



SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION MEETING

AGENDA SECTION	NEW BUSINESS
MEETING DATE	3/11/2025

ITEM:	2025 Sustainability Commission Goal Setting	
DEPARTMENT:	Community Development	BY/DATE: Andrew Boucher, 03/7/2025

BACKGROUND:

In preparation for the Council’s 2025 goal setting process, staff are providing the Sustainability Commission with the opportunity to define its 2025-2026 priorities. Other commissions utilize the City Council’s goals to guide their priorities. For 2025, however, staff aim to establish the Commission’s goals prior to the Council’s meeting so that the Commission may directly inform some of the City’s broader strategies. The goal setting process will take place over two sessions. The first session, in March, will include a presentation of the City’s current Sustainability initiatives, followed by an interactive activity to identify priorities for 2025-2026. In the second session, held in April, staff will present a summary of the March discussions along with recommendations for the Commission 2025 goals. Feedback will be solicited, and the recommendations will be refined as necessary. This process will result in a final set of Commission priorities for 2025-2026.

As staff work with the Commission to set goals and establish priorities for 2025, we wanted to provide an overview of what the City has already implemented for context purposes. Some examples of how the City has incorporated sustainability into city processes include:

1. Joining and participating in Xcel’s Partners in Energy program which will result in the adoption of the City’s Energy Action Plan later this year.
2. Updating the City’s Solid Waste Operating Policy and developing an outreach activity to encourage further participation in the curbside organics recycling program as well as increasing the amount of waste diverted from the waste stream.
3. Starting the SolSmart designation process with the desire to achieve Bronze, Silver, Gold, and potentially Platinum to strengthen, encourage, and develop renewable energy resources.
 - a. Using SolSmart’s technical review and recommendations, adopted language in the zoning code referencing to overarching plans such as the Energy Action Plan along with new definitions for renewable energy systems and identifying/removing barriers to them as well as including language in the Planned Unit Development code section requiring renewable energy and beneficial electrification in any future projects.
4. Adopted a Complete Streets Policy to assess and document opportunities to make traffic safety improvements based on recommendations from Safe Streets for All and other transportation related plans.
 - a. Including the descriptions of the design standard districts and identified conflict points/issues that need to be considered when there are public or private projects occurring.
5. Establishing a Time-of-Sale inspection program where residential properties are inspected and compliance items identified for the buyer/seller to negotiate prior to the transfer of the property.
6. Mixed-use redevelopment project containing the new city hall, 266 residential apartment units, and a commercial space for a local financial institution; this project also contains public and private EV chargers, improved the stormwater capacity, and features a heated sidewalk that reduces the amount of salt or deicing necessary under certain temperatures.

7. Passed a Smoking in Parks ordinance to help address litter and air quality issues at public parks.
8. Adopted a tree preservation and replanting standards ordinance establishing a security or letter of credit for tree plantings, replacement standards based on diameter of trees, and set soil volume minimums to ensure that trees planted are capable of reaching maturity; also amended the zoning code to allow for public parks to be used for outdoor recreation space for day cares.
9. Other zoning reforms include: removing unrelated occupancy maximums, establishing accessory dwelling units and shared family living arrangements as uses; setting a review process for artificial turf and establishing impervious surface maximums in the front yard setback as well as for residential properties as a whole; twinhomes and duplexes in the R-2A and R-2B districts are allowed as permitted uses as well as residential greenhouses.

GOAL SETTING ACTIVITY:

Staff will walk the Commission through the goal setting activity described below. As part of this activity, commissioners will be asked to provide three or four answers to Question 1 (see below). Please think through your ideas ahead of time and be prepared to share them during the meeting. Post-It notes will be provided at the meeting.

- “The responsibility of the Sustainability Commission is to serve as an advisory body to the Council and the administrative services of the city. The Commission shall advise and make recommendations on how to incorporate environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable practices within the city on its own initiative, or as referred to the Commission by the Council or the administrative service of the city.”
- Process: Ideas -> Focus areas -> Prioritization -> Staff recommendations
- Question 1: What are three or four initiatives, strategies, or topics that you would like the Sustainability Commission to focus on in 2025? Write each one on a separate big Post-It note.
 - These can be general or very specific.
 - They can be new or based on things the City already does or has done in the past.
 - Examples: *create business directory booklet; develop and implement a Business Retention and Expansion program; execute specific Energy Action Plan measures; improving GIS layers.*
- After we have completed Question 1, we will come back together as a group to discuss the results and define focus areas.
- Question 2: Using your three small Post-It notes, vote for the three suggestions that you would like the Sustainability Commission to prioritize this year.
- After we have completed Question 2, staff will outline next steps.