



Inver Grove Heights Environmental Advisory Commission

Thursday, December 18, 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). Comments received prior to 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 18, 2025, will be provided to the Commissioners at or before the December 18, 2025 meeting.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Consent Agenda**
 - A. Minutes of the November 20, 2025, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting.
5. **Presentations**
 - A. Plastic Bag Ordinances and Recycling in Minnesota
 - B. Sustainable IGH Awards Criteria and Applications
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.

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

City Council Chambers – 8150 Barbara Avenue
Thursday, November 20, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Nick Ruiz (Vice-Chair)
 Ted Trenzeluk
 Nichole Boehmke
 Jon Wallerick
 Marjorie Savage
 Tracie Killion
 Patti Mikulski

Commissioners Absent: Sara Goodman (Chair)
 Kevin Sethre

Staff Present: Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Killion, Second by Boehmke, to Approve the Agenda as Published.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of the October 23, 2025, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting

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

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

5. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Consider Recommendation of Draft 2026 Environmental Advisory Commission Work Plan

Environmental Specialist Kramer reviewed the changes made since the last meeting, including:

- Changed Item 1.a. to “Work towards the goals laid out in the 2026 Xcel Energy Partners in Energy Extension Memorandum of Understanding”
- Added item 8: “Review existing responsibilities of EAC in City Code and research EAC work in other communities”
- Added item 9: “Participate in 2026-2028 Comprehensive Plan review work”

All Commissioners expressed support for the draft.

Motion by Mikulski, Second by Killion, to recommend approval to City Council of the Draft 2026 Environmental Advisory Commission Work Plan.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

B. Consider Recommending a 2026 EAC Work Session

Environmental Specialist Kramer asked the Commission to recommend holding a work session in order to formalize it as a priority for the Commission. She mentioned that she would send out an email to find a date.

Commissioner Mikulski said she was in favor of holding it in January.

Commissioner Trenzeluk suggested using the work session to identify particular tasks.

Commissioner Savage said that text describing how often the Commission meets should include “except in the case of holidays” to cover situations where meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month rather than the fourth. She also asked whether this work session would comply with the Open Meeting Law.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she would look into it and confirm.

Commissioner Killion said that she wanted to focus on prioritizing attainable goals in the work session.

Environmental Specialist Kramer suggested using the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals framework.

Commissioner Mikulski said having clear steps for achieving goals would be important.

Commissioner Wallerick said it would be good to leave the meeting with action plans and identified next steps.

Commissioner Ruiz said that it would be important to ensure that the public can participate. He mentioned that assigning tasks/delegating would be helpful to do in the work session.

Commissioner Savage suggested adding assessments for each goal to make them measurable.

Motion by Boehmke, Second by Killion, to recommend holding an EAC work session in Quarter 1 of 2026.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Denise Marlowe, 7406 Bolton Way, asked whether Inver Grove Heights has considered charging customers for plastic bags or paper bags. She mentioned that there is a big problem with plastic use.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that to her knowledge the City has not considered an ordinance to do that.

Commissioner Trenzeluk mentioned that in New Jersey, plastic bags are banned by a state law. He suggested bringing concerns to state legislators.

Commissioner Killion said that plastic bags cause problems at landfills because they blow around.

Commissioner Boehmke said that Minneapolis has a plastic bag ordinance, and she was unable to get a plastic bag at a grocery store. She mentioned that plastic bags are also a nuisance when it comes to recycling (sorting them out from cardboard, metal, etc.).

Commissioner Ruiz asked whether it was legal for a city to pass a plastic bag ban; he said that a ban would have to be a statewide ordinance.

Commissioner Boehmke suggested looking at Minneapolis's ordinance for more details on how the Minneapolis process occurred.

Commissioner Ruiz asked if the bags are available for a fee.

Commissioner Killion said she would find out, as she works in Minneapolis.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she would be willing to look into whether other Minnesota cities have plastic bag bans.

Commissioner Savage asked her to look into the statewide process.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she would research that.

Commissioner Mikulski said that many stores offer reuseable bags for sale to people who did not bring their own.

Commissioner Ruiz said that reuseable bags can be resource-intensive to make. He also asked if Republic Services took plastic bags and what they do with them.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said that Recycling Works can't take plastic bags. There are special collection locations for them.

Commissioner Ruiz said he was curious where the various types of plastic bags go and that it would be worth looking into.

Commissioner Mikulski mentioned an experience where she found out that a collection location for plastic bags had closed, and when she asked for more information, she found out that the plastic bags were just being thrown away anyway.

Commissioner Ruiz said he knows of one group that weaves them into mats to give to homeless people.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she would add plastic bag ordinance research as an agenda item for the next meeting.

The Commissioners thanked the resident for sharing their concern.

7. COMMISSIONER AND STAFF COMMENTS

Commissioner Trenzeluk said that the Commission used to be involved in development projects that involved wetlands. He mentioned that there has been a lot of development in Inver Grove Heights, but

projects have not come before the Commission recently. He said that he wanted to find out more about that.

Commissioner Killion commented that that responsibility applies to renovations, not just new development construction projects.

Commissioner Boehmke echoed Commissioner Trenzeluk's comment, having been on the Commission since 2014. She asked if a different group is responsible for reviewing Wetland Alteration Permit Requests now.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said she would look into it.

Commissioner Ruiz said that there had been two Wetland Alteration Permit Request projects in his four years on the Commission, and one on 70th where dirt was being taken for alignment of the roadway. He sees it as an important opportunity to offer environmentally-conscious suggestions. He also asked whether environmental staff in different cities communicate.

Environmental Specialist Kramer said yes – she is part of several peer networks that exchange ideas, including city-, county-, and state-level staff. She also added that the Winter Clothing Swap was held recently and she commended the generosity of the donators and the volunteers. Lastly, she mentioned that the next meeting would be December 18, 2025, not December 25, 2025.

Commissioner Ruiz commented that everything that was left at the Winter Clothing Swap will be donated.

8. ADJOURN

Motion by Savage, Second by Boehmke, to adjourn the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Will Clashe, Recording Secretary



**Environmental Advisory Commission
Staff Report**

SUBJECT: Plastic Bag Ordinances and Recycling in Minnesota

MEETING DATE: December 18, 2025

ITEM TYPE: Presentations

CONTACT: Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist, 651-604-8511

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

The Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) requested education regarding plastic bag use, recycling, and related ordinances in Minnesota. No action is requested.

BACKGROUND

Annually, the City's Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) develops a commission work plan. Part of this work plan often revolves around promoting public awareness of local environmental issues. In an effort to provide education that is pertinent to the commission and public concerns, commission members requested information on plastic bag use, recycling, and related ordinances in Minnesota.

FISCAL IMPACT

This item is budget neutral for the City.

RECOMMENDATION

Educational Presentation Only

ATTACHMENTS

None



Environmental Advisory Commission Staff Report

SUBJECT: Sustainable IGH Awards Criteria and Applications

MEETING DATE: December 18, 2025
ITEM TYPE: Presentations
CONTACT: Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist, 651-604-8511

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

The Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) plans to review and if needed, revise, the 2026 Sustainable IGH Awards application criteria and priorities during a work session in Quarter 1 of 2026. This is a review of the award criteria from 2024. No action is requested.

BACKGROUND

Reinstating the Sustainable IGH Awards is a priority of the Environmental Advisory Commission (EAC) in 2026, and is listed on the EAC Work Plan for the upcoming year.

The commission plans to review and potentially revise application criteria and award priorities in 2026, if needed. To better serve this goal, and because the awards last took place in 2024, the application criteria from 2024 will be reviewed prior to a planned work session in Quarter 1 of 2026. This presentation will be a review only, with any potential revision happening during the 2026 Work Session.

FISCAL IMPACT

This item is budget neutral for the City.

RECOMMENDATION

Educational Presentation Only

ATTACHMENTS

None