

**CITY OF PLYMOUTH
AGENDA
Regular Environmental Quality Committee
Council Chambers
3400 Plymouth Boulevard, Plymouth, MN
March 12, 2025, 7:00 PM**

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PUBLIC FORUM - Individuals may address the committee about any item not contained on the regular agenda. A maximum of three minutes is allotted per individual with a total of 15 minutes for the forum. If the full 15 minutes are not needed for the forum, the committee will continue with the agenda. The committee will take no official action on items discussed at the forum, with the exception of referral to staff for future report.

3. PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. APPROVE AGENDA - Environmental Quality Committee members may add items to the agenda for discussion purposes or staff direction only. The committee will not normally take official action on items added to the agenda.

5. CONSENT AGENDA - These items are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a council member or individual so requests, in which event the item will be removed from the consent agenda and placed elsewhere on the agenda.

- 5.1 Minutes
 - 1. EQC 02-12-25

- 5.2 Plymouth Environmental Academy

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

- 6.1 Energy Action Plan Update
- 6.2 Approval of GreenStep Cities Best Management Practice Submittal
 - 1. Green Step Cities BMP Submittal #3
- 6.3 Metropolitan Council Equity-Focused Water Efficiency Grant Pilot Program Application
 - 1. Metropolitan Council Equity Water Efficiency Grant Application

7. REPORTS AND STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Attendance request for upcoming events

8. FUTURE MEETINGS

9. ADJOURNMENT



To: Environmental Quality Committee

Prepared by: Ben Scharenbroich, Water Resources Supervisor

Reviewed by: Michael Thompson, Public Works Director

Item: **Minutes**

1. Action Requested:

Adopt proposed Environmental Quality Committee minutes

2. Background:

N/A

3. Budget Impact:

N/A

4. Attachments:

1. EQC 02-12-25

Proposed Minutes Environmental Quality Committee Meeting February 12, 2025

Chair Matthiesen called a Regular Meeting of the Plymouth Environmental Quality Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 3400 Plymouth Boulevard, on February 12, 2025.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Babcock, Committee members Blakely, Dmytrenko, Matthiesen, Polzin, and Vavreck.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Committee member Tinjum.

STAFF PRESENT: Water Resources Supervisor Scharenbroich and Deputy City Clerk Gottschalk.

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember Gregor.

Public Forum

No one appeared to address the committee.

Presentations and Public Information Announcements

The committee members introduced themselves.

Approval of Agenda

Motion was made by Committee member Blakely and seconded by Committee member Polzin to approve the agenda as presented. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

Consent Agenda

(5.1) Adopt Proposed Environmental Quality Committee Minutes – January 8, 2025

The correction to the meeting location was noted. The correct location was the Medicine Lake Room.

Motion was made by Committee member Polzin and seconded by Committee member Babcock to approve the consent agenda as amended. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

General Business

(6.1) Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) Refresher and Orientation; EQC Mission Statement and Training Materials

Deputy City Clerk Gottschalk gave an overview of the EQC's responsibility for review, consideration, initiation, and recommendation to the City Council on policies, plans, or projects which will enhance and preserve the natural environment of the city.

Committee members shall maintain compliance with open meeting law requirements and follow established procedures for meetings including parliamentary procedure. Orientation for new members and a refresher for current members serves to reaffirm committee procedures, purposes, and goals. The training document included Open Meeting Law, Data Practices, Conflicts of Interest, Gift Laws, and Rules of Order and Meeting Procedures. Also provided to the committee were the EQC Mission Statement and Training Materials.

(6.2) Election of Environmental Quality Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for 2025

Water Resources Supervisor Scharenbroich stated that each year the EQC shall elect a chairperson and vice chairperson. It is the responsibility of the chairperson to conduct EQC meetings in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order. Should the chairperson be unable to attend an EQC meeting, the responsibility for conducting the meeting shall be the responsibility of the vice chairperson. It is common for the various Plymouth committees to rotate their leadership on an annual basis. The chairperson shall act as a point of contact between the EQC and city staff.

Committee member Blakely asked if this should wait until Committee member Tinjum is present. Scharenbroich stated a decision should be made this evening.

Motion was made by Committee member Polzin and seconded by Committee member Babcock to elect Robert Blakely as Chairperson and Kate Dmytrenko as Vice Chairperson for the EQC for 2025. With all members voting in favor, the motion carried.

(6.3) Plymouth Environmental Academy

Water Resources Supervisor Scharenbroich outlined that the EQC will continue the Plymouth Environmental Academy (PEA) starting in August. At the February 12 meeting, the committee discussed and assigned members to each proposed topic:

1. Tree Care and Food Production (August 21, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.)
2. Tour of Community Garden or Schmidt Woods (September 11, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.)
3. Tour of Environmental Practices – PPP – Plants, Ponds, Practices Tour (September 25, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.)
4. Environmental Practices Overview (October 9, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.)

Further discussion about each topic was held.

1. Tree Care and Food Production – A Smart AI Tree Inventory would be presented by city forester Paul Buck. Tree care, tree health and public and private trees inventory would be covered. Emerald Ash Borer and how to identify tree species would also be discussed. This would be more of a classroom set-up.
2. Tour of Community Garden or Schmidt Woods – Schmidt Woods Tour would be a walk-and-talk event. Conservation practices would be highlighted, including a history of the park. City forester

Buck was suggested as a presenter, along with Parks Project Supervisor Rippe. This would be a showcase highlighting the topics discussed in the first session. The tour would be accessible. The location of Schmidt Woods Park was shown on a map to the committee members. There is sufficient on-street parking, and a shelter is available in the event of bad weather.

3. Tour of Environmental Practices – PPP – Plants, Ponds, Practices Tour. Water Resources Supervisor Scharenbroich will present on stormwater management. Visits of past projects could include ponds, rain gardens, filtration practices, stream restoration projects, alum treatment on Pomerleau Lake and street sweeping. No more than four sites should be done given the time limit.
4. Environmental Practices Overview – Stormwater Practices 101. The speaker is yet to be determined. Water quality success stories will be highlighted along with how the city achieved it.

The following members are assigned to each session.

1. Smart AI Tree Inventory – Dmytrenko, Babcock and Blakely.
2. Schmidt Woods Tour – Vavreck, Blakely, and Dmytrenko.
3. PPP – Plants, Ponds Practices – Polzin and Mathiesen.
4. Stormwater Practices 101 – Tinjum, Matthiesen, and Polzin.

Reports and Staff Recommendations

There were no reports or staff recommendations.

Future Meetings

Regular meetings will occur on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.

February 25, 2025 – Boards and Commissions Recognition Event at 5:30 p.m. at Plymouth City Hall.

March 12, 2025 – Environmental Quality Committee Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. at Plymouth City Hall.

March 22, 2025 – Discover Plymouth from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at Plymouth Community Center.

Adjournment

Chair Blakely adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

To: Environmental Quality Committee

Prepared by: Ben Scharenbroich, Water Resources Supervisor

Reviewed by: Michael Thompson, Public Works Director

Item: **Plymouth Environmental Academy**

1. Action Requested:

Receive updates from Environmental Quality Committee members on the 2025 Plymouth Environmental Academy

2. Background:

The Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) 2025 Work Plan includes a continuation of the Plymouth Environmental Academy (PEA), which will begin in August. The committee discussed topics at their February 12 meeting, and will continue further planning efforts for each proposed topic as listed below at their April 9 meeting.

1. Tree Care and Food Production - August 21, 2025 - 7:00 p.m.

- Committee member Babcock, Blakely and Dmytrenko
- Presenters - City Forester Paul Buck and TBD

2. Tour of Schmidt Woods Park - September 11, 2025 - 5:00 p.m

- Committee members Blakely, Dmytrenko and Vavreck
- Presenters - City of Plymouth Parks and Recreation Director Tomlinson

3. Plants, Ponds and Practices for Water Quality Tour - September 25, 2025 - 6:00 p.m

- Committee members Matthiesen and Polzin
- Presenters - Water Resources Supervisor Scharenbroich

4. Stormwater Practices 101 October 9, 2025 - 7:00 p.m.

- Committee members Matthiesen, Polzin and Tinjum
- Presenters - TBD

3. Budget Impact:

N/A

4. Attachments:

To: Environmental Quality Committee

Prepared by: MK Anderson, Environmental Stewardship Coordinator

Reviewed by: Michael Thompson, Public Works Director

Item: **Energy Action Plan Update**

1. Action Requested:

Receive updates on the City of Plymouth's Energy Action Plan

2. Background:

The Energy Action Plan will be the culmination of a community-driven, strategic energy use planning process. Energy planning expertise is being received through a joint program of Xcel Energy and the Center for Energy and the Environment called Partners in Energy. A 22-person energy action plan team made up of community members will drive this process. The plan will be created from visioning, insights, ideas, and goals through a series of six workshops. Representatives from all three utilities that serve the City of Plymouth, as well as city staff, will attend each workshop. The plan will focus on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and access to energy information. The energy action plan team may pick additional focus areas as they see fit. The first workshop was held on February 27, 2025. Planning will be completed in September, and the final plan should be received no later than December 2025.

3. Budget Impact:

N/A

4. Attachments:

To: Environmental Quality Committee

Prepared by: MK Anderson, Environmental Stewardship Coordinator

Reviewed by: Michael Thompson, Public Works Director

Item: **Approval of GreenStep Cities Best Management Practice Submittal**

1. Action Requested:

Review and approve the GreenStep Cities Best Management Practice Submittal

2. Background:

Staff is requesting the EQC review and approve the city's third submission of the GreenStep Cities Best Management Practices (BMP). Minnesota GreenStep Cities is a free and voluntary program to help cities track sustainability and quality-of-life goals. The program was developed by a broad coalition of public and private stakeholders, including the League of Minnesota Cities, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Office of Energy Security, and the Clean Energy Resources Team (CERTs) as a result of 2008 state legislation. More than 145 Minnesota cities are currently participating in the program, including Bloomington, Burnsville, Eagan, Eden Prairie, Edina, Maple Grove, Minnetonka, St. Louis Park, and Woodbury. More information can be found here: <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/>

The GreenStep Cities program is administered by the Engineering Division of the Public Works Department. Engineering staff partner and coordinate with all other departments as well as the EQC to draft submittals to the GreenStep Cities program. Prior to formally joining the GreenStep Cities program, the city was already performing a number of BMPs in the program through its regular operations. At the March 12 meeting, the EQC will be asked to approve submittal of BMPs 2, 4, 7, 8, 11 (partial completion), and 12 as detailed in the attached document. Some BMPs included in this submittal are current practices the city has undertaken prior to joining the GreenStep Cities program, and some BMPs are new practices. The city is currently at Step 2 of the GreenStep Cities program and with the submittal and subsequent approval by the program staff, the city would move closer to the goal of becoming a Step 3 city.

3. Budget Impact:

N/A

4. Attachments:

1. Green Step Cities BMP Submittal #3



GreenStep Cities

Best Management Practice Submittal | March 2025

BMP 2- Efficient Existing Private Buildings

Date Reviewed by EQC: March 12, 2025

Date Submitted: _____

- Action 1: Create or participate in a program to promote energy and water efficiency.
 - i. In March of 2024 the city launched an energy efficiency and renewable energy rebate program. The program requires a Home Energy Squad Planner Visit. The city's HRA partially subsidizes these visits for all residents. The rebate program subsidizes the remaining cost of the visit for low-income residents.

- Action 5: Create one of the following:
 - Water-wise landscaping ordinance/ guidance
 - WaterSense purchasing program
 - Guidance on rainwater harvesting and home water softener use
 - i. The Public Works Department has had a water efficiency rebate program since 2016. The Water Resources division manages the program, and it is funded by the City of Plymouth Water Department. The rebate program provides incentives for WaterSense toilets and irrigation system upgrades. As well as Energy Star dishwashers and washing machines.



BMP 4- Efficient Outdoor Lighting and Signals

Date Reviewed by EQC: March 12, 2025

Date Submitted: _____

- Action 2: Purchase LEDs for all future street lighting and traffic signals.
 - i. The city uses LEDs in city owned street lighting and traffic signals. Traffic signals located within city limits that are owned by other government agencies also utilize LEDs. New installations of street lighting in the city owned by private utility companies utilize LEDs.
- Action 4: Coordinate Traffic Signals; optimize signal timing to minimize idling at intersections yet maintain safe and publicly acceptable vehicle speeds
 - i. Traffic signal timing and optimization have been in place for decades at some level. Vehicular detection, first accomplished with magnetic loops and more recently with camera video detection, triggers some signals to change when a vehicle approaches to facilitate a more efficient flow of traffic. Some cameras are set on a predetermined delay when one vehicle approaches an intersection allowing more major corridors to flow before stopping the major corridor to allow the minor corridor vehicles to proceed.
 - ii. In 2024 MNDOT completed a signal timing and optimization project on Highway 55, to provide maximum efficiency of highway travelers coordinating so drivers hit as many green lights as possible throughout the corridor. The City of Plymouth coordinated city owned adjacent signal systems with the Highway 55 signals to improve the flow of traffic.



BMP 7 – Resilient City Growth

Date Reviewed by EQC: March 12, 2025

Date Submitted: _____

- Action 2: Achieve higher-density housing with one of the following:
 - a. Flexible Lot Size/frontage requirement for infill development.
 - b. Allowing accessory dwelling units, single-room occupancy housing, senior housing, co-housing, and tiny houses/ apartments by right in selected zoning districts.
 - i. Zoning ordinance 21385 establishes the Multiple Family Dwelling District 3 (RMF-3) to promote the development of higher density, primarily attached housing and directed related, complementary uses.
 - ii. Zoning ordinance 21100 allows for the development of substandard lots through flexible frontage and lot sizes.
 - iii. City code states: Accessory dwelling units may be allowed on residential lots with a detached, single-family home within the FRD, RSF-1, RSF-2, RSF-3, or residential PUD district.



BMP 8 – Mixed Uses

Date Reviewed by EQC: March 12, 2025

Date Submitted: _____

- Action 3: Modify a planned unit development (PUD) ordinance to emphasize or require mixed-use development or affordable housing, to limit residential PUDs to areas adjacent to commercial development, and/or to add sustainability features.
 - i. In May of 2024, the City of Plymouth’s PUD ordinance was modified to include sustainability features. Developments can earn PUD points for including net zero buildings, renewable energy systems, buildings with LEED certification, green roofs, greywater or rainwater reuse systems, EV chargers, and by being solar ready and/or EV charging ready.
<https://www.plymouthmn.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/26879/638518042028800000>

- Action 5: Have a downtown zoning district that emphasizes small and destination businesses, and entrepreneurial spaces, and allows or requires residential and residential-compatible commercial development.
 - i. A goal of the redevelopment of the City of Plymouth City Center (downtown area) is to encourage residential development to support local businesses.
 - ii. Zoning code section 21475 states that the purpose of the City Center (CC) District is to provide a mixture of residential, commercial, entertainment, civic, institutional, and related public facilities in a pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Standards to promote high-quality buildings and site design to foster a vibrant, safe, attractive, and walkable pedestrian environment
 - iii. Zoning code section 21475 states that the city center zoning district allows for residential development as well as residential-compatible development such as restaurants, community centers, parks, and recreation facilities, entertainment, retail sales and services, daycare facilities, tutoring/learning centers, transit stations, electric vehicle supply equipment, roof-mounted solar energy systems, farmers markets, and outdoor events.



BMP 11 – Living and Complete Streets

Date Reviewed by EQC: March 12, 2025

Date Submitted: _____

- Action 6: Implement traffic calming policy/measures in at least one street redevelopment project.
 - i. In 2024, the City of Plymouth rehabilitated Plymouth Boulevard between State Highway 55 and Rockford Road (County Road 9). This roadway is located in the heart of Plymouth’s City Center and is classified as a Major Collector. The rehabilitation project included the addition of four roundabouts for traffic calming and safety measures as well as replacement of an existing sidewalk with a multi-use trail and other pedestrian crossing safety improvements to encourage walking and rolling (biking, roller skating, use of a wheelchair, etc.)
 - ii. Additionally, in the past few years the city completed:
 - a. Conversion of a section of Vicksburg Lane, an Arterial roadway, from an undivided four-lane section to a three-lane section
 - b. Installation of a roundabout on Vicksburg Lane at Gleason Lake Drive near Central Middle School
 - c. Conversion of a portion of Schmidt Lake Road from an undivided four-lane section to a three-lane section as well as installation of other traffic safety improvements
 - d. Rehabilitation of Vicksburg Lane from Highway 55 to Old Rockford Road, which included numerous improvements to traffic and pedestrian mobility and safety



BMP 12 – Mobility Options

Date Reviewed by EQC: March 12, 2025

Date Submitted: _____

- Action 6: Add/expand transit service, or promote car/bike sharing
 - i. In 2020, the City of Plymouth expanded a click-and-ride (on-demand) transit service. Click-and-Ride provides public transit service anywhere in Plymouth, in addition to select locations outside the city of Plymouth, such as Ridgedale Center in Minnetonka, Colonial Square in Wayzata, Golden Valley Center, businesses located in the area of Highway 55 and County Road 101 in Medina and Hamel, and Maple Grove Transit Station.



To: Environmental Quality Committee

Prepared by: MK Anderson, Environmental Stewardship Coordinator

Reviewed by: Michael Thompson, Public Works Director

Item: **Metropolitan Council Equity-Focused Water Efficiency Grant Pilot Program Application**

1. Action Requested:

Review and approve submittal of application for the Metropolitan Council's Equity-Focused Water Efficiency Grant Pilot Program.

2. Background:

The city is proposing to apply for the Metropolitan Council's 2025-2026 Equity-Focused Water Efficiency Grant Pilot Program. The additional funding provided by this pilot program would supplement the city's existing Water Efficiency Rebate Program. An application for the program has been included in the packet for consideration. If awarded, staff will modify the current Water Efficiency Rebate Program to include the elements required by the grant and bring the modification to a future regular meeting for approval.

3. Budget Impact:

The city is requesting \$10,000 of the Metropolitan Council Grant.

4. Attachments:

1. Metropolitan Council Equity Water Efficiency Grant Application



2025 – 2026

EQUITY-FOCUSED WATER EFFICIENCY GRANT PILOT PROGRAM

APPLICATION FORM

updated 02 / 12 / 2025

Applicant information:

MUNICIPALITY:	
MUNICIPAL UTILITY:	
MAILING ADDRESS:	

Primary contact information:

Municipality primary authorized representative (all correspondence regarding the Equity-Focused Water Efficiency Grant Program should be addressed to individual named below):

Name:	
Title:	
Street:	
City, ZIP:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Secondary contact information:

Municipality secondary authorized representative:

Name:	
Title:	
Street:	
City, ZIP:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Program design:

Along with this application form, please include a work plan and schedule that details the municipality’s strategy for promoting the program, connecting with residents, program administration, and spending down the requested grant amount by 6/30/2026 (assuming an announcement of awards in May 2025 and a completed grant agreement in June 2025).

1. Requested grant amount:

Equity criteria

Municipalities are expected to develop equity-focused criteria to determine participation requirements for residents. This pilot program aims to reach residents in the region for whom the traditional program may be challenging to participate in (due to up-front costs, program requirements for participation, language barriers, awareness of the program, and more).

The Met Council has developed maps, data, and other resources related to prioritizing equity that can be used to inform a municipality’s equity criteria:

- [Equity priority areas mapping tool](#)
- Equity Considerations Dataset
 - [Landing page](#)
 - [Interactive tool](#)
 - [GIS data](#) and [user guide](#)
- HousingLink [subsidized housing addresses by city](#)

Municipalities are not required to use the resources provided by the Met Council and can develop criteria based on locally available data or other information.

2. Please explain the criteria that will be used to determine eligibility for participation.

3. How does this proposed program/project prioritize historically disproportionately burdened groups?

4. What data or information informed the development of the equity criteria?

5. Please estimate the number of residents that will participate in this program:

6. Please explain the methodology for calculating the number of participants:

Water savings

7. Please estimate the number of EPA WaterSense labeled toilets that will be installed through this program:

8. Municipality's estimated annual water savings from proposed program, in gallons:

9. Please explain the methodology for calculating estimated annual water savings:

Program/Project Logistics

10. Please describe how the municipality plans to communicate information about this program/project to different audiences? Does the municipality have the ability to translate program information into other languages?

11. Will residents be responsible for acquiring and installing EPA WaterSense labeled toilets or will the municipality coordinate purchase and installation?

Evaluating applications:

Applications will be scored and ranked based on the answers to the questions above as well as the attached work plan and schedule. Proposed programs/projects will be evaluated after the close of the application period. The following topics have been ordered by priority for scoring the application.

- 1. **Equity focus – 15 points**
 - i. Who is benefitting from the proposed program/project?
 - ii. How does this proposed program/project center historically disproportionately burdened groups?
 - iii. Is the grant activity area within an equity priority area?
- 2. **Estimated water savings – 15 points**
- 3. **Ease of participation for residents – 10 points**
 - i. Have barriers to participation been reduced?
- 4. **Estimated number of participants – 10 points**
- 5. **Ease of implementation of project – 10 points**
 - i. Does the municipality have a clear plan to spend down the requested award amount by June 30, 2026?

Applications are due by March 28th, 2025



To: Environmental Quality Committee

Prepared by: Ben Scharenbroich, Water Resources Supervisor

Reviewed by: Michael Thompson, Public Works Director

Item: **Attendance request for upcoming events**

1. Action Requested:

Discuss upcoming events and confirm attendance

2. Background:

Environmental Quality Committee (EQC) members are requested to attend City events outside of regular EQC meetings to assist with public education and outreach. In 2025 there are a number of events in which the EQC may be asked to attend. These events include but are not limited to Discover Plymouth, Drop off Days, Plymouth Tree Sale and Music In Plymouth. For discussion this evening, staff is looking for volunteers to attend the following events in March and April.

- Discover Plymouth - March 22, 2025 - 9:00am - 1:00pm - Plymouth Community Center
- Drop off Days - April 25th - 2:30pm - 6:30pm - Plymouth Maintenance Facility
- Drop off Days - April 26th - 6:30am - 1:30pm - Plymouth Maintenance Facility

3. Budget Impact:

N/A

4. Attachments: