



AGENDA

Environmental Management Commission

REGULAR MEETING
May 16, 2022
7:00 PM
Oakdale City Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. April 18, 2022

5. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION REVIEW

a. NEW BUSINESS

- i. Bike and Pedestrian Plan project update
- ii. Summary of 2022 Environment Commissions Conference

6. OTHER

- i. Monthly review of the 2022 EMC Editorial Calendar
- ii. Draft EV-ready ordinance and guidelines update*
- iii. Commissioner update(s)*
- iv. Council liaison update(s)*

7. ADJOURNMENT

*Items marked with an asterisk have no accompanying materials

**The next regular Environmental Management Commission meeting will be held
June 20, 2022 @ 7PM in the Council Chambers at Oakdale City Hall.**

**REGULAR MEETING
OAKDALE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
APRIL 18, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

The Oakdale Environmental Management Commission (EMC) held a meeting on Monday, April 18, 2022 at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting began at 7:00PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Chairperson: Keith Miller, Chairperson

Commissioners: Noah Gerding, Vice Chair
Nick Kantola
Bonnie Wilson
Connor Brown

Absent: Kevin Zabel, City Council Liaison

Also Present: Shannon Reidlinger, Sr. Community Development Specialist
Andrew Gitzlaff, Community Development Director

Quorum Present: YES NO

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILSON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER KANTOLA, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 7, 2022 AS WRITTEN.

**5 AYES
0 NAYS**

MOTION CARRIED

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION REVIEW

a. OLD BUSINESS

i. Draft EV-ready ordinance and guidelines update

Ms. Reidlinger provided an update on amending the Oakdale Code of Ordinances to include electric vehicle (EV)-ready language.

She shared that a public hearing of the draft EV-ready ordinance amendments was held at the April 7, 2022 meeting of the Oakdale Planning Commission, and that no comments were made by the public. Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the draft EV-ready ordinance amendments. Ms. Reidlinger summarized the draft EV-ready ordinance amendments and charging infrastructure guidelines document and discussed the next steps for pursuing City Council approval to amend the Oakdale Code of Ordinances as drafted. She explained that as EV technology and charging infrastructure evolves, the Code of Ordinances may be amended again to incorporate new design and installation standards.

In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding where the EV Charging Infrastructure Guidelines document will appear, Ms. Reidlinger explained that the document will be posted to the City of Oakdale's website.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KANTOLA, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GERDING, TO RECOMMEND THAT OAKDALE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE DRAFT EV-READY ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS AND CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE GUIDELINES.

**5 AYES
0 NAYS**

MOTION CARRIED

b. NEW BUSINESS

i. Review of 2021 GreenStep Cities metrics

Chair Miller explained that the City of Oakdale has been re-designated as a Step 4 and 5 city – the highest level of designation – through the GreenStep Cities program, and voiced particular interest in analyzing how the sustainability metrics tracked for the program have varied year-over-year during the pandemic.

Ms. Reidlinger summarized core sustainability and environmental metrics reported to the GreenStep Cities program for 2021. Of note,

- The Waters of Oakdale received ENERGY STAR certification in 2021 (metric 2.5, Private Buildings)
- More trees were planted in Oakdale by the City in 2021 than in 2020 (metric 8.6, Tree Canopy)
- More Oakdale residents and businesses participated in one or more of Xcel Energy's renewable energy programs (i.e. Windsource, Solar*Rewards Community, and Solar*Rewards) in 2020 than in 2019 (metric 14.5, Renewable Energy)

Chair Miller expressed enthusiasm for the positive trend in the number of residents and businesses participating in one or more of Xcel Energy's renewable energy programs, as clean energy alternatives are a point of focus in the 2022 EMC Work Plan. In response to Chair Miller's question regarding the lack of 2021 data for metrics 13.3 and 13.4 (Solid Waste), Ms. Reidlinger mentioned that more recent data on solid waste might be collected from the solid waste haulers licensed to operate in Oakdale. Chair Miller stressed the importance of collecting up-to-date data as much as possible.

Chair Miller highlighted that more solid waste was recycled in Oakdale in 2020 than in 2019 (metric 13.3, Solid Waste), and that more miles were traveled by vehicles in the City's fleet in 2021 than in 2020 (metrics 3.1 and 3.3, City Fleets). He mentioned that conducting an analysis of the City's fleet to identify opportunities for acquiring one or more electric vehicles may impact future GreenStep Cities reporting on metrics related to vehicle usage. Additionally, Chair Miller pointed out that more miles of sidewalks and trails in Oakdale were constructed or reconstructed in 2021 than in 2020 (metric 4.1, Infrastructure for Walking and Biking), and predicted that this metric may change more drastically after the City completes a Bike and Pedestrian Plan update in the coming year.

In response to Commissioner Gerding's question regarding whether metric 14.5 (Renewable Energy) defines non-City entities as both residents and businesses, Ms. Reidlinger confirmed that Xcel Energy's 2020 Community Report provides data only for residential and business customers. In response to Commissioner Gerding's question regarding the base number of resident and businesses participating in Xcel Energy's renewable energy programs, Ms. Reidlinger estimated that a few hundred customers in Oakdale participate in an Xcel Energy renewable energy program as of 2020.

In response to Chair Miller's question regarding whether metrics 14.6 and 14.7 (Renewable Energy) reflect total energy or just electricity, Ms. Reidlinger committed to finding an exact definition for the kilowatt hours reported in the City's monthly Xcel Energy bill. Chair Miller noted that the City had formerly signed up to receive 100% of its electricity from a community solar garden subscription and wondered if some of the City's electricity is no longer coming from that subscription.

Commissioner Kantola commended City Forester Loren Cota and the Oakdale Public Works crew for the increased number of trees planted by the City in 2021 than in 2020 (metric 8.6, Tree Canopy).

ii. Review of 2022 Washington County Recycling Grant draft projects

Ms. Reidlinger summarized project outcomes for the 2021 Washington County Recycling Grant.

Projects completed in 2021 included:

- *Promoting Washington County's food scraps drop-off program.* Free food scraps collection kits were given away with program sign-up at the Oakdale Farmers Market. Additionally, a video starring EMC Commissioners Gerding and Fink was produced to demonstrate how the program works in Oakdale households.
- *Promoting recycling through educational posts.* Recycling and compost education was shared via social media and a direct mailing campaign.

Ms. Reidlinger noted the need for more sophisticated data collection and tracking methodologies to better understand and quantify program outcomes in the future.

Ms. Reidlinger explained that draft projects for the 2022 Washington County Recycling grant continue the themes of projects completed in 2021 with the intention of engaging with and/or educating the community in a different way. Commissioner Gerding expressed interest in moving projects related to composting from the tactical (i.e. what can be done by individuals every day) to a systems approach.

In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding the launch of the curbside food scraps pickup program, Ms. Reidlinger shared that Washington County estimates launching the program in late 2022 or early 2023. In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding whether compost bins would be installed at public facilities in Oakdale after the curbside food scraps pickup program is launched, Ms. Reidlinger clarified that the County's curbside program is specifically for residential households, but that the 2022 Washington County Recycling Grant might be used to requisition and install compost bins for public facilities. Commissioner Gerding recommended utilizing the Farmers Market again to provide education about composting.

In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding proper disposal of organic material at Summerfest, Ms. Reidlinger mentioned that Washington County will provide consultative services to ensure that resources like bins and signage are made available for the proposed grant project. Commissioner Kantola speculated that individuals might incorrectly throw away non-organic materials in public compost bins too, and wondered whether pests might also be a problem for installed bins.

Chair Miller recognized the importance of Washington County's BizRecycling program and encouraged further spotlighting local businesses who have engaged in recycling and composting activities. He also highlighted the need to provide continued education on recycling best practices to multifamily dwellings.

Commissioner Kantola expressed interest in installing more waste bins at public parks in Oakdale. Chair Miller questioned whether more waste bins might be needed to handle increased waste produced in the park around holiday weekends, especially recycling bins.

Chair Miller noted that effective signage will be needed for any recycling bins installed.

Commissioner Gerding acknowledged that the draft 2022 Washington County Recycling Grant projects are logical continuations of grant projects completed in 2021 in terms of identifying barriers, increasing access, providing education, promoting programs, assessing needs, building discovery, and aligning systems with the EMC's 2022 Work Plan.

iii. 2022 Grow Solar Twin Cities solar group buy program update

Chair Miller provided an update on the 2022 Grow Solar Twin Cities solar group buy program. He shared that the request for proposals has gone out to solar contractors, and that the task force charged with selecting a solar contractor will be making a selection in May. He also mentioned that Solar Power Hour information sessions – both in-person and virtual – will begin in May as well.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILSON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GERDING, FOR THE EMC TO SUPPORT THE 2022 GROW SOLAR TWIN CITIES GROUP BUY PROGRAM.

**5 AYES
0 NAYS**

MOTION CARRIED

The EMC discussed hosting a Solar Power Hour information session. In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding whether the virtual Solar Power Hour information session was better attended last year than previous in-person sessions, Chair Wilson confirmed that more participants joined the virtual session last year and that more individuals participated in the solar group buy overall last year than in previous years as well. Commissioner Wilson emphasized the convenience of watching a playback recording of the virtual Solar Power Hour.

In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding promoting the virtual Solar Power Hour, Commissioner Kantola mentioned social media and the City's website as platforms for promotion. Ms. Reidlinger confirmed that the City's electric signage board in front of City Hall could also advertise the virtual Solar Power Hour.

The Commission agreed to host a virtual Solar Power Hour early in the summer.

c. OTHER ITEMS

i. Monthly review of the 2022 EMC Editorial Calendar

The EMC reviewed the themes and dates relevant to the 2022 environmental communications strategy for the months of March and April. Chair Miller noted that Earth Day is April 22, and that National Park Week is April 16 – 24. He also suggested the importance of promoting the Adopt a Drain, Adopt a Park, and Adopt a Wetland programs.

Chair Miller noted that May is National Bike Month, with Bike to Work Day on May 20 and Bike to Work Week from May 16 – 22. He emphasized promoting Oakdale's bike trails in the month of May, as well as pushing bicycling safety education. He highlighted the Minnesota Bicycle Alliance as a resource for bike safety education; Commissioner Wilson mentioned that AARP also has a bike safety education booklet. Ms. Reidlinger mentioned that the City would be relaunching a Bike and Pedestrian Plan update project, and that the EMC would be tapped to provide feedback on the deliverables for that project.

In response to Commissioner Gerding's question regarding whether engagement metrics for social media posts could be gathered, Ms. Reidlinger committed to determining what data points might be available for the EMC to review.

ii. Commissioner update(s)

Commissioner Gerding shared that the 2022 Environment Commission Conference, hosted by Conservation Minnesota, will be held at Ridgedale Public Library in Minnetonka on April 30 from 10 AM to 1:30 PM. He also proposed sharing action items or minutes between Oakdale's advisory bodies in order to better coordinate each commission's actions. Commissioner Kantola recommended meetings of the advisory body Chairs and/or Vice Chairs.

Chair Miller shared that he talked with a staff member at Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) about the Solar Rewards for Schools initiative sponsored by Xcel Energy. He subsequently sent an email to Oakdale's School District 622 with more information about the program.

Commissioner Kantola shared an update about the Arbor Day Tree Giveaway event on April 30. He mentioned that all 200 trees in the giveaway (including Blue Beech, Common Hackberry, Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry, and Juniper) had been pre-registered for. He noted that Master Gardners would be on hand to answer questions from the public at the Giveaway.

Commissioner Kantola shared that the Tree Board has been looking into the City's Tree Preservation Ordinances to ensure that trees and forestland is protected as development and redevelopment activities are underway in Oakdale.

iii. Council liaison updates

No update.

iv. Community Development Department update

Community Development Director Andy Gitzlaff gave a brief update on the progress of current and future development and redevelopment projects in Oakdale, and on planning studies.

In response to Commissioner Gerding's question regarding an oil storage tank in proximity to the proposed location of Iglesia Rios de Agua Viva, Mr. Gitzlaff explained that the parcel of land on which the church is built is behind the tank, and as such the tank is unlikely to be moved.

In response to Chair Miller's question regarding whether a bridge across Interstate 94 at the Helmo Station project will be open to vehicle traffic, Mr. Gitzlaff clarified that the bridge will have two general purpose lanes, a trail, and two lanes exclusively for bus rapid transit.

Chair Miller commented that many of the development and redevelopment projects in Oakdale could incorporate elements of focus in the 2022 EMC Work Plan, including expanding access to electric vehicles, diversifying bike and pedestrian transportation options, and installing solar panels.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Chair Miller reminded the Commission that the next meeting of the EMC will be Monday, May 16, 2022 in the City Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER KANTOLA, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GERDING, TO ADJOURN THE APRIL 18, 2022 REGULAR MEETING OF THE OAKDALE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AT 8:29 P.M.

**5 AYES
0 NAYS**

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Reidlinger
Sr. Community Development Specialist

TO: Environmental Management Commission
FROM: Shannon Reidlinger
DATE: May 11, 2022
SUBJ: Bike and Pedestrian Plan project update

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform the EMC of the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update project restart, and to generate discussion about the role of the commission in providing feedback on project deliverables.

BACKGROUND

Oakdale's bike and pedestrian system provides an affordable transportation option with recreation and health benefits. To better connect people and where they live to the region's growing multimodal transportation network, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan calls for updating the 1995 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (Chapter Three, Goal Four, Policy One). The City contracted with Toole Design in 2019 to undertake a Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update project; due to the pandemic, project work was halted in 2020 with three of six project phases completed. These three project phases included:

1. Presenting and approving the project work plan
2. Reviewing relevant local and regional bike and pedestrian plans and policies
3. Identifying existing bike and pedestrian system issues in Oakdale

Additionally, the following deliverables were completed before project work halted in 2020:

- A public, online survey about biking and walking habits, conditions, and amenity desires in Oakdale
- A level of traffic stress analysis
- A bus stop inventory
- Gold Line transit station travel shed maps
- A map of community destinations
- A map of existing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure

Staff collaborated with Toole Design to restart the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update project in early 2022. To guide project completion, a revised scope of work will:

- Deliver an updated project management plan, an updated existing facilities map, and a future (already-planned) facilities map
- Execute a public engagement plan and summarize engagement results. The public engagement plan will incorporate feedback from existing advisory bodies (including the Environmental Management Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Economic Development Commission) as well as community-based focus groups and the City Council
- Determine Bike and Pedestrian Plan goals and strategies
- Outline network recommendations
- Identify cost estimates, timelines, and funding sources for goals and bike and trail projects

The final deliverable of the project will be an updated Bike and Pedestrian System Plan. The anticipated project completion date is February 2023.

COMMISSION ENGAGEMENT

Input on the project will be collected from public focus groups and from Oakdale's advisory committees, including the Economic Development Commission, EMC, Parks and Recreation Commission, and/or Planning Commission. As the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update is a component of the EMC's 2022 Work Plan, the EMC will serve as the primary advisory body for the project.

During project review meetings, Toole Design will assist in addressing questions, comments, and suggestions from the EMC and other advisory bodies on the following:

1. Identify issues and opportunities, and develop draft goals.
2. Solicit feedback on the recommended approach for public involvement.
3. Review community feedback and prioritize projects.
4. Comment on draft plan.

TO: Environmental Management Commission
FROM: Shannon Reidlinger
DATE: May 11, 2022
SUBJ: Summary of 2022 Environment Commissions Conference

This memorandum summarizes key takeaways from the 2022 Environment Commissions Conference and invites conversation about future engagement between the EMC and peer city commissions.

The 2022 Environment Commissions Conference was hosted by Conservation Minnesota at Ridgedale Public Library in Minnetonka on April 30, 2022 from 10 AM to 1:30 PM. The conference provided an opportunity for advisory body members to network and learn from peers across the state who are working on environment, climate, and conservation at the city level. Commissioner Gerding and Commissioner Wilson represented Oakdale's EMC.

The conference featured presentations from:

- Diana McKeown with Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) on resources for cities interested in electric vehicles;
- Larry Kraft (who serves on the St. Louis Park City Council) on the recent declarations by Minnesota cities about the climate emergency; and
- Katie Jones with the Center for Energy and the Environment on city energy policies around benchmarking, sustainable building policies, and energy and climate planning.

Key ideas from the conference included:

- Creating a strategic climate action plan;
- Better leveraging the resources provided by CERTs;
- Expanding commission capacity by including a GreenCorps member or local high school student;
- Increasing communication about city-wide sustainability achievements, like GreenStep Cities designation; and
- Developing community engagement strategies to target specific audiences with education about environmentally sustainable activities and solutions.

TO: Environmental Management Commission
FROM: Shannon Reidlinger
DATE: May 11, 2022
SUBJ: Monthly review of the 2022 EMC Editorial Calendar

The 2022 Environmental Management Commission (EMC) Editorial Calendar is designed to generate public outreach and communication about the Commission’s priorities related to solid waste, recycling, composting, air and water quality, and energy conservation. Topics of interest, dates of note, and relevant community resources may vary as the calendar is refined and updated; consequently, the EMC shall provide a recommendation to staff on the messages and resources of highest importance month-to-month.

This memorandum seeks to open discussion on the message and resources of focus in May, June, and July of 2022.

2022 EMC Editorial Calendar	
May: Bicycling and Transportation	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<i>Bike to Work Day – May 20</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local trails and routes • Bicycle safety and education • General emission reduction education (including electric vehicles)
<i>National Bike to Work Week – May 16 – 22</i>	
<i>National Bike Month</i>	
June: Renewable Energy	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<i>World Environment Day – Jun 5</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable energy programs via Xcel Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Windsource ○ Solar*Rewards (installed solar panels) ○ Solar*Rewards Community (community solar garden) • Grow Solar Twin Cities solar group buy
July: Going Plastic-Free	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<i>Plastic Bag Free Day – Jul 3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington County Environmental Center (reuse room, food scrap drop-off program) • Compost bins and reusable bags at the Farmers Market • https://www.plasticfreejuly.org
<i>Plastic Free July</i>	

Social media posts of note in April and May 2022 include:

- Promotion of the Landscape Revival Expo & Market (posted April 1 and May 9)
- Promotion of a free mobile shredding event (posted April 9, 28, 29, & 30)
- Promotion of the Washington County-sponsored rain barrel sale (posted April 11)
- Promotion of the 2022 Oakdale Citywide Garage Sale (posted April 11 & 14, and May 2 & 5)
- Promotion of free entrance to all Washington County Parks and Minnesota State Parks in celebration of Earth Day (posted April 19 & 21)
- Recognition of Earth Day (posted April 22)
- Recognition of Park Clean Up Week and promotion of sign-up for trash bags available at the Discovery Center (posted April 27)
- Promotion of the Arbor Day Tree Giveaway event (posted April 29 & 30)
- Recognition of street sweeping as a method to keep contaminants out of wetlands (posted May 4)