



Inver Grove Heights Environmental Advisory Commission

Thursday, August 27, 2026 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 Stacy Bodsberg (sbodsberg@ighmn.gov). Comments received prior to 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 27, 2026, will be provided to the Commissioners at or before the August 27, 2026 meeting.

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Consent Agenda**
 - A. Approval of Minutes from Thursday, June 25, 2026, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting.
5. **Regular Business**
 - A. 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update Informational Discussion
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
CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS
JUNE 25, 2026 - 8150 BARBARA AVENUE**

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was cited.

2. OATH OF OFFICE

Stacy Bodsberg administered the Oath of Office to the three newly appointed Commissioners.

3. ROLL CALL

Commissioner(s) Present: Sara Goodman (Chair)
 Nick Ruiz (Vice-Chair)
 Ted Trenzeluk
 Tracie Killion
 William Pickett
 Patti Mikulski
 Katherine Barry
 Anne Lundquist

Commissioner(s) Absent: Kevin Sethre - *excused*

Staff Present: Stacy Bodsberg, Community Development Support Specialist

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A. Election of the 2026 Environmental Advisory Commission Chair and Vice-Chair.

Chair Goodman stated that new Commissioners are selected annually and the election of Chair and Vice-Chair needs to be conducted.

Commissioner Mikulski nominated Sara Goodman for the position of Chair.

Motion by Trenzeluk, Second by Killion, to Close Nominations and Elect Sara Goodman by Unanimous Consent to the position of Chair.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

Commissioner Trenzeluk nominated Nick Ruiz for the position of Vice-Chair.

Motion by Mikulski, Second by Killion, to Close Nominations and Elect Nick Ruiz by Unanimous Consent to the position of Vice-Chair.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of the May 28, 2026, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting.

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

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

7. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Annual Local Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan Presentation.

Joe Barten, Program Management Supervisor at the Dakota County Soil & Water Conservation District (DCSWCD) and Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO) presented on the Local Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to provide background information on Minimum Control Measures (MCMs) and Best Management Practices (BMPs), gather citizen input on the SWPPP, and meet the requirements of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permit.

Water resources are important for many every day, recreational, and environmental purposes, including swimming, household uses, fishing, enjoying natural areas, and supporting plants and wildlife. Local water resources highlighted included Seidl's Lake, Simley Lake, and the Mississippi River at the Rock Island Swing Bridge.

Human impacts on water resources have changed significantly over time. A timeline spanning from 1930 to the present identified the New Industrial Age, increased agricultural production resulting in erosion, exposed soils, and chemical use, the Clean Water Act, the Clean Water Rule, and continued urban development as major factors affecting water resources.

The question of where rain can soak into the ground was illustrated by comparing a 1951 undeveloped area near Fleming Field, also known as the South St. Paul Airport, Bohrer Pond, Cahill Avenue, and 65th Street East with the same general area under existing development in 2021. The comparison demonstrated the significant change from undeveloped land to streets, buildings, parking lots, and other developed surfaces.

Urban development affects the natural movement of water. Under natural conditions, approximately 10% of water becomes runoff, 25% infiltrates shallowly, 25% infiltrates deeply, and approximately 40% returns to the atmosphere through evaporation and transpiration. In suburban areas with 35% to 50% impervious surfaces, such as asphalt and concrete, runoff increases to approximately 30%, while shallow infiltration decreases to 20%, deep infiltration decreases to 15%, and evaporation and transpiration decrease to approximately 35%.

Construction activities and the use of heavy equipment can compact soil and further reduce the ability of rainwater to soak into the ground. Conventional site design relies on engineered drainage to collect, concentrate, and convey stormwater, essentially making the water go away. Water flows from rooftops and developed properties to streets, gutters, and storm drains. Stormwater entering the storm drain is then piped directly to a wetland, lake, or stream, often untreated. Along the way, it can carry accumulated "gunk" and other pollutants into the storm drainage system and ultimately into local water resources. Polluted stormwater is the number one problem because it all adds up. Stormwater carries oil, chemicals, phosphorus, sediment, litter, heavy metals, and disease-causing organisms. Compaction combined with impervious surfaces results in more pollutants and more

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runoff. Waterbody impairments occur when there is too much phosphorus, sediment, E. coli, chemicals, and other pollutants. One pound of phosphorus can produce 500 pounds of algae. Stormwater runoff containing pollutants disrupts natural processes and can result in health advisories, water-contact warnings, beach closures, algae advisories, and blue-green algae bloom advisories.

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System, or NPDES, and the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan, or SWPPP, are part of the NPDES MS4 Permit framework. The NPDES Permit Program was created in 1972 by the Clean Water Act to address water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants to surface waters.

The history and authority for the program begins with the 1972 Clean Water Act, a federal law. The Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for enforcement of the federal law, while States are given authority to implement the federal law. The State sets minimum requirements, including annual reporting, through the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency MS4 Permit. City ordinances and City staff provide local enforcement.

The City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System program covers a system of conveyances, including pipes, streets, ditches, storm drains, and other infrastructure. The original phase began in the 1990s and applied to large MS4s, while the second phase in the 2000s included small MS4s. The latest update occurred in 2020. Inver Grove Heights is classified as a "small" MS4, covering communities with populations between 10,000 and 100,000.

Other public organizations involved in water resources include the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District (DCSWCD), Eagan-Inver Grove Heights Watershed Management Organization (Eagan-IGH WMO), Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO), Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (MN BWSR), and Minnesota Cities Stormwater Coalition (MCSC).

The annual meetings are important because they provide an opportunity for citizen input and allow the City to receive comments from the public regarding the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The meetings also explain the 6 Minimum Control Measures (MCMs), review the City's work toward meeting those measures, and fulfill requirements of the MS4 Permit.

The 6 Minimum Control Measures are public education and outreach; public participation and involvement; illicit discharge detection and elimination; construction site stormwater runoff control; post-construction stormwater management; and pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations.

The City's MS4 accomplishments and achievements under Minimum Control Measures 1 and 2, Public Education, Outreach, Participation, and Involvement, included the Insights newsletter distributed to all Inver Grove Heights residents. Topics highlighted in the newsletter included Adopt a Drain, pet waste, illicit discharge, yard waste, salt use, chemical disposal, and other topics. Residents also participated in Landscaping for Clean Water workshops offering classes on raingarden, native gardens, project design, maintenance, and shoreline restoration. Additional education and outreach occurred through water resources postings on the City website and social media.

Further accomplishments under Minimum Control Measures 1 and 2 included the annual SWPPP public meeting and staff training, along with coordination involving the Dakota County Soil and

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Water Conservation District and the Eagan-Inver Grove Heights and Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organizations. Stormwater educational displays were provided at events including the Healthy Living Fair, Touch a Truck, and the IGH Days Business Expo. Other efforts included Clean Water Educational Bags at libraries; Inver Glen Library Salt Week displays, activities, a scavenger hunt, and salt test strips; the Salt Smart Program and Salt Smart cups promoted through social media and local businesses; a rain barrel program; storm drain stenciling; and Adopt a Drain.

Minimum Control Measure 3 addresses Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination. An illicit discharge is any dumping into a storm drain that is not stormwater. Potential sources include household cleaning services, trenchless boring slurry discharge, improper disposal of oil or household chemicals, failing septic systems, illegal dumping, and spills from accidents or gas stations. Updates were made to the GIS storm sewer map, annual storm sewer inspections were conducted, and illicit discharges were identified, reviewed, and investigated by City staff.

Minimum Control Measure 4 addresses Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control. All construction sites disturbing more than one acre require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit through the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. These projects require a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and are subject to State MPCA inspections for larger projects.

Smaller construction sites disturbing less than one acre are enforced by the City. Any project requiring City permits, including a building permit, plat, or land alteration permit, must follow City Code requirements for erosion and sediment control. Inspections vary based on project type, resident concerns, and proximity to special receiving waters, with inspections conducted weekly or following a one-half-inch rainfall event. Soil erosion can be substantially greater on construction sites than on other land uses. Annual soil loss was shown at approximately 0.04 tons per acre per year under one condition, 0.4 tons per acre per year under another, 7.5 tons per acre per year from farm fields, and 75 tons per acre per year from construction sites. Construction sites can therefore experience 10 times more soil loss than farm fields, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Minimum Control Measure 5 addresses Post-Construction Stormwater Management and includes requirements for landowners to implement permanent stormwater management practices. These practices can include stormwater ponds, infiltration basins or trenches, filtration basins, vegetated swales, underground treatment chambers, stormwater reuse, and many other methods. Requirements are dictated by the City and/or State. Additional accomplishments under Minimum Control Measure 5 included conducting plan reviews, overseeing multiple major projects under construction, facilitating stormwater facility maintenance agreements, and managing many privately owned stormwater best management practices and maintenance agreements. The City also enforced infiltration requirements, updated enforcement and other stormwater procedures, updated the Water Resources Management Plan, and updated the City-wide inventory of stormwater Best Management Practices. The system includes more than 120 miles of stormwater piping, more than 600 ponds and basins, more than 4,000 catch basins and drains, more than 1,500 aprons and pipe ends, and more than 450 environmental manholes and control structures.

Minimum Control Measure 6 addresses Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations. Staff conducted inspections of public stormwater facilities, including 20% of storm sewer system discharge points and ponds and 100% of environmental structures. Major and minor maintenance, repairs, and other activities were also completed. Street sweeping is conducted on all

City streets and parking lots in the spring and fall using a regenerative street sweeper, with additional sweeping performed as necessary.

Public Works has also reduced road salt use by storing salt on impervious surfaces and improving transfer loss, properly covering salt storage areas, implementing salt saver sanders with pre-wet tanks, and using salt brine to pretreat roads. These practices have reduced salt usage by more than 55% since 2007.

Public involvement opportunities provide residents with ways to help protect local waters. The Salt Smart program encourages people to combat ice while protecting water resources during the winter season by understanding how much salt is too much. The Adopt a Storm Drain program allows residents to help clear drains of leaves, trash, and debris and reduce water pollution by adopting a storm drain through Adopt-a-Drain.org. Residents can also help protect water quality through the Scoop the Poop campaign. Pet waste is not good fertilizer and can harm water quality, so residents are encouraged to scoop the poop, bag it, and throw it in the trash. Storm drain stenciling provides another opportunity for individuals and organizations to stencil nearby storm drains, with 129 drains stenciled in 2025, more than the other seven cities in the Mississippi River Watershed Management Program. Water Resources Educational Boxes explain the stormwater cycle and how it affects nearby ponds, lakes, and rivers.

Additional opportunities to get involved include registering for Landscaping for Clean Water, Lawns Reimagined, and Shoreline Restoration courses and visiting the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District's Landscaping for Clean Water website. Residents can also seek appointment as a Watershed Management Organization Board Member or Environmental Commissioner or participate as a volunteer.

Commissioner Killion questioned what projects were currently underway in Inver Grove Heights and inquired about the process for adding additional projects to the project list.

Mr. Barten stated that a meeting with City staff would be scheduled within the next three weeks to prioritize water resource improvement projects. Staff maintain a comprehensive list of projects, which would be reviewed to distinguish routine infrastructure maintenance projects, which are generally not eligible for grants, from water quality improvement projects that may qualify for State grant funding. The watershed management organization would assist the City in pursuing available grant opportunities for eligible projects.

Priority projects include continued improvements to Seidl's Lake, maintenance of the shoreline restoration, and evaluating the carp population, which is believed to be a significant contributor to poor water quality because carp feed along the lake bottom. Potential management strategies include drawing down the lake or removing carp through netting, both of which have produced substantial water quality improvements in other metropolitan lakes. The presence of goldfish in Seidl's Lake and other lakes would also be evaluated.

Additional work is underway following the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization's Direct Drainage Study, which identified erosion issues in drainage areas leading directly to the Mississippi River, many of which are located in Inver Grove Heights. The study, available on the organization's website, prioritized projects based on need. One of the highest-ranked projects is in the Gisch Pond area, where significant ravine erosion and a City-owned stormwater pond that has become filled with sediment require restoration. Efforts are underway to work with the City to improve the pond and pursue grant funding due to the project's anticipated

cost. These initiatives are among the highest priorities for collaboration with the City over the next several years.

Commissioner Killion inquired as to how residents can bring concerns about a water body they believe may be impacted to the attention of the City or the local watershed management organization and what process is available for submitting those concerns for review.

Mr. Barten encouraged residents with concern about a potentially impacted water body to contact him by email, noting that both the City and the Watershed Management Organization are responsive to resident inquiries. He explained that every water body within Inver Grove Heights and the other member communities has already been mapped and prioritized through the Watershed Management Plan based on factors such as size, water quality, impairment status, recreational use, public access, and habitat value. If a concern is submitted, the first step is to determine where that water body falls on the established priority list, which guides how public funds and grant opportunities are allocated to achieve the greatest public benefit. Because the organization has limited resources, its primary focus over the next ten years is on the highest-priority water bodies rather than larger systems such as the Mississippi River. In addition to voluntary water quality improvement projects supported through grants, ongoing regulatory requirements, including the MS4 permit, continue to improve water quality throughout the City. He encouraged residents to reach out with questions so concerns can be evaluated and directed appropriately based on the established priorities.

Commissioner Killion questioned whether the presence of vegetation, wildlife, or other species within or around a water body could increase its priority ranking.

Mr. Barten explained that habitat value is included in the prioritization process, but it is not weighted as heavily as human recreational value. He noted that the priority list is established as part of the Watershed Management Plan, which is updated every ten years, and there are currently no plans to revise the rankings before the next update. He added that the Watershed Management Organization's Board is a public board, and residents may share concerns with staff to be brought before the Board or attend Board meetings to provide input directly.

Commissioner Killion inquired as to whether the Watershed Management Organization also implements recreational improvements on lakes, such as installing boat launches for kayaks or canoes.

Mr. Barten explained that the Watershed Management Organization does not typically construct recreational amenities such as boat launches. While recreation is considered during the prioritization process, the organization's primary focus is improving overall water quality. He noted that recreational improvements are generally implemented by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources or by the City when it owns land adjacent to a water body.

Commissioner Trenzeluk recalled that several years ago, when the City reconstructed neighborhood streets, residents were offered free rain gardens as part of the project through a funding program. He shared that he was the only homeowner in his development to participate and said the rain garden has worked well, with ongoing maintenance provided each year. What happened to the funding for that program and whether similar programs are still available. He also questioned why rain gardens were required to be included on a property's deed, stating he believed that requirement discouraged participation because it concerned many homeowners. He suggested

there may be less restrictive ways to ensure rain gardens are preserved, such as through a City ordinance, rather than recording them on the deed.

Mr. Barten explained that approaches to rain gardens vary from community to community and are often influenced by the preferences of the City Engineer and how the City chooses to manage stormwater. Some communities favor dispersed stormwater treatment through multiple neighborhood rain gardens, while others prefer larger regional stormwater basins that treat runoff from a broader area. Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages. Many Cities have reduced their use of residential rain gardens because of the ongoing maintenance required, particularly when homeowners do not maintain them, resulting in additional costs, complaints, and maintenance responsibilities for City staff. Other Cities continue to install rain gardens because they have dedicated staff and funding to support long-term maintenance.

He added that aging infrastructure and limited budgets often force Cities to prioritize spending, making rain garden programs one of the first items to be reduced. The Watershed Management Organization previously partnered with the Soil and Water Conservation District to help fund rain gardens, but available funding was limited. Construction costs have also increased significantly, with a single residential rain garden now costing approximately \$15,000 to \$20,000 to install, in addition to long-term maintenance expenses. He noted that State grant funding for these projects has declined substantially, making it more difficult for communities to continue expanding rain garden programs.

He also noted that some communities have addressed maintenance challenges by using volunteer programs in conjunction with environmental education initiatives, such as the Landscaping for Clean Water program. Volunteers may assist with weeding, mulching, and seasonal plantings, helping reduce maintenance costs, although City staff are still needed to coordinate and support those efforts.

Commissioner Trenzeluk noted that rain gardens were not included among the public involvement opportunities presented and asked whether the Watershed Management Organization supports rain gardens or considers them a lower priority compared to other water quality initiatives.

Mr. Barten responded that the Watershed Management Organization continues to support the use of rain gardens and still assists with installing them in a variety of situations. If a City is interested in implementing rain gardens, the Watershed Management Organization can provide technical assistance with design as well as grant funding. He said the organization believes rain gardens are an effective practice but recognizes that each City has different staffing levels, funding priorities, and approaches to stormwater management, so there is no one-size-fits-all solution.

Commissioner Trenzeluk then asked whether the requirement to record a rain garden on a property's deed was a City requirement.

Mr. Barten explained that deed restrictions for rain gardens are generally determined at the local level and often depend on the risk tolerance of the City Attorney and the City Engineer. He noted that, based on his experience, the decision to require a rain garden to remain with the property through a deed restriction varies by community and reflects how those officials choose to manage long-term responsibility for the installation.

Commissioner Ruiz questioned whether there are additional stormwater management practices, beyond the volunteer rain garden program, that the Watershed Management Organization has

found to be particularly effective and that could benefit the City, while recognizing that each community has different needs and priorities.

Mr. Barten stated that the City is already operating at a high level in its stormwater management efforts. He explained that many additional initiatives depend on staff capacity, as City staff must first focus on required responsibilities such as development review, plan review, inspections, and regulatory compliance. Because Inver Grove Heights continues to experience significant development pressure, staff have less opportunity to devote time to voluntary programs compared to fully developed communities that may have greater capacity to support volunteer initiatives and other discretionary efforts. He noted that expanding those types of programs would likely require additional staffing and emphasized that he does not believe the City is overlooking important responsibilities but is instead balancing the demands created by continued growth.

Commissioner Ruiz questioned whether research, including work by the University of Minnesota, is exploring ways to address road salt, or the resulting chloride, once it has entered the water system.

Mr. Barten explained that there are currently few practical methods for removing salt from water once it has entered the environment, noting that desalination is one possible approach. He said the University of Minnesota is internationally recognized for its stormwater research through the Minnesota Stormwater Research Council and continues to study stormwater management, pollutants, and emerging contaminants. He noted that contaminants such as PFAS, PFOA, PFOS, and PH are becoming increasing areas of concern but are not specifically addressed under the current MS4 permit. Research conducted by the University of Minnesota is regularly shared with stormwater professionals through training sessions, conferences, and newsletters, allowing new findings to be incorporated into local practices. He added that this research has influenced improvements in rain garden design, street sweeping practices, and strategies for reducing road salt use, including the development and implementation of salt brining techniques.

Chair Goodman inquired as to who residents should contact if they observe neighbors blowing grass clipping into the street instead of back onto their lawn, asking whether concerns should be reported to the City or another authority if speaking directly with the neighbor is not possible.

Mr. Barten recommended that residents contact the City Engineering Department with concerns about grass clipping being blown into the street. Engineering staff can determine the appropriate City department to address the issue and would likely begin with education or a courtesy notice before pursuing any enforcement action.

Chair Goodman questioned whether roadway reconstruction projects that involve exposing bare soil are subject to the same weekly inspection requirements as larger development projects.

Mr. Barten explained that roadway reconstruction projects are subject to the same construction stormwater inspection requirements as other construction projects. Contractors are required to inspect sites following qualifying rainfall events and maintain documentation to ensure erosion and sediment control measures are functioning properly, while City staff are responsible for verifying that those inspections are being completed.

He noted, however, that permanent stormwater management requirements differ for roadway and trail projects because they are considered linear projects. Unlike larger developments, which are typically required to construct permanent stormwater ponds or similar treatment practices, linear

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projects may be exempt from some permanent stormwater management requirements due to limited available space and the impracticality of constructing those facilities along road corridors.

Commissioner referred to the discussion of stormwater ponds used in new development projects and asked whether those ponds primarily retain sediment, leaves, and other debris, or if they also help remove dissolved pollutants such as road salt. She also asked whether the ponds simply slow the movement of those dissolved pollutants through the system.

Mr. Barten explained that traditional stormwater ponds, commonly referred to as NURP ponds because they were originally developed through the Nationwide Urban Runoff Program, are designed to capture sediment and other particulate pollutants. As stormwater enters the pond, sediment, sand, grit, leaves, and phosphorus attached to those particles settle to the bottom, allowing cleaner water to flow out. He noted that these ponds remain an effective stormwater management practice and continue to be constructed today.

He explained, however, that traditional NURP ponds do not remove dissolved pollutants, such as road salt, because those pollutants remain in the water rather than settling to the bottom. As sediment accumulates over time, ponds must be periodically dredged to restore their effectiveness, which can cost Cities well over \$100,000 per pond. He added that ongoing research, including work by the University of Minnesota, is evaluating how well existing pond designs perform and exploring ways to make pond maintenance and cleanouts more efficient and less costly for Cities.

Commissioner Lundquist questioned how the Commission could best support the work of the Soil and Water Conservation District.

Mr. Barten encouraged Commissioners to support the work of the Soil and Water Conservation District by participating in and promoting available programs within the community. He suggested serving as a bridge between the City and residents by helping raise awareness through neighborhood networks, social media, and other community outreach. He also encouraged Commissioners to participate in programs such as Lawns Reimagined and Landscaping for Clean Water so they could share their firsthand experiences with others. He said volunteer-led efforts, such as creek cleanups, can also be effective ways to engage residents and improve local water resources. In addition, he encouraged Commissioners to serve as the eyes and ears of the community by sharing information about City initiatives and identifying successful practices from other communities that could be considered in Inver Grove Heights. He concluded by noting that the City is already doing an excellent job with its stormwater management efforts.

Commissioner Killion questioned whether the sediment removed from stormwater ponds requires special handling and disposal at a designated landfill.

Mr. Barten explained that sediment removed from the bottom of stormwater ponds is tested to determine the types and concentrations of contaminants it contains. Depending on the test results, the material may be disposed of in a standard landfill or, if contamination exceeds certain thresholds, a specialized landfill, which significantly increases disposal costs. He noted that similar concerns exist with street sweepings, which can also contain contaminants, including emerging pollutants that are only beginning to be studied. He added that, in some cases, dredged material can remain on-site if it is determined to be safe, properly dried, capped, and covered with vegetation to prevent environmental risks. This approach can provide a more cost-effective alternative to landfill disposal.

Commissioner Killion inquired as to whether water quality testing is conducted within storm drains or immediately before stormwater enters the drainage system.

Mr. Barten responded that current monitoring efforts focus on collecting water samples from lakes, streams, and other receiving waters rather than from storm drains themselves. He noted that the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization has discussed expanding its monitoring program to sample storm sewer outfalls, such as the large pipes that discharge directly into the Mississippi River, to better understand what pollutants are entering the river. He added that comprehensive water quality monitoring is expensive, particularly when testing for a wide range of contaminants, with costs increasing depending on the number of parameters analyzed.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Judy Dunaski, 8300 Ashton Ave, inquired about the water testing process following repairs to water lines in the privately owned manufactured home community where she lives. After water service is restored, residents are placed under a boil-water advisory until a water sample is collected and tested to confirm the water is safe to drink. She asked where the samples are sent for testing and how the process works.

Commissioner Killion inquired as to whether the manufactured home community was privately owned or part of an association and whether the water samples were collected within the community.

Ms. Dunaski confirmed the community was privately owned and that samples were taken following repairs.

Commissioner Killion suggested that the Property Management Office or leasing company would likely be able to provide additional information about the testing process.

Ms. Dunaski inquired about street sweeping, noting that the City performs sweeping in the spring and fall but that she had not seen street sweeping occur recently in her privately owned manufactured home community as it had under previous ownership. She asked how street sweeping requirements are regulated and how those responsible for maintaining private streets are held accountable for completing that work.

Mr. Barten explained that street sweeping is generally not required on private streets. He noted that the City is responsible for sweeping City roads, counties maintain County roads, and MnDOT is responsible for State highways, but similar requirements typically do not apply to privately maintained roads.

He added that if she wished to have her tap water tested independently, she could contact the Dakota County Groundwater Department to inquire about free water testing kits. Although those programs are generally intended for private wells and groundwater, he noted that assistance may also be available for residents served by a public water system who have concerns about their drinking water.

Commissioner Lundquist expressed interest in expanding the use of rain gardens and suggested that both the Commission and the City could do more to promote them. He also suggested exploring a matching grant program, similar to those offered by other communities, to encourage additional rain garden installations and said he would be interested in working on such an initiative in the future.

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Commissioner Trenzeluk noted that the proposed data center had become a significant topic of discussion within the community and acknowledged that the City Council was actively addressing the issue. He suggested that, because of the potential water resource impacts, there may be an opportunity for the Environmental Advisory Commission to review environmental information related to the project if requested by the City. He emphasized that any involvement would depend on direction from the City.

Chair Goodman recalled that the Commission had previously developed a list of priorities, including reviewing and updating sections of the City Code related to topics such as data centers and emerald ash borer. She asked whether the Commission could play a role in recommending updates to modernize those provisions.

Commissioner Trenzeluk added that he had noted the City's stormwater management plan had recently been updated and was surprised the Commission had not been involved in that process. He suggested the Commission may have a role in reviewing similar planning efforts in the future.

Commissioner Killion questioned whether the Environmental Advisory Commission would have a role in reviewing or providing input on the proposed data center moratorium if it were brought forward by the City.

Stacy Bodsberg responded that she was unsure whether the Commission would have a role in reviewing the proposed moratorium but will inquire with City staff for clarification.

Commissioner Killion suggested it would be beneficial for the Commission to receive a presentation on data centers from someone with experience working with other communities if the opportunity became available.

Ms. Bodsberg responded that staff had discussed the topic and indicated that someone with relevant expertise could be invited to provide a presentation to the Commission on data centers.

Commissioner Ruiz noted that, while water use had received significant attention during discussions about data centers, residents had also raised concerns about noise and lighting. He suggested those issues should continue to be considered as part of any future review.

Commissioner Killion shared observations from a visit to a data center in Brooklyn Park, noting that little noise was noticeable on one side of the building, while equipment on the opposite side produced clearly audible noise.

Commissioner Ruiz suggested that noise mitigation standards, such as sound dampening measures, could be considered to reduce impacts from equipment.

Commissioner Killion suggested that building design could also help reduce noise, such as locating equipment within a courtyard surrounded by the building to provide additional sound buffering.

Commissioner Trenzeluk emphasized that he was not seeking to advise or interfere with the process but believed the Commission could provide constructive assistance if given the opportunity.

9. COMMISSION AND STAFF COMMENTS

None.

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10. ADJOURN

Motion by Killion, Second by Mikulski, to Adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m.

Ayes: 8

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Tammy Greenlee, City Recording Secretary.



Environmental Advisory Commission Staff Report

SUBJECT: **2050 Comprehensive Plan Update Informational Discussion**

MEETING DATE: August 27, 2026
ITEM TYPE: Regular Business
CONTACT: Kevin Shay, Planning Manager, 651-450-2554

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

Planning staff will provide an update to the Commission about the upcoming 2050 Comprehensive Plan work.

BACKGROUND

Pursuant to the Metropolitan Land Use Planning Act, jurisdictions within the 7-county Twin Cities Metropolitan area are required to complete Comprehensive Plan updates on a decennial basis. This process is guided by MN Statute requirements and is primarily administered by the Metropolitan Council. A Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document which allows cities to properly forecast growth and expected improvements within the community to ensure it is aligned from both a City and regional perspective. The document is a fairly lengthy plan which includes sections including, and at a minimum: land use, housing, transportation, parks, utilities, and natural resources. The intention of these plans is to plan for 20 years into the future, so the next planning cycle corresponds to the 2050 Comprehensive Plan. The City adopted its 2040 Comprehensive Plan in October 2019.

As part of this update process, there will be numerous community engagement events and items related to the plan that are anticipated to go before relevant Commissions and the City Council multiple times throughout the process. The EAC will be provided the Stormwater, Natural Resources and Climate sections of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan update for review as each of the chapters are drafted.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

None