

**HOPKINS CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
AGENDA**

Tuesday, June 8, 2021

6:30 pm

Hopkins City Hall – Council Chambers

6:30 p.m. Sustainability Update; Imihy

7:30 p.m. Development Update; Kersten (verbal)

Other

Adjournment



Administration

CITY OF HOPKINS

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor and Council Members
Mike Mornson, City Manager

From: PeggySue Imihy, Management Analyst

Date: June 8, 2021

Subject: Sustainability Update

Purpose

At the June 8, 2021 work session, staff will present current and past sustainability initiatives and accomplishments across departments. This will include:

- Addition of Management Analyst and GreenCorps Member positions
- City investments into facilities, infrastructure and participation in renewable energies
- Policy development and program participation
- Existing sustainability goals from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan
- Potential new and continued initiatives

Staff is interested in understanding what aspects of sustainability are the highest priority for the City Council and how best this work can move forward.

Background and History

GreenCorps Member and Management Analyst

The City has been selected to host a GreenCorps Member from September 2021-August 2022. It will be a full time position with no staffing costs to the City. The focus of the work plan is on community readiness and outreach. The GreenCorps Member will focus on three projects:

Waste reduction, recycling and organics management

- Develop educational materials and engage with the community on waste reduction, recycling, and the new curbside organics program
- Specifically engage with multi-family rental property managers and residents to promote waste reduction and recycling

Air pollutant reduction

- Develop educational materials and engage with the community on active living, multi-modal transportation, and walking/biking to transit and other destinations
- Help coordinate targeted community events and demonstration projects to gather feedback on potential enhancements or improvements along biking and walking routes to the future light rail stations (focus area is south Hopkins)

Community sustainability

- Engage and educate the community on pollinator friendly native landscaping
- Plan and coordinate a demonstration project in a local park
- Review the University of Minnesota's Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management capstone course reports and recommendations that were developed for Hopkins; assess the City's readiness and interest in pursuing these projects, and recommend steps in moving forward

Additionally, PeggySue Imihy, AICP has joined the staff as a Management Analyst, and as part of her work will oversee continued sustainability efforts and supervise the GreenCorps Member in addition to other duties.

City investments into facilities and infrastructure and participation in renewable energies

Public Works has and continues to coordinate replacements of equipment in city facilities with more sustainable options. This includes conversion of inefficient lighting to LED lighting in all facilities, which is scheduled to be substantially complete by the end of the year, replacements of high-efficiency rooftop units, and the installation of soft start motors in water distribution facilities.

City Solar Panel Projects

The City completed a facility solar project in 2020. There is a solar array on the Public Works building, the Hopkins Pavilion and the Fire Station. A summary of the expected energy produced is shown below:

- Public Works building: The solar array is expected to produce about 210,000 kWhrs of energy per year, this is about 97% of the energy consumed by the building in year 2019.
- Hopkins Pavilion: The solar array is expected to produce about 149,000 kWhrs per year, this is about 34% of the energy consumed by the building in year 2019.
- Fire Station: Expected energy production per year is about 60,000 kWhrs per year, this is about 29% of the energy consumed in year 2019.

Electric Charging Stations

Electric Charging Stations have been installed in the municipal ramp as well as lot located near Driskill's.

Community Solar Garden Participation

The City entered into this new solar program in 2015, shortly after it was approved by the Minnesota Legislature in late 2014. The City entered into a 25-year power purchase agreement with SunEdison to purchase up to 5,500 MW-hrs per year at a cost indexed at \$0.01/kW-hr less than the Xcel Energy rate – with an anticipated energy cost savings of \$70,000+ per year.

Currently, the City is subscribed to four separate solar gardens, located in Carver and Dakota Counties. The first to go into service in 2018 was the 5 MW Nesvold 1-5 solar gardens, Watertown Township, MN. The City of Hopkins subscribes to 25.8% of Nesvold garden's power production. The total energy purchased by the City from the

solar gardens equals just over 3,033,000 kWhrs per year. **This equates to about 56% of the City's annual energy demand.**

Policy development and program participation

The city actively participates in a number of sustainability focused programs which contribute to the overall sustainability and residency of the city such as:

- MinnPACE
- Sol Smart
- Home Energy Squad
- Adopt-A-Drain

The Planning and Economic Development department has worked to encourage sustainable design in new development through:

- Requiring sustainable building commitments in PUD zoning approvals
- Successfully securing environmental investigation and clean-up funds through Hennepin County, Met Council and the State of Minnesota for many brownfield sites; and
- Requiring bike amenities in new developments through the zoning code and PUD zoning approvals

In Engineering, the department has designed projects to encourage contractors to reuse and/or recycle materials onsite, such as a reclaiming bituminous pavement to reuse as roadway subgrade, as well as incorporate storm water treatment into street reconstruction project above and beyond permit requirements.

Engineering has also coordinated improvements during the SWLRT design so that a Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) approved quiet zone can be implemented once construction of the SWLRT is complete. Construction will include the long-term implementation of design elements for quiet zones and where the routine sounding of horns would be eliminated because of safety improvements at at-grade crossings, including modifications to streets, raised median barriers, four quadrant gates, and other improvements designed and implemented by the Project and consistent with quiet zone readiness. This will result in the elimination of the majority of the noise impacts from the project through the use of mitigation measures, such as noise walls, or rail quiet zone. Timing of this is subject to the Federal process.

Staff is also currently working to expand organics collection in compliance with upcoming the Hennepin County mandate, and more information will be provided at the July 13, 2021 City Council work session.

2040 Comprehensive Plan Goals

Sustainability goals were not previously part of the 2030 comprehensive plan but many initiatives were still carried out by staff in the time period between comprehensive plans. During the community engagement process many residents noted a desire for the city to increase sustainability efforts and become more resilient to the effects of climate change.

Using this information from the community and centering much of the existing staff work, a vision of sustainability and resiliency was created within the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

Broad vision statements included:

- Improve the overall sustainability and resiliency of the City of Hopkins.
- Pursue holistic approach to developing a resilient City, including natural environment, public health, economic impacts and other aspects
- Support increased resilience in Hopkins by increasing the ability of a system to survive, adapt and grow in the face of climate change and related incidents
- Develop response strategies for major incidents, both natural and human-made

Additionally, more specific ideas, which fit into clearly defined categories are below:

<p>Land Use and Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage sustainable practices in locating, designing, constructing and maintaining development in the City • Promote the cleanup and reuse of brownfield sites and use sustainable practices to prevent future soil contamination 	<p>Renewable Energy & Facility Efficiency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the use of solar power and other renewable sources for City infrastructure, facilities and operations and encourage residents and businesses to make renewable energy improvements
<p>Water:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve water resources by continuing education and incentive programs to ensure the City has adequate water supply to meet the long term needs of the citizens • Improve water quality by requiring design and use of erosion control plans and storm water pollution prevention plans to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local regulations, minimize pollution and contamination of waterways and enhance and protect biodiversity and ecosystems • Ensure wastewater is managed and treated in a way that protects the natural environment • Improve water quality through reduction in runoff and management of storm water 	<p>Ground Cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve and restore open spaces and natural resources to increase resilience, adaptability, and biological integrity • Maintain and increase the urban tree canopy to provide benefits to the community
<p>Solid Waste and Recycling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the overall disposal of solid waste and increase reuse and recycling to conserve environmental resources 	<p>Community Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and improve indoor and outdoor air quality • Mitigate and/or reduce noise pollution where possible, particularly near residential areas

Some categories which were not directly addressed through our comprehensive plan's sustainability goals, but are included in many communities sustainability planning efforts include:

- Fleet and Equipment
- Transportation
- Environmental Justice and Equitable Priorities and Outcomes

Staff is interested in hearing the City Council's thoughts about which sustainability areas are the highest priority for the community as well as what other areas should be added in work planning efforts.

Next Steps

Potential Initiatives

As part of the ongoing sustainability work, staff has identified a number of opportunities which could be pursued as part of continued work on these goals. These include, but are not limited to:

- GreenStep Cities advancement – accomplishing steps 4 & 5
- Participating in Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy Program
- Energy benchmarking through B3 Benchmarking and/or Regional Indicators Initiative
- Additional city-owned solar installation
- Native plantings and pollinator gardens on city-owned parcels and in city parkland
- Installation of additional electric chargers and fleet conversion
- Increase communication and messaging around sustainability

Staff will be evaluating these as part of work planning and is interested in hearing the City Council's ideas for other ways to advance sustainability goals or if any of these ideas should be prioritized.

Zoning Code Update

As part of ongoing efforts to update the City's zoning code staff is seeking direction on the City Council's support for increased requirements related to sustainable development policies.

Budgeting and Work Plan

Staff is interested in understanding the desire of the City Council regarding creating a budget for sustainability related items and for advancing the work plan. As next steps, staff will take Council feedback to draft a work plan and bring it back to this body at a later date.