



Sustainability Commission Agenda

Sept. 14, 2021 – 6:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting Via WebEx

Members of the public who desire to monitor the meeting remotely or to give input or testimony during the meeting can find instructions at <https://www.minnetonkamn.gov/government/virtual-meeting-information>.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Approval of Agenda**
- 4. Approval of Minutes:** July 13, 2021
- 5. Report from Staff:** The next sustainability commission meeting will be on Nov. 9, 2021.
- 6. Report from Sustainability Commission Members**
- 7. Agenda Items**
 - A. Bee Lab Presentation
 - Recommendation: Listen to the presentation and discuss city opportunities.
 - Staff Member: Drew Ingvalson
 - Bee Lab Presenter: Jennifer Warner
 - B. Sustainability Recognition/Award
 - Recommendation: Approve sustainability recognition/award parameters for 2022.
 - Staff Members: Drew Ingvalson
 - C. Partners in Energy Extension
 - Recommendation: Approve moving the initiative “assist energy action team with creating long-term goals for city’s energy action plan” to the sustainability commission’s 2022 work plan.
 - Staff Member: Drew Ingvalson

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D. 2022 Everything Electric Event

- Recommendation: Approve adding an “Everything Electric Event” to the sustainability commission’s 2022 work plan.
- Staff Member: Drew Ingvalson

8. Other Business

9. Adjournment

If you have questions about any of the agenda items, please contact:

Drew Ingvalson, Planner (952) 939-8293, dingvalson@minnetonkamn.gov

Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner, (952) 939-8296, lgordon@minnetonkamn.gov

Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director, (952) 939-8282, jwischnack@minnetonkamn.gov

**Unapproved
Minnetonka Sustainability Commission
Virtual Meeting
Minutes**

July 13, 2021

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Sustainability Commissioners Justin Anderson, Edwin Avalos, Brian Golob, Matt Henry, David Ingraham, Harapanahalli Muralidhara, Megan Park, and Ashley Pattain were present. Greta Beck was absent.

Staff present: Community Development Director Julie Wischnack, City Planner Loren Gordon, Staff Liaison Drew Ingvalson, Assistant City Planner Susan Thomas, Natural Resources Manager Leslie Yetka, and IT Assistant Joonas Sundstrom.

3. Approval of the Agenda

Henry moved, second by Avalos, to approve the agenda as submitted.

Anderson, Avalos, Golob, Henry, Ingraham, Muralidhara, Park, and Pattain voted yes. Beck was absent. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Golob moved, second by Park, to approve the May 11, 2021 sustainability commission minutes as submitted.

Anderson, Avalos, Golob, Henry, Ingraham, Muralidhara, Park, and Pattain voted yes. Beck was absent. Motion carried.

5. Report from Staff

Ingvalson reported that Summerfest was canceled due to rain, so an ambassador from the sustainability commission was unable to attend that event. Park and Pattain attended the Farmer's Market on June 29, 2021. The next ambassador event will be the Farmer's Market on July 27, 2021.

Ingvalson reported that the UMN Bee Lab was voted the top learning opportunity by commissioners with stormwater/wetlands and the special waste facility coming in second and third. He is working on scheduling a presentation by the UMN Bee Lab representatives.

Ingvalson presented the commission's work plan for the second and third quarters of 2021. The commission has already completed many tasks. He reviewed the commission's remaining goals for 2021, including creating an energy action plan; implementing a process to recognize residents and businesses for utilizing sustainable practices; recommending programs and events that could enhance the city's energy action plan; exploring the opportunity for the city to host or attend an electric-vehicle-ride-and-drive event; and exploring the opportunity for the city to host a solar-energy event.

Commissioners are invited to a joint city council and boards and commissions dinner on July 21, 2021, at 6 p.m.

The next sustainability commission meeting is scheduled to be held on Sept. 14, 2021.

6. Report from Sustainability Commission Members

Henry reported that the Bird Wing house was relocated to Polymeth Park.

Golob announced that there would be an electric vehicle event called Plugged In on Sept. 9, 2021, at 5:30 p.m. at Wayzata City Hall.

Park reported that there was a good crowd at the Farmer's Market on June 29, 2021. The free LED lightbulbs were a huge hit. Pattain, Ingvalson, and Park handed out information on home energy squad visits, adopting a storm drain program, and emerald ash borer eradication efforts. She enjoyed meeting and talking with visitors.

Anderson reported that LEGO announced that it is working on being able to make bricks and elements out of plastic soda and water bottles.

7. Agenda Items

A. Sustainability Commission Ambassador Handouts

Ingvalson reported. He recommended commissioners discuss the handouts: Home Energy Squad, Support Renewable Energy, Adopt-A-Drain, Slowing the Spread of Emerald Ash Borer, and Organics Recycling Guide.

In response to Anderson's question, Wischnack answered that Randy's Sanitation collects organic recycling items.

Avalos asked what is included with the Home Energy Squad visit. Wischnack had one done at her house and said that she had weather stripping added around a door, diffusers added to her faucets, an energy-saving blanket wrapped around her water heater, and was provided LED light bulbs. She thought it was a good deal at \$100. It is now being offered for \$50.

Avalos asked if residents are advised not to plant ash trees. Yetka answered in the affirmative. There are no known ash species resistant to emerald ash borers.

Golob said that his home visit by the Home Energy Squad was great. The people who did his visit were very thorough, and it was well worth it.

Pattain stated that she has Randy's Sanitation and utilizes organic recycling. She said that it is very easy and encouraged others to try it.

Golob thought the Hennepin County handout could use more information on appropriate compost containers and the best use of compost as a good soil conditioner. Wischnack said that the Hennepin County website provides a great deal more information on composting and organics recycling. Drew noted that the link to the website is included in the handout.

B. Tree Protection Ordinance Review

Ingvalson, Wischnack, Yetka and Gordon reported. They recommended commissioners provide comments on the city's proposed tree ordinance.

When commissioners were asked to rate from one to ten, with one being least and ten being most, how impactful he or she believes the city tree policies and regulations are in preserving trees in the community, the answers ranged from seven to nine, and the average was eight.

When commissioners were asked what his or her takeaway was when reviewing the community-wide survey results, commissioners were surprised that 79 percent of respondents were "not too concerned" or "not at all concerned" with the city's natural amenities of wetlands, parks, and forested areas.

When commissioners were asked if he or she is familiar with the city's Plant Pest Program and efforts in managing tree diseases, four out of five commissioners knew of the annual tree sale. Two out of five commissioners were aware of the Plant Pest Program. Staff will follow up with a commissioner's idea to partner with local businesses to advertise the events.

Ingvalson asked commissioners to comment on what he or she considers to be most important when it comes to tree protection, between the choices of limiting tree removal, maintaining the existing tree canopy, and expanding the tree canopy.

Henry stated that they are all related. Limiting tree removal maintains the existing tree canopy, which is an important piece. It is hard to replace a 100-year-old tree, so limiting tree removal is probably the most important.

Golob agreed with Henry.

When commissioners were asked what he or she believes are the greatest concerns relating to trees and tree canopies in the community, Anderson stated that he is concerned with urbanization, an increase in building footprint size and a decrease in green space.

Muralidhara encouraged the planting of more trees. The temperature is gradually increasing, which increases the photosynthesis rate. The water level will drop. He was concerned with how increasing density would impact that.

Ingraham felt that development and climate change are primary concerns. Staff's proposals in the June 2020 study session had good ideas, including creating removal maximums on high-priority trees and an idea to extend tree removal guidelines into residential properties that are not undergoing major development. He felt some oversight of a 100-year old, significant tree located on a developed property might be beneficial.

When asked if commissioners felt tree replacement of smaller trees would be an appropriate strategy or if the ordinance should limit the removal of smaller trees, Ingraham felt that it would be reasonable for small trees to be removed and replaced somewhere else.

Pattain agreed with Ingraham. As long as the small tree would be replaced, it would be appropriate for it to be removed.

When commissioners were asked if he or she believes redevelopment projects should have tree removal limits:

- Pattain felt that there should be removal limits for redevelopment. It would be appropriate for the city to have some consideration regarding whether a tree should be removed.
- Avalos agreed that there should be tree-removal limits for redevelopment projects but was interested in hearing the reasoning behind opposing views.
- Anderson answered affirmatively. There may be large parcels with very old trees being redeveloped. There should be limits if there is a chance that a large number of significant, old trees would be removed.
- Park was unsure removal limits would be needed. She felt that there could be a balance struck with tree removal limits, or the city could provide guidance when it comes to redevelopment. Redevelopment is a healthy part of building a community in a city. Keeping the current tree canopy intact is important but could be done while creating a better community.

- Henry was impressed with developers who proposed redevelopments that positioned buildings to preserve high-priority trees. He felt that there could be a little more protection for trees for redevelopments than what exists now, but he did not want to go to the extreme. Property owners already typically work to preserve trees which increase a property's value.

Ingvalson asked commissioners if the city should provide incentives to encourage single-family residential property owners to plant more trees; use restrictions to limit tree removal, or take a neutral stance on tree removal for a single-family residential property.

Anderson thought putting restrictions on homeowners may seem too restrictive. He supports providing incentives to homeowners to increase the tree canopy. He could see that being very effective.

Park agreed with Anderson. Some people automatically fight when given a restriction. Positive reinforcement with an incentive would be the way to go.

Ingvalson asked if commissioners could think of any other information which may help the city council's discussion on the tree protection ordinance.

Henry suggested trying to track the impact of programs such as the tree sale on the increase it had on the tree canopy if possible.

Park thought an additional handout with a list of the dates of community events like the plant sale and the number of plants that were sold to show the potential positive impact each event had would be helpful.

Avalos would appreciate details on the circumstances that required some properties being developed to remove a large percentage of the trees and what was done to mitigate tree removal.

Anderson has seen beautiful results when an evasive species, such as buckthorn, was removed. The city can definitely keep working on the buckthorn information program and introduce incentives for homeowners to remove buckthorn from their yards, especially if the property borders a forested area.

Ingvalson said that staff will submit commissioners' comments to the planning commission, who will make a recommendation to the city council regarding the tree protection ordinance. Ingvalson will report back to sustainability commissioners with the results.

C. Chair and Vice-Chair Election

Ingvalson reported. He recommended that the sustainability commission elect a commissioner to serve as chair and one to serve as vice-chair of the sustainability commission for the remainder of 2021.

Golob introduced himself and stated that he would be honored to serve as chair of the sustainability commission.

In a unanimous decision of those present, Golob was elected to serve as chair of the sustainability commission for the remainder of 2021.

Anderson, Avalos, Golob, Henry, Ingraham, Muralidhara, Park, and Pattain voted yes. Beck was absent. Motion carried.

Pattain introduced herself and stated that she would appreciate the opportunity to serve as vice-chair of the sustainability commission.

In a unanimous decision of those present, Pattain was elected to serve as vice-chair of the sustainability commission for the remainder of 2021.

Anderson, Avalos, Golob, Henry, Ingraham, Muralidhara, Park, and Pattain voted yes. Beck was absent. Motion carried.

8. Other Business

Ingvalson reported that:

- The next sustainability commission meeting is scheduled for Sept. 14, 2021.
- The next ambassador event will be the Farmer's Market on July 27, 2021.
- Staff will be looking into the possibility of the city hosting a solar event and scheduling a learning opportunity for commissioners presented by representatives of the UMN Bee Lab.
- The topic of the August Sustainable Minnetonka Webinar will focus on electric vehicles, and the webinar in September will provide information on electric vehicle chargers.

9. Adjournment

Henry moved, second by Ingraham, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried unanimously by those present.

By: _____
Lois T. Mason
Planning Secretary



**Sustainability Commission Agenda Item 7A
Meeting of September 14, 2021**

Title: Bee Lab Presentation

Report From: Drew Ingvalson, Planner

Submitted through: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner

Action Requested: Motion Informational Public Hearing Vote
Form of Action: Resolution Ordinance Other N/A
Votes needed 5 votes N/A Other

Summary Statement

Jennifer Warner from the Bee Lab at the University of Minnesota will be presenting information on pollinators to the sustainability commission.

Recommended Action

Listen to the Bee Lab presenter, ask questions regarding pollinators and pollinator plants. Consider information that should be shared with the public and opportunities for the city to become more pollinator-friendly.

Strategic Profile Relatability

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Strength & Operational Excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe & Healthy Community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability & Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Livable & Well-Planned Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure & Asset Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Inclusiveness |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | |

Statement: N/A

Background

At the May 11, 2021 sustainability commission meeting, city staff polled the commission's interest in various sustainability learning opportunities. The Bee Lab presentation received the most votes out of all of the opportunities. Staff then reached out to the Bee Lab organization to set up a presentation for the Sept. 14, 2021 sustainability commission meeting.

Bee Lab

The Bee Lab is a program within the University of Minnesota, College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences. The program has specialists that work on research, education, and community assistance. More information can be found on the Bee Lab webpage at <https://beelab.umn.edu/>.

About the Bee Lab Presenter

Jennifer Warner from the Bee Lab will be presenting at this meeting. For over ten years, she has worked as a beekeeper, beekeeping mentor, and pollinator advocate at the University of Minnesota Bee Lab/Bee Squad. She graduated with a B.S. in Horticultural Food Production and a minor in Soil Science from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

Existing City of Minnetonka Pollinator Efforts

Over the years, the City of Minnetonka has established multiple initiatives to help the city be more pollinator-friendly. These initiatives include:

- **Education-** The city provides information for residents at various events, such as [Pollinator Field Day](#), and shares them on our city webpages (see [What You Can Do](#)).
- **City Code-** The city permits lawn alternatives to a traditional turf lawn, such as pollinator lawns or meadows, per [city code section 845.030](#).

The city also amended its landscaping plan requirements for developments ([city code section 300.27 Sub. 15](#)) to require that "at least 25 percent of proposed new plantings must be species beneficial to pollinators derived from the city's native or native cultivar plant list, unless approved by the city. The city may allow credit for existing, native, and/or significant plant materials beneficial to pollinators that are preserved as part of the landscape plan."

- **Pledge- Minnetonka** is recognized as a "Monarch Champion" by the [National Wildlife Federation's Mayor's Monarch Pledge Program](#), which helps protect the monarch butterfly and other important pollinators. There are less than ten cities in the United States that have achieved "champion" status.



**Sustainability Commission Agenda Item 7B
Meeting of September 14, 2021**

Title: Sustainability Recognition/Awards
Report From: Drew Ingvalson, Planner
Submitted through: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner

Action Requested: Motion Informational Public Hearing Vote
Form of Action: Resolution Ordinance Other N/A
Votes needed 5 votes N/A Other

Summary Statement

Tactic 7 of the city’s Energy Action Plan outlines that the city should “recognize participants performing upgrades to their homes.” As such, the city needs to consider the type and parameter for sustainability recognition/awards.

Recommended Action

Staff recommends the sustainability commission approve the plan below to create sustainability awards to recognize residents and businesses in the community annually.

Strategic Profile Relatability

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Strength & Operational Excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe & Healthy Community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability & Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Livable & Well-Planned Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure & Asset Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Inclusiveness |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | |

Statement: N/A

Background

In 2020, the City of Minnetonka approved the [Energy Action Plan](#) created through Xcel Energy’s Partners in Energy program. The plan establishes three strategies (multi-family building, residential energy efficiency, and renewable energy) and multiple tactics for each strategy to reduce the city’s energy consumption. Strategy 7 states that the city should “recognize participants performing upgrades to their homes.” More specifically, the two tactics of this strategy are:

Tactic 7A: In addition to regular publicity about the number of people starting energy efficiency projects, celebrate newsworthy projects.

Tactic 7B: Conduct an annual event or coordinate with an existing event that celebrates all of the improvements Minnetonka residents have made – and the greenhouse gasses they’ve saved.

Comparable Cities' Sustainability Recognition/Awards

To better understand other communities' sustainability recognition/awards, staff researched the community awards of Minnetonka's 12 comparable cities. After reviewing each city's website and contacting each city's appropriate staff members, Minnetonka city staff found that only three of the 12 comparable cities in the Twin Cities metro area have this type of program (see table below). One of these communities (Eden Prairie) includes recognition for both residents and businesses. The other two programs (Edina and St. Louis Park) only provide recognition for businesses.

Comparable City	Residential	Business	Rolling or Annual Given Award	Program
Apple Valley	No	No	-	-
Bloomington	No	No	-	-
Brooklyn Park	No	No	-	-
Burnsville	No	No	-	-
Eagan	No	No	-	-
Eden Prairie	Yes	Yes	Annual	Sustainable Eden Prairie Award
Edina	No	Yes	Rolling	Green Business Recognition (Gold, Silver Bronze)
Lakeville	No	No	No	-
Maple Grove	No	No	No	-
Plymouth	No	No	No	-
St. Louis Park	No	Yes	Rolling	Climate Champions
Woodbury	No	No	No	-
Total	1 out of 12	2 out of 12	1 Rolling/ 2 Annual	3 out of 12

Below is a brief description of each of these three city's programs.

Eden Prairie: Sustainable Eden Prairie Award

- The applicant must submit a photo with the nomination form
- Nomination can be made by the property owner or others
- Winners are selected annually by the sustainability commission
- The award winner is given a certificate and plaque or landscaping stone (no monetary award)
- Eligibility
 - o Must be an Eden Prairie property or organization that serves Eden Prairie (but the owner does not need to be Eden Prairie resident)
 - o Sustainability commission members are not eligible
- Award categories include: Energy, Landscape, Waste, and Water

Edina: Green Business Recognition

- The recognition is for Edina businesses only.
- Three recognition levels (Gold, Silver, Bronze) are based on a point system.

- The point system based on eight categories (Solid Waste Prevention, Recycling, Purchasing, Energy, Landscaping & Water Conservation, Involving Others, Transportation, Miscellaneous)

St. Louis Park: Climate Champions

- The city of St. Louis Park has partnered with the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce's Energy Smart program to provide free energy assessments
- The program helps connect building owners with no/low-interest loans, grants, and rebate opportunities
- Businesses are recognized if they complete an assessment and one or more of the recommended energy-saving projects. Recognition includes:
 - o Receiving a Climate Champions window cling;
 - o Business is listed on the city's website as a Climate Champion; and
 - o Listed in the quarterly "Park Perspective" newsletter.

Staff Recommended Award Program

Staff recommends that the sustainability commission approve a sustainability award program with the following guidelines.

Eligibility: Must be a Minnetonka property owner.

- The property owner does not need to be a Minnetonka resident.
- The project must have been completed in the past two years.
- The nomination may be made by persons on behalf of the property owner or others; however, the property owner must sign off on the use of photos for the property to be eligible.
- City staff and board/commission/council members are not eligible.

Promotion: The city will promote the award program throughout the year through the Minnetonka Memo, Sustainable Minnetonka webpage, city social media, email subscriber groups, etc.

Submittal: Applicants would complete a form and submit a photo (including signing off on city of Minnetonka sharing names, photos, and project information; addresses would not be shared without consent).

- Staff will create an application form that requests:
 - o Applicant information.
 - o Project category (multiple category submittals allowed).
 - o Explanation of the project.

Review: Conducted by city staff and Minnetonka Sustainability Commission.

- City staff will collect applications and provide relevant information to the commission for voting.
- The commission will rank their 1st and 2nd choice for each category.
- Staff will tabulate points for each category.
- The top point-getter will receive the award.

Awards

- Submittals must be for projects that go above and beyond city code requirements.
- Categories and Examples (included, but are not limited to):
 - o **Energy:** solar panels or solar-powered electricity, wind power, smart grid systems, energy efficiency projects, electric vehicles, electric equipment, charging stations, geothermal HVAC.
 - o **Landscape:** native plantings, pollinator-friendly gardens, low/no-mow grass.
 - o **Waste:** organics recycling, composting, food waste reduction, clothes recycling/repurposing, reused/recycled construction materials.
 - o **Water:** rain gardens, water retention ponds/systems, greywater reuse systems, shoreline preservation/restoration, green roofs.
- The winner will be:
 - o Announced annually at a sustainability commission meeting.
 - o Provided a plaque, landscaping stone, or other awards (no monetary award).
 - o Recognized in Minnetonka Memo and at other city-sponsored events.



**Sustainability Commission Agenda Item 7C
Meeting of September 14, 2021**

Title: Xcel Energy Partners in Energy Program (PiE) Extension
Report From: Drew Ingvalson, Planner
Submitted through: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner

Action Requested: Motion Informational Public Hearing Vote
Form of Action: Resolution Ordinance Other N/A
Votes needed 5 votes N/A Other

Summary Statement

The sustainability commission's 2021 work plan includes an initiative to "assist Energy Action team with creating long-term goals for the city's Energy Action Plan" in the 4th quarter of 2021. However, a longer timeframe is required to ensure the plan remains well planned and thought out.

Recommended Action

The sustainability commission approves moving the Energy Action Plan medium and long-term goal creation to the 2022 work plan.

Strategic Profile Relatability

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|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Strength & Operational Excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe & Healthy Community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability & Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Livable & Well-Planned Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure & Asset Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Inclusiveness |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | |

Statement: N/A

Background

In August 2019, the City of Minnetonka was selected to be part of [Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy](#) program. This program helps local communities create energy action plans to meet their community goals. To help create this plan, the city created an Energy Action Team that was comprised of residents, business owners/managers, school district members, board/commission members, and city staff. From November 2019 to May 2020, the team participated in five workshops to create consensus on community goals and initiatives that would become part of Minnetonka's Energy Action Plan.

In 2020, the Minnetonka City Council approved the [Energy Action Plan](#) created through Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy program. The plan establishes three strategies (multi-family building, residential energy efficiency, and renewable energy) and multiple tactics for each strategy to reduce the city's energy consumption. By design, the plan was made to only have

short-term energy reduction goals and initiatives, starting in spring 2020 and continuing through 2021, when the city's involvement in the PiE program is scheduled to end. In addition, the Energy Action Team put the short-term focus areas of the plan mostly on residential properties.

Moving forward, the team identified business outreach and facilitating electric vehicle adoption as potential medium and long-term focus areas. When the plan was approved, the city acknowledged the short-term design of the plan and aimed to revisit medium and long-term focus areas near the end of 2021.

Existing Energy Action Plan Work

The city has been completing strategies outlined within the Energy Action Plan over the past year. Some items that have been completed include:

- Promoting no-cost energy audits for multi-family buildings by communicating with building managers;
- Providing a one-stop location for sustainability information ([Sustainable Minnetonka webpage](#));
- Conducting monthly webinars on various sustainability topics (see topics and videos within "monthly webinar series" on [Sustainable Minnetonka webpage](#));
- Educating homeowners about Home Energy Squad Visits (via ambassador events, webinars, mailings, Minnetonka Memo, etc.); and
- Educating the public about electric vehicles (via Sustainable Minnetonka webinar series).

Proposed Partners in Energy Program Extension

City staff has been meeting regularly with Xcel Energy and Center for Energy the Environment staff for the past two years to create and implement the city's new Energy Action Plan. In recent conversations, the city has discussed extending its partnership with the Partners in Energy program, and Xcel staff has indicated that they would be open to a 6-12 month extension. If the program were extended, the city would add the medium and long-term goal creation for the Energy Action Plan to the 2022 sustainability commission work plan. The work plan would direct the sustainability commission to revise the Energy Action Plan by the end of 2022.

Extending the PiE program would be at no cost to the city (the initial phase of the program was also at no cost). Additionally, extending the city's involvement with the program would allow the city more time to be strategic with the expansion of the plan. It would provide additional time with the energy experts from the Partners in Energy program (Xcel Energy and Center for Energy and the Environment staff).



**Sustainability Commission Agenda Item 7D
Meeting of September 14, 2021**

Title: 2022 Everything Electric Event
Report From: Drew Ingvalson, Planner
Submitted through: Julie Wischnack, AICP, Community Development Director
Loren Gordon, AICP, City Planner

Action Requested: Motion Informational Public Hearing Vote
Form of Action: Resolution Ordinance Other N/A
Votes needed 5 votes N/A Other

Summary Statement

The sustainability commission's 2021 work plan includes an initiative to "explore the opportunity to host/attend an electric vehicle 'Ride and Drive' event" in the 3rd quarter of 2021.

Recommended Action

The sustainability commission approves adding an "Everything Electric Event" to the 2022 sustainability commission work plan.

Strategic Profile Relatability

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Strength & Operational Excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> Safe & Healthy Community |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainability & Natural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Livable & Well-Planned Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure & Asset Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Inclusiveness |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A | |

Statement: N/A

Background

The 2021 sustainability commission work plan states that the commission shall "explore the opportunity to host/attend an electric vehicle 'Ride and Drive' event." This event was added to the work plan to provide a hands-on opportunity for the public to learn more about electric vehicles (EVs).

Name Change to "Everything Electric Event"

To increase educational opportunities of the potential event, staff finds it appropriate to change the event name from "ride and drive" to "everything electric." Other equipment that could be available for education, beyond electric vehicles, include outdoor equipment (lawnmowers, leaf blowers, hedge trimmers, chainsaws, etc.) and indoor equipment (furnace, oven, stovetop, water heater, clothes dryer, etc.).

Potential Event Partner: Drive Electric Minnesota

[Drive Electric Minnesota](#) is an organization facilitated by the [Great Plains Institute](#), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Drive Electric Minnesota has an existing program to help communities host "[Ride and Drive](#)" events. These events allow community members to speak to experts about electric vehicles (EVs), EV chargers, and even test drive electric vehicles. The assistance from this organization is at no cost to the host communities they assist. The community would only be responsible for providing event promotion and space for the event.

Drive Electric Minnesota has hosted or will be hosting "Ride and Drive" events in the following communities:

- Robbinsdale: Robbinsdale Main Street Meet and Greet
- Northfield: Defeat of Jesse James Days
- Duluth: Duluth Harvest Festival and North Country Electric Vehicle Show and Tell
- Ramsey: Ramsey Happy Day's Car Show
- Wayzata: Plug It In! Wayzata
- La Crescent: La Crescent Electric Vehicle Ride and Drive
- Wadena: Wadena Electric Vehicle Ride and Drive
- Roseau: Northern Exposure: Driving Electric in Minnesota
- Bloomington: Electric Vehicle Expo 2021

Here are links to find more "ride and drive" information on [previous events](#) and [upcoming events](#).

Next Steps

If the sustainability commission approves to add an "Everything Electric Event" to the 2022 work plan, city staff will reach out to Drive Electric Minnesota and the communities they have worked in to learn more about the assistance they provide for events. Staff will also review existing city events to add the "Everything Electric Event" and search for other partners to share information about electric equipment. At this time, staff proposes hosting this proposed event in the 3rd or 4th quarter of 2022.