



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA

3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE
ROOM

MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2026

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order
2. Oath of Office
 - A. Miranda Lamb
3. Approval of the March 23, 2026 Agenda
4. Approval of the February 23, 2026 Minutes
5. Routine Business
 - A. 2026 Annual Work Plan
 - B. Interim Ordinance
 - C. Faribault Heritage Days Booth
6. Items for Discussion
 - A. Grant Updates
7. Commissioner Reports and Updates
8. Adjournment



ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES

3RD FLOOR CONFERENCE
ROOM

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2026

6:00 PM

Call to Order

The Environmental Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Teresa DeMars at 6:02 p.m. Commissioners in attendance include Teresa DeMars, Lee Nordmeyer, Ann Poe, Kevin Theis, and Yvette Marthaler. Commissioners absent include Ann Schultz. Also in attendance include Heather Slechta – City Clerk, and Adam King – Environmental and Water Resource Coordinator.

Oath of Office

Re-appointed Environmental Commissioner Yvette Marthaler took the Oath of Office given by Heather Slechta – City Clerk.

Approval of the Monday, February 23, 2026, Agenda

There were no corrections to the Monday, February 23, 2026 Agenda. Motion by Marthaler, seconded by Nordmeyer to approve the agenda as presented and carried unanimously.

Approval of the Monday, October 27, 2025, Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes

King presented the Monday, October 27, 2025 Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes. The Commissioners discussed the minutes. There were no corrections to the Monday, October 27, 2025 Environmental Commission Meeting Minutes. Motion by Nordmeyer, seconded by Theis to approve the Monday, October 27, 2025 Environmental Commission Meeting minutes as presented and carried unanimously.

Routine Business

Election of Officers

Current officers for the City of Faribault Environmental Commission include Chair: Teresa DeMars, and Vice-Chair: Lee Nordmeyer.

A nomination for Nordmeyer for Chair was made by Marthaler. A nomination for DeMars for Chair was made by Theis. There were no additional nominations for Chair. Nordmeyer accepted the nomination for Chair. DeMars declined the nomination for Chair. DeMars seconded the nomination for Nordmeyer for Chair. A unanimous ballot was cast for Lee Nordmeyer as Chair.

A nomination for Theis for Vice-Chair was made by DeMars. There were no additional nominations for Vice-Chair. Theis accepted the nomination for Vice-Chair. Marthaler seconded the nomination for Theis for Vice-Chair. A unanimous ballot was cast for Kevin Theis as Vice-Chair.

Set 2026 Meeting Dates and Times

The commissioners discussed dates and times for the regular City of Faribault Environmental Commission meetings. Motion by Theis, Seconded by Marthaler, to hold the regular City of Faribault Environmental Commission meetings on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:00

p.m. with the May 2026 meeting moved to the fourth Tuesday of the month (Tuesday, May 26, 2026) and no meeting in December 2026. The motion carried unanimously.

2026 Annual Workplan

King presented past City of Faribault Environmental Commission Annual Workplans. The commissioners discussed 2026 priorities. Top priorities for 2026 include implementing the Energy Action Plan with promotion of the energy assessment kits, promote and replace Ash trees within the City, promote and implement environmental restorations and pollinator habitat, promote the Adopt-A-Drain program, display items that we promote at outreach events, promote environmentally friendly transportation options including bussing and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure, merge the City's Tree Board and Environmental Commission, promote water conservation. King will prepare the 2026 Annual Workplan for approval at the next Environmental Commission meeting.

Interim Ordinance

King presented Resolution ENV2026-01, a Recommendation to Adopt an Interim Ordinance to Pause the Development of Data Centers. The commissioners discussed the recommendation and that there is still litigation pending on a currently proposed data center. Motion by Marthaler, seconded by Theis to approve Resolution ENV2026-01 and take the recommendation to City Council. The commissioners discussed the motion. Aye – Marthaler; Nay – Theis, DeMars, Nordmeyer. The motion failed.

Motion by Theis, seconded by DeMars to table the discussion until the March 2026 meeting. The commissioners discussed the motion. Aye – Theis, DeMars, Nordmeyer; Nay – Marthaler. The motion carried.

Wyland Foundation National Mayor's Water Conservation Challenge 2026

King presented information from the Wyland Foundation on their 2026 National Mayor's Water Challenge for 2026 and Resolution ENV2026-02, a Recommendation to Participate in the 2026 Wyland National Mayor's Water Challenge. The commissioners discussed the water conservation challenge and the recommendation to participate. Motion by Marthaler, Seconded by DeMars, to pass Resolution ENV2026-02, the Recommendation to Participate in the 2026 Wyland National Mayor's Water Challenge. The motion carried unanimously.

Items for Discussion

Outreach Opportunities Update

King provided an update on the Faribault Winter Festival Christmas Market, reporting that he was joined by Commissioner Thies, Commissioner DeMars, and Excel Energy staff in the booth, and were able to give away many lightbulbs. Eight sign-ups for energy squad visits were received. Upcoming outreach opportunities include the Faribault Heritage Days (June 11-13th 2026), Rice County Fair (July 22-26th 2026), the Faribault Fall Festival, and Faribault Winter Festival.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) ReLeaf Grant Update

King provided an update on the MN DNR ReLeaf Grant, informing the commissioners that the MN DNR has ranked the received application and informed the City of Faribault that the grant will be funded in the amount of \$389,000. The MN DNR reduced the number of trees to be planted from 200 to 100, and the budgeted amount of the gravel bed nursery from \$15,000 to \$7,500 from the original grant application. King has adjusted the budget and amended the grant application and resubmitted the grant with the updated information. The City will be receiving the grant agreement soon.

Clean Energy Resource Team (CERTs) Video Vignette Grant Update

King provided an update on the CERTs Video Vignette Grant, informing the commissioners that CERTs has ranked the received application and informed the City of Faribault that the grant will be funded in the amount of \$10,000. The grant is to fund the production of 5 – 7 short video vignettes demonstrating energy and water conservation measures. The City will be receiving the grant agreement soon.

Commissioner Reports and Updates

The commissioners provided reports and updates to projects they are working on. Teresa DeMars reported that the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Board is providing the “State of the Cannon” address on Tuesday, March 10, 2026 at 12:00 Noon, and that the Rice Soil and Water Conservation District is currently holding their annual plant and tree sale. Lee Nordmeyer, Kevin Theis, and Yvette Marthaler did not provide a report.

Adjournment

Motion by DeMars, seconded by Theis, to adjourn the Environmental Commission meeting and carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Approved:	Date:	Recorder:
	03/23/2026	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: March 23, 2026
SUBJECT: 2026 Annual Work Plan

Background:

As stated in the Environmental Commissioner Handbook, Sec. 9-5, the Environmental Commission shall create, for council review, an annual work plan outlining planned projects and tasks for the year. This includes (a) environmental review of projects that involve an environmental assessment worksheet (EAW), or environmental impact statement (EIS), (b) creation and participation of plans, and (c) other duties as assigned by the city council, including advising the city council on other environmental matters such as environmental ordinances and promoting public awareness and understanding of environmental matters affecting the city.

Discussion:

The Environmental Commission discussed their 2026 priorities at the February 23, 2026, meeting and include:

- Implement the Energy Action Plan.
 - Promote Energy Assessment Kits.
 - Environmentally Friendly Transportation.
 - Busing and Carpooling.
 - EV Charging Infrastructure.
- Remove and Replace Dead and Dying Ash Trees.
 - Work on the MN DNR ReLeaf grant to remove and replace 100 trees for low-income residents.
- Promote and Implement Environmental Restorations and Pollinator Habitat.
- Promote Water Conservation in the City.
- Promote and Implement the Adopt-a-Drain Program.
- Promote Priorities at Outreach Events.
- Merge the City's Tree Board and Environmental Commission

The 2025 Annual Report and 2026 Annual Work Plan are attached.

HONESTY ▪ RESPECT ▪ DEDICATED ▪ VISIONARY ▪ ACCOUNTABILITY

Recommendation:

Approve the 2025 Annual Report and 2026 Annual Workplan.

Attachments:

1. 2025 Annual Report - 2026 Annual Workplan
2. Environmental Commission 2026 Workplan

City of Faribault 2026 Environmental Commissioners

	Term Expires
Lee Nordmeyer – Chair	1/31/2027
Kevin Thies – Vice-Chair	1/31/2027
Teresa Demars	1/31/2028
Yvette Marthaler	1/31/2029
Ann Schultz	1/31/2029
Miranda Lamb	1/31/2029
Vacant	

2026 Meeting Schedule

Monday, February 23, 2026
 Monday, March 23, 2026
 Monday, April 27, 2026
 Tuesday, May 26, 2026
 Monday, June 22, 2026
 Monday, July 27, 2026
 Monday, August 24, 2026
 Monday, September 28, 2026
 Monday, October 26, 2026
 Monday, November 23, 2026
 Monday, January 25, 2027

2025 Meetings Held

Thursday, May 29, 2025 – Special Meeting
 Monday, June 26, 2025
 Monday, July 28, 2025
 Monday, September 22, 2025
 Monday, October 27, 2025



City of Faribault Environmental Commission



2025 Annual Report and 2026 Annual Workplan



2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The City of Faribault's Environmental Commission worked on and passed 3 resolutions.

Passed Resolution ENV2025-02 Requesting Strengthened Environmental Commitments for the Archer Datacenter Project

Reviewed the Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) and passed Resolution ENV2025-01 Approving the Findings of Fact and Record of Decision for Archer Datacenters EAW and Negative Declaration Concerning the Need for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The City of



Passed Resolution ENV2025-03 Requesting Authorization for Community and Economic ReLeaf

Faribault's Environmental Commission Worked on and Applied for Two Grant Applications

The Minnesota Clean Energy Resource Team (CERTs) – Visualizing Energy Savings Through Video Vignettes – This grant in partnership with the City of Faribault Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) will expand its video vignette series to include video vignettes focused on energy efficiency and energy conservation practices.



The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources – ReLeaf Community Forestry Grant – This grant in partnership with River Bend Nature Center will work with low-income residents in Faribault to remove approximately 100 dead and dying trees and replace them with diverse and climate resilient species protecting and increasing the city's tree canopy.

The City of Faribault's Environmental Commission was present at 2 events in 2025, speaking with residents about energy conservation, taking sign-ups for Home Energy Squad visits, and handing out energy efficient light bulbs.



1. Implement the Energy Action Plan – Promotion of Energy Assessment Kits and Environmentally Friendly Transportation (Bussing and EV Charing Infrastructure)

The Environmental Commission has partnered with Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy, to receive a Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) grant that assisted with purchasing home energy assessment kits stationed at the library and River Bend Nature Center. The City will continue promoting the home energy assessment kits, seek funding for expanded EV charging infrastructure, promote bussing and carpool options, and continue to implement all other aspects of the Energy Action Plan.



2. Remove and Replace Dead and Dying Ash Trees

The emerald ash borer (EAB) has devastated the ash trees in the City and removing and replacing trees can be expensive and complicated when close to utilities. The City has received funding though the MN DNR ReLeaf grant to assist low-income residents remove and replace 100 dead and dying trees. River Bend Nature Center will assist with outreach and sign-ups for the program.

3. Promote and Implement Environmental Restorations and Pollinator Habitat

The city will work with partners and seek funding to promote and implement pollinator habitat projects in the city, including Partners for Pollinators, the BWSR L2L grant, HELP grants, and Pollinator Pathways.

4. Promote Water Conservation

Participate in the Wyland Foundation's Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation to encourage residents to take simple, measurable actions at home to protect water quality, reduce waste, and build greater resiliency in local water systems. Promote water conservation practices and provide water efficiency items at outreach events.



5. Promote the Adopt-A-Drain Program

Adopting a drain can help reduce flooding and improve water quality of nearby surface waters by keeping it free of leaves, debris and litter. An often-overlooked piece of street infrastructure, drains play a crucial role in removing excess rainwater from our streets and keeping our communities safe from flooding.



6. Promote Priorities at Outreach Events

The city will promote the Environmental Commission priorities at education and outreach events in the City of Faribault, and plan demonstration and community service projects.



7. Merge the City's Tree Board and Environmental Commission

To streamline processes and make strides in efficiency, we will work to combine the City's Tree Board and Environmental Commission.

2026 WORKPLAN



City of Faribault Environmental Commission 2026 Workplan

1. Implement the Energy Action Plan
 - a. Promotion of the home energy assessment kits available at the library and River Bend Nature Center.
 - b. Promotion of environmentally friendly transportation options including bussing and electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.
2. Promote the removal and replacement of dead and dying ash trees.
3. Promote and implement environmental restorations and pollinator habitat.
4. Promote Water Conservation.
5. Promote the Adopt-A-Drain Program.
6. The city will work to incorporate education/outreach, demonstration projects, community service into each of the priorities.
7. Merge the City's Tree Board and Environmental Commission

1. Implement the Energy Action Plan.

The Environmental Commission has partnered with Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy, to receive a Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) grant that assisted with purchasing home energy assessment kits stationed at the library and River Bend Nature Center. The City will continue promoting the home energy assessment kits, seek funding for expanded EV charging infrastructure, promote bussing and carpool options, and continue to implement all other aspects of the Energy Action Plan.

2. Promote the removal and replacement of dead and dying ash trees.

The emerald ash borer (EAB) has devastated the ash trees in the City and removing and replacing trees can be expensive and complicated when close to utilities. The City has received funding through the MN DNR ReLeaf grant to assist low-income residents remove and replace 100 dead and dying trees. River Bend Nature Center will assist with outreach and sign-ups for the program.

3. Promote and implement environmental restorations and pollinator habitat.

The city will work with partners and seek funding to promote and implement pollinator habitat projects in the city, including Partners for Pollinators, the BWSR L2L grant, HELP grants, and Pollinator Pathways.

4. Promote Water Conservation.

Participate in the Wyland Foundation's Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation to encourage residents to take simple, measurable actions at home to protect water quality, reduce waste, and build greater resiliency in local water systems. Promote water conservation practices and provide water efficiency items at outreach events.

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The city will promote the Environmental Commission priorities at education and outreach events in the City of Faribault, and plan demonstration and community service projects.

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**8. POSTPONED – until a decision with the Woolen Mills Dam is made. –
Also see priority #3.**

**Implement a native buffer on city property along the Cannon River
Reservoir above the Woolen Mill Dam**

The city will work with partners and seed funding to install and maintain a native buffer on city owned property along the Cannon River Reservoir above the Wollen Mill Dam, including the HELP grant, Pollinators pathways grants and other state and federal grants.



Environmental Commission Memorandum

TO: Environmental Commission
THROUGH: David Wanberg, Community & Economic Development Director
FROM: Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator
MEETING DATE: March 23, 2026
SUBJECT: Interim Ordinance

Background:

King has drafted a recommended Interim Ordinance resolution for review. The draft resolution covers the Environmental Commission's concerns of drinking water source, water usage, electricity use, noise, air pollution / greenhouse gas emissions.

Recommendation:

Approve Resolution ENV20026-01 Recommendation to Adopt and Interim Ordinance to Study the Development of Data Centers.

Attachments:

1. ENV Resolution ENV2026-01 Interim Ordinance on Data Centers

CITY OF FARIBAULT ENVIRONMENTAL COMISSION

RESOLUTION #ENV2026-01

RECOMMENDATION TO ADOPT AN INTERIM ORDINANCE TO STUDY THE DEVELOPMENT OF DATA CENTERS

WHEREAS, there has recently been interest from at least one developer for the placement, construction and operation of a data center within the City of Faribault, with additional data centers assumed to follow; and

WHEREAS, the City of Faribault uses the Prairie Du Chien and Jordan Aquifers as its source for industries, and drinking water for its approximately 25,000 residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Faribault is limited to 1,740 Million Gallons Per Year (MGY) or an average of 4,767,123 Gallons Per Day (GPD) by its Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Water Appropriations Permit, with its Water Treatment Plant designed to operate at 7.7 Million GPD and able to operate at 10 Million GPD for short periods of time; and

WHEREAS, data center operations can:

- Draw between 250,000 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 and over 14,000,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) 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 1,000,000 square feet in size, with some much larger; and

WHEREAS, exterior noise at data centers generated by equipment, cooling systems, fans, and diesel generators can result in some people experiencing headaches, additional stress, and sleep disturbances leading to potential anxiety, cognitive impairments, cardiovascular risks, and in extreme cases, tinnitus and hearing loss; and

WHEREAS, emissions caused by electricity generated primarily from fossil fuel and diesel generators can release significant amounts of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, energy demand for data centers can range from 14,000,000 kWh / year to over 70,000,000 kWh /year putting strain on the energy grid and increasing energy costs; and

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

WHEREAS, the City of Faribault Environmental Commission hereby finds that the typical demands and cumulative potential effects of multiple data centers with respect to water resources, air quality, noise, and electricity constitute a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the its residents such that the City Council should consider an interim ordinance to study the permitting, building and associated development applications of new data centers until standards and environmental protections can be established; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FARIBAULT, that the Environmental Commission recommends the City of Faribault City Council adopt an interim ordinance to study the development of new datacenters for one year to allow time for staff to research, develop, and incorporate design standards for datacenters regarding noise, greenhouse gas emissions, water, and energy efficiency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FARIBAULT, that this recommendation shall be effective immediately upon its passage and without publication according to the Faribault City Charter.

Date Adopted: Monday, February 23, 2026

Faribault Environmental Commission

Teresa DeMars, Chair

ATTEST:

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: March 23, 2026
SUBJECT: Faribault Heritage Days Booth

Background:

The Environmental Commission has partnered with Xcel Energy – Partners in Energy and the Home Energy Squad on a booth at Faribault’s Fall Festival and Winter Festival. The Faribault Heritage Days will be held June 11 – 13th 2026. Outreach ideas for the Faribault Heritage Days include the promotion of the energy assessment kits, providing energy efficiency kits, water conservation items 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:

Decide if the Environmental Commission wants to participate and have a booth at the Faribault Heritage Days.

Attachments:

1. Heritage Days Flyer



2026 Annual Heritage Days Craft and Vendor Show

Friday, June 12 and Saturday, June 13, 2026
430 2nd Ave NW, Faribault, MN 55021

Hello Crafters and Vendors,

It's that time to start planning ahead for the **Faribault Heritage Days Craft and Vendor Show** set for Friday June 12th and Saturday June 13th. You can also do Thursday June 11th roughly 5-9pm if you like.

The craft fair will be advertised to begin at 3:00 pm this year on Friday and go until about 8:00 or, if you want to stay longer, please feel free. On Saturday, we must advertise a start time which will be set at 10:00 am; however, you are welcome to start selling when the Farmer's Market starts at 7:00 a.m. We will have a start time on Saturday at 10:00 am and an end time at 7:00. If you've been a part of these events in the past, you will know that I try to be as amenable to your schedules as possible. This is a two-day outdoor event for the Craft and Vendor fair and there will be no space sharing unless agreed upon in writing in advance. One 12x12 space will be \$60 and with an Early Bird discount of \$5.00 if you get it in before May 1, 2026. Promotional booths are \$100. I will not be taking application after June 1st so get your application in early.

The advertisement for this event will be in conjunction with the Heritage Days and will be heard on FCTV, KDHL and Power 96 as well as in the newspaper, our website and social media. Please be sure to tell all your customers that you will be at this event and advertise as best you can through any social media outlets that you have.

\$60.00 will reserve you ONE 12x12 space *Get your early bird registration in before May 1, 2026 and receive a discount of \$5.00 off your total registration fee.*

THERE IS A LIMIT TO THE NUMBER OF VENDORS, SO PLEASE GET YOUR CONTRACT AND PARTICPATION FEE SUBMITTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. All fees Are non-refundable, if vendor cancels, no shows, or in the event of a serious weather event (the fees are used to promote the event

If you require electricity, please contact Kari directly to see if we may be able to accommodate. Availability for this is very limited and you must be able to use a commercial grade extension cord.

Along with your payment, you will need to fill out the Operator Certificate of Compliance ST-19 and return to Kari. Make checks payable to: **Faribault Community Festivals**

Kari Casper
1156 Kingswood Crescent
Faribault, MN 55021
(507) 838-5748

**Karicasper30@aol.com

Please include this portion with your payment

Name _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Product Name/Sold _____

Email: _____ Telephone No.: _____

Spots Needed _____ Address: _____

Do you plan on Thursday evening as well? yes or no

Please make your checks payable to: **Faribault Community Festivals**

How did you hear about us? _____

Please provide me with a copy of your business cards also if available. We love referrals as well. Pass on...the quicker I can get these back from you the quicker we can come up with an awesome flyer to show who will be there. Thank you and we look forward to working with you.

Show is getting bigger and better every year!!!

Last three years were amazing – thank you!



Environmental Commission Memorandum

TO: Environmental Commission
THROUGH: David Wanberg, Community & Economic Development Director
FROM: Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator
MEETING DATE: March 23, 2026
SUBJECT: Grant Updates

Background:

Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator, is still working with the MN DNR, the Faribault Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), River Bend Nature Center and City of Faribault Staff to prepare and sign agreements including the grant agreement for the ReLeaf Grant.

Adam King, Environmental and Water Resources Coordinator, is also still working with the University of Minnesota, the Faribault Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), and City of Faribault Staff to prepare and sign agreements including the grant agreement for the Clean Energy Resource Team (CERTs) grant.

Recommendation:

Attachments: