

# Sustainability Commission Work Plan

March 2025 - February 2026



# Table of Contents

<a href="#"><u>The Executive Summary</u></a>	3
<a href="#"><u>The Commission</u></a>	4
<a href="#"><u>The Commissioners</u></a>	5
<a href="#"><u>The Work Plan</u></a>	9
<a href="#"><u>Contact Us</u></a>	15



# The Executive Summary

Our commitments and actions

## Commitments

- Effecting behavior change through outreach, education and incentives
- Initiating, catalyzing, and revising sustainability policies
- Evaluating the Sustainability Commission's core role and evolving as needed

## Priority Actions

- Work with staff to enhance alternative transportation
- Identify areas to incentivize more sustainable behavior
- Education and outreach for behavior change emphasizing new people and new places
- Policy discussion with Council to review the Sustainability Commission's charter and role, and implement new changes if needed
- Support current and ongoing outreach and education efforts

# The Commission

Our purpose, duties and responsibilities, membership

## Purpose

---

The purpose of the Sustainability Commission shall be to advise the City Council on policies and practices that relate to the sustainable use and management of environmental resources that include air, water, energy, land, and ecological resources, and waste. The Sustainability Commission will help to ensure that such resources will be sustained and continue to provide for a high quality of life for present and future generations of Bloomington.

## Duties and Responsibilities

---

The Commission shall:

- a) Collaborate with City staff to review, evaluate, develop, and advise the City Council on policies and practices regarding the sustainable use and management of environmental resources that include air, water, energy, land and ecological resources, and waste;
- b) Act as change agent, coordinator and educator for policies, procedures and proposals that relate to environmental sustainability;
- c) Engage with the Bloomington community and serve as a community liaison for issues, ideas, and proposals and provide appropriate feedback;
- d) Cultivate relationships with residents, community groups, businesses, institutions of higher learning, faith-based organizations, outside government bodies, and non-governmental institutions;
- e) Serve as a resource for other Bloomington commissions, boards, committees, and task forces on any issues related to sustainability;
- f) Adopt criteria and processes for making decisions about the use of resources and selection of sustainability projects;
- g) Review sustainability proposals and make recommendations; and
- h) Submit written annual work plans and progress reports to the City Council.

## Membership

---

The Sustainability Commission shall consist of 11 members, including at least two young adults. The majority of the members shall be technical experts in one or more of the areas of sustainability and one seat shall be reserved for a City Council member.

# The Commissioners

Who we are



## **Binaya Acharya, Commissioner**

*Term 1: 03/01/2024-02/28/2026*

Binaya Acharya is driven to leave the world in better shape for his two kids and the next generation. With a B.S. in electrical engineering from the University of Maine and an MBA from the University of St. Thomas, his professional career spans over twenty years in engineering and marketing. Binaya works at the local electric utility company educating customers on electric vehicle charging programs, clean energy, and other energy efficiency related programs. Born and raised in Kathmandu, Nepal, Binaya has been a Bloomington resident for the past twelve years and is looking forward to contributing his experiences to the commission and serving the community.



## **Claudia Althoen, Commissioner**

*Term 1: 03/18/2025-02/28/2027*

Claudia Althoen is passionate about building a more sustainable community. With a B.S. in Environmental Sciences, Policy, and Management from the University of Minnesota, along with graduate-level research on the effects of climate change on glaciers and water systems, Claudia brings expertise in climate change impacts and resource management to the Sustainability Commission. She is eager to actively contribute to local initiatives that protect Bloomington's natural resources and enhance community well-being.



## **Angie Begosh, Commissioner**

*Term 1: 03/15/2022-02/28/2025*

*Term 2: 03/18/2025-02/29/2028*

Angie Begosh has a Ph.D. in zoology from Oklahoma State University, where she researched how land use affects pollinator communities. Her career includes work as an extension educator in Kentucky, Iowa, Idaho, and New Mexico focusing on natural resources and agriculture education, a salmon habitat restoration grants coordinator in Washington state, and a field technician and contract ecologist in Minnesota. She is passionate about preserving and enhancing green space in Bloomington and making quality urban habitats accessible to everybody.

# The Commissioners

Who we are



## **Alex Brand, Commissioner**

*Term 1: 03/01/2024-02/28/2027*

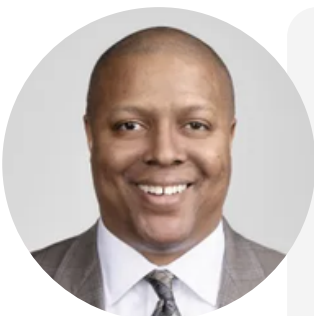
Alex Brand graduated from Dunwoody College of Technology's HVAC/R Service program and works in Bloomington as a Building Automation Engineer. His work focuses on tracking and reducing energy usage. He has a personal interest in environmentally-conscious construction, efficient and reliable infrastructure, and safe and robust public transportation. He moved to Bloomington in 2021 with his spouse and two cats. They have since added their first dog and their first baby to their family. As a newer resident of Bloomington, Alex is looking forward to learning more about the city and its residents while helping to form a more sustainable, and equitable, living space for all.



## **David Drummond, Commissioner**

*Term 2: 03/01/2023-02/28/2026*

Dave Drummond has a Ph.D. (Environmental Health) from the U of M School of Public Health. He performed the first campus-wide sustainability study for the UW-Madison including a facilities-based carbon footprint. He also served as their Director of Environment, Health and Safety. As a member of the Commission, he continues to learn and participate in its activities and hopes to share his expertise where it will be helpful.



## **Dwayne Lowman, Commissioner**

*Councilmember Seat: 01/06/2025-12/31/2025*

Dwayne Lowman was born and raised in Bloomington near Effa play lot. He and his wife Kellie enjoy camping up north and walking the parks and trails. Dwayne has a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Urban Studies, concentrating in Public Administration and Community Economic Development from Augsburg University. When reflecting on why he joined the Sustainability Commission, he said, "There are many reasons why I am committed to Bloomington's long-term ecological, social, and economic resilience. Chief among those many reasons has to be those voices that are marginalized or drowned out by obstacles seen and unseen. I trust that I will have the humility to pass on a better Bloomington than what I have found."

# The Commissioners

Who we are



## **Sean McFarling, Commissioner**

*Term 1: 10/14/2023-02/28/2026*

Sean McFarling is a Civil Engineer whose career has focused on helping communities and campuses reduce carbon emissions while improving energy reliability and sustainability for over the last decade. Using natural resources responsibly and efficiently is a driving motivation for Sean. After moving to Minnesota in college, Sean has lived in Bloomington for 20-plus years with his wife Jill, and enjoys being outside, travel, and learning new things.



## **Sam Porter, Youth Commissioner**

*Term 1: 09/17/2024-08/31/2025*

Sam Porter is a lifelong resident of Bloomington. He is a senior at John F. Kennedy High School where he serves as president of the Green Club. He has spent his past two summers working for the City of Bloomington as a seasonal employee in the Public Works department. In college Sam wants to major in Environmental Engineering, and plans to attend the University of St. Thomas later this year.



## **Andy Scott**

*Term 1: 03/15/2022-02/28/2025*

*Term 2: 03/18/2025-02/29/2028*

Andy grew up in Richfield and has been a Bloomington resident for 10 years. He has a degree in design from MCAD and has been working as a landscape designer since 2017. He is the proprietor of a small landscape company that specializes in native plant communities, habitat gardening, pollinator-friendly practices and residential stormwater management. As an engaged member of the South Loop community, Andy is passionate about continuing to improve Bloomington's natural areas/resources by supporting efforts from the City and its residents.

# The Commissioners

Who we are



## **Aaron Smith**

*Term 1: 03/18/2025-02/29/2028*

Aaron Smith is the CEO of the Energy and Environmental Building Alliance (EEBA) which represents a community of over 50,000 builders and their stakeholders across North America that are truly the early adopters and innovators in driving sustainable transformation of the homebuilding industry.

Aaron has over 25 years of experience in home construction, building products, sustainability and non-profit board leadership. He has worked for companies including Kohler, Uponor and ASSA ABLOY as well as startups in Silicon Valley and his own building and remodeling company. Aaron previously served on non-profit Boards for Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, Health Product Declaration Collaborative (HPDC), CT Sustainable Business Council, and co-founded the CT Collaborative - Living Building Challenge.

Aaron completed his undergraduate studies at West Point and St. Cloud State University and is a 2016 graduate of the Yale University MBA program with a focus on Sustainability. He loves green building and sustainability as well as hockey, hiking, skiing, gardening and spending time with his wife, Jennifer, 3 boys and 4 cats and chickens at their home in Bloomington.



## **Amelia Wenisch, Youth Commissioner**

*Term 1: 09/17/2024-08/31/2025*

As a recent graduate from the University of Manitoba with a degree in Environmental Studies, Amelia is eager to apply her knowledge to benefit both the community she grew up in and resides in today. Throughout her academic career, she concentrated on conservation and biodiversity and developed a strong interest in sustainability. Amelia understands that these areas are deeply interconnected and recognizes that sustainability is crucial for maintaining the health and balance of Earth's ecosystems. She is excited to collaborate with like-minded individuals to ensure a more equitable, safe and resilient future for Bloomington.



# The Work Plan

What we will do

## Work with staff to enhance alternative transportation

Actions	Timeline	Commissioner Involvement
Have Kirk Roberts, Traffic and Transportation Engineer, come to a Sustainability Commission meeting to provide an update on projects such as the American Blvd. Transit Study, transit service throughout the city, etc.	Summer	All
Participate in updating the Safe Routes to School Plan by attending a stakeholder meeting and/or open house	Fall	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, Drummond
Attend an American Blvd. Transit Study Open House	July	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, Porter, McFarling
Attend 1-3 public meetings regarding the Bloomington Ferry Road Study	March-September	Begosh, Brand, Drummond, Porter

# The Work Plan

What we will do

## Identify areas to incentivize more sustainable behavior

Actions	Timeline	Commissioner Involvement
1-2 meetings to identify areas to incentivize more sustainable behavior	To be determined	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, Drummond, McFarling, Wenisch
Volunteer at the annual compost giveaway event	May 10	Brand, McFarling, Porter, Wenisch
Support staff in recruiting participants for the next pilot of the Bloomington Stewards Program	To be determined	Acharya, Brand, McFarling, Porter, Wenisch
Help promote the 2026 Solid Waste Pay-As-You-Throw rate changes that incentivize waste reduction and diversion e.g. tabling, door knocking, family/friend recruitment	To be determined	Begosh, Brand, Drummond

# The Work Plan

What we will do

## Education and outreach for behavior change emphasizing new people and new places

Actions	Timeline	Commissioner Involvement
Organize hosting a guest speaker for the west metro restoration staff group	To be determined	Scott
Help promote organics recycling in new places e.g. tabling, door knocking, family/friend recruitment	Ongoing	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, Drummond, McFarling, Porter, Scott, Wenisch
Promote the City's water rebate program to new audiences	Ongoing	Begosh, Brand, Porter, Scott
Help promote the Better Futures Reuse/Recycling Pickup service in new places e.g. tabling, door knocking, family/friend recruitment	Ongoing	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, Drummond, Porter, Scott, Wenisch
Identify strategies and recruit new participants for the spring garlic mustard pull and fall buckthorn bust	March-May	Begosh, Porter, Scott
Volunteer at the Home Energy Fair, an event that typically draws residents who have recently purchased a house in Bloomington	July	Acharya, Brand, McFarling
Assist staff with organizing a business energy tour	Fall	Acharya, Brand, McFarling, Wenisch

# The Work Plan

What we will do

**Policy discussion with Council to review the Sustainability Commission’s charter and role, and implement new changes if needed**

Actions	Timeline	Commissioner Involvement
1-2 prep meetings with staff to determine goals and outcomes of joint Council and Sustainability Commission meeting	September/ October	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, McFarling, Porter, Scott, Wenisch
Special meeting with Councilmembers	Nov/Dec	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, Drummond, McFarling, Scott
Assist implementing new changes (if needed)	Jan/Feb 2026	Begosh, Brand, Porter, Scott, Wenisch

# The Work Plan

What we will do

**Support current and ongoing outreach and education efforts**

Actions	Timeline	Commissioner Involvement
Volunteer and/or recruit attendees for the baby gear swap	April 26	Acharya, Begosh, Wenisch
Volunteer to distribute discounted rain barrels with staff at the Richfield farmers market and promote the City's water rebate program	May 3	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, Porter
Volunteer at the Public Works Open House to promote home and vehicle electrification; table by the City's EVs and new electric equipment	May 17	Acharya, Brand, Porter
Volunteer and/or help recruit volunteers for the annual spring garlic mustard pull	May	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, McFarling, Porter Scott, Wenisch
Assist outreach staff with residential energy program tabling	June-August	Acharya, Brand, McFarling, Wenisch
Help promote an online residential electrification workshop	To be determined	Acharya, Brand, McFarling, Wenisch
Support U of M with their Reducing Water Use on Twin Cities Lawns Through Research, Education, and Outreach project by boosting participation in Bloomington	To be determined	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, Scott, Wenisch

# The Work Plan

What we will do

**Support current and ongoing outreach and education efforts**

Actions	Timeline	Commissioner Involvement
Energy Assistance Program and Weatherization Assistance Program tabling at VEAP, etc.	September to Decembter	Brand, McFarling
Assist with the Xcel Energy Transmission Line Corridor Habitat Restoration Project plug planting volunteer event	September 13	Acharya, Begosh, Scott
Volunteer and/or help recruit volunteers for the annual citywide recycling event	September 20	Begosh, Scott
Volunteer and/or help recruit volunteers for the annual buckthorn bust	October/November	Begosh, Scott
Help recruit and/or participate in Climate Action Plan engagement opportunities	Fall 2025-Winter 2026	Acharya, Begosh, Brand, McFarling, Scott, Wenisch
Promotion of the Adopt-a-Drain program in Bloomington and/or encourage current participants to report their debris clean-up data so the impact can be communicated/celebrated	To be determined	Acharya, Brand, Porter, Scott, Wenisch
Assist staff with outreach and engagement for the Urban Forest Master Plan	To be determined	Acharya, Porter, Scott, Wenisch



Public Works  
1700 W 98th St  
Bloomington, MN 55431

Staff Liaison: Emma Struss, Sustainability Coordinator  
Interim Staff Liaisons (May-August 2025): Julie Long, City Engineer, and  
Scott M Anderson, Utilities Superintendent  
Staff-Appointed Commission Secretary: Kim Larson, Office Coordinator

**Contact us for further inquiries**

**[sustainability@BloomingtonMN.gov](mailto:sustainability@BloomingtonMN.gov)**



CITY OF  
**BLOOMINGTON**  
MINNESOTA