



**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
2019 ANNUAL REPORT AND
2020 WORK PLAN**

2019 Environmental Commission

Commissioners

Scott Seys, Chair (2021)

Debra Yahle, Vice-Chair (2022)

Tracy Anderson (2020)

Tonia Galonska (2022)

Dawn Hill (2021)

Susan Phelps (2020)

Jim Stremel (2020)

Joseph Ramlet, Student (2020)

Note: Terms run May 1-April 30

Council Liaison

Larry Fonnest

City Staff

Eric Eckman, Environmental Resources Supervisor

Drew Chirpich, Environmental Specialist

Carrie Nelson, Engineering Assistant

Emma Pierson, MN GreenCorps Member

Purpose and Mission

The Environmental Commission has been established to advise and make recommendations to the City Council in matters relating to and affecting the environment.

Table of Contents

2019 Accomplishments	page 4
2020 Proposed Work Plan	page 6

2019 Accomplishments

GreenStep Cities

- Completed Step 4 of the GreenStep Cities Program, including metrics and measures in the following topic areas:
 - buildings and lighting
 - renewable energy
 - land use
 - transportation and fleet
 - surface water
 - green buildings

A link to the summary of the Golden Valley's GreenStep Cities progress is located at

https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/cityInfo.cfm?ctu_code=2394924



*Council Member Gillian Rosenquist accepted Golden Valley's GreenStep Cities Step 4 designation in June.
(Photo by GreenStep Cities)*

Energy Use

- Researched and recommended participation in Xcel Energy's Partners In Energy community collaboration program.

Pollinators

- Approved and recommended to Council the adoption of a resolution endorsing pollinator protection and promoting pollinator habitat.
- Created a prioritization matrix of potential pollinator plots and habitat sites to develop in the community in the next several years.

Solid Waste And Recycling

- Provided input and feedback on the City's solid waste hauling discussion.
- Worked with MN GreenCorps Member to complete GreenStep Cities actions related to waste reduction, recycling, and composting/organics management.

Natural Resources Management

- Hosted an educational workshop on sustainable yards and soils.
- Supported the Bassett Creek Nature Area Habitat Restoration Project made possible by a grant from the MnDNR.
- Provided guidance and received updates on the City's work to resolve encroachments in the Bassett Creek Nature Area.



DeCola Pond A is a component of the City's Flood Plain Mitigation Plan.

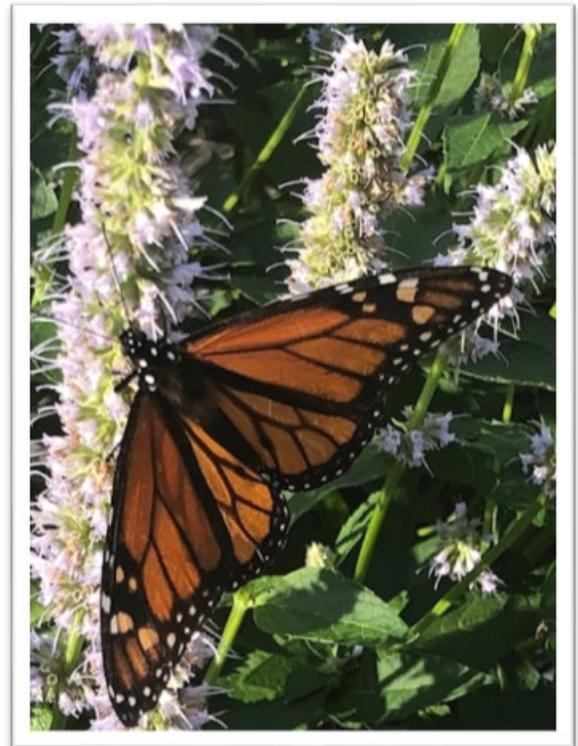
Sustainability And Resilience

- Researched and made recommendations on zoning code revisions to remove barriers to local food production.
- Continued support of the City's flood reduction and mitigation efforts through its projects, programs, and participation in the FEMA Community Rating System, which provides discounts on flood insurance in exchange for the City's high level of floodplain management actions. The City moved up from Class 7 to Class 6 in 2019.

2020 Proposed Work Plan

Proposed work plan priorities for 2020 are based on goals in the Resilience & Sustainability, Water Resources, and Parks & Natural Resources chapters of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the GreenStep Cities Program, and the City's participation in Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy Community Collaboration Program.

- **Curbside Organics Collection** Continue to explore options and provide information/recommendation to the City Council; assist in developing and implementing a new organics program
- **Xcel Energy's Partners In Energy Program** Help guide and participate in the development and implementation of the City's Energy Action Plan including:
 - advance building performance (supporting City's efforts to update building codes or standards that advance energy performance in buildings)
 - energy benchmarking in private buildings
- **GreenStep Cities Step 5:** Continue working on actions and metrics to address climate-related impacts, improve the environment, and reduce energy consumption and costs.
 - If awarded a MN GreenCorps Member in 2020-2021, work to complete GreenStep Cities actions related to Climate and Energy Action.
- **Community Outreach:** Use the Commission's \$3,500 budget to:
 - fund a joint project, speaker, or event with the Human Rights Commission
 - host an educational workshop on sustainable yards and pollinator habitat (approximately \$1,500 for Metro Blooms Workshop #3 in a series of 3)
 - administer a student essay competition
- **Climate Justice and Environmental Justice:** Partner with Human Rights Commission on joint project, event, or speaker. May require joint meeting. Ties in well with City's Resilience and Sustainability Plan. Potential ideas for collaboration include:
 - hosting a speaker on climate justice and environmental justice focusing on climate adaptation and resilience or promoting community gardens and local food production
 - sponsoring a project in an area of the City with inequities of green space and amenities, or pairing a community event with planting trees and vegetation in that area



The City partnered with the Golden Valley Garden Club to plant a pollinator garden in the City Hall parking lot. (photo by Joanie Clausen)

- **Zero-Waste Community:** Assist the City in hosting a community event in 2020.
- **Natural Resources Management Plan:** Continue to assist in implementation of the plan, including:
 - exploring the potential to revise City Code to allow temporary use of goats for vegetation management on public and private properties
 - providing an update on Emerald Ash Borer Management
 - supporting habitat restoration in the Pennsylvania Woods Nature Area in 2020-21 with DNR Grant funds
- **Downtown Redevelopment Study:** Engage in environmental aspects of the study and plan
- **Pollinators:** Complete actions listed in the City's Pollinator Protection resolution, such as:
 - doing an inventory and reducing the use of chemicals on City properties
 - developing more plots and habitat in the community
- **Air Quality:** Review City code with respect to wood burning and update as needed to protect and maintain local air quality.
- **Recycling:** Reduce single use plastics and containers.