



## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA

3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE MONDAY, OCTOBER 27,  
ROOM 2025

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Monday, October 27, 2025 Meeting Agenda
3. Approval of the Monday, September 22, 2025, Meeting Minutes
4. Items for Discussion
  - A. MN DNR ReLeaf Grant update
  - B. Moratorium Discussion
  - C. Outreach Opportunities
5. Commissioner Reports and Updates
6. Adjournment



## ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES

3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR CONFERENCE  
ROOM

MONDAY, SEPT 22, 2025

6:00 PM

### **Call to Order**

The Environmental Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Teresa DeMars at 6:01 PM. Commissioners in attendance include Teresa DeMars, Lee Nordmeyer, Ann Poe, Kevin Theis, and Richard Huston. There were no commissioners absent. Also in attendance include Adam King – Environmental and Water Resource Coordinator.

### **Approval of the Monday, July 28, 2025, Agenda**

Motion by Huston, seconded by Theis to approve the agenda as presented and carried unanimously.

### **Approval of the Monday, July 28, 2025, Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes**

King presented the Monday, July 28, 2025 Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes. The Commissioners discussed the minutes.

Motion by Poe, seconded by Nordmeyer to approve the Monday, June 23, 2025 Environmental Commission Meeting minutes as presented and carried unanimously.

### **Items for Discussion / Action**

#### Tree Grant Updates

King presented background information on that actions Faribault has taken regarding the dead and dying trees in the city. King discussed the potential ReLeaf grant through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and presented a Resolution #ENV2025-03 Requesting Authorization for Community and Economic Development to apply for the ReLeaf Community Forestry Grant. The commissioners discussed the resolution and removed “but will use amounts that higher-income landowners contribute towards tree and stump removal as match” after the second “whereas.”

Motion by Theis, seconded by Huston to approve Resolution #ENV2025-03 as amended and carried unanimously.

#### Moratorium Discussion

The commissioners discussed the possibility for a moratorium on new datacenters in the City of Faribault to allow the city time to investigate and incorporate design guidelines and standards for water use in the development of datacenters. The commissioners would like to verify the correlation between the power and water usage, and see how other entities and agencies have worded their moratoriums on datacenters. The commissioners asked staff to coordinate with Rice County to check if there are any discussions involving datacenters at the county level.

#### Outreach Opportunities

King informed the commissioners that he has signed the Environmental Commission up for a booth at Faribault’s Fall Festival on Saturday, October 04, 2025, from 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM in Downtown Faribault. The Environmental Commission will be partnering with Xcel Energy Partners In Energy and the Energy Squad to sign people up for Energy Squad visits, promote the Energy Audit Assessment Kits, and hand out energy saving kits. Additional outreach opportunities include the Faribault Winter Fest, Faribault Heritage Days, and the Rice County

Fair. The commissioners discussed the Faribault Fall Fest booth, along with a potential booth at the upcoming Faribault Winter Fest. Other potential outreach events discussed include the Earth Day Celebration at Riverbend Nature Center.

**Commissioner Reports and Updates**

The commissioners provided reports and updates to projects they are working on. Lee Nordmeyer did not provide a report, Ann Poe reported that Partners for Pollinators planted an Oak tree and received a grant from Wild Ones to double the size of a demonstration garden, Richard Huston did not provide a report, Kevin Theis reported applying for a grant to install his pollinator garden, and Teresa DeMars reported that the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board is partnering with the University of Minnesota Extension on “Buzzing Back: Restoring the Habitat for the Rusty Patch” a virtual learning series.

**Adjournment**

Motion by Poe, seconded by Huston, to adjourn the Environmental Commission meeting and carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	10/27/2025	Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator



## Environmental Commission Memorandum

**TO:** Environmental Commission  
**THROUGH:** David Wanberg, Community & Economic Development Director  
**FROM:** Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator  
**MEETING DATE:** October 27, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** MN DNR ReLeaf Grant update

---

### **Background:**

The Faribault City Council approved authorization to apply for the MN DNR ReLeaf Grant at their Tuesday, October 14, 2025 meeting. Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator, has completed the grant application and has submitted the application to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Project selection recommendations will be made, with financial and capacity reviews and grant agreement negotiations between December 1, 2025 and January 23, 2026, with all work plans approved and contracts executed by April 15, 2026.

### **Recommendation:**

### **Attachments:**

1. 2025-releaf-application - City of Faribault

# ReLeaf Community Forestry Grants

2025 Application



Please refer to the Request for Applications (RFA) when completing this application.

Submit this form, along with required attachments, to [ucf.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:ucf.dnr@state.mn.us) by October 28, 2025.

<b>Name of Organization</b>	
<b>Project Coordinator</b>	
<b>Project Coordinator Title</b>	
<b>Address (as found in SWIFT)</b>	
<b>City, State, Zip</b>	
<b>County</b>	
<b>Project Coordinator Email</b>	
<b>Project Coordinator Phone Number</b>	
<b>Grant Amount Requested</b>	
<b>Authorized Signer(s) Name(s) &amp; Email(s)</b> <i>Individual(s) from your organization with signing authority for contracts in the event of grant award.</i>	

If tree removal is incorporated into this project, please list estimated percentages of how wood waste is managed: (no score, taken into account throughout proposal)

- \_\_\_ Not Applicable/No Trees Removed
- \_\_\_ Durable Wood Products (ex. Timber, lumber, building materials, furniture, decorative wood products)
- \_\_\_ Soil Amendments (ex. Biochar, compost, mulch)
- \_\_\_ BioEnergy (ex. Combined heat & power, thermal energy, pelletizing, biogas, advanced biofuels)
- \_\_\_ Disposal (ex. Open burning, land disposal, landfilling)

**Total % of wood waste being utilized \_\_\_/100**

**PROJECT PRIORITY**

What percent of your project is dedicated to the Priority Areas? (3 points)

*Please provide a percentage between 0-100% that reflects the proportion of eligible activities directed at Priority Areas.*

\_\_\_\_\_ %

Please describe how you arrived at this percentage. (3 points)

*In your response, explain which eligible activities occur in Priority Areas, how you calculated their share of the project, and describe any assumptions or data used (e.g., maps, population estimates, tree inventories, staff hours, financial allocations, etc.).*

**PROJECT APPLICATION**

**Project Overview and Need** (30 points; 2600-character limit) Provide a summary of the project, why this funding is needed, what project work will not happen without these grant funds and expected outcomes. Include a description of project locations (citywide project, boulevards, specific parks, etc.). A high-scoring application will demonstrate a readiness to take on a project of the proposed scope and size, showcase significant need, and will prioritize the preservation and maintenance/increase of canopy cover.

**Project Timeline** (20 points; 3200-character limit) Describe the approximate project schedule showing intermediate steps and milestones for activities described in this application or required by the RFA. A high-scoring timeline will provide specific dates for all components of the project, be realistic, easy to comprehend, and will follow EAB best management practices.

**Project Budget Explanation** (10 points; 2600-character limit) Provide additional remarks to clarify the budget request. Provide an explanation of how you are funding portions of your project that are not eligible with grant dollars. A successful budget will provide specific dollar amounts for anticipated use, be financially realistic, and cost effective. Budget attachment will be correctly calculated. Projects that plant more trees than they remove will score higher.

**Community Engagement and Impact** (15 points; 2600-character limit) A high-ranking proposal will show planning and collaboration that clearly serves and includes residents within the Priority Area, and populations that define the Priority Area (low-income residents, persons with disabilities, less than high school education, limited English speaking, and low life expectancy). A high-scoring proposal will describe actionable items for these communities, how these communities will be engaged through the project, and how their input will be incorporated throughout the project.

**Communication** (10 points; 2600-character limit) Describe the methods you will use to conduct outreach to residents about this grant project. A high-scoring communication strategy will use multiple formats that have the potential to reach the public and will incorporate EAB-related messaging.

**Key Personnel** (15 points; 2600-character limit) List all certifications and degrees for staff or contractors involved in the project. Describe the duties internal staff will conduct, and any work that will be contracted out, or the partnerships you will leverage to complete tasks. Include key personnel and their experience with similar tasks. If you expect to contract work out, describe requirements you will have for contractors. A high-scoring application will have key personnel corresponding to each component of the project and will showcase that they have the expertise to conduct the work proposed.

#### **PAST GRANT PERFORMANCE**

*This section will be weighted and scored separately from the project portion of your application. If your organization has been awarded a grant from the DNR Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) program, or you are unsure if your organization has been awarded an a grant, please reach out to [ucf.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:ucf.dnr@state.mn.us) to obtain your past Grant Closeout form, so that you may address it here in this section. There is no penalty for first-time applicants. If you have not had a grant with DNR UCF program and or the DNR UCF program does not have a Grant Closeout form on file, you may leave this section blank.*

**Past Grant Performance** (5 points; 2600-character limit) If you have received funding from the DNR Urban and Community Forestry program in the past, please describe your past performance. Include the outcomes achieved, any challenges you experienced, and how you addressed them. If applicable, explain any missed deliverables, budget issues, or delays, and describe what you have learned or changed in response. If applicable, describe how you plan to continue demonstrating strong grant management practices. This response will be evaluated as part of your overall past performance score and will be conducted in relation to your last grant closeout, as conducted by your grant administrator.



## Environmental Commission Memorandum

**TO:** Environmental Commission  
**THROUGH:** David Wanberg, Community & Economic Development Director  
**FROM:** Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator  
**MEETING DATE:** October 27, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Moratorium Discussion

---

### **Background:**

With one data center proposed in the City of Faribault, questions were brought up at the July Environmental Commission meeting on data centers and a possible recommendation for a moratorium. The discussion focused on needing a timeframe and a specific purpose of a moratorium. In September, the discussion continued for the need of a moratorium related to water use and consumption. Wanting to see the wording of other similar moratoriums, and discussing with larger entities on any discussions surrounding data center moratoriums.

King spoke with staff at Rice County at planning and zoning on their requirements for data centers. Their zoning works differently than the city's, where the county must explicitly allow the use in their ordinance. Currently Rice County does not allow for data centers because it does not explicitly call out that land use. Citizens can petition for the land use to be incorporated into the county's zoning ordinance.

Attached is an example resolution from Kootenai County, Idaho that was passed in early 2025.

Also attached is Minnesota State Statute 462.355.

### **Recommendation:**

### **Attachments:**

1. Kootenai County Resolution - 2025-23 - Data Center Building Permit Moratorium
2. MN SS 462.355

**RESOLUTION NO. 2025-23\_  
EMERGENCY MORATORIUM – DATA CENTERS**

WHEREAS, the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer is part of the greater Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer which was designated as a sole source aquifer by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Feb. 9, 1978; and

WHEREAS, this designation recognized that the Spokane Valley-Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer is the sole source of drinking water for over 600,000 people in Kootenai County, Idaho and Spokane County, Washington; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has also designated the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer as a sensitive resource aquifer; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Kootenai County Community Development has recently been advised that Kootenai County has drawn interest from developers for the placement, construction and operation of data centers within the unincorporated area of Kootenai County on parcels which are located above the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer; and

WHEREAS, data center operations typically:

- Draw between 500,000 and five million gallons of water per day; and
- Generate approximately the same amount of non-domestic wastewater as it draws; and
- Draw up to 100 megawatts of electricity per year; and
- Employ up to 1,600 people during construction and up to 200 people during operations; and

WHEREAS, buildings housing data centers are often at least 1,000,000 square feet in size, or approximately the size of 17 football fields, and some are much larger; and

WHEREAS, concerns have also been raised in communities with data centers regarding their air, stormwater and noise pollution and expected lifespans of only 15-20 years; and

WHEREAS, the Kootenai County Board of Commissioners (“Board”) hereby finds that the typical demands of data centers with respect to water, electricity, air pollution, building size, noise, parking, and traffic circulation constitute an imminent peril to the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Kootenai County, particularly with respect to the quantity and quality of water in the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer, such that an Emergency Moratorium should be placed on new applications for building and associated development permits for data centers as defined herein;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE KOOTENAI COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS AS FOLLOWS:**

1. As stated above, the Board finds that the typical demands of data centers with respect to water, electricity, air pollution, building size, noise, parking, and traffic circulation constitute an imminent peril to the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Kootenai County. This is particularly pertinent to the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer with respect to both water quantity and water quality.
2. A moratorium on new data center building and development is the only way to avoid exacerbating the demand for water in Kootenai County and further jeopardizing the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer's ability to provide water for residents of and visitors to Kootenai County.
3. Therefore, a moratorium is hereby imposed upon the receipt, processing, and approval of applications for building or development permits for the construction of data centers in Kootenai County. For purposes of this moratorium, "data center" is defined as a facility or portion of a facility housing networked computer systems and telecommunications equipment used for remote storage, processing, and distribution of data.
4. The purpose of this moratorium is to identify appropriate zones and to develop regulations and permitting processes which would apply to the placement, construction and operation of data centers within the unincorporated area of Kootenai County.
4. This moratorium shall not apply to any permit that has already been issued or application for a building permit that is already complete and pending. These limitations shall not prohibit the Board or Kootenai County Community Development staff from exercising the control it is otherwise authorized to exercise over any such permit, project, or development application.
5. This moratorium shall be in place for a period of one hundred eighty-two (182) days following adoption of this moratorium.
6. This moratorium shall be in full force and effect retroactive to February 27, 2025.
7. This moratorium is hereby declared to be severable. The invalidity of a section shall not affect the validity of the remaining sections.
8. If a conflict exists between this moratorium and any other ordinance, resolution, or order of Kootenai County, this moratorium shall control until its expiration or termination by the Board.

Upon a motion to adopt the text of the foregoing Resolution made by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_, the following vote was recorded:

Commissioner Eberlein:  
 Commissioner Duncan:  
 Chair Mattare:

Upon said roll call, the text of the foregoing was duly enacted as a Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of Kootenai County, Idaho on the 11<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2025.

**KOOTENAI COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**ATTEST:  
JENNIFER LOCKE, CLERK**

**462.355 ADOPT, AMEND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN; INTERIM ORDINANCE.**

Subdivision 1. **Preparation and review.** The planning agency shall prepare the comprehensive municipal plan. In discharging this duty the planning agency shall consult with and coordinate the planning activities of other departments and agencies of the municipality to insure conformity with and to assist in the development of the comprehensive municipal plan. In its planning activities the planning agency shall take due cognizance of the planning activities of adjacent units of government and other affected public agencies. The planning agency shall periodically review the plan and recommend amendments whenever necessary. When preparing or recommending amendments to the comprehensive plan, the planning agency of a municipality located within a county that is not a greater than 80 percent area, as defined in section 103G.005, subdivision 10b, must consider adopting goals and objectives that will protect open space and the environment. When preparing or recommending amendments to the comprehensive plan, the planning agency must consider (1) the location and dimensions of airport safety zones in any portion of the municipality, and (2) any airport improvements identified in the airport's most recent approved airport layout plan.

Subd. 1a. **Update by metropolitan municipalities.** Each municipality in the metropolitan area, as defined in section 473.121, subdivision 2, shall review and update its comprehensive plan and fiscal devices and official controls as provided in section 473.864, subdivision 2.

Subd. 2. **Procedure to adopt, amend.** The planning agency may, unless otherwise provided by charter or ordinance consistent with the municipal charter, recommend to the governing body the adoption and amendment from time to time of a comprehensive municipal plan. The plan may be prepared and adopted in sections, each of which relates to a major subject of the plan or to a major geographical section of the municipality. The governing body may propose the comprehensive municipal plan and amendments to it by resolution submitted to the planning agency. Before adopting the comprehensive municipal plan or any section or amendment of the plan, the planning agency shall hold at least one public hearing thereon. A notice of the time, place and purpose of the hearing shall be published once in the official newspaper of the municipality at least ten days before the day of the hearing.

Subd. 3. **Adoption by governing body.** A proposed comprehensive plan or an amendment to it may not be acted upon by the governing body until it has received the recommendation of the planning agency or until 60 days have elapsed from the date an amendment proposed by the governing body has been submitted to the planning agency for its recommendation. Unless otherwise provided by charter, the governing body may by resolution adopt and amend the comprehensive plan or portion thereof as the official municipal plan upon such notice and hearing as may be prescribed by ordinance. Except for amendments to permit affordable housing development, a resolution to amend or adopt a comprehensive plan must be approved by a two-thirds vote of all of the members. Amendments to permit an affordable housing development are approved by a simple majority of all of the members. For purposes of this subdivision, "affordable housing development" means a development in which at least 20 percent of the residential units are restricted to occupancy for at least ten years by residents whose household income at the time of initial occupancy does not exceed 60 percent of area median income, adjusted for household size, as determined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, and with respect to rental units, the rents for affordable units do not exceed 30 percent of 60 percent of area median income, adjusted for household size, as determined annually by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Subd. 4. **Interim ordinance.** (a) If a municipality is conducting studies or has authorized a study to be conducted or has held or has scheduled a hearing for the purpose of considering adoption or amendment of a comprehensive plan or official controls as defined in section 462.352, subdivision 15, or if new territory for which plans or controls have not been adopted is annexed to a municipality, the governing body of the municipality may adopt an interim ordinance applicable to all or part of its jurisdiction for the purpose of

protecting the planning process and the health, safety and welfare of its citizens. The interim ordinance may regulate, restrict, or prohibit any use, development, or subdivision within the jurisdiction or a portion thereof for a period not to exceed one year from the date it is effective.

(b) If a proposed interim ordinance purports to regulate, restrict, or prohibit activities relating to livestock production, a public hearing must be held following a ten-day notice given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality before the interim ordinance takes effect.

(c)(1) A statutory or home rule charter city may adopt an interim ordinance that regulates, restricts, or prohibits a housing proposal only if the ordinance is approved by majority vote of all members of the city council.

(2) Before adopting the interim ordinance, the city council must hold a public hearing after providing written notice to any person who has submitted a housing proposal, has a pending housing proposal, or has provided a written request to be notified of interim ordinances related to housing proposals. The written notice must be provided at least three business days before the public hearing. Notice also must be posted on the city's official website, if the city has an official website.

(3) The date of the public hearing shall be the earlier of the next regularly scheduled city council meeting after the notice period or within ten days of the notice.

(4) The activities proposed to be restricted by the proposed interim ordinance may not be undertaken before the public hearing.

(5) For the purposes of this paragraph, "housing proposal" means a written request for city approval of a project intended primarily to provide residential dwellings, either single family or multi-family, and involves the subdivision or development of land or the demolition, construction, reconstruction, alteration, repair, or occupancy of residential dwellings.

(d) The period of an interim ordinance applicable to an area that is affected by a city's master plan for a municipal airport may be extended for such additional periods as the municipality may deem appropriate, not exceeding a total additional period of 18 months. In all other cases, no interim ordinance may halt, delay, or impede a subdivision that has been given preliminary approval, nor may any interim ordinance extend the time deadline for agency action set forth in section 15.99 with respect to any application filed prior to the effective date of the interim ordinance. The governing body of the municipality may extend the interim ordinance after a public hearing and written findings have been adopted based upon one or more of the conditions in clause (1), (2), or (3). The public hearing must be held at least 15 days but not more than 30 days before the expiration of the interim ordinance, and notice of the hearing must be published at least ten days before the hearing. The interim ordinance may be extended for the following conditions and durations, but, except as provided in clause (3), an interim ordinance may not be extended more than an additional 18 months:

(1) up to an additional 120 days following the receipt of the final approval or review by a federal, state, or metropolitan agency when the approval is required by law and the review or approval has not been completed and received by the municipality at least 30 days before the expiration of the interim ordinance;

(2) up to an additional 120 days following the completion of any other process required by a state statute, federal law, or court order, when the process is not completed at least 30 days before the expiration of the interim ordinance; or

(3) up to an additional one year if the municipality has not adopted a comprehensive plan under this section at the time the interim ordinance is enacted.

**History:** 1965 c 670 s 5; 1976 c 127 s 21; 1977 c 347 s 68; 1980 c 566 s 24; 1983 c 216 art 1 s 67; 1985 c 62 s 1,2; 1995 c 176 s 4; 2004 c 258 s 1; 2005 c 41 s 17; 1Sp2005 c 1 art 1 s 91; 2008 c 297 art 1 s 59; 2010 c 347 art 1 s 24; 2017 c 94 art 11 s 3; 1Sp2019 c 3 art 3 s 109



## Environmental Commission Memorandum

**TO:** Environmental Commission  
**THROUGH:** David Wanberg, Community & Economic Development Director  
**FROM:** Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator  
**MEETING DATE:** October 27, 2025  
**SUBJECT:** Outreach Opportunities

---

### **Background:**

The Environmental Commission partnered with Xcel Energy – Partners in Energy and the Home Energy Squad on a booth at Faribault’s Fall Festival vendor and trade show Saturday, October 04, 2025 from 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM. Adam King and Commissioner Nordmeyer, along with staff from Xcel Energy staffed the booth. We were able to give away many light bulbs, energy-saving information, received 9 sign-ups for home energy squad visits, and spoke to many more that were already signed up or had already had a home energy squad visit. The next outreach opportunity is Faribault Winter Fest.

Upcoming events in Faribault that could be outreach opportunities.

- Winter Fest (Saturday, December 6, 2025 Christmas Market or Craft Spirits Holiday Bazaar)
- Faribault Heritage Days (June 11 – 13<sup>th</sup> 2026?)
- Rice County Fair (July 22 – 26<sup>th</sup> 2026)

Outreach ideas include the promotion of energy assessment kits, providing energy efficiency kits, and pollinator information. Potential partners include Xcel Energy (Partners in Energy, Home Energy Squad), Rice County SWCD, Clean Rivers Partners, River Bend Nature Center, and others.

### **Recommendation:**

Xcel Energy would be onboard to partner on a booth to promote energy conservation and the Home Energy Squad. Are any Environmental Commissioners available on Saturday, December 6, 2025 to staff the booth.

### **Attachments:**

