



ENVIRONMENTAL STATE OF THE CITY

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The City of Golden Valley has demonstrated a strong commitment to the environment and has been involved in a number of environmental programs, projects and initiatives since the formation of the Environmental Commission on June 26, 2000. From natural resources to recycling to solar energy, the City continues to take steps to improve the environment. Following is a brief summary of the Environmental Commission's past projects and the City's current environmental programs, projects, and initiatives.

Environmental Commission Past Projects

- Natural Resources Management Plan
- Drafted guidelines for managing Open Space parcels
- Studying and making recommendation on the keeping of chickens
- Curbside recycling program – new and expanded service
- Residential solid waste study – new hauler regulations
- Informing the 2008 Comprehensive planning process
- U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement
- Sanitary Sewer Inflow and Infiltration ordinance, communications and education plan
- Lighting ordinance
- Property Maintenance code
- No smoking ordinance
- Trash and recycling in parks and along trails
- Involved in deer management task force
- Buckthorn control initiative
- Provide guidance and feedback on surface water management issues
- Envision Golden Valley – reviewed and provided action items on environmental themes
- Receive regular updates on City programs, policies, and initiatives - review and provide information to staff

City's Current Environmental Programs, Projects, and Initiatives

Energy

- U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement
- B3 Benchmarking (Buildings, Benchmarks, and Beyond) – Like your energy bills at home, local governments can track usage and progress on their own buildings and also compare with neighbors
- Building renovation and remodeling
- LED Traffic Signal retrofit
- Campus LED Outdoor Lighting retrofit
- Solar Arrays - Made in MN Solar Incentive Program
- Instrumentation for sweepers, plow trucks and sidewalk machines to improve operations, reduce fuel, and better target the application of chemicals used in snow and ice control

Water Resources

- NPDES Stormwater Management Program
 - Comprehensive program with over 50 best management practices in place to protect and improve water quality
 - Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Studies and Implementation plans
 - New development/redevelopment must consider including green stormwater practices like filtration/infiltration/reuse in order to reduce runoff rates, volume, and phosphorus and sediment loads, where feasible
- Floodplain Management
 - City participates in FEMA NFIP – anyone in community can get flood insurance
 - 2014 – applied and accepted into FEMA Community Rating System (CRS) Program – 1 of over 1,200 cities in country. Eligible participants may receive discounts on flood insurance.
- Wetland Conservation Act
 - Golden Valley is the local governmental unit responsible for administration
 - 24 wetland delineations or decisions produced in past 5 years
- Sanitary Sewer Inflow and Infiltration Program
 - Citywide about 50% inspected and 40% compliant in about 9 years
- City and BCWMC water resource projects – wetland and floodplain creation, construction of ponds and rain gardens, streambank stabilization projects

Recycling

- Recycling Program
 - Parks with heavy use added to program – Brookview Shelters, Brookview Tennis program, Isaacson Little League
- Spring Brush pick-up program
 - Collected 2,800 cubic yards of brush during 3 week period
- Fall Leaf Drop Off
- Midy Tidy Program
- Recycling of wood, brush, yard waste materials and soil to Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux community

Natural Resources

- Natural Resources Inventory and Natural Resources Management Plan
- City Nature Areas – 11 (includes General Mills JFB), 155 acres (excludes General Mills JFB)
- City Open Space parcels – 130 properties, 67 acres
- Hennepin County Sentencing to Service (STS) program
 - Litter and debris removal
 - Stormwater pond maintenance
 - Landscape maintenance, buckthorn removal

Vegetation Management

- Native Vegetation Buffers
 - 25 buffers managed under annual contract
 - 57 maintenance agreements for stormwater ponds/basins with buffers
 - Estimate additional 20 native or natural buffers managed by others
 - New development subject to City and BCWMC buffer requirements

- Shoreline restoration/enhancement
 - Public projects: Over 2 miles of stream banks stabilized
 - Private projects: Over 30 properties have stabilized their own shoreline
- Conservation easements
 - 20 properties have restrictions regarding vegetation & shorelines
- Sustainable vegetation management in Parks
 - Phased mowing reductions - minimize and naturalize certain areas of parks that are not programed: Schied Park hill, Glenview Terrace Park hill, Brookview Tennis hill.
 - Native grasses added to lawn bowling hill
 - Golf Course pond buffers 2015-2017

Forestry

- Tree City USA
- Inventory of Public Trees
- Emerald Ash Borer Management Plan
 - Hundreds of trees removed and planted as part of the EAB plan
 - 2014 – 30 ash trees removed from city parks and boulevards, 67 shade trees planted in city parks and right-of-way
 - EAB quarantine – Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Houston, Olmstead, Winona counties
- Diseased tree notices, removals
 - In 2014 - Over 158 diseased elms identified and removed on private and public property. Oak wilt disease and Bur Oak Blight were found in the city.
- Buckthorn Management
 - 8 weed wrenches available to residents
 - Volunteer buckthorn busting efforts in Brookview Golf Course, Hampshire (6th year), Wesley (3rd year)
 - City staff buckthorn removals in rights-of-way
- Tree Trust partnership

Administrative

- Ordinances
 - Stormwater Management
 - Shoreland Management
 - Floodplain Management
 - Tree Preservation – in process of updating and merging with landscape requirements
 - Planned Unit Development
 - Animal Waste
 - Feeding of Deer
 - Shade Tree Diseases
 - Lawn Maintenance (allowing for native vegetation upon permit)
 - Application of fertilizers and pesticides
 - Regulating coal-tar based sealer products
- Permits/Licenses
 - Stormwater Management permits – approximately 90 permits/year since 2000
 - Tree Preservation permits – 11 issued in 2014
 - Native Vegetation permit – 1 issued since inception
 - Chicken keeping – 2 current licenses, 5 licenses granted since inception