreements with Ivy Tech Community College and Purdue University allow students and staff to ride fare-free. That’s one factor in our high ridership. So is the growing awareness among residents that public transportation is a wise environmental choice.”

“There’s widespread support locally for green initiatives in our business and industry community,” said Joseph Seaman, president and chief executive of Greater Lafayette Commerce. “Recently, Caterpillar announced its local plant had converted to LED lighting with the help of Kirby Risk Electrical Supply, making a significantly positive environmental impact. We also have a growing number of businesses who have become Clear Blue Green Certified, indicating their commitment to the environment.”

Tree Lafayette is also pitching in, Seaman noted. “That all-volunteer group is about to top 1,500 in its tree plantings since it was formed in 1993.”

West Lafayette, too, has earned a reputation for its environmental commitment, said Mayor John Dennis, who cited a recycling program that continually sets new records, the city’s Go Greener Commission and its \$8.4 million wastewater utility upgrade that won an Environmental Protection Agency award. The utility accepts greases and food waste, in turn producing electricity.

“Our residents eagerly embrace green initiatives and have taken a leadership role in reducing waste,” Dennis said. “One example is our community’s Global Fest, which last fall had a zero-landfill goal.”

A year ago, West Lafayette took on Indiana’s voluntary Comprehensive Local Environmental Action Network (CLEAN) Community Challenge. “That includes goals of increasing recycling, purchasing an electric vehicle, using biodiesel and implementing other environmental steps,” Dennis said.

In the Daily Beast Top 25 Green Cities list, New York City took first, followed by Las Vegas, Nev., San Francisco, Washington D.C. and Albuquerque, N.M. Completing the Top 10 were Boston, Gainesville, Fla., Chicago, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, M.D.

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