

City of Northfield

*City Hall
801 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057
northfieldmn.gov*



Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, August 19, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

Environmental Quality Commission

6:00 PM - REGULAR AGENDA CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

The proposed consent agenda is included on the Council Chamber screens. The purpose of a consent agenda is to allow for routine motions, resolutions, and ordinances, or those previously discussed with consensus made, to be passed with one motion. These are still important and necessary considerations and full background memo and materials are publicly available on the website and a copy on the table in the room. Board/Commission Members may ask questions for clarification of an item. If a Member wants to discuss an item, our rules request it be made by advance notice by noon on the Monday immediately prior to the meeting date to the Chair and Staff Liaison, or without said prior notice, during the approval of the agenda. The agenda was passed earlier including the consent agenda.

1. [26-419](#) July 15, 2026 EQC Meeting Minutes

Attachments: [1 - July 15, 2026 EQC Meeting Minutes](#)

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

Persons may take one opportunity to address the Board/Commission for two (2) minutes (not including interpreter's time) on any topic, even if on the agenda, with the condition that they may not speak on the same item later in the meeting. No notification of the Chair is required. However, speakers are asked to complete a sign up card. Persons wanting a response to a question must submit the question in writing to the recording secretary. Questions must include name and information on how to contact. You may use the back side of the comment cards available in the meeting room. Persons cannot gift their 2 minute speaking time to other members of the public.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

REGULAR AGENDA

Persons that wish to speak on a regular agenda item must provide name and address by completing & submitting a sign up card. Persons may also contact the staff liaison via the City's website no later than 12:00 noon on the day of the meeting. The Chair will call up individuals to speak, based on preregistration and cards submitted, after the staff report on an item. Please be respectful of the public's and the Commission's time. Members of the public wishing to speak must adhere to the following guidelines:

- *Speak only once for no more than two minutes (not including interpreter's time) on the topic unless the speaker is addressed by the Commission;*
- *Identify your relationship to the topic;*
- *Have a spokesperson or two for your group to present your comments;*
- *Persons wanting a response to a question must submit the question in writing to the recording secretary, including name and how you would like to be contacted.*

2. [26-420](#) Discussion on Environmental Quality and Sustainability Considerations for the Zoning Code Update.

Attachments: [1 - Zoning Code Update](#)

3. [26-421](#) 2026 EV Ride-and-Drive Event Update

Attachments: [1- EV Ride & Drive Event Presentation](#)

4. [26-422](#) 2026-2027 Work Plan and Commission Priorities

Attachments: [1 - 2026 Work Plan Tracker FINAL](#)
 [2 - 2026-2027 Work Plan Final Initiatives](#)

STAFF UPDATES

5. [26-423](#) Staff Update

ADJOURNMENT



Legislation Text

File #: 26-419, **Version:** 1

Environmental Quality Commission Meeting Date: August 19, 2026

To: Members of the Environmental Quality Commission

From: Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate

July 15, 2026 EQC Meeting Minutes

Action Requested:

Please review the July 15, 2026 EQC Meeting Minutes and approve or approve with amendments.

Summary Report:

N/A

City Plans & Policies Relevance:

N/A

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

N/A



City of Northfield

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801 Washington Street
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Meeting Minutes - Draft Environmental Quality Commission

Wednesday, July 15, 2026

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

6:00 PM - REGULAR AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Present: 4 - Vice Chair Michael Provancha, Commissioner Janet Petri, Chair Rob Hanson and Commissioner Kimberly Haroldson

Absent: 3 - Commissioner Susannah Shmurak, Commissioner Simon Pryor and Commissioner Ava Podracky

Also present: Sara Pabich, Sustainability Coordinator; Matt Bailey, Meeting Associate; Alex Halverson, Youth Representative (voting)

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Petri, seconded by Vice Chair Provancha, to approve the agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Petri, Vice Chair Provancha, Chair Hanson, Commissioner Haroldson, and Youth Representative Halverson

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Vice Chair Provancha, seconded by Commissioner Petri, to approve the consent agenda containing the June 17, 2026 EQC Meeting Minutes. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Commissioner Petri, Vice Chair Provancha, Chair Hanson, Commissioner Haroldson, and Youth Representative Halverson

1. [26-377](#) June 17, 2026 EQC Meeting Minutes

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was received.

BOARD MEMBER AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Provancha reported on the continued operation of federal weather buoys and on the passage of legislation in some states mandating that electric vehicle manufacturers provide recycling operations to EV batteries.

Commissioner Petri reported on the Citizens Climate Lobby national meeting on Zoom which highlighted ongoing reductions in emissions.

REGULAR AGENDA

2. [26-378](#)

Xcel Energy Conversation and Optimization Program Triannual Plan

Sustainability Coordinator Sara Pabich delivered a presentation on Xcel Energy's Conservation Improvement Program and asked the EQC to consider approval of a comment letter for submission to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission's eDockets system. Pabich responded to questions and comments from the EQC.

Commissioner Haroldson left the meeting at 6:41 p.m.

3. [26-379](#)

2026-2027 Work Plan and Commission Priorities

- Energy Efficiency Education for Residents: Commissioner Petri reported on the abundance of material this subcommittee has for distribution to the public. At Commissioner Provancha's request, Sustainability Coordinator Sara Pabich provided an update on the tabling opportunity at this coming weekend's Riverwalk Market Fair.
- Electric Vehicle Community Showcase: Chair Hanson reminded the EQC of this event occurring on September 26, 2026.
- Active Transportation Awareness Campaign: Chair Hanson reported that there are no new updates on this initiative.
- Landscaping & Native Planting Research: Petri reported that the work of this subcommittee continues.
- Waste Reduction Library Research: Vice Chair Provancha reiterated that work on this initiative is complete.

STAFF UPDATES4. [26-380](#)

Staff Update

Sustainability Coordinator Sara Pabich provided updates from City Staff. Pabich responded to questions and comments from the EQC.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice Chair Provancha, seconded by Commissioner Petri, to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 4 - Commissioner Petri, Vice Chair Provancha, Chair Hanson, and Youth Representative Halverson



Legislation Text

File #: 26-420, **Version:** 1

Environmental Quality Commission Meeting Date: August 19, 2026

To: Members of the Heritage Preservation Commission

From: Sara Pabich, Sustainability Coordinator
Mathias Hughey, Interim City Planner

Discussion on Environmental Quality and Sustainability Considerations for the Zoning Code Update.

Action Requested:

The Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) will receive an overview of the City's Land Development Code (LDC) update process and discuss how environmental quality and sustainability considerations can be incorporated into development regulations.

Summary Report:

The City has started the process of updating its Zoning Code and Subdivision Regulations, currently contained within the Land Development Code (LDC). The LDC establishes the rules for how land can be developed and used, including requirements related to building placement, density, setbacks, landscaping, parking, open space, and site design.

As part of the update, the City will review existing regulations and consider opportunities to better support the City's goals for environmental quality, sustainability, and community development. Some of the LDC provisions that can affect environmental outcomes include:

- Land use and density - Where and how development occurs, including infill and patterns of growth.
- Landscaping and stormwater - Regulations that can support vegetation, water quality, and natural resources.
- Lighting - Including the City's existing dark-sky lighting ordinance.
- Preservation and adaptive reuse - Supporting the continued use of existing buildings and protection of historic and cultural resources.

The LDC also helps implement the Comprehensive Plan, including goals related to protecting natural, historic, and cultural resources; encouraging infill; promoting sustainability; and creating a stable pattern of land uses. As part of the update, the City will consider opportunities to better align these regulations with the Comprehensive Plan and support a resilient, sustainable, and well-planned community.

City Plans & Policies Relevance:

The Comprehensive Plan identifies updating the LDC as a key priority for implementing that plan.

Alternative Options:

NA

Financial Impacts:

NA

Tentative Timelines:

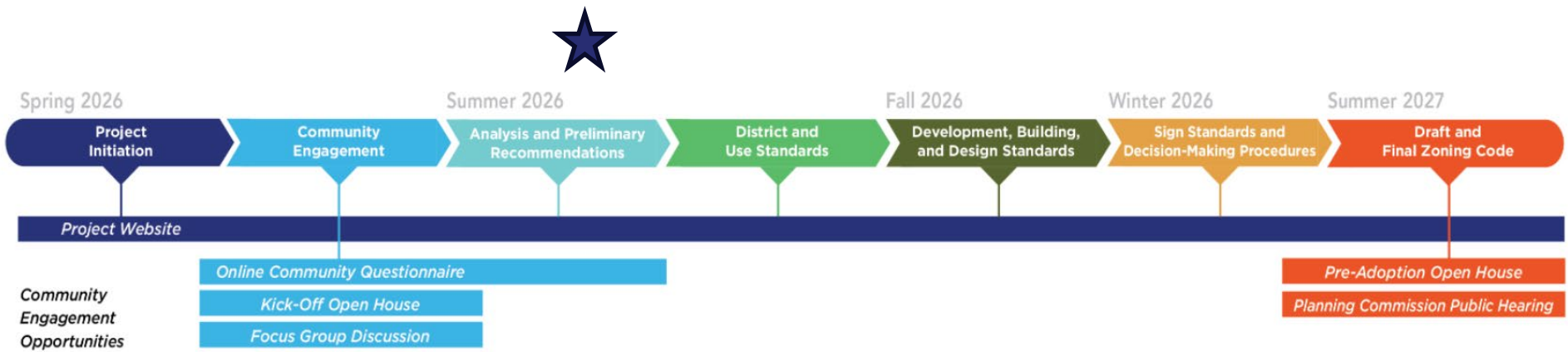
NA



Zoning Code Update

Environmental Quality Commission
August 19, 2026

Timeline



What is a Zoning Code?



- **Regulates development within the city**
 - Uses – where, when, how
 - Forms – setbacks, height limits, access, size, materials, etc.
 - Buildings, signs, subdivisions, streets
 - Performance – lighting, noise, dust, traffic
 - Process – permits, variances, enforcement, etc.
- **What it's not:**
 - Building code, fire code, fiscal policy, nuisance code, private actions

Purpose of a Zoning Code?



- Implement Comprehensive Plan (and other city plans)
- History of public health
- Includes purpose statement
 - Preserve & protect natural, historic, & cultural resources...
 - Encourage growth in infill locations...
 - Promote an ethic of sustainability...
 - Create a comprehensive and stable pattern of land uses...

Why Update?

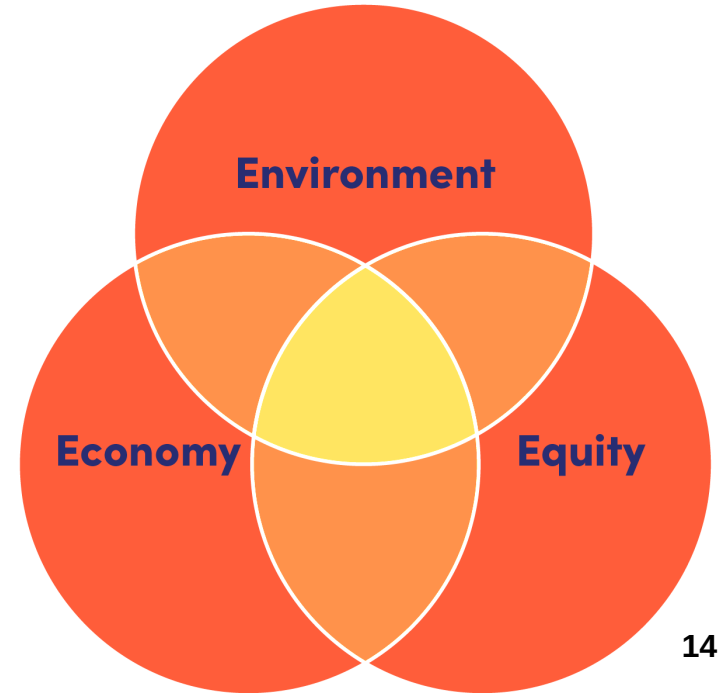


- **Align with the 2045 Comprehensive Plan.**
 - Ensure zoning regulations support the goals and vision outlined in Northfield's Comprehensive Plan 2045
- **Modernize and Update.**
 - The Zoning Code was last fully updated in 2011, with several amendments added over time
- **Respond to Evolving Development Needs.**
 - Update regulations to better reflect current and future development trends
- **Improve Development Standards.**
 - Refine regulations related to setbacks, building coverage, parking, lighting, and signs
- **Enhance Usability and Clarity.**
 - Redesign the Code to be clearer, easier to navigate, and more user-friendly for residents, developers, and City staff
- **Process Improvement.**
 - Implement proportional and transparent processes with clear requirements and decision criteria

Key Themes of Comp Plan



- Northfield is a welcoming city, providing equitable access to a high quality of life.
- We are a city with a strong identity rooted in history while growing as a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable place. We maintain our integrity as an independent and distinct city shaped by our historic and natural resources, the Cannon River, rural neighbors, and our colleges.



Key Considerations



- **Clear**
 - Terms defined, consistently used, reflect intent
- **Enforceable**
 - State/Federal law, practical constraints
- **Practicable**
 - Allow/prohibit, dis/encourage, requirements/conditions
- **Balance trade-offs and competing priorities**

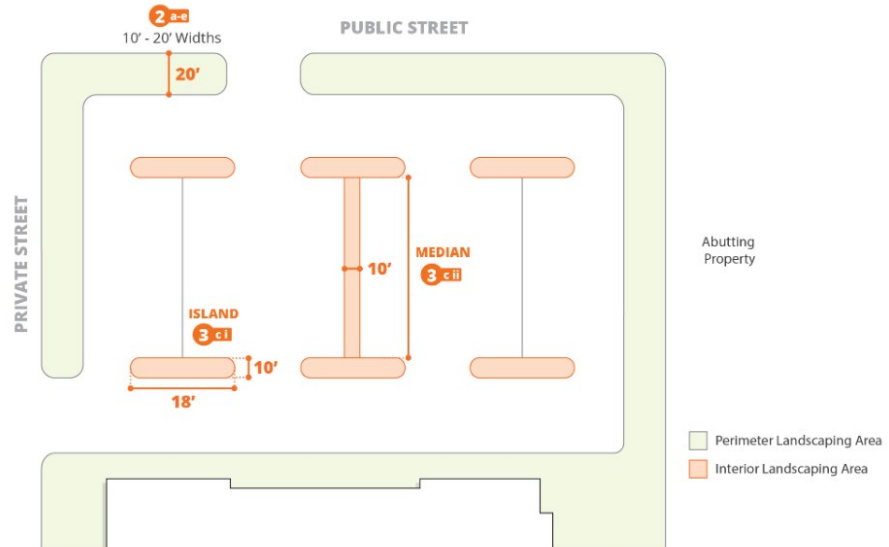
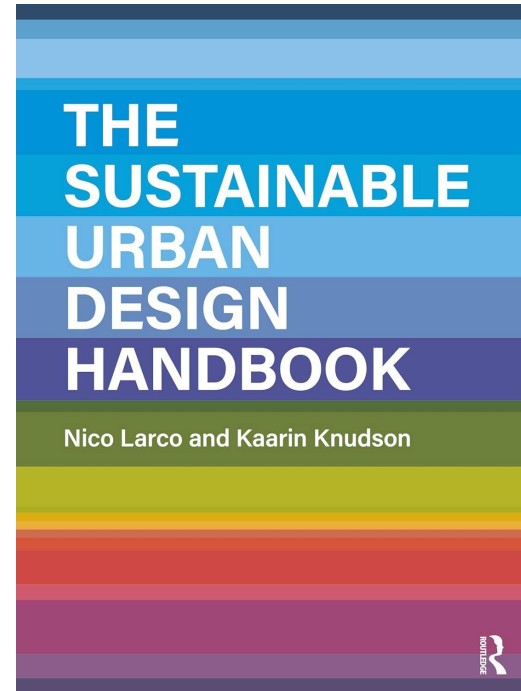


Figure 3 Parking Lot Landscape

EQC Relevant Topics



- **Density & land use**
 - Buildings & Transportation – 2 primary sources of GHG
- **Landscaping**
- **Stormwater**
- **Lighting**
 - Currently have a dark-sky lighting ordinance
- **Preservation/adaptive reuse**

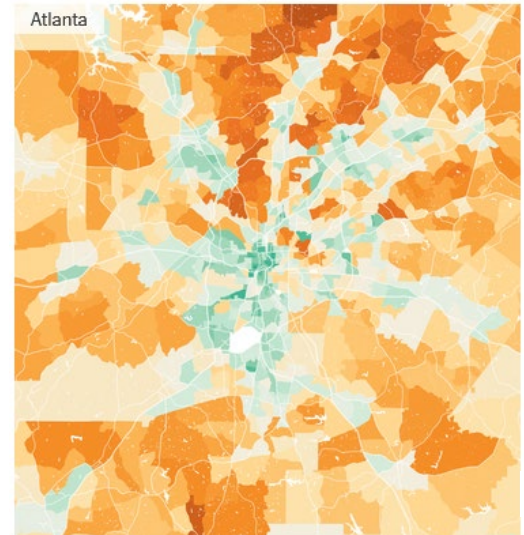
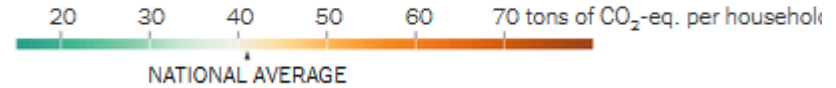


Compact Development



- **Density & land use**
 - Buildings & Transportation – 2 primary sources of GHG
- **Multiplier effects**
 - Destinations to walk to, enough customers to support, more efficient buildings, reduced land consumption
- **Effectively manage change**

Emissions Footprint of the Average Household



Compact Development



- 1 unit on 1.01 acre lot
- Density $< 1/\text{acre}$
- VPA = \$1.8 million



- 3 units on 0.17 acre lot
- Density $> 17/\text{acre}$
- VPA = \$3.9 million



Compact Development



- 0 units on 0.25 acre lot
- Density = 0/acre
- VPA = \$130,800



- 0 units on 0.22 acre lot
- Density = 0/acre
- VPA = \$261,400



Compact Development



- 1 units on 12.18 acre lot
- Density = 1/acre
- VPA = \$550,000



- 1 units on 0.05 acre lot
- Density = 1/acre
- VPA = \$6.5 million



Compact Development



- **Known issues**

- Clarity needed for attached vs. detached ADUs
- NC-F zoning location requirement too restrictive
- Additional housing types
- Height limits
- Minimum lot sizes

- **Lessons on current code**

- Allowing change $\neq$ having change
- Financing/market forces play a significant role

- **Sample questions**

- Regulate density vs. form?
- Expansion of small-scale commercial?

Landscaping



- **Location, type, purpose**
 - Aesthetics, buffering, screening, shading
- **Tree preservation**
 - Which trees are protected, how to protect, how to manage replacement
- **Adequate standards – i.e. tree survival**
- **Standards based on benefits**



Landscaping



- **Known Issues**
 - Clarity ex. “...shall be generously and intensively landscaped”
 - Parking lot trees not surviving
 - Enforcement around boulevard plantings
- **Sample Questions**
 - How to improve tree survival
 - Is buffering adequate, excessive, etc.?
 - How to balance economics, density, and natural systems



Stormwater



- State-level Regulations
- Stormwater ponds
 - Due to karst topography and clay soils, infiltration is difficult in Northfield
 - Location, design, up-stream interventions (ex. street trees)
- Managed by Public Works & Engineering
 - Soils, flow rates, capacity, etc.



Amphibian Amphitheater

Roof water captured by the on-site pond provides both habitat and the water needed for irrigating the vibrant landscape.

Stormwater



- **Sample questions**
 - Incentivize alternatives to large ponds?
 - Impervious limits on single-family or low-density housing
 - Rainwater capture/re-use
 - Maintenance considerations – adequate expertise, time, money, etc.



Lighting

- **Current dark-sky lighting ordinance**
 - Requires full cut-off
 - Regulates light temp
 - Height limits
- **Sources not regulated**
 - Internally lit signs
 - Interior building lights
- **Relatively new update – monitoring areas for improvement**

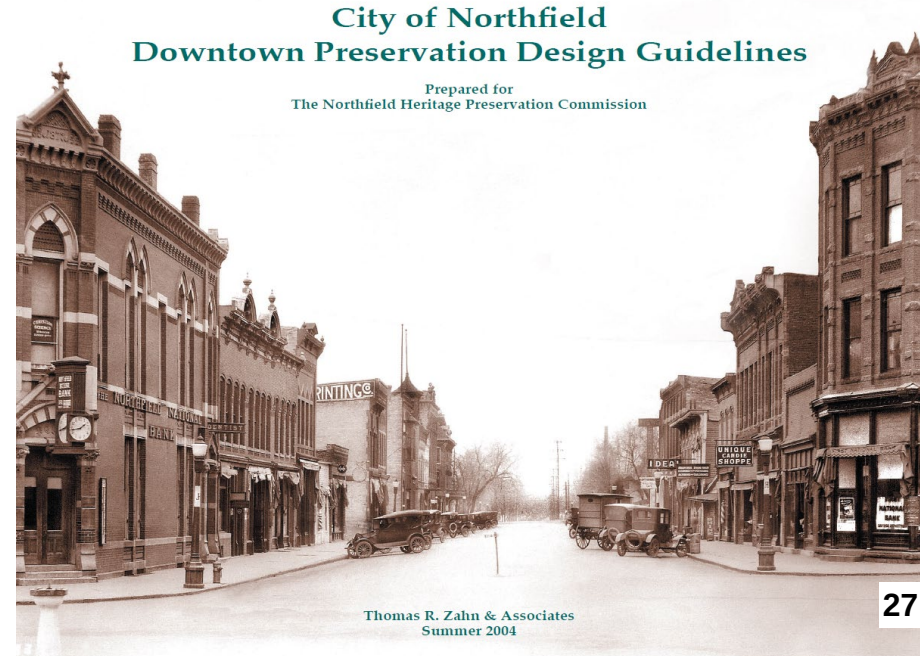
Examples of Acceptable / Unacceptable Lighting Fixtures



Preservation and Adaptive Reuse



- Embodied carbon is significant portion of life-cycle emissions
- Preserving and reusing buildings reduces waste and life-cycle emissions
 - May require additions, accommodations/exceptions from regulations
 - Efficiency upgrades can be difficult and/or costly
 - Misaligned incentives



Preservation and Adaptive Reuse



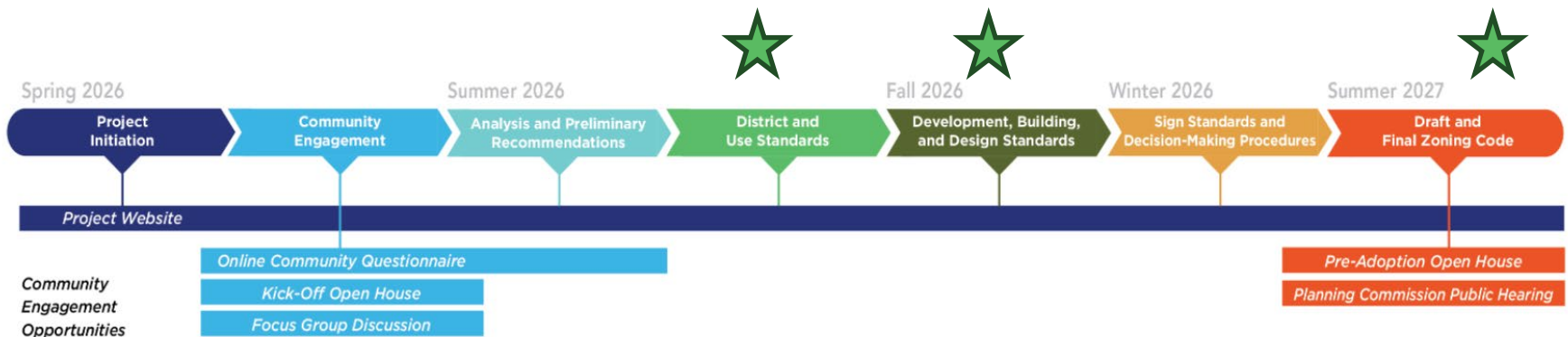
- Sample questions
 - Demolition review ordinance?
 - Balance “character” and modern systems
 - Clear path for adaptive reuse projects?
 - Especially outside of historic district



How to provide feedback



- <https://northfield-mn-zoning-code-update-hlplanning.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Project website – updates will be posted
- Specific topics may involve stakeholder engagement
- Email: athias.Hughey@northfieldmn.gov





Legislation Text

File #: 26-421, **Version:** 1

Environmental Quality Commission Meeting Date: August 19, 2026

To: Members of the Environmental Quality Commission

From: Sara Pabich, Sustainability Coordinator

Action Requested:

EQC members receive an update on the upcoming EV Ride-and-Drive event and provide input on event communications.

Summary Report:

The City of Northfield is partnering with the Rotary Club of Northfield to host an EV Ride-and-Drive event on Saturday, September 26, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Northfield Middle School. The event will provide community members with an opportunity to learn about electric vehicles and participate in public test drives.

Staff will review proposed communications for the event with the EQC and seek commissioner input on how to effectively promote the event and encourage community participation. The event is being hosted in partnership with the Rotary Club, which is incorporating a charitable component into the event.

City Plans & Policies Relevance:

Climate Action Plan

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

September 26 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm - Electric Vehicle Ride & Drive



Electric Vehicle Ride & Drive

2026

RECHARGE NORTHFIELD

EV Ride & Drive Event!

Northfield Middle School

🔌 Food Trucks

🔌 Local Exhibitors

🔌 E-Bike Rides

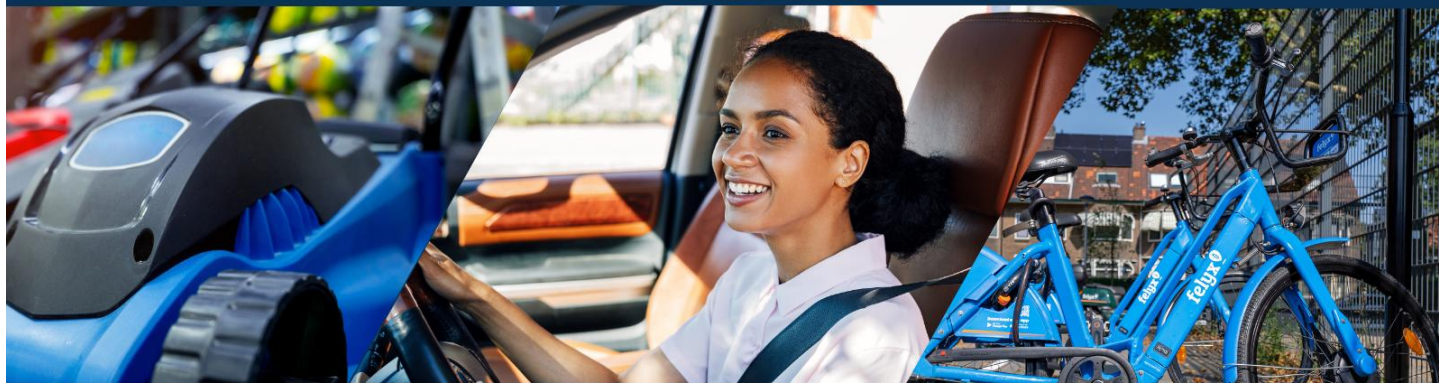
🔌 EV Test Drives

Sat. **Sept 26, 2026** | 11am - 3pm | Northfield Middle School, Northfield, MN

Join the **City of Northfield** and the **Rotary Club of Northfield** for an afternoon of electrified fun!



Recharge
Northfield
EV Ride &
Drive |
Recharge
America



Recharge Minnesota is Proudly Sponsored by:



THE CITY OF
NORTHFIELD
ESTD MINNESOTA 1855

Event Presented in Partnership with:



City Event Communications



Press Release

- Aiming for two weeks prior to the event

Social Media

- August: Aiming to Post once a week
- September
 - Aiming to post once a week
 - Post the twice the week prior to event

Other

- Interview on KYMN
- Flyer at Library Bulletin



Partner Communications



ReCharge Communications

Social Media

- August: Post once a week
- September
 - Aiming to post once a week
 - Post the twice the week prior to event

ReCharge Newsletter

- August: Highlight Event x2
- September: Highlight Event

Rotary Communications

- Rotary Newsletter
- Tabling at Riverwalk Sept 5
- Presentation to all of Rotary
- Climate Action Team lunch – getting EV drivers to event
- Reaching out to Master Gardener's to highlight fundraising component of tree planting
- Join KYMN Interview

Event Communications



Join us for

National Drive Electric Month Sep 11-Oct 12, 2026

National Drive Electric Month, is a nationwide celebration to raise awareness of the many benefits of all-electric and plug-in hybrid cars, trucks, motorcycles, and more. Whether you're curious to learn about driving electric, want to get involved in supporting an event, or are ready to help organize within your community, you're in the right place!

Get Involved

Join the Movement

Whether you're an EV enthusiast, a community leader, or just curious about driving electric, there's a way for you to plug in:

- 🔑 [Get involved](#) — find an event near you and sign up to attend, participate or help out
- 🌐 [Host an event in your community](#) — we'll support you every step of the way.
- ★ [Volunteer to support an event](#) — show your vehicle(s), help with event facilitation, and more.
- 🔥 [Partner with us](#) — be a sponsor or promotional ally to amplify the campaign impact.
- 💬 [Spread the word](#) — share on social media using #DriveElectricMonth



© 2022 Johan Verinks, volunteer with Cool Davis

National Drive Electric Month

Enter City or Zip Code

[RSVP For In-Person and Online Events](#)

1. Any other communication ideas?
2. Where do you obtain information regarding City programs, initiatives, and other updates?



Upcoming Planning Details



Next Couple weeks

- Finalizing vendors
- Finalizing EV Ride Route

Request for Volunteers from EQC (email follow-up to come)

- Shift one: 11 am – 1 pm
- Shift two: 1 pm – 3 pm



Legislation Text

File #: 26-422, **Version:** 1

Environmental Quality Commission Meeting Date: August 19, 2026

To: Members of the Environmental Quality Commission

From: Sara Pabich, Sustainability Coordinator

Action Requested:

EQC members provide work plan updates and progress. The 2026-2027 EQC work plan is attached for reference.

Summary Report:

EQC members are invited to provide any final updates on work completed through their subcommittees. The 2026 to 2027 EQC work plan is attached for reference.

As of August, standing subcommittee work has concluded and the subcommittees are now sunset. Members are welcome to share any final updates or accomplishments from their subcommittee work. Beginning in September, EQC discussions and work will take place during regular Commission meetings, providing all commissioners with an opportunity to participate while reducing the need for meetings outside of the regular EQC schedule.

City Plans & Policies Relevance:

N/A

Alternative Options:

N/A

Financial Impacts:

N/A

Tentative Timelines:

August: Standing subcommittees conclude.

September and beyond: EQC work will take place during regular Commission meetings.

Commission: Environmental Quality Commission 2026 Annual Work Plan

Initiative # 1	Initiative Type ☒ Project ☒ Ongoing / Annual ☐ Event		
Initiative Title: Energy Efficiency Education for Residents		Commissioners: Petri Podracky	Target Completion Date April 2027
Progress Q1 January-March: Planning to table at Riverwalk Series			
Progress Q2 April-June: Plan to reach out to Rotary Climate Action			
Progress Q3 July-September: The subcommittee noted that there is a significant amount of information available to share at upcoming events and community outreach opportunities.			
Progress Q4 October-December:			
Progress Q5 January-March:			

Initiative # 2	Initiative Type ☐ Project ☐ Ongoing / Annual ☒ Event		
Initiative Title: Electric Vehicle Community Showcase		Commissioners: Hason Halverson	Target Completion Date April 2027
Progress Q1 January-March: Meeting at the end of March			
Progress Q2 April-June: Met with ReCharge America – Working to finalize date and location for the event. - Shared the event date will be September 26, 2026.			
Progress Q3 July- September: Shared the event date will be September 26, 2026. More information about this event will be presented at the August meeting.			
Progress Q4 October -December:			

Progress Q5 January-March:

Initiative # 3	Initiative Type ☒ Project ☐ Ongoing / Annual ☐ Event		
Initiative Title: Active Transportation Awareness Campaign		Commissioners: Hason Provancha Podracky	Target Completion Date April 2027
Progress Q1 January-March: No Update.			
Progress Q2 April-June: Met the past month to discuss pedestrian and biker visibility.			
Progress Q3 July- September: No Update.			
Progress Q4 October -December:			
Progress Q5 January-March:			

Initiative # 4	Initiative Type ☒ Project ☐ Ongoing / Annual ☐ Event		
Initiative Title: Landscaping & Native Planting Research		Commissioners: Petri Haverson Shmurak	Target Completion Date April 2027
Progress Q1 January-March: No Update.			
Progress Q2 April-June: Subcommittee meet and discussed education materials that might be shared with the public.			
Progress Q3 July- September: Shared the review of additional education materials continues.			
Progress Q4 October -December:			
Progress Q5 January-March:			

Initiative # 5	Initiative Type ☒ Project ☐ Ongoing / Annual ☐ Event		
Initiative Title: Waste Reduction Library Research		Commissioners: Shmurak Haroldson Provancha	Target Completion Date April 2027
Progress Q1 January-March: Meeting with the Library about Toy library.			
Progress Q2 April-June: Met with Library. - Learned the Library does not have the capacity to support a toy library at this time			
Progress Q3 July-September: Reported that work on this initiative is complete.			
Progress Q4 October-December:			
Progress Q5 January-March:			

Initiative # 6	Initiative Type ☒ Project ☐ Ongoing / Annual ☐ Event		
Zero Waste: Recycling and Compost Education Toolkit		Commissioners: Haroldson	Target Completion Date April 2027
Progress Q1 January-March: Recycling education toolkit almost ready			
Progress Q2 April-June: Working on refining education toolkit.			
Progress Q3 July-September:			
Progress Q4 October-December:			
Progress Q5 January-March:			

Parking Lot: (These items have been considered by the Commission, but not proposed as part of this year’s work plan. If the Commission decides they would like to work on them in the current year, it would need to be approved by a Majority vote of the Commission.)

1. Energy Efficiency Education for Residents

Goal: Help residents understand cost savings and energy-efficient HVAC practices.

- Collaborate with partners to coordinate educational outreach and materials.
- Research and summarize current incentives, rebates, and best practices.
- Develop a short handout highlighting cost savings and upgrades.

2. Electric Vehicle Community Showcase

Goal: Educate the public about EV adoption, charging infrastructure, and cost savings.

- Organize a showcase event featuring local EV owners, dealerships, and informational displays.
- Prepare a one-page summary or talking points outlining EV adoption, available rebates, and charging options.
- Provide volunteer support to assist with event coordination and engagement on the day of the event.

3. Active Transportation Awareness Campaign

Goal: Increase safety and visibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

- Create a public education campaign promoting active transportation.
- Support and promote initiatives such as Bike to School Day through volunteering to encourage safe, active travel among youth and families.
- Educate community stakeholders on upcoming and ongoing pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements to support and promote active transportation.
- Focus on low-cost awareness strategies: social media posts, flyers, and research of low cost solutions such as visibility (lights, reflective vests).

4. Landscaping & Native Planting Research

Goal: Promote better use of city parks and private lands through native planting.

- Support and promote native planting initiatives through programs like Lawns to Legumes, increasing pollinator-friendly plants, and encouraging community gardens with partner organizations.
- Research best practices for native planting and community gardens, including pollinator gardens, rain gardens, native grasses and flowers, and shared food-growing spaces.
- Develop resources for residents, including one-pagers on invasive species and recommended native plants, to encourage native gardening and biodiversity.

5. Waste Reduction Library Research

Goal: Explore opportunities for community lending libraries for sustainable items.

- Research what current waste reduction spaces exist in the community (i.e. Carleton Maker Space, Library Repair desk, Swap events happening, etc.)
- Research models like toy libraries, tool libraries, diaper banks, and other reusable item programs.
- Analyze potential benefits and challenges for the community.
- Written summary documenting current community initiatives, ongoing research efforts, and identified best practices to support continued waste reduction (2 pages max)

6. Zero Waste: Recycling and Compost Education Toolkit

Goal: Provide resources to improve household recycling and organics management.

- Develop a draft educational toolkit for recycling and organics outreach, including short handouts, example visuals, and a basic presentation.
- Conduct an internal pilot with City staff or volunteers to gather feedback and identify gaps.
- Finalize the toolkit and produce a brief summary report with findings, lessons learned, and recommendations for potential future expansion or implementation.



Legislation Text

File #: 26-423, **Version:** 1

EQC Meeting Date: August 19, 2026

To: Environmental Quality Commission

From: Sara Pabich, Sustainability Coordinator

Staff Update

Action Requested:

The EQC receives an update regarding staff activities.

Summary Report:

This update includes items not included as agenda items for this meeting.

Greater Minnesota Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Community Program: The City of Northfield has been selected to participate in the Greater Minnesota Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Community Program, which will provide technical assistance to explore potential EV charging sites. The City will evaluate the Northfield Transit Hub, Northfield Community Resource Center, and potential multifamily housing locations. Participation in Phase 1 will position the City to be eligible for potential Phase 2 funding to support EV charging infrastructure construction.

Upcoming EQC Meeting: Breanna Wheeler will attend the November 2026 EQC meeting to present her findings and provide an update on the Hauberg Woods restoration pilot project. The project focused on removing invasive species, increasing native biodiversity, and engaging volunteers and community partners in restoration efforts.

Composting: On August 3rd, City Council directed staff to prepare bids, timelines, and other relevant information for a universal residential curbside organic recycling program for further Council review and consideration of release for proposal.

Speed Limit Study: The Speed Limit Study will include a public survey beginning August 19, followed by two opportunities for community engagement. An open house on September 3 will gather public input on current speed limits, and a second open house on October 28 will share the study's recommendations and gather additional feedback.

Riverwalk: Environmental Quality Commission will not be participating in the Riverwalk event for the month of August. We had hoped to secure a spot by getting off the waitlist; however, we were unable to obtain a space for this month. As a result, we will not be participating in the August event.

Budget Townhall:

- August 17th: At 6 p.m. in the 2nd floor Training Room at City Hall (801 Washington Street), City

Administrator Ben Martig will provide an overview of the proposed budget, budget process, and timeline. The session is held in partnership with the Northfield Area Chamber of Commerce, and all community members are welcome. Questions may be submitted in advance. Submit questions here: www.northfieldmn.gov/BudgetQuestion <<http://www.northfieldmn.gov/BudgetQuestion>>

- August 18th: At 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, community members will have the opportunity to engage with Council members and provide feedback on the proposed budget. Complete the 2027 Budget Survey: <<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KY3W2FC>>
- July 29th: Budget Townhall was recently held to provide an overview of the budget and an opportunity to discuss key budget-related information. A recording of the Townhall is now available to watch: [City of Northfield Budget](https://www.northfieldmn.gov/193/Budget) <<https://www.northfieldmn.gov/193/Budget>>

Alternative Options:

NA

Financial Impacts:

NA

Tentative Timelines:

NA