



AGENDA

Environmental Management Commission

REGULAR MEETING
November 21, 2022
7:00 PM
Oakdale City Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. October 17, 2022

5. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION REVIEW

a. **OLD BUSINESS**

- i. Draft 2023 EMC Work Plan approval
- ii. Electric Vehicle Suitability Assessment update

6. OTHER

- i. Monthly review of the 2022 EMC Editorial Calendar
- ii. Commissioner update(s)*
- iii. 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
January 9, 2022 @ 7PM in the Council Chambers at Oakdale City Hall.**

**REGULAR MEETING
OAKDALE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
OCTOBER 17, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

The Oakdale Environmental Management Commission (EMC) held a meeting on Monday, October 17, 2022 at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting began at 7:00 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Chairperson: Noah Gerding, Vice Chair

Commissioners: Bonnie Wilson
Connor Brown

Also Present: Shannon Reidlinger, Sr. Community Development Specialist and City Staff Liaison

Absent: Keith Miller, Chairperson
Kevin Zabel, City Council Liaison

Quorum Present: YES NO

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILSON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BROWN, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2022 AS WRITTEN.

**3 AYES
0 NAYS**

MOTION CARRIED

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION REVIEW

a. OLD BUSINESS

i. Draft 2023 EMC Work Plan

Ms. Reidlinger provided a brief overview of the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan and explained the supporting documents that shape the content of the work plan, including the 2022 EMC Work Plan, Chapter Eight (Resiliency) of the city's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, and a summary of the

29 GreenStep Cities program best practices. She noted that elements of the 2022 Work Plan have carried over into the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan, including actions related to community readiness for electric vehicles, projects funded by the Washington County recycling grant, the completion of the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update project, and annual reporting of sustainability metrics for continued designation through the GreenStep Cities program.

Commissioner Gerding reflected that a theme of the 2022 EMC Work Plan was energy conservation and consumption. He encouraged the Commission to consider a theme for the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan.

Commissioner Wilson noted a desire to see energy conservation and consumption education continue in 2023 in the wake of economic uncertainty and cost inflation, and suggested that information around energy efficient cost saving strategies – rather than around purchasing new solar panels and electric vehicles – should be emphasized. Commissioner Brown recommended that residents and business owners be made aware of tax rebates associated with clean and renewable energy alternatives too, as part of the broader effort to educate the community about energy conservation and consumption in 2023. Commissioner Gerding suggested that a theme of the draft 2023 Work Plan may be diving deeper into elements of the 2022 EMC Work Plan by informing the community how to take advantage of sustainable solutions that already exist.

Commissioner Wilson recommended that the City better promote existing commercial use of solar panels to better encourage businesses to consider solar energy alternatives. She lifted up HOM Furniture and the Animal Emergency Referral Center as two examples of Oakdale businesses that have installed solar panels for their energy needs, and suggested that those examples be highlighted in some way.

Commissioner Gerding noted that one of the GreenStep Cities program best practices surrounds sustaining the ecological function of local waterbodies, and he proposed focusing part of the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan around water quality in Oakdale, including the health of the watershed and of surface water, and runoff mitigation. Commissioner Brown questioned whether advocating for regular water quality tests may be part of the EMC's work. Commissioner Gerding agreed that water quality tests may be an option, and that conducting a baseline assessment in conjunction with establishing a long term strategic plan for water quality improvement may build upon test results. Commissioner Gerding also noted that cost barriers to soil and water quality improvement projects are lowered by available grant programs, and that funding information should be more broadly shared with residents and business owners.

In response to Commissioner Gerding's question regarding whether offering bill clinics through the Citizens Utility Board (CUB) is the right avenue to educate residents about energy conservation, Ms. Reidlinger mentioned that CUB has coordinated bill clinics in Oakdale in the past but that services may have transitioned to a virtual platform during the pandemic and

were not widely promoted to the community in the previous two years. She suggested that the Commission may elect to focus on promoting those services again in 2023. Commissioner Gerding agreed that utilizing technology to educate residents and business owners about energy bill savings is a desirable focus of the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan.

Commissioner Wilson indicated that hosting an educational fair may help inform the community about the wide variety of grants and resources available for environmentally sustainable projects and daily practices. Commissioner Gerding summarized that a general focus on education may be a theme of the draft 2023 Work Plan.

In response to Commissioner Gerding's question regarding the process to achieve SolSmart designation, Ms. Reidlinger explained that certain actions must be taken by the community surrounding solar accessibility in order to attain a designation level through the SolSmart program. She clarified that those actions may occur at the administrative and/or the infrastructure level, among other avenues. She noted that a municipality may be designated at the bronze, silver, or gold level. In response to Commissioner Gerding's question regarding at what point a municipality may seek SolSmart designation, Ms. Reidlinger suggested that researching designation activities to better understand how designation may align with the City's goals and objectives could be an element of the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan. She also suggested that a noted increase in residential and commercial permits for solar panel installation may be a data point to indicate that Oakdale is ready to pursue SolSmart designation.

In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding whether the EMC is responsible for pursuing strategies to improve the city's tree canopy, Ms. Reidlinger proposed working with the Oakdale Tree Board to understand how the EMC can appropriately impact community goals related to Oakdale's trees.

Ms. Reidlinger clarified that a refined version of the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan will be presented at the November 21, 2022 EMC meeting, and then will be summarized for the Oakdale City Council in the first quarter of 2023.

b. 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 October, November, and December. Commissioner Gerding praised the City for its increased bandwidth for social media communication.

In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding whether Washington County's food scraps drop-off program might be moved to a location more accessible for Oakdale residents,

Ms. Reidlinger informed the Commission that the County is coordinating a food scraps pick-up program to be made available to residents likely in 2024. She explained that the City will continue to promote the County's food scraps drop-off program until the new pick-up program is launched.

In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding pumpkin disposal, Ms. Reidlinger shared that the City is coordinating with the County to make a dumpster available for residents to dispose of their pumpkins.

In response to Commissioner Wilson's question regarding whether the City will provide Christmas light recycling services, Ms. Reidlinger clarified that the goal of environmental communication in 2022 is to help residents understand available waste reduction resources during the holiday season.

In response to Commissioner Gerding's question regarding whether the City collects testimonials from local businesses about waste reduction activities, Ms. Reidlinger explained that one project funded by the 2022 Washington County Recycling Grant is cataloging and promoting stories of how local businesses have applied for and utilized grant money through the County's BizRecycling program.

ii. Commissioner update(s)

Commissioner Wilson summarized her participation in the Development Bus Tour. She expressed appreciation for seeing construction projects throughout the City in person, including the location of future Gold Line stations. She encouraged more transparency on the City's website about current and future development projects.

Ms. Reidlinger reminded the Commission that the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update project open house will be hosted on October 19, 2022 from 5–7 PM, and that an online survey and Wikimap is available for residents and business owners to fill out as well.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Commissioner Wilson reminded the Commission that the next meeting of the EMC will be Monday, November 21, 2022 in the City Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER WILSON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BROWN, TO ADJOURN THE OCTOBER 17, 2022 REGULAR MEETING OF THE OAKDALE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AT 7:37 P.M.

Environmental Management Commission Draft Minutes
October 17, 2022
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3 AYES
0 NAYS

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Reidlinger
Sr. Community Development Specialist

TO: Environmental Management Commission
FROM: Shannon Reidlinger
DATE: November 16, 2022
SUBJ: Draft 2023 EMC Work Plan approval

This memorandum invites conversation about the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan in order to finalize its contents prior to Commission approval.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Chapter Six, Article I, Sec. 6-02 of the City Code of Ordinances establishes the EMC as an advisory body which acts in an advisory capacity to the City Council and City Administrator in all matters pertaining to solid waste, recycling, composting, storm water run-off, water quality improvements, wetland conservation and management, air quality, ground and drinking water, tree preservation, and energy conservation. To support this function, the 2023 EMC Work Plan will guide and focus the seven-member Commission's work during its monthly meetings and in the community.

The finalized 2023 EMC Work Plan will be presented to City Council in early 2023 for consideration and feedback. The draft 2023 EMC Work Plan, presented on the following page, reflects priorities identified in the resiliency chapter of the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program (a voluntary challenge, assistance, and recognition program to help cities achieve their sustainability and quality-of-life goals).

The draft 2023 EMC Work Plan focuses on annual, ongoing items related to education about and promotion of waste reduction, reuse, and recycling; on continuing to implement priority actions outlined in the 2021 EV-Ready Community Study; on concluding the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update project; on promoting information regarding energy efficiency alternatives and resources; and on supporting water quality conservation and improvement activities.

COMMISSION ENGAGEMENT

Commission members are encouraged to provide opinions and commentary on the content of the draft 2023 Work Plan. Specifically, the Commission is asked to identify:

- Themes, goals, and/or actions not included in the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan that should be incorporated into the finalized document
- Themes, goals, and/or actions that should be removed from the draft 2023 EMC Work Plan
- Themes, goals, and/or actions that are of the highest priority to the Commission in 2023
- New or innovative actions that may be piloted in 2023 to support identified themes and/or goals

DRAFT 2023 EMC WORK PLAN

Electric Vehicle (EV) Priorities

2040 Comp Plan relevance	Action	Description
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policy 6	EV-Ready Community Study priority action implementation	<p>Analyze opportunity to transition one or more City fleet vehicles to an electric alternative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude EV Suitability Assessment and share findings and recommendations with City Council. Determine continued participation in Xcel Energy’s Fleet Electrification Advisory Program.
		<p>Coordinate opportunities for education around EV infrastructure and vehicle purchasing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor, coordinate, and promote a local ride-and-drive where residents may test drive an EV (if possible given COVID restrictions) and speak with actual EV owners about their experience.
		<p>Streamline electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) permitting requirements with suggested process updates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an online process for EVSE permitting. Provide education to businesses, developers, homeowners, and electrical contractors about EVSE installation guidelines.

Other Applicable 2040 Comprehensive Plan Priorities

2040 Comp Plan relevance	Action	Description
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policies 1 & 5	Promote energy efficiency and renewable energy in residential & commercial properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Xcel Energy Rebate Programs (including Windsource, Solar*Rewards Community, and Solar*Rewards), PACE, and Trillion BTU.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote availability of tax rebates, utility credits, and/or financing opportunities for renewable energy solutions. • Host a Solar Twin Cities Power Hour. • Share testimonials of local businesses that have incorporated renewable energy solutions into business operations.
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policy 2	Connect low-income residents to weatherization and EE resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a CUB Bill Clinic (virtual or in-person). • Provide information about energy assistance programs, energy weatherization opportunities, and energy auditing services available through Washington County and other organizations to help residents and business owners impact energy bill cost savings.
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policy 3 & 4	Increase access to solar	Research SoSmart bronze level designation.
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policy 7	Reduce waste generation, increase recycling	Leverage funds from the Washington County Recycling Grant to promote recycling and waste reduction programs. (Specific projects to be determined Q1 of 2023.)
Chapter 8, Goal 2, Policy 4	Promote water conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Adopt-a-Drain (including EMC's adoption of drains at Walton Park) through communication channels and at community events. • Provide education about, and resources for, water infiltration/reuse practices including: rain gardens, rainwater harvesting, green alleys or green parking lots, pervious/permeable pavement or pavers, green roofs/green walls, tree trenches/tree boxes, and/or incorporating compost and native plants into landscape design. • Promote grant opportunities for water quality improvement project available through the three local Watershed Districts.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish the baseline health of Oakdale’s local water bodies.
GreenStep Cities Best Practice Priorities		
2040 Comp Plan relevance	Action	Description
Chapter 3, Goal 4 and 5	Implement GreenStep Cities Best Practice Action 11.5	Complete the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update project.
	2022 metrics reporting	Update metrics to reflect 2022 data.

TO: Environmental Management Commission
FROM: Shannon Reidlinger
DATE: November 16, 2022
SUBJ: Electric Vehicle Suitability Assessment update

This memorandum updates the EMC on the City's participation in Xcel Energy's Fleet Electrification Advisory Program (FEAP) and summarizes the Electric Vehicle Suitability Assessment (EVSA), a primary component of program participation.

BACKGROUND

At the June 28, 2022 regular meeting, City Council authorized the Mayor and City Administrator to execute a Terms Document with Sawatch Labs to conduct an EVSA. The purpose of the assessment is to identify fleet vehicles that are a good candidate to be replaced with an EV. The output of the assessment is an online planning tool that includes information on the latest EV models, customizable financial analytics, and GPS data for infrastructure needs specific to Oakdale's fleet. The outcome of the assessment is a recommendation regarding a fleet electrification strategy for consideration by City Council that keeps costs low for the City and drives the best return on investment when planning to install charging capacity and incorporate EVs into Oakdale's fleet.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Telematics devices for data collection were installed in late August of 2022 in 12 fleet vehicles. Telematics data will be gathered for 90 days, until late November or early December 2022. As of mid-October 2022, six fleet vehicles participating in the assessment have been initially identified as ideal candidates for transition to an electric alternative based on vehicle type, consistency of vehicle use, and mileage traveled. Complete data collection may alter this initial recommendation.

The results of the EVSA will be delivered in early 2023 to the City by Sawatch Labs via webinar; staff will share a summary of results with City Council at a subsequent Council workshop.

TO: Environmental Management Commission
FROM: Shannon Reidlinger
DATE: November 16, 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 November and December of 2022, and January of 2023.

2022/2023 EMC Editorial Calendar	
November: Recycling	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<i>America Recycles Day – Nov 15</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington County Environmental Center • BizRecycling • Food scraps drop-off program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pumpkin composting ○ EMC-specific composting video
December: Low-waste Holidays	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<i>National Christmas Lights Day – Dec 1</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree recycling via Oakdale Public Works • Christmas lights – energy efficiency and resources for recycling
<i>World Pollution Prevention Day – Dec 2</i>	
January: Energy Efficiency	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<i>National Cut Your Energy Costs Day – Jan 10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home and business energy audit • Xcel Energy rebates for homes and businesses • Commercial energy efficiency resources (Clean Energy Project Builder, PACE, Trillion BTU) • Residential energy efficiency resources and weatherization opportunities available via County, State, and other local organizations
<i>National Organize Your Home Day – Jan 14</i>	

Social media posts are scheduled and subject to review by Communications staff. Proposed social media posts in the month of November include:

- Recognition of [America Recycles Day](#) on November 15
- Promotion of the City's pumpkin drop-off program
- Sharing information and education about Washington County's [BizRecycling program](#)

Select social media posts of note in October and November 2022 include:

- Reminder not to rake leaves into the street (October 5)
- Promotion of the Bike and Pedestrian Update Project open house (October 6 and October 19)
- Sharing of Emerald Ash Borer removal best practices (October 15)
- Recognition of the annual buckthorn removal at the Oakdale Nature Preserve (October 20)
- Promotion of the pumpkin drop-off program (October 26 and November 6)
- Reminder to complete the online questionnaire and WikiMap for the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update project (October 29)
- Reminder to recycle campaign signs at the Washington County Environmental Center (November 9)
- Recognition of America Recycles Day (November 15)