



# Inver Grove Heights Environmental Advisory Commission

Thursday, November 20, 2025 at 7:00 PM

8150 Barbara Avenue, Inver Grove Heights, MN 55077

## AGENDA

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS: Individuals may submit written public comments in advance of the meeting by emailing comments to Rebecca Kiernan ([rkiernan@ighmn.gov](mailto:rkiernan@ighmn.gov)). Comments received prior to 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2025, will be provided to the Commissioners at or before the November 20, 2025 meeting.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Consent Agenda**
  - A. Minutes of the October 23, 2025, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting.
5. **Regular Agenda**
  - A. Consider Recommendation of Draft 2026 Environmental Advisory Commission Work Plan
  - B. Consider Recommending a 2026 EAC Work Session
6. **Public Comment**

Public comment provides an opportunity for the public to address the Commission on items that are not on the agenda. Comments will be limited to three (3) minutes per person.
7. **Commission and Staff Comments**
8. **Adjourn**

This document is available upon a three (3) business day request in alternate formats such as braille, large print, audio recording, etc. Please contact Rebecca Kiernan, City Clerk, at 651.450.2513 or [rkiernan@ighmn.gov](mailto:rkiernan@ighmn.gov).

**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES  
CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS**

City Council Chambers – 8150 Barbara Avenue  
Thursday, October 23, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Goodman called the Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present: Sara Goodman (Chair)  
Nick Ruiz (Vice-Chair)  
Jon Wallerick  
Marjorie Savage  
Tracie Killion  
Patti Mikulski

Commissioners Absent: Ted Trenzeluk  
Kevin Sethre  
Nichole Boehmke

Staff Present: Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Motion by Savage, Second by Ruiz, to remove the Presentations item and Approve the remainder of the Agenda as Published.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

**4. CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Minutes of the September 25, 2025, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting**

Motion by Mikulski, Second by Wallerick, to Approve the Minutes as Published.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

**5. REGULAR BUSINESS**

**A. Xcel Energy Partners in Energy MOU – 2026 Implementation Extension**

Environmental Specialist Kramer asked the Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) to review the Xcel Energy Partners in Energy MOU - 2026 Implementation Extension and consider recommending it for City Council approval.

Background

- March 2021
  - Energy Action Plan (EAP) with community engagement and municipal leadership goals adopted
  - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining how Xcel would support implementation approved
- December 2022

- Original MOU expired, then was extended for a year (it has since been extended several times to allow the City to continue receiving direct technical assistance).

The draft 2026 MOU details how Xcel Energy will support the City in achieving the goals of the EAC throughout 2026, including:

- Provide business outreach related to energy audits, electric vehicle charger installation opportunities, renewable energy, and available energy credits and rebates
- Provide residential and multi-unit outreach related to energy audits, assistance for energy-burdened households, and available energy credits and rebates, with a focus on strategies related to natural gas conservation
- Review community energy data reports provided by Partners in Energy
- Support the Sustainable IGH Awards program
- Support existing City environmental programming, including partnerships with GreenStep Cities and SolSmart

Environmental Specialist Kramer said there was limited progress on most goals in 2025 due to staffing limitations, but information about energy conservation is made available on the City's website, and materials were distributed via tabling at community events.

Staff recommends the EAC consider recommending City Council approval of the Xcel Energy Partners in Energy MOU - 2026 Implementation Extension.

Commissioner Mikulski asked when the Business Expo is held.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said early September; she also has a contact in the Chamber of Commerce that she can work with business outreach year-round.

Commissioner Wallerick asked whether the \$2,000 in funding was used last year.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that she was not sure, but in the past, the funding was used for printing materials. This year, the funding could be used to update the materials. She asked the Commissioners to share ideas for other uses.

Commissioner Killion asked for more details about SolSmart.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that SolSmart is an organization dedicated to helping local governments expand solar options by providing expert technical assistance.

Commissioner Killion asked whether SolSmart or another organization could help with adding wind power to residential properties.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she was not aware of organizations providing that kind of assistance, but she said she would look into it. She mentioned that zoning restrictions would likely limit wind installation in residential areas.

Commissioner Killion mentioned that her understanding is residential wind power is typically used for homes that are off grid.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she could research it for further discussion at a future meeting.

Chair Goodman said that representatives from SolSmart did a presentation for the EAC about two years ago; it is her understanding that the City is already a SolSmart designee.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that she thought cities had to renew their SolSmart designation every year, but she said she would look into it further.

Commissioner Savage said that she would like to revisit the Sustainable IGH Awards parameters.

Environmental Specialist Kramer suggested discussing the award parameters at a future meeting. She said that Partners in Energy had funded the printing of yard signs for the Sustainable IGH Awards program.

Commissioner Ruiz commented that there were different levels of recognition for different levels of impact.

Environmental Specialist Kramer confirmed that (bronze, silver, gold, and special); past awardees can also apply for more advanced levels of recognition.

Commissioner Killion commented that Xcel owns some streetlights in Inver Grove Heights. She said that turning off, shielding, or dimming streetlights might be another way to conserve energy.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said streetlight energy conservation could be a separate conversation with Xcel and the City. She said she would gather information on that.

Commissioner Mikulski said that she would appreciate more specific strategies under each item, but she is in favor of the MOU.

Commissioner Wallerick seconded that; he also said that he is in favor of being proactive in work with Xcel.

Commissioners Killion, Goodman, and Savage expressed their support for the MOU.

Commissioner Ruiz asked why this program is called "Graduate Support".

Environmental Specialist Kramer said Partners in Energy is typically an 18-month program. Once completed, participant cities are called Graduates, and support can then continue indefinitely.

Motion by Mikulski, Second by Ruiz, to recommend approval to City Council of the Xcel Energy Partners in Energy MOU - 2026 Implementation Extension.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0      Motion carried.

## **B. Discussion on the Draft 2026 EAC Work Plan**

Environmental Specialist Kramer asked Commissioners to comment on the 2026 EAC Work Plan, which summarizes annual priorities (in alignment with duties and functions as assigned by City Code).

Commissioner Ruiz asked whether the Annual Stormwater Pollution Prevention Meeting was held this year.

Environmental Specialist Kramer confirmed that it was held in May or June 2025.

Commissioner Ruiz suggested including salt reduction efforts under the stormwater pollution prevention item.

Commissioner Wallerick said the work plan looked good, and he suggested editing item 1.a. (about extending the MOU for 2026).

Environmental Specialist Kramer suggested replacing it with wording like “work towards the goals of the 2026 MOU.”

Commissioner Savage said that she sees opportunities to make the topic of stormwater pollution prevention more engaging and fun – it’s something that everyone can play a role in.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that she agreed, and staff members who work on stormwater are trying to find more ways to publicize the Pollution Prevention plan and make people realize how it affects them.

Chair Goodman said that she would like the EAC to have more opportunities to review developments and offer environmental guidance while projects are in the planning stages. She said that the EAC is not currently set up to allow for that, and she asked Environmental Specialist Kramer to find more ways for Commissioners to provide input.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that she would discuss it with other City staff and look for ways to involve the EAC more.

Commissioner Ruiz seconded what Chair Goodman said, and added, as an example, that chemicals (e.g., road salt) are often used to try and deal with ice issues, when a retrofit (e.g., adding more drainage) would be a more long-term and sustainable solution. It’s most cost-efficient to make retrofits during construction, so having the EAC’s perspective on development projects while they are in planning stages is important.

Commissioner Killion said that the EAC could also help ensure that existing developments have environmental recreation opportunities where possible (e.g., adding lake access points).

Commissioner Wallerick said that adding steps to the approval process was unlikely to succeed, but he suggested that the EAC could provide periodic presentations to the commissions that review developments.

Commissioner Mikulski said that the work plan goals look achievable.

Environmental Specialist Kramer summarized the suggestions:

- Edit Item 1.a. to include work on the Energy Action Plan goals
- Look for ways for the EAC to offer guidance, input, and/or education to commissions that review developments

She said she would have a revised version ready at the next meeting.

### **C. Discussion on Holding a 2025 EAC Work Session**

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that a work session would be a good opportunity to discuss topics of interest more informally.

Commissioner Mikulski said that a work session would be useful for adding more specific goals and strategies for achieving them. She suggested that it be held in early January.

Commissioner Wallerick suggested the Sustainable IGH Awards as another topic.

Commissioners Wallerick, Killion, and Savage, as well as Chair Goodman, said January 2026 would work well.

Commissioner Ruiz asked whether the work meeting would be open to the public.

Environmental Specialist Kramer confirmed that it could be. She read comments from Commissioner Sethre that were also in favor of holding a work session and scheduling it for early 2026.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said details on the work session could be finalized at the next meeting.

### **6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **7. COMMISSIONER AND STAFF COMMENTS**

Commissioner Ruiz asked to see the noise level contour maps that are used to evaluate eligibility for airport noise reduction retrofits. He commented that outliers can provide important information, and he would like to see the concerns of the household responsible for the majority of the complaints addressed if possible. He added that he recently attended a two-hour informative meeting on stormwater pollution prevention.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she knows the local watershed district passes out small cups to help educate people about how much salt is needed for a driveway. She said she would look into that program.

Commissioner Killion asked about alternatives to salt.

Commissioner Ruiz said brine spray and ionized water softener can be used. He added that when parking lots are redesigned, gradients can be put in to minimize ice accumulation proactively.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that sometimes alternative chemicals have limited functionality in lower temperature ranges, which makes them less helpful in Minnesota. Sand can be useful for adding friction, but it does not have melting capability.

Commissioner Ruiz said dust/sand can be swept up in warmer seasons and scattered in the winter to add friction. He said that chloride is difficult if not impossible to remove from the watershed, and because it sinks, it can harm streambeds and lakebeds. He said there will be more free Zoom meetings on salt reduction offered later this year.

Chair Goodman suggested that paper towels be collected as organic waste in the Community Center.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she would look into it.

Commissioner Ruiz said he thought paper towels were already being collected in some restrooms within the Community Center.

Commissioner Killion said that many people don't know that you can't drain a freshly-treated pool – she suggested adding information on pool drainage regulations to Insights Newsletter in future years.

Commissioner Mikulski said that she would like to know when the sound level contour maps were last updated. She said that new homes have been added under common flight paths, which may be leading to more complaints.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that the November and December meetings will be held one week earlier than usual due to the holidays. She also said there would be an article in Insights and eNews postings about smart salting. She said that eNews monthly bulletins are now active again, and she asked Commissioners to send along relevant items (community events related to environmental work). She mentioned that anyone can sign up to receive the newsletter.

Chair Goodman said it would be good to advertise the eNews signup on social media.

Commissioner Ruiz said that there are lots of great programs through the Community Center and library, but there isn't currently a good way of getting information out widely about them. He suggested adding information on environmental programs to the large screen in the Community Center because of its visibility.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she could contact Veterans Memorial Community Center staff about displaying environmental event information there.

Chair Goodman said that sometimes Parks events are advertised on that screen.

Commissioner Ruiz said small TV screens could also be added to the exercise rooms to inform people.

## **8. ADJOURN**

Motion by Savage, Second by Killion, to adjourn the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0      Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Will Clashe, Recording Secretary



## Environmental Advisory Commission Staff Report

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**SUBJECT:        Consider Recommendation of Draft 2026 Environmental  
Advisory Commission Work Plan**

**MEETING DATE:** November 20, 2025  
**ITEM TYPE:** Regular Agenda  
**CONTACT:** Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist, 651.604.8511

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### **PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED**

The Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) is asked to review the draft 2026 Environmental Advisory Commission Work Plan and consider recommending City Council approval.

### **BACKGROUND**

The duties and functions of the City's Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) are defined by City Code 2-4-2. These include advising the City Council on environmental issues including local landfill matters, wetland replacement applications and aircraft noise, and promoting public awareness of local environmental issues. Since 2023, the EAC, City Council and staff have found the annual work plan to be a helpful guiding document proposed by the EAC and approved by the City Council. The purpose of this work plan is to define annual priorities of the EAC that align with the duties and functions defined by City Code.

The draft work plan included in this packet was developed based on EAC duties, progress from previous EAC work plans, regional environmental and sustainability trends, public comments, existing environmental programming, and EAC comments provided at the October 2025 EAC meeting. Staff believe the proposed work plan is achievable by December 2026 with available City staff support, funding, and external technical assistance.

The EAC is asked to consider recommending the draft 2026 work plan included in this packet at the November 2025 EAC meeting.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This item is budget neutral for the City.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the EAC consider recommending City Council approval of the attached draft 2026 EAC Work Plan.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2026 EAC Work Plan - Draft

## **2026 Environmental Advisory Commission Work Plan**

The purpose of this work plan is to define annual priorities of the City of Inver Grove Heights Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) that align with the duties and functions defined by City Code 2-4-2. Duties and functions of the EAC include, but are not limited to, reviewing and advising the City Council on environmental issues and promoting public awareness and understanding of local environmental issues.

This work plan was developed based on progress from EAC duties, previous EAC work plans, regional environmental and sustainability trends, public comments, and existing environmental programming. It was also developed in partnership with the City's Environmental Specialist to ensure the work plan is achievable by December 2026 with available City staff support, funding and external technical assistance.

**The EAC will implement the following 2026 Work Plan with support from the City's Environmental Specialist:**

### **1. Support the City's Energy Action Plan (EAP).**

- a. Work towards the goals laid out in the 2026 Xcel Energy Partners in Energy Extension Memorandum of Understanding.
  - i. Provide business outreach related to building energy audits, electric vehicle charger installation opportunities, renewable energy, and available energy credits and rebates.
  - ii. Provide outreach tailored to young people and students related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, energy careers, and other energy related topics.
  - iii. Provide residential and multiunit property outreach related to building energy audits and available energy credits and rebates.
  - iv. Review community energy data updates provided by Xcel Energy Partners in Energy and annual EAP update.

### **2. Support the Sustainable IGH Awards program.**

- a. Help promote the reinstatement of the program to residents and businesses by hosting information tables at City events, leveraging local partnerships, utilizing social media and communication strategies, and working with community groups.
- b. Review applications and make recommendations to the City Council for bronze, silver, gold and special recognition awardees.

### **3. Host the Annual Stormwater Pollution Prevention Meeting in partnership with the City's engineering division.**

### **4. Support the following existing City environmental programming as needed:**

- a. Solid waste abatement programming related to waste reduction, recycling and organics initiatives.
- b. Minnesota GreenStep Cities
- c. SolSmart

### **5. Increase the public and Commission's awareness of local environmental issues by inviting internal and external speakers to EAC meetings and increasing promotions of the meetings to the public.**

### **6. Invite relevant City Staff to present internal environmental and sustainability updates related to City facilities, natural resources, and more.**

### **7. Process other business-as-usual items related to landfills, wetlands, airport noise, and other assigned duties of the Environmental Advisory Commission per City Code 2-4-2.**

### **8. Review existing responsibilities of EAC in City Code and research EAC work in other communities. Provide recommendations on how these roles and responsibilities should be revised into the future.**

### **9. Participate in 2026-2028 Comprehensive Plan review work.**



## Environmental Advisory Commission Staff Report

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### **SUBJECT: Consider Recommending a 2026 EAC Work Session**

**MEETING DATE:** November 20, 2025  
**ITEM TYPE:** Regular Agenda  
**CONTACT:** Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist, 651.604.8511

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#### **PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED**

The Environmental Advisory Commission is asked to determine whether to recommend holding a 2026 EAC Work Session in early 2026.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The duties and functions of the City's Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) are defined by City Code 2-4-2. These include advising the City Council on environmental issues including local landfill matters, wetland replacement applications and aircraft noise, and promoting public awareness of local environmental issues. The commission hosts regular meetings on the 4th Thursday of each month, based on a set agenda. Commissioners host informational presentations, make recommendations on commission-relevant items, and develop work plans and strategies for commission work. Work sessions are more informal meetings, and focus on reviewing and discussing upcoming agenda items and topics of interest. They do not involve formal decision-making.

The attached draft lays out a work session outline based on EAC priorities and goals.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This item is budget neutral.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the EAC make a recommendation on holding a 2026 EAC Work Session in Q1 2026 based on the provided outline.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Draft Work Session Summary for EAC

**Notes:**

Upcoming Years - Host in August/September to precede Work Plan Planning

**Goal:**

The Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) of Inver Grove Heights will hold an informal work session to focus on four key priorities for the upcoming year. This dedicated session provides an opportunity for commissioners to collaborate on refining the “Sustainable IGH Award” criteria, reviewing the EAC work plan, outlining an annual calendar, and setting informal goals for the year.

The meeting will be conversational and solution-oriented, with no formal votes, just time for creative discussion, alignment, and shared direction.

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**1. Creating a Framework**

EAC members will be asked to come with some ideas, possibly including topics like:

- What are we doing well, how can we build on this and make it even better
- What are challenges, how can we turn into opportunities
- What are road blocks we experience, and what do they stem from

The group will draw out the main themes and purpose of the commission.

Goal Setting – Identify things we do well, what needs improvement, and how can we build on these things in the future

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**2. “Sustainable IGH Award” Criteria and Aligning it with EAC Priorities**

- Quick overview of current award framework and goals
  - Discussion: What’s working well? What needs updating? Is it meeting our priorities?
  - Identify new sustainability focus areas if needed
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**3. Action Steps to Move the 2026 Work Plan Forward**

- Brief review of current approved 2026 work plan
- Discuss actionable steps to help accomplish goals

We will identify 'Difference Making Action Strategies'. Identify simple, clear, understandable goals, tied to specific, clear, understandable action steps and simple, clear, understandable outcomes.

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## **5. Annual Calendar Planning**

- Begin to map out EAC meeting calendar
- Consider education-only presentations the Commission would be interested in
- Consider ways to invite the community to hear or participate in education or outreach opportunities throughout the year

The EAC can bring ideas for educational opportunities, and how do we fit them into existing required outcomes.