



AGENDA

Environmental Management Commission

REGULAR MEETING

February 9, 2026

6:30 PM

Oakdale City Council Chambers

1. INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH CITY COUNCIL REGARDING ANNUAL WORK PLAN AND FUTURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

MOVE TO DAIS FOR CONTINUATION OF REGULAR BUSINESS AND BROADCASTING

2. CALL TO ORDER

3. CALL OF ROLL

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. November 17, 2025

7. OPEN FORUM

8. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION REVIEW

a. **OLD BUSINESS**

- i. None

b. **NEW BUSINESS**

- i. Election of Commission Chair and Vice Chair
- ii. 2050 Comprehensive Plan
- iii. Review of 2025 Washington County Recycling Grant and Discussion of Potential 2026 Projects
- iv. 2026 EMC Environmental Communications Strategy Discussion

9. OTHER

- a. Staff Liaison Update(s)
 - i. Community Development Update(s)*
- b. Commissioner Update(s)*
- c. Council Liaison Update(s)*

10. ADJOURNMENT

*Items marked with an asterisk have no accompanying materials.

The next regular Environmental Management Commission meeting will be held on March 16, 2026 @ 7 PM in the Hadley Conference Room at Oakdale City Hall.

DRAFT 2026 EMC WORK PLAN

Items in orange have been added or edited since the November 17, 2025 EMC meeting based on Commission feedback

Electric Vehicle (EV) Priorities		
2040 Comp Plan relevance	Action	Description
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policy 6	EV-Ready Community Study priority action implementation	<p>Continue to analyze the opportunity to transition City fleet vehicles to electric alternatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor changes in technology and market availability. • Consider charging infrastructure types and locations. • Look for grant and funding opportunities. • Determine available technical assistance programs.
		<p>Coordinate opportunities for EV purchase and infrastructure education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile and promote availability of state and federal tax rebates and financing opportunities for residents/businesses interested in electric vehicles.
		<p>Electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide education to businesses, developers, homeowners, and electrical contractors about EVSE installation guidelines. • Research funding opportunities to help pay for charging infrastructure. • Analyze best locations for fleet charging infrastructure and public charging infrastructure.
		<p>Explore the feasibility of achieving silver certification in the Charging Smart program. Oakdale has already received bronze</p>

		certification, which was a 2024 Work Plan action.
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 and 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. Promote Home Energy Squad rebates available to Oakdale residents. Encourage households to conduct an energy audit. Promote availability of state and federal tax rebates, utility credits, and/or financing opportunities for renewable energy solutions. Research solar group buy programs that are available in the Twin Cities. Share testimonials of residents and local businesses that have incorporated energy efficiency or renewable energy solutions into their homes and business operations. Share resources available to multifamily residents. Engage with multifamily buildings regarding energy efficiency.
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policy 2	Connect low-income residents to weatherization and energy efficiency resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Home Energy Squad rebates available to Oakdale residents. Promote that free visits are available to income-qualified households. Encourage households to conduct an energy audit. Provide information about energy assistance programs, energy weatherization opportunities, and energy auditing services available through the State, Washington County, and other organizations to help residents and business owners achieve energy bill cost savings. Promote Community Action Partnership's energy assistance and energy conservation

		<p>/ weatherization programs available to Washington County residents that meet the income eligibility requirements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share resources available to multifamily residents. Engage with multifamily buildings regarding energy efficiency.
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policy 3 & 4	Increase access to solar	Research SolSmart bronze level designation.
Chapter 8, Goal 1, Policy 7	Reduce waste generation, increase recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage funds from the Washington County Recycling Grant to promote recycling and waste reduction programs for single-family residents, multifamily residents, and businesses. • Determine opportunities for single-use plastic reduction and education.
Chapter 8, Goal 2, Policies 1-5	Promote water conservation, quality, etc.	<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. • Continue Commissioner assignments to clear drains adopted by the EMC. • 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 existing water quality and conservation demonstration projects at City buildings/parks or other places through social media and stories. Explore opportunities for improved and resilient stormwater infrastructure at commercial properties. • Educate residents about smart deicing and chloride-free practices in winter (e.g., use of grit instead of chloride deicers).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote resident grant opportunities for water quality improvement projects available through Oakdale's three local Watershed Districts and Blue Thumb (Metro Blooms). • Understand the baseline health of Oakdale's local water bodies – utilize water monitoring and data resources from the three watershed districts. Continue Revive conversations with South Washington Watershed District regarding Armstrong Lake and surrounding wetland restoration project. • Continue to discuss the future of the Adopt-A-Wetland program. • Create an educational and communications campaign about wetlands and water resources. Explore pilot with property owners at Tanners Lake, Armstrong Lake, and Mud Lake. • Create policy recommendations for the City Council regarding rain gardens, right-of-way, and curb cuts.
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GreenStep Cities Best Practice Priorities

2040 Comp Plan relevance	Action	Description
	2026 reporting	Submit Step 4 and Step 5 documentation.
Other		
2040 Comp Plan relevance	Action	Description
Chapter 5, Goals 1-4	Park System Plan	Support the City during implementation of the Park System Plan and its efforts to add pollinator, native habitat, and trails to parks.
Chapter 8, Goal 2, Policy 7	Open space and trees	Determine how the Environmental Management Commission can support the City and other advisory bodies with open space and tree efforts.

Chapter 8, Goals 1 and 2	Host Eco Fair and clothing swap	Host the Eco Fair on Saturday, April 25, 2026 at Castle Elementary. Residents and others will have the opportunity to visit different booths to learn about energy efficiency, natural resources, climate, water conservation, transportation, and other environmental issues. As part of the Eco Fair, a clothing swap is also proposed.
	Promote multimodal transportation	Identify opportunities to promote the METRO Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit.
	City operations and buildings	Identify and research opportunities to implement green initiatives for City operations and buildings.
	2050 Comprehensive Plan	The process to update Oakdale's Comprehensive Plan will begin in 2026. The Environmental Management Commission will assist as necessary in this effort.

Additional Items for Consideration in 2026 or Beyond

- *Develop a Climate Action Plan for Oakdale.* Other cities in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and the State have adopted Climate Action Plans, which can serve as roadmaps to reduce emissions and prepare for climate change. City staff is monitoring grants that may be available for this work. Climate action planning can be done as part of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan or as a separate effort.
- *Evaluate joining the Gold Leaf Challenge.* This is a new program that uses GreenStep Cities program resources. Its intention is to challenge, assist, and recognize city efforts for high-impact climate actions.
- *Evaluate joining Xcel's Partners in Energy program.* This program supports communities by helping them develop and implement energy plans.
- *Create environmental purchasing guidelines for City of Oakdale buildings and operations.*

REGULAR MEETING
OAKDALE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 17, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

The Oakdale Environmental Management Commission (EMC) held a meeting on Monday, November 17, 2025 at Oakdale City Hall, 1584 Hadley Avenue North, Oakdale, Minnesota. The meeting began at 7:00 PM.

CALL OF ROLL

On a call of roll, the following were present:

Commissioners: Noah Gerdig, Chairperson
 Tim Doolittle, Vice Chairperson
 Keegan Anderson
 Justin Brendon
 Katie Lasch

Not Present: Laura Fenstermaker
 Chang Yang

Also Present: Angie Hong, Washington Conservation District
 Abby Tekiela, South Washington Watershed District
 Hannah Dunn, Community Development Specialist and City Staff Liaison

Quorum Present: YES NO

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BRENDON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER DOOLITTLE, TO APPROVE THE AGENDA OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 17, 2025 AS PRESENTED.

5 AYES
0 NAYS

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BRENDON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LASCH, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 20, 2025 AS WRITTEN.

5 AYES

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 17, 2025

0 NAYS

MOTION CARRIED

OPEN FORUM

Chair Gerding invited comments from the audience. No comments were heard.

a. Presentation – Angie Hong (Washington Conservation District) and Abby Tekiela (South Washington Watershed District)

Angie Hong with the Washington Conservation District (WCD) and Abby Tekiela with South Washington Watershed District (SWWD) educated the EMC on wetlands and provided a presentation on work being done in Oakdale and Washington County to improve water resources and wetlands. One project highlighted was an experimental cattail harvest at Armstrong Wetland. SWWD is seeking to understand whether removing cattail biomass from Armstrong Wetland will remove excess nutrients from the overall system and improve water quality.

Regarding SWWD's project at Armstrong Wetland, Commissioner Doolittle asked whether the cattail biomass removal experiment will change the wetland's chemistry. Tekiela responded that only a small portion of cattail biomass was removed from the wetland, which was not enough to impact the chemistry. The intention of the completed work was to understand the amount of nutrients (phosphorus, nitrate, and chloride) contained in the cattail plants. Doolittle followed up with a question regarding future projects that build off this experiment. Tekiela stated that there are a number of potential pathways that the watershed district can take. One option is to annually remove cattail biomass. However, this would take a lot of work and other factors must be taken into consideration such as budget. Another option is reviewing the outcomes of the small experiment and determining that the impact was not significant.

Commissioner Doolittle commended SWWD for the signs they installed to inform and educate residents near Armstrong Wetland about the project.

There was further discussion regarding regulatory authority over Armstrong Wetland.

In response to Chair Gerding's question about public waters, Tekiela responded that to her understanding the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) determines what is considered public water. Hong shared that the DNR maintains an inventory of public waters.

Tekiela went on to educate the EMC about chloride pollution and shared information on SWWD's grit giveaway to encourage residents in the watershed district to use grit instead of chloride deicers.

In response to Chair Gerding's question about the structure and resources of SWWD and WCD, Tekiela provided the example of the SWWD grit giveaway as a program that is intended to inspire behavior change. As people change their behavior and are more educated about

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 17, 2025

chloride reduction, SWWD staff should have to spend less administrative time on this issue. She added that SWWD is willing to invest in pilot programs.

Commissioner Doolittle commented that neighbors surrounding Armstrong Wetland would likely be interested in volunteering to remove cattails.

Staff Liaison Dunn inquired about the people that are eligible to pick up grit from SWWD. Tekiela responded that only residents who live in South Washington Watershed District are eligible. Hong added that Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) is also doing a grit giveaway. It is the hope to scale up this effort so that more watershed districts offer grit to their residents.

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION REVIEW

a. OLD BUSINESS

i. Draft 2026 EMC Work Plan – Continued Discussion

Staff Liaison Dunn discussed changes made to the Draft 2026 EMC Work Plan based on conversations among Environmental Management Commissioners and Mayor Zabel at the October 20, 2025 meeting.

Consensus among the Environmental Management Commissioners was that the Draft 2026 EMC Work Plan was in good shape.

ii. 2026 Eco Fair Activities

Staff Liaison Dunn shared that the City Council is supportive of partnering with another organization to coordinate a clothing swap at the 2026 Eco Fair. In response to Chair Gering's question about whether the clothing swap will be for all ages, Dunn confirmed that it will be. Chair Gering suggested partnering with Once Upon a Child.

There was discussion among the Commission about outdoor activities and leveraging the proximity of Castle Elementary to the Oakdale Nature Preserve. Other ideas for activities at the Eco Fair included a scavenger hunt, passport book, vendor bingo card, and giveaways.

In response to Commissioner Brendon's question about a food truck, Dunn said that there will be one present, but it has not yet been identified. Commissioner Lasch proposed one that has ice cream or smaller treats such as mini donuts. Chair Gering suggested MN Nice Cream or a bakery style food truck.

Commissioner Anderson offered the idea to do a sports gear swap.

Chair Gering recommended showcasing the City's efforts to expand recycling access in parks at the EMC table.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 17, 2025

In response to Commissioner Lasch's question about how many vendors had audio-visual components to their table, Dunn said that ReWild had a television set up with a picture slideshow. Commissioner Lasch suggested having a TV set up that shows communications content and promotions for the various vendors.

Commissioners discussed the layout of the gym at Castle Elementary School and suggested that the EMC table be placed close to where the Metro Transit Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit table was at the 2025 Eco Fair.

b. NEW BUSINESS

i. 12th and Geneva Redevelopment Study

Staff Liaison Dunn provided an overview of the 12th and Geneva Redevelopment Study that the City completed in 2025.

In response to Commissioner Lasch's question about the affordable properties that let their Low-Income Housing Tax Credit expire, Dunn said that she will need to talk with City staff that worked on the study and follow up at a future meeting.

Dunn clarified that the illustrative concept sketches in the report provide alternate scenarios for placement of housing and commercial development and are not meant to be final plans for the future.

Chair Gerdung pointed out that there is no mention of energy in the report and how it relates to environmental stewardship and environmental justice.

OTHER

i. Staff Liaison Update(s)

The monthly Editorial Calendar themes for November and December were discussed.

Staff Liaison Dunn then shared a number of updates.

- Hard copies of the Park System Plan will be provided in the future.
- The next EMC meeting will likely be held on Monday, February 9, 2026.
- The presentation slides from Angie Hong and Abby Tekiela will be sent after the meeting, along with Gold Leaf Challenge materials.
- The Food Scraps Pickup Program is not planning to expand the program to restaurants due to the level of food waste they generate. However, the program may expand to small offices in the future.
- More information about green building features of the City Hall and Police Department remodel and expansion project will be shared at a future meeting.

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION
NOVEMBER 17, 2025

ii. Commissioner Update(s)*

No updates.

iii. Council Liaison Update(s)*

Mayor Zabel was not in attendance.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the EMC will likely be Monday, February 9, 2026 in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION WAS MADE BY COMMISSIONER BRENDON, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LASCH, TO ADJOURN THE NOVEMBER 17, 2025 REGULAR MEETING OF THE OAKDALE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COMMISSION AT 8:48 PM.

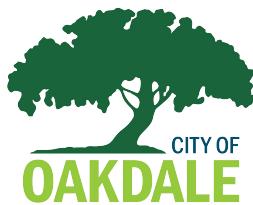
5 AYES
0 NAYS

MOTION CARRIED

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Dunn
Community Development Specialist



Process for the Election of Commissioners

1. Nominate candidates for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson positions. Nominations do not require a "second", but other members may "second" the nomination to show support.

"Motion to nominate Commissioner_____ for the position of Chairperson."

"Motion to nominate Commissioner_____ for the position of Vice-Chairperson."

2. When there are no new nominations to be made someone should make a motion that nominations close. The motion to close requires a "second".

"Motion to close nominations for the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson positions."

3. Election using the ballot provided. Commissioners write in their choice from those nominated and pass the ballots to staff for tabulating.

4. Staff will announce results.

5. Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson require a motion and a "second."

"Motion to elect Commissioner_____ for the position of Chairperson of the Environmental Management Commission for a period of one (1) calendar year, commencing with the February 9, 2026 meeting."

"Motion to elect Commissioner_____ for the position of Vice-Chairperson of the Environmental Management Commission for a period of one (1) calendar year, commencing with the February 9, 2026 meeting."

Assumption of the roles of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson may commence immediately following the vote.



Ballot
Environmental Management Commission Election of Chairperson & Vice-
Chairperson
February 9, 2026

Please write in your choice for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from those nominated tonight:

Chairperson: _____

Vice-Chairperson: _____

Votes will be tallied and announced immediately following the vote.

TO: **Environmental Management Commission**
FROM: **Hannah Dunn, Community Development Specialist**
DATE: **February 9, 2026**
SUBJ: **2050 Comprehensive Plan**

This memorandum and attached presentation slides are intended to provide a high-level overview of the upcoming 2050 Comprehensive Plan.

BACKGROUND

Each municipality within the seven-county metropolitan region is required by the Metropolitan Council (Met Council) and under State Statute to update its Comprehensive Plan by the end of 2028. Oakdale's updated Comprehensive Plan will serve as the official guide for land development and infrastructure planning through 2050. The Plan is also intended to support the efficient and effective use of land, protect and preserve natural features, and promote the overall public health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Met Council recently published the official [System Statement for Oakdale](#)¹. The System Statement initiates the Comprehensive Plan update process and serves as a guide for future growth and infrastructure investment. In addition to the components within the System Statement, the Met Council specifies [required plan elements](#) to be incorporated into the 2050 Comprehensive Plan; they include land use, housing, transportation, water resources, parks and trails, climate, natural systems, and implementation.

It is expected that the Comprehensive Plan update will incorporate, align with, and build upon the City's existing portfolio of planning documents which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan \(2023\)](#)
- [Park System Plan \(2025\)](#)
- [Glenbrook Small Area Plan \(2023\)](#)
- [12th Street and Geneva Avenue Redevelopment Study \(2025\)](#)
- [Strategic Plan 2025-2027](#)
- [Water System Study \(2025\)](#)
- [EV-Ready Community Study \(2021\)](#)
- [Oakdale Housing Study \(2025\)](#)
- [Capital Improvement Plan](#)
- [Fire Department Site Location Analysis \(2024\)](#)

In addition, the Comprehensive Plan update will cross reference other applicable planning documents such as the Minnesota Department of Transportation's [Highway 120/Century Avenue Study](#), the forthcoming Washington County [Long Range Transportation Plan](#), and the forthcoming Washington County [Climate Action Plan](#).

¹ The City is working through an appeal process related to the System Statement projections.

NEXT STEPS

Given the scale of the project and the necessary technical requirements for the update, the City will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select a qualified consulting firm for project support.

Once a consulting firm is selected, the process will begin with data collection and analysis. Throughout the multi-year update process, extensive public engagement with diverse stakeholder groups, including the Environmental Management Commission, will be conducted.

The Comprehensive Plan must be submitted to the Metropolitan Council by December 31, 2028. Prior to formal submittal, an “affected jurisdictions review” is required to allow other government agencies the opportunity to review and comment on the City’s updated Comprehensive Plan.

COMMISSION INPUT

This is educational for Environmental Management Commissioners. No action is requested but Commissioners are encouraged to ask questions.

Attachment

2050 Comprehensive Plan Update Process Slides

2050 Comprehensive Plan Update Process

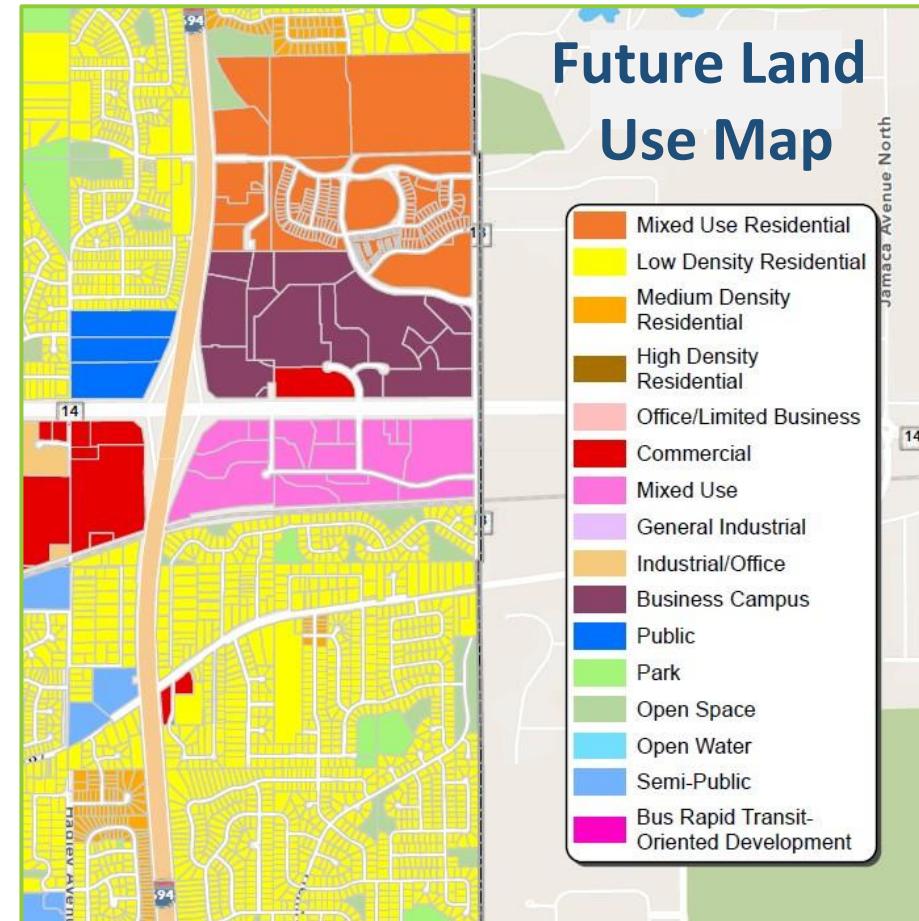
Environmental Management Commission

February 9, 2026



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- Guides land development and infrastructure planning
- Ensures efficient and effective use of land
- Promotes health, safety, and welfare of the community



Why Update the Comp Plan?



- Update required every 10 years
 - MINN. STAT. 473.864 (2025)
 - Cannot conflict with Met Council's Imagine 2050 regional guide
 - Deadline to submit update: Dec. 31, 2028

Required Plan Elements

Land Use



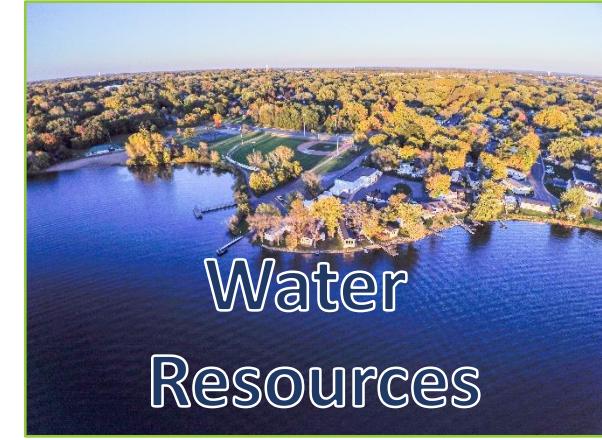
Housing



Transportation



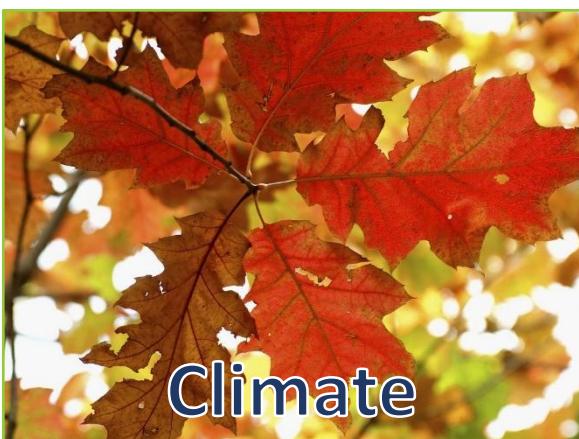
Water
Resources



Parks & Trails



Climate



Natural
Systems



Implementation



Climate Minimum Requirements

Climate	Pg #
Climate Mitigation	
1	Include an acknowledgement of statewide targets for GHG reductions: 50% GHG reduction by 2030 and net zero by 2050 from a 2005 baseline.
2	Include a greenhouse gas emissions inventory that includes transportation, energy use, solid waste, and livestock and agriculture (where applicable)
3	Include at least one strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions for each of the above sectors
4	Detail the emissions impact of reduction strategies through 2050 for the above sectors using the Met Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Tool or an equivalent modeling tool.
Climate Adaptation	
5	Identify social, built, and natural systems vulnerabilities to the following climate hazards: Extreme Heat and Localized Flooding
6	Include strategies to address social, built, and natural systems vulnerabilities for the following climate hazards: Extreme Heat and Localized Flooding
7	Include strategies that support local food systems to increase access to healthy food, food security, and community resilience

Integration of Planning Documents

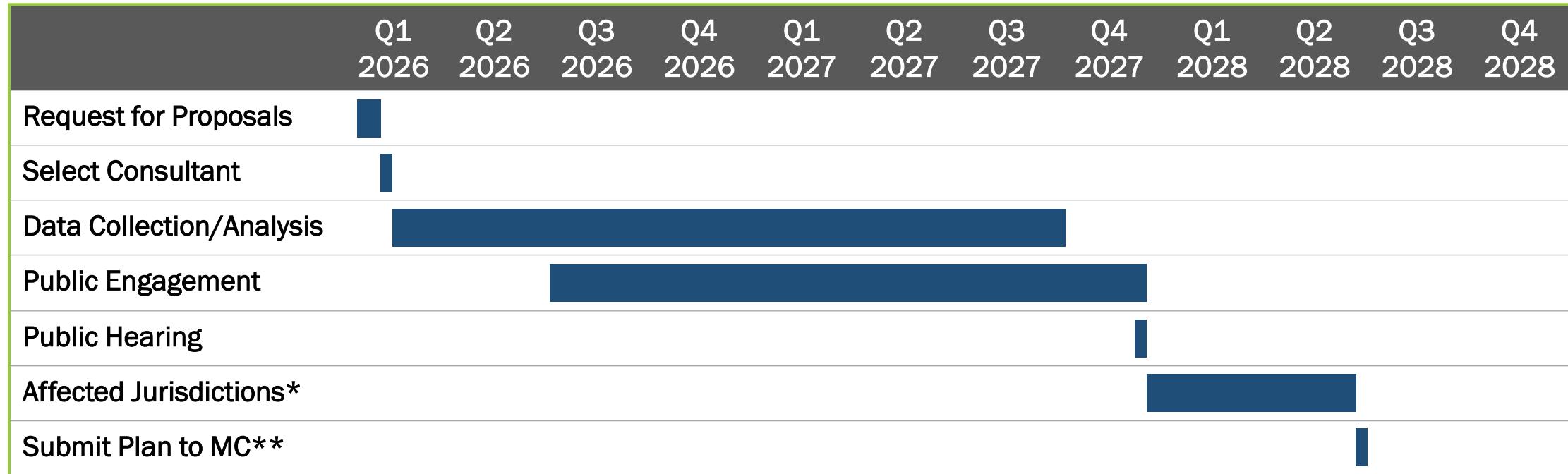
City Plans

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (2023)
- Park System Plan (2025)
- Glenbrook Small Area Plan (2023)
- 12th Street and Geneva Avenue Redevelopment Study (2025)
- Strategic Plan 2025-2027
- Water System Study (2025)
- EV-Ready Community Study (2021)
- Oakdale Housing Study (2025)
- Capital Improvement Plan
- Fire Department Site Location Analysis (2024)

Other Relevant Plans

- MnDOT Hwy 120/Century Ave Study
- Washington County Long Range Transportation Plan
- Washington County Climate Action Plan

Draft Schedule



* Affected jurisdictions must be given a full six months to review the draft plan.

** The plan must be submitted to the Metropolitan Council no later than December 31, 2028.



Questions?

TO: **Environmental Management Commission**
FROM: **Hannah Dunn, Community Development Specialist**
DATE: **February 9, 2026**
SUBJ: **Review of 2025 Washington County Recycling Grant and Discussion of Potential 2026 Projects**

This memorandum summarizes the project outcomes for the 2025 Washington County Recycling Grant and invites discussion about potential projects for the 2026 Recycling Grant application.

GRANT OVERVIEW

Chapter Eight, Goal One, Policy Seven of Oakdale's Comprehensive Plan states that the City will promote and encourage strategies that reduce waste generation and increase options for reuse, recycling, and composting of items in City operations, residential, and commercial developments. Implementation of this policy is supported by the Washington County Recycling Grant. The purpose of the grant is to assist municipalities with recycling program expenses.

2025 RECYCLING GRANT PROJECT OUTCOMES

The City applied for grant funding in 2025 to accomplish four projects.

1. Promote residential and commercial recycling through simple, high-level education.
2. Promote composting as a means of waste reduction.
3. Increase recycling access in parks.
4. Host the Clean Up Event.

Project outcomes for the 2025 Washington County Recycling Grant include:

- Shared 35 social media posts specifically promoting waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting.
- Promoted waste reduction, reuse, and recycling in the printed Oakdale Update newsletter (Spring 2025 issue, Summer 2025 issue, Fall-Winter 2025 issue) that is sent to over 14,000 addresses.
- Hosted the City's first Eco Fair on April 26, 2025 where there were opportunities for residents and attendees to engage with vendors such as Washington County and the Food Scraps Pickup Program.
- Continued to promote the Food Scraps Pickup Program, which rolled out to Oakdale residents in April 2024, using the robust communications campaign created with Communications.
- Coordinated with Washington County to offer free pumpkin recycling at City Hall after Halloween from October 31 to November 10, 2025.
- Purchased dual-stream waste bins for Willowbrooke Fields and Prairie Trails Park.
- Hosted the Fall City-Wide Clean Up Event on September 20, 2025 where Oakdale residents had the opportunity to dispose of general trash, electronics, appliances, mattresses, and tires.

2026 RECYCLING GRANT APPLICATION

The City will apply for 2026 grant funding to support recycling, reuse, and waste reduction projects. The deadline for applications is the end of February. Funds are then typically distributed to municipalities in early June.

Municipalities are eligible to apply for both base funding and project funding as part of the Washington County Recycling Grant. Base funding for the grant is dependent on municipality household count data from the Metropolitan Council. For the 2026 application, municipalities with over 10,000 households will receive \$30,000 in base funding. Oakdale has more than 10,000 households and therefore can receive \$30,000. In addition to base funding, municipalities can apply for funding for up to four projects. The grant awards \$0.50/household/project. Oakdale plans to submit four projects in 2026 and can receive \$23,364 in project funding. In total, Oakdale has the potential to receive \$53,364 in funding (\$30,000 base plus \$23,364 project) in 2026.

Below are potential projects that the EMC could consider for the 2026 application. Projects can be the same as prior applications.

- Promote residential and commercial recycling through simple, high-level education.
- Promote composting as a means of waste reduction.
- Continue to increase recycling access within the Oakdale park system.
- Host the Clean Up Event. It is important to note that there are restrictions regarding community clean up events and grant funding can only be used for disposal costs of items that are recycled or reused.

COMMISSION INPUT

Commissioners are encouraged to discuss the 2025 Washington County Recycling Grant project outcomes. Additionally, it is requested that Commissioners provide input on the potential 2026 Washington County Recycling Grant projects above and bring forward other application project ideas for consideration.

TO: **Environmental Management Commission**
FROM: **Hannah Dunn, Community Development Specialist**
DATE: **February 9, 2026**
SUBJ: **2026 EMC Environmental Communications Strategy Discussion**

This memorandum summarizes the purpose of, and invites conversation about, the 2026 environmental communications strategy. In order to refine the strategy, the EMC is encouraged to consider:

- Themes for each month
- Specific messages and/or content to convey in a given month
- Specific channels by which to convey a message and/or content in a given month
- Partner organizations

POLICY OVERVIEW

It is the City's policy to foster environmental resiliency, adaptation, and mitigation among the community. Coordinating timely communication about programs and information is an important consideration in achieving the City's environmental management priorities. Implementing an environmental communications strategy will ensure residents, business owners and their employees, developers, and other audiences in Oakdale receive the information and resources they need to make environmentally sustainable decisions.

Consequently, an environmental communications strategy is prepared annually. Aligning with 2040 Comprehensive Plan priorities and annual work plans, the goal of the environmental communications strategy is to increase awareness of and education about energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction, and recycling.

ANNUAL EDITORIAL CALENDAR

Environmental communications strategies are implemented using annual editorial calendars. The editorial calendar provides an opportunity to focus on relevant themes at key times throughout the year. These themes may be ongoing in nature (i.e. increasing energy efficiency and recycling, conserving water, reducing waste, etc.) or specific to a date or program (i.e. an electric vehicle Ride and Drive event, a Washington County Recycling Grant project, the Adopt-a-Drain program, etc.).

The editorial calendar takes the following into consideration:

- **Objective.** Establishing the primary goal of the environmental communications strategy ensures messaging facilitates the priorities of the EMC, including:
 - Becoming an EV-ready community
 - Promoting energy efficiency
 - Connecting low-income residents to weatherization and energy efficiency resources
 - Promoting renewable energy
 - Reducing waste
 - Increasing recycling
 - Promoting water conservation

Public outreach and communication of these topics will fulfill one of the following objectives:

1. RAISE AWARENESS by conveying public service announcements.
2. INFORM by communicating environmental information, tips, and reminders.
3. PROMOTE relevant events and programs.

- **Channels.** Environmental content intended for Oakdale businesses and residents may be communicated through the following channels:
 - City of Oakdale social media (Facebook)
 - City newsletter “Oakdale Update”
 - City website
 - Printed collateral
 - Electronic message boards
 - City building lobbies
 - Direct mail
 - Cross-promotion with partner organizations
- **Calendar.** Content is scheduled on an annualized basis in a relevant and timely manner according to the following editorial calendar. The monthly content of the editorial calendar is flexible and can be changed.

COMMISSION ACTION REQUESTED

Environmental Management Commissioners are encouraged to discuss themes and resources for the 2026 Editorial Calendar. The 2025 Editorial Calendar is attached for reference.

Attachment

2025 EMC Editorial Calendar

2025 EMC Editorial Calendar	
January and February	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
N/A	<p>Due to City staff capacity, frequency of environmental communications will be minimized during the month of January and February.</p>
March: Food Scraps Pickup Program	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
N/A	<p>In March, communications content will focus on the Food Scraps Pickup Program.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Scraps Pickup Program • Specific material (mailers, graphics) provided by the program
April: Eco Fair	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
Earth Day – Apr 22	<p>In April, communications content will focus on the Eco Fair, taking place on Saturday, April 26.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications materials (flyers, social media content) created by City staff and the Communications team

May: Bicycling and Walking & Water Conservation	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<u>Bike to Work Day</u> – <i>Friday, May 16</i> <u>National Bike to Work Week</u> – <i>May 12-18</i> <u>National Bike Month</u>	<p>In May, communications content will focus on bicycling and walking as this theme aligns with dates relevant to this topic.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oakdale Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan • Information about local trails and routes • Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Bicycle safety ○ Events ○ Local bike clubs ○ Education <p>Communications content will also focus on water conservation. It is a good time to remind residents about conserving water in the summer, the odd-even watering schedule, rain gardens, and available financial assistance.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rain barrels and rain gardens • Water quality improvement grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District Stewardship Grants ○ South Washington Watershed District Clean Water and Watershed Resiliency Cost Share Program ○ Valley Branch Watershed District Best Management Practices Grant Program ○ Washington Conservation District financial assistance • Blue Thumb <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rain gardens ○ Turf alternatives • WaterSense • Washington County rain barrel and backyard compost sale

June: Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<u>World Environment Day</u> – Jun 5	<p>In June, communications content will focus on renewable energy (e.g., solar, wind, etc.) and energy efficiency. This would be an opportune time to promote City-sponsored Home Energy Squad rebates.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renewable energy programs through Xcel Energy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Windsource ○ Solar*Rewards (installed solar panels) ○ Solar*Rewards Community (community solar garden) • Home energy audit with Home Energy Squad • IRA rebates (solar, electric vehicles, energy efficiency) • Xcel Energy residential resources (including rebates and home services) • Citizens Utility Board (CUB) resources and bill clinics • Residential energy and weatherization assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties ○ Energy CENTS Coalition ○ CenterPoint Energy gas affordability program ○ Xcel Minnesota Energy Assistance Resources ○ Salvation Army HeatShare program • Commercial energy efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Xcel Energy business resources ○ CenterPoint Energy efficiency programs and rebates ○ MN Chamber of Commerce energy efficiency ○ Clean Energy Project Builder • American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy financial incentives database • National Solar Tour

July: Going Plastic-Free	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
Plastic Bag Free Day - Jul 3	<p>In July, communications content will focus on going plastic-free.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington County Environmental Centers (Free Product Room) • Plastic bag and film recycling locations at Target, Cub Foods, Environmental Center • Reusable bags at the Farmers Market • Research the journey of plastic bags after they are dropped off for recycling
August: Miscellaneous	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
	<p>In August, communications content will focus on whatever is relevant to the month. For example, if the Twin Cities or State is experiencing severe drought, content can focus on water conservation tips. If content from the Recycling Education Committee's communications calendar is timely, Oakdale communications will align and promote that messaging.</p>
September: Electric Vehicles	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
Zero Emissions Day - Sep 21	<p>In September, communications content will focus on electric vehicles.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRA rebates for EVs • Drive Electric Minnesota • Shift2Electric • EVs with Xcel Energy • MN State EV Dashboard
Car Free Day – Sep 22	
National Drive Electric Month – Sep 12 – Oct 12	

October: Energy Efficiency	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<p><i>National LED Light Day – Oct 7</i></p> <p><u>National Solar Tour</u> – Oct 3-5</p> <p><u>Energy Awareness Month</u></p>	<p>In October, communications content will focus on energy efficiency. While energy efficiency is being promoted in June, October is Energy Awareness Month. This would be an opportune time to promote City-sponsored Home Energy Squad rebates if money is still left.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Renewable energy programs through Xcel Energy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Windsource ○ Solar*Rewards (installed solar panels) ○ Solar*Rewards Community (community solar garden) • Home energy audit with <u>Home Energy Squad</u> • <u>IRA rebates</u> (solar, electric vehicles, energy efficiency) • Xcel Energy <u>residential resources</u> (including rebates and home services) • Citizens Utility Board (CUB) <u>resources</u> and <u>bill clinics</u> • Residential energy and weatherization assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Community Action Partnership of Ramsey & Washington Counties</u> ○ <u>Energy CENTS Coalition</u> ○ <u>CenterPoint Energy gas affordability program</u> ○ <u>Xcel Minnesota Energy Assistance Resources</u> ○ Salvation Army <u>HeatShare program</u> • Commercial energy efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Xcel Energy business resources</u> ○ <u>CenterPoint Energy efficiency programs and rebates</u> ○ <u>MN Chamber of Commerce energy efficiency</u> ○ <u>Clean Energy Project Builder</u> • <u>American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy financial incentives database</u> • <u>National Solar Tour</u>

November: Reuse and Recycling	
Dates related to monthly topic	Resources related to monthly topic
<u>America Recycles Day</u> – Nov 15	<p>In November, communications content will focus on reuse and recycling. Typically the City partners with the County to offer pumpkin recycling at the beginning of November. This month might also be a good opportunity to do another promotional push for the Food Scraps Pickup Program.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Washington County Disposal Directory • Washington County Environmental Centers • “Be a Hero Battery” campaign • Recycling Exists campaign • BizRecycling • Food Scraps Pickup Program
December: Low-Waste Holidays	
<u>National Christmas Lights Day</u> – Dec 1	<p>In December, communications content will focus on low-waste holidays.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas lights – energy efficiency and recycling <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Recycle old light strands at the Environmental Centers • Tree recycling at Public Works • Food Scraps Pickup Program
Ongoing Content Throughout Year	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of Food Scraps Pickup Program • General sustainability 	