

Environmental Commission

February 24, 2020 – 6:30 pm
Council Conference Room
Golden Valley City Hall
7800 Golden Valley Road

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of January 27, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes (5 min)
5. Old Business
 - A. Partners in Energy update (5 min)
 - B. Metro Blooms Workshop (5 min)
 - C. 2020 Work Plan (20 min)
 - D. Curbside Organics Collection Options - Pros-Cons (20 min)
6. New Business
 - A. Organics Recycling – Summary of Hauler Engagement (15 min)
 - B. Program/Project Updates (10 min)
 - C. Council Updates (5 min)
 - D. Other Business
7. Adjournment



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Environmental Commission

January 27, 2020 – 6:30 pm

Council Conference Room
Golden Valley City Hall
7800 Golden Valley Road

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:28 pm by Chair Seys.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners present: Tracy Anderson, Tonia Galonska, Dawn Hill, Susan Phelps, Joseph Ramlet, Scott Seys, Jim Stremel and Debra Yahle

Commissioners absent: None

Staff present: Eric Eckman, Environmental Resources Supervisor;
Drew Chirpich, Environmental Specialist;
Emma Pierson, MN GreenCorps Member;
Carrie Nelson, Administrative Assistant

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Yahle to approve the agenda of January 27, 2020 with the following change: Switch items 5A and 5B under Old Business, and the motion carried.

4. Approval of November 25, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes

MOTION by Commissioner Stremel, seconded by Commissioner Anderson to approve the minutes of November 25, 2019 as submitted and the motion carried.

5A. Partners in Energy update

Eric Eckman gave an update on the Partners in Energy program.

- Commission approved the City's participation in the Partner's in Energy Program with Xcel Energy in October.
- City Council approved applying for the Partners in Energy Program in December.
- An energy action plan will be developed over the next two years for residents and businesses.
- Application was completed and sent in in mid-January. We haven't heard back from Xcel yet but should by next meeting.
- If accepted in the program:
 - 6 months of plan development and understanding the goals of the community.
 - Moving forward with implementation with energy actions from residents and businesses.
 - This will include other programs such as Home Energy Squad and others that benefit residents and businesses, provide efficiencies, save money, and reduce electricity use.
 - Exploring how to incorporate energy reductions and electrification in the transportation sector.



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- Eric asked the Commission if one or two members would be interested in joining a community group that will be created for the planning phase of the Energy Action Plan to determine the goals and priorities of the community and refine what is in the Resilience and Sustainability Plan. The community group will also include staff members, business owners, multi-family apartment interests, school interests, and 1-2 planning commission members. The group would meet 3-5 times in the next year.
 - Commissioners Hill and Golanska expressed interest in serving on the community group.

5B. Organics Recycling Considerations

Emma Pierson gave an update on the organics matrix presented to the Commission at the November 2019 meeting to address comments and questions at the last meeting.

- SCORE funds are affected by participation. The higher the participation, the more the SCORE funding will be from the County. The funds can be used toward residential recycling related items.
- There are no grants for education however, the County does have the ability to provide speakers/education for recycling and organics and will work with the City to customize this. We will reach out to the County about having a staff person at a booth at the Farmer's Market to plan dates and what information will be at the table.
- Education Requirements
 - If opting for a licensing requirement:
 - Haulers will need to follow the Hennepin County Ordinance 13 Education Requirements Section 2: Subsection 2B
 - Regardless of which route we go:
 - Cities will follow Hennepin County Ordinance 13 Education Requirements Section 2: Subsection 3
- City Code Sec. 22-23 States: "Containers shall be stored no more than three feet from the primary or accessory structure and shall at all times be located behind the front of the primary structure."
- Participating in organics can help you reduce the size of your garbage container by diverting waste to an organics bin.
- Saint Louis Park: Curbside Organized 1.76% Contamination Minneapolis: Curbside Organized 0.47%-1.45% Contamination. Contamination rates change when outreach is done.
- Trash containers are taxed by sales price, which is determined by Haulers based on the volume of containers. County taxes 15.5% on trash and the State taxes 9.75% on trash. There are no taxes on recycling or organics recycling. If adding a separate organics bin to your property, there will be no additional tax to your hauling, and you may be able to reduce the size of your trash bin, in turn reducing taxes. If you are co-collecting in a durable bag system, there is no tax on the price to participate in the organics program, however, the volume of your trash bin will likely stay the same, causing no reduction in taxes, depending on the program.

- Timing depends upon what decision City Council makes and when. Must have curbside opportunity available by January 1, 2022.
- There is no specific data showing contamination differences between the durable bag vs. separate bin programs. While discussing options with haulers, some have mentioned a durable bag program is a risk; others like the program.
- In general, an organized system requires more staff time than an open system since issues will need to be addressed by a staff person.
- There are no known methods to provide more compost to those participating more in the organics program. There isn't a way to determine who participates more.
- Republic Services currently does a curbside pick-up in Fridley and will soon be in Richfield.
- Cities and haulers have been moving away from yard waste co-collection bin to separate bin collection because of certain challenges with the recipes at compost facilities.
- The only known co-collection system currently available is the blue bag program and they do have one consistent bag that is heavier duty than a standard, green, compostable bag.
- Minneapolis does their own compost pick-up. They have a separate cart so they can use a paper grocery bag or certified compostable bag. There is no limit to the amount of bags that go in the cart.

6A. Curbside Organics Program Draft Pros-Cons

The commission reviewed the draft pros-cons of different options included in the packet and recommended the following edits.

Organized 'All-In, Everyone Pays' Program (Cart):

'Pros' Changes:

- Change to 'Increases participation' i.e. SLP
- Change to *Resident* can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags

'Cons' Changes:

- Add – City manages so there will be additional staff time required
- Add – Resident must provide bags

Can either give a cart to every resident or only give a cart to residents who choose to participate. Maybe more people would participate if they get the cart.

Organized 'Opt-In' Program (cart)

'Pros' Changes:

- Change to *Resident* can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags

'Cons' Changes:

- Change to Lower participation is likely to avoid the cost, i.e. SLP
- Delete last three items.
- Add – City manages so there will be additional staff time required

License Requirements Organics Recycling Collection (Cart)

'Pros' Changes:

- Add from Cons column – Hauler is responsible for education
- Add - Less city staff time required
- Change to *Resident* can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags

'Cons' Changes:

- Delete second item
- Move Hauler is responsible for education to 'Pros'
- Add – City has less input on education
- Delete 6th item since it's a duplicate

License Requirements Organics Recycling Collection (Durable Bag Program)

- Add /Co-Collect to Durable Bag Program
- Can this work in the parks?
- Only Randy's offers this option at this time

'Pros' Changes:

- Add from Cons column – Hauler is responsible for education

'Cons' Changes:

- Add – City has less input on education

Staff will update the pros-cons list and present it for review and approval at the next meeting.

6B. SCORE Funding

Emma Pierson reviewed SCORE Funding. The money helps cities with any operational expenses of a recycling program. 50% of SCORE funding in 2020 will go toward recycling and 50% will go to organics. The amount of SCORE funding the city receives fluctuates based on the number of active participants in the City. An active participant is one who puts their bin out for collection at least once per month. The participation number is determined in September. An increase in SCORE funds could offset having to raise recycling rates. Golden Valley has about 7,000 household accounts.

6C. GreenStep Cities - City Hall Organics

Proposed Update #1:

MOTION by Commissioner Hill, seconded by Commissioner Galonska to approve Proposed Update of the Existing Entry of Best Practice 22, Action 1 with the following amendments:

- Include how education of the employees made a difference in participation.
- Include that Plastic Film Recycling was also added to the break room.

Proposed Update #2:

MOTION by Commissioner Stremel, seconded by Commissioner Yahle to approve Proposed Update of the Existing Entry of Best Practice 22, Action 2 with the following amendment:

- Add 'to every household' when talking about the bi-monthly newsletters being sent out.

Proposed Update #3:

MOTION by Commissioner Phelps, seconded by Commissioner Ramlet to approve Proposed Update of the Existing Entry of Best Practice 22, Action 5 with the following amendments:

- Change ‘there are currently 114 participating households’ to ‘In 2019 there were 114 participating households’.
- Change the last sentence to: In 2019, (2 out of 8) haulers reported 267.7 tons of yard waste was collected.

6D. 2020 Work Plan Ideas

Eckman reviewed the 2019 work plan (items complete and not yet complete) and engaged the Commission to offer ideas for the 2020 work plan. The 2020 draft work plan must be approved by the Commission by April to be considered by Council in May.

The Commission kept most unfinished items on the list and added new topics to consider:

- If accepted – Partners in Energy Program (Energy Action Plan)
 - Add private buildings energy benchmarking
- Reducing chemicals - look into salt use on roads; products used on weeds
- Look into options for maintaining the sidewalks in the winter – residents help clear them?
- Reducing single use plastics and styrofoam
- Update on Emerald Ash Borer – Possibly have Tim Teynor come talk – part of Natural Resources Management
- Downtown Redevelopment Study - Take opportunity to be a part of this planning process
- Climate Action Plan (GreenStep Cities as guide or separate plan?)
- Work with the Human Rights Commission on Climate Justice and Environmental Justice with a speaker on climate change or promoting community gardens and local food production – possible joint project and commission meeting.

6E. Program/Project Updates

- Staff recently met with the Garden Club and People for Pollinators group to share information about the upcoming plans for 2020. Consistent with the MOU executed last fall, the City will be promoting the Garden Club’s events and activities in a variety of ways in 2020. The Garden Club website is <https://gvgardenclub.com> and the Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/Peopleforpollinatorsgoldenvalley/>.
- The Board of Water and Soil Resources has a program called “Lawns to Legumes” that will reimburse people to convert portions of their lawn to pollinator habitat. The link to the program website is: <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/l2l> . The Metro Area is the highest priority for the program, and the application deadline is February 28th, 2020.

6F. Council Updates

None

6G. Other Business

Bike/Ped Task Force has been dissolved. Bike/Ped will now fall under open space. Consider adding bike/ped involvement to the work plan.

7. Adjournment

MOTION by Commissioner Ramlet, seconded by Commissioner Stremel to adjourn the meeting at 8:33pm and the motion carried.

ATTEST:

Carrie Nelson, Administrative Assistant

Scott Seys, Chair

UNAPPROVED



MEMORANDUM
Physical Development Department
763-593-8030 / 763-593-3988 (fax)

Date: February 20, 2020
To: Environmental Commission
From: Eric Eckman, Environmental Resources Supervisor
Subject: Xcel Energy's Partners In Energy community collaboration program

The City was formally accepted into the Partners In Energy program in February. Staff will provide a brief update and schedule for the development of the energy action plan.



MEMORANDUM
Physical Development Department
763-593-8030 / 763-593-3988 (fax)

Date: February 20, 2020
To: Environmental Commission
From: Drew Chirpich, Environmental Specialist
Subject: MetroBlooms Workshop

The City of Golden Valley has been in touch with MetroBlooms about hosting a workshop at Brookview Community Center this spring. The City has worked with MetroBlooms in the past, hosting a Turf Alternatives Workshop in October 2018, and a Healthy Soils Workshop in Spring of 2019.

Last Winter the Commission agreed it was interested in continuing the arrangement with Metro Blooms if the opportunity presented itself. The next workshop in the series is Creating Your Resilient Yard (base cost \$1,500) which includes a Q&A/group discussion after the presentation. There is also a charge of \$15 per person.

The description for the workshop is "A framework to understand the importance of resilience and how it can be fostered in your yard through a variety of practices, including planting native plants and how to install your own raingarden."

The Commission is requested to discuss this opportunity and approve the scheduling of this workshop, if acceptable.



MEMORANDUM
Physical Development Department
763-593-8030 / 763-593-3988 (fax)

Date: February 20, 2020
To: Environmental Commission
From: Eric Eckman, Environmental Resources Supervisor
Subject: 2020 Draft Work Plan

As stated in its bylaws, the Commission is required to develop an annual work plan for review and approval by City Council. The draft work plan for 2020 is based on the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, GreenStep Cities Program, and the City's participation in Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy Community Collaboration Program.

<http://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/planning/comprehensiveplanupdate/>
<https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/best-practices>
https://www.xcelenergy.com/working_with_us/municipalities/partners_in_energy

In January, the Commission reviewed the 2019 work plan and brought forth new ideas for consideration in 2020. Attached is a list of the potential ideas for the 2020 work plan. Below is a schedule for approval of the work plan.

February	Review and prioritize draft work plan
March	Review 2019 accomplishments and 2020 draft work plan document
April	Commission approves work plan for Council review
May	Council review and direction

Please come to the meeting prepared to discuss and prioritize the list of ideas.

Draft 2020 Work Plan

Proposed work plan priorities are based on the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, GreenStep Cities Program, and the City's participation in Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy Community Collaboration Program.

- Continue working on GreenStep Cities Step 5 metrics to address climate-related impacts, improve the environment, and reduce energy consumption and costs.
- Xcel Energy's Partners In Energy Program (help develop and implement the City's Energy Action Plan) including:
 - Advance building performance
 - Private building energy benchmarking
- Continue to explore options and make a recommendation on curbside organics collection; assist in developing and implementing a new program.
- If awarded, work with MN GreenCorps Member in 2020-2021 to complete GreenStep Cities actions related to Climate and Energy Action.
- Utilize the Commission's \$3,500 budget to:
 - Administer a student essay competition
 - Create an annual Environmental Citizen Award
 - Host an educational workshop on sustainable yards and pollinator habitat
- Assist the City in hosting a zero-waste community event in 2020.
- Continue to assist in implementing the Natural Resources Management Plan.
 - Explore the potential to revise City code to allow the temporary use of goats for vegetation management on public and private properties.
 - Provide update on Emerald Ash Borer Management.
 - Support habitat restoration in the Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area in 2020-21 with DNR Grant funds.
- Review City code with respect to wood burning and update as needed to protect and maintain local air quality.
- Work with the Human Rights Commission on Climate Justice and Environmental Justice with a speaker on resilience & climate adaptation, or promoting community gardens and local food production – possible joint project and joint meetings.
- Reducing single use plastics and polystyrene containers
- Explore options for maintaining sidewalks in the winter
 - Residents help clear them?
 - Reducing use of salt/chlorides on pavements
- Downtown Redevelopment Study – engage in the planning process
- Develop a Climate Action Plan (separate from GreenStep Cities and PIE Energy Action Plan)
- Complete action items in the Pollinator Protection resolution
 - Inventory and reduce the use of chemicals used on weeds



MEMORANDUM
Physical Development Department
763-593-8030 / 763-593-3988 (fax)

Date: February 20, 2020
To: Environmental Commission
From: Emma Pierson, MN GreenCorps Member
Subject: Curbside Organics Collection Options - Updated Pros-Cons

Staff will provide an update on the Curbside Organics Options Pro-Con matrix discussed at January's Commission meeting.

Organized 'All-in, Everyone Pays' Program (Cart)

Pro	Commission Priority	Guiding Documents	Con	Commission Priority	Guiding Documents
Increases Participation i.e. SLP	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide contract MSWPP 2016-2036 (pg 32) - Organized collection results in higher participation	Additional bin on property	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 6) - Address barriers to cart storage
Lower cost w/ City wide contract	High		Additional city staff, cost of city staff	Medium	
Option for bin tagging w/education	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Comprehensive outreach plan	Resident must pay regardless of participation		HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide contract
City can manage education w/ help from Hennepin County	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Comprehensive outreach plan	Resident must provide bags		
Can reduce trash bin size and save money as waste is diverted from trash	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg 32) - Cases show households can offset organics collection costs by reducing trash bin sizes			
Higher density collection routes	Low	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg30) - Higher density routes needed for affordable service			
Everyone pays same fee		HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide availability MSWPP 2016-2036 (pg 32) - Organized collection results in higher participation			
Resident can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags					
Consistent color bins throughout city					
No negotiation required for residents					

Cities that do this:

St Louis Park, Minneapolis, Edina (May), Richfield (RFP in 2019)

Cost ranges:

\$2.96- \$5.50/month per household

Organized 'Opt-in' Program (Cart)					
Pro	Commission Priority	Guiding Documents	Con	Commission Priority	Guiding Documents
Optional - no payment if choosing not to participate	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg32) - Communities with subscribe and pay systems have lower participation HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide contract	Less participation possible	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg32) - Communities with subscribe and pay systems have lower participation HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide contract
Option for bin tagging w/education	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Comprehensive outreach plan	Additional bin to property	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 6) - Address barriers to cart storage
Can reduce trash bin size and save money as waste is diverted from trash	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg 32) - Cases show households can offset organics collection costs by reducing trash bin sizes	Higher cost possible w/ lower participation	High	
Resident can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags			Resident must provide bags		
Cities that do this:					
Robbinsdale, Fridley					
Cost ranges:					
\$6-\$11/month per household (In Fridley, the City funds a portion of the cost)					

License Requirement (Cart)					
Pro	Commission Priority	Guiding Documents	Con	Commission Priority	Guiding Documents
Optional - no payment if choosing not to participate	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg32) - Communities with subscribe and pay systems have lower participation HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide contract	Less participation possible	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg32) - Communities with subscribe and pay systems have lower participation HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide contract
Option for bin tagging w/ education	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Comprehensive outreach plan	No regulation or consistency of costs between haulers	High	
Hauler is responsible for education	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Comprehensive outreach plan	Additional bin to property	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 6) - Address barriers to cart storage
Can reduce trash bin size and save money as waste is diverted from trash	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg 32) - Cases show households can offset organics collection costs by reducing trash bin sizes	Unknown amount of added trucks to each street	High	
Less city staff time than organized system	Medium		City has less input on education provided	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Comprehensive outreach plan
Resident can use certified compostable bags or paper grocery bags					
Cities that do this:					
N/A					
Cost ranges:					
Haulers estimated about \$15-20/month per household					

License Requirement (Durable Bag Program, Co-collect)					
Pro	Commission Priority	Guiding Documents	Con	Commission Priority	Guiding Documents
No additional bin on property	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 6)- Address barriers to cart storage	Less participation possible	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg32)- Communities with subscribe and pay systems have lower participation HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide contract
Optional - no payment if choosing not to participate	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg32)- Communities with subscribe and pay systems have lower participation HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15) - Larger participation with citywide contract	Bin is not organics specific, limited/no opportunity for bin tagging/education	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15)- Comprehensive outreach plan
Hauler is responsible for education	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15)- Comprehensive outreach plan	Takes up room in trash bin; would not decrease trash bin size	High	MSWPP 2016-2036 (Pg 32)- Cases show households can offset organics collection costs by reducing trash bin sizes
No additional trucks on streets	High		City has less input on education provided	High	HC SWMMP 2018- 2023 (Pg 15)- Comprehensive outreach plan
Less city staff time than organized system	Medium		Restricted bag size		
Durable bags included in program fee (limited amount)			Mandated unorganized durable bag hauling could provide capacity overload for facilities that accept and sort bags		
Cities that do this:					
N/A					
Cost ranges:					
\$5.83/month (\$69.95/year) per household					



MEMORANDUM
Physical Development Department
763-593-8030 / 763-593-3988 (fax)

Date: February 20, 2020
To: Environmental Commission
From: Emma Pierson, MN GreenCorps Member
Subject: Organics Recycling – Summary of Hauler Engagement

Staff will provide a summary of its meetings with haulers about Curbside Organics Collection.

PROGRAM/PROJECT UPDATES – February 2020

NATURAL RESOURCES

Pennsylvania Woods DNR Habitat Grant – The City recently received confirmation that it was selected to receive a habitat grant for areas of the Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area that are outside of the DeCola Ponds B and C Flood Mitigation project boundaries. The project will involve the removal of buckthorn and other invasive species and the planting and establishment of native vegetation. A request for quotes will be sent out in the coming months to select a contractor to complete the work outlined in the project.

Lawns to Legumes- The Board of Water and Soil Resources has a program called “Lawns to Legumes” that will reimburse people to convert portions of their lawn to pollinator habitat. The link to the program website is: <https://bwsr.state.mn.us/l2l> . The Metro Area is the highest priority for the program, and the application deadline is February 28th, 2020.

WATER RESOURCES

DeCola Ponds Flood Mitigation Projects - The DeCola Ponds B and C project is about 75% complete. The excavation and utility work should finish up in March 2020, with trail construction in June 2020, and the City’s native vegetation contractor seeding and planting trees, shrubs, and grasses starting in spring 2020.

The City and Bassett Creek Watershed are beginning to plan and study the next flood mitigation project areas. The Wildwood Park/SEA School area has been identified as having potential for flood storage to benefit properties around DeCola Ponds D, E, and F. A planning level study to understand opportunities and challenges and develop concepts is programmed for this spring and will include engagement with the community and nearby stakeholders. The Isaacson Park/Industrial Area is also being looked at for potential flood storage. The DNR is supportive of the projects in Golden Valley and has requested flood damage reduction funding in the 2020 state bonding bill this legislative session. Look for more information on this in the coming months.

EDUCATION

Student Essay Competition- Staff has been working on putting together an annual student essay competition. The competition would be sponsored by the Environmental Commission, and prompts for the competition would center around sustainability and the environment. The time for the release of the competition would be around Earth Day (April 22, 2020).

ENERGY

2019

- Staff replaced the co-ray-vac heating systems in 2 of the Public Works Maintenance buildings that will improve efficiency.
- Staff continued to replace Park shelter roofs with significantly more insulation value and insulated skylights that should significantly lower the heating costs of these buildings. Only one shelter remains to be updated. Scheid park shelter.
- Staff continues to replace interior lighting with LED bulbs when opportunities arise.
- A new LED scoreboard replaced the old traditional scoreboard at Isaacson Park.

2020

- Wesley Park is scheduled to retrofit all park exterior lighting (Parking & Trail lights, Hard surface Lights and Skating rinks lights) with LED fixtures. The Tennis Court is scheduled to also get all new LED fixtures and poles.
- The Parks & Recreation Department in a partnership with Three Rivers Park District installed 28 Solar LED lights on the winter recreation trail at Brookview Golf Course.

PLANNING AND ZONING AND DEVELOPMENTS

Jan 24, 2020

800 Boone Ave North—A Conditional Use Permit Amendment to remove a recently approved prohibition on the drop-off and pick-up on Boone Avenue of clients at the adult day care. The applicant is requesting to be allowed to use the east side of Boone Avenue only. The current condition requires all pick-ups and drop-offs to occur on-site. A public hearing was held on December 9 and then the item was tabled to the January 27 meeting.

Tobacco Sales Restrictions—A Zoning Text Amendment to restrict the sale of tobacco products based on nearby uses was discussed at the January 13 meeting. Following recent City Council action to restrict the sale of flavored tobacco, to raise the age of sales to 21, and to cap the number of City tobacco licenses, the Planning Commission began looking at additional locational restrictions to prohibit tobacco sales within 750 feet of schools, parks, and other youth-oriented centers. This will likely be sent to the City Council for a vote in late March.

Sweeney Lake Woods PUD No. 120—A Major PUD Amendment to subdivide properties within the existing PUD and incorporate some portions of adjacent properties. The proposal would create two new single-family residential lots and consolidate two others, resulting in a net increase of one buildable lot. A neighborhood meeting was held on October 16, 2019. A public hearing was postponed to February in order to allow for additional stormwater information to be collected.

Added Feb 12, 2020 - A proposal has been received for an amendment to the Sweeney Lake Woods PUD which would expand residential development on the northwest shore of Sweeney Lake by providing access for two additional lots. Two platted lots would be combined for a net increase in one buildable lot. A wetland near the lake would be preserved and a new basin would be created to treat water from the area before it flows into Sweeney Lake. This will be evaluated by the Planning Commission on February 24.

2040 Comprehensive Plan—The City's Comprehensive Plan was approved by the Metropolitan Council on January 22. It will now be brought back to the City Council for formal adoption on February 4. Implementation of all of the various aspects of the plan will then be able to move forward.

I-394 Mixed Use Property Rezonings—With the 2040 Comprehensive Plan moving towards adoption, the City must bring its zoning into conformance with the approved land use plan. One initial step is rezoning properties designated I-394 Mixed Use to either Mixed Use, Commercial, Office, or High Density Residential. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the rezonings (6-0) at their meeting on December 9. A public hearings for these properties are scheduled for the February 18 meeting.

Narrow Lots—A public forum on narrow lots was held on January 16 at City Hall. Roughly 50 residents attended and took part in small group discussions and a large group conversation. A recording of the event can be viewed on the City's website. Input collected at the forum will be shared with the Planning Commission on January 27. The ongoing online survey will conclude on January 31, at which time staff will compile a community engagement report. Throughout February the Planning Commission will discuss possible revisions to the City's zoning text in hopes of sending recommendations for code amendments to the City Council in March.

Downtown Study—HKGi presented the Phase II Interim Report to the City Council on January 21. The report and a copy of the presentation are posted on the City website. Phase III of the study, which will look at staging and implementation, including financial tools, will commence in the next few months with completion targeted before the end of the year.

Additional information about current development projects may be found on the City website.