



# Sustainability Commission

## Regular Meeting

335 South Broadway  
De Pere, WI 54115  
[www.deperewi.gov](http://www.deperewi.gov)

## Agenda

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Tuesday, January 13, 2026

5:30 PM

Council Chambers and Virtual

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Pursuant to Wisconsin Statute 19.84, Notice is hereby given to the public that a meeting of the **Sustainability Commission** of the City of De Pere will be held on **January 13, 2026** at **5:30 PM** in the **COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 2ND FLOOR CITY HALL, 335 S. BROADWAY STREET. DE PERE.**

**The Public or Members of the Sustainability Commission, which may count toward an official quorum, may attend the meeting either in person in the Council Chambers or telephonically or electronically via video conferencing or other appropriate technological means. Telephonic or electronic access to the meeting is provided below:**

Computer/smart phone accessing <https://www.gotomeet.me/DePere>

OR

**You can also dial in using your phone.**  
United States (Toll Free): [1 866 899 4679](tel:18668994679)  
United States: [+1 \(312\) 757-3117](tel:+13127573117)  
Access Code: 154-883-285

*This meeting may also be rebroadcast on TV throughout the week and available on demand at <https://deperewi.portal.civicclerk.com/>.*

- I. Call to Order
  1. Roll Call
- II. Public Comment on Matters not on the Agenda. Comments made during the public comment period shall pertain only to matters under the jurisdiction of the Sustainability Commission. §6-3(f) DPMC
- III. Items
  1. Approval of the November 11, 2025 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes
  2. Discussion on Recent Public Works Awards
  3. Consideration and Possible Action on Reid Street Banner Initiative Advertising
  4. Discussion on Sustainability Commission Work Plan
  5. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization — Adopt a Drain

6. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization — Composting
7. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization — Clean Air Initiative
8. Consideration and Possible Action on Initiative Prioritization — Pollinator Gardens / Planned Natural Landscapes
9. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization — Green Energy

IV. Future Agenda Items

V. Adjournment

Any person wishing to attend this meeting who, because of disability, requires special accommodations should contact the Public Works Department at 920-339-4060 by noon on the previous day so that arrangements can be made.

Agenda Sent To:

Alderspersons  
City Manager  
Mayor  
Department Heads  
TV, Newspapers & Radio Stations  
Kress Family Library  
De Pere Chamber of Commerce  
Definitely De Pere



**City of De Pere, Wisconsin**

**III.1**

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:**  
**FROM:** Natalie Markelz, Administrative Assistant  
**SUBJECT:** Approval of the November 11, 2025 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes  
**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Motion to approve.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**  
2025 1111 Sustainability Commission Minutes



# Sustainability Commission

## Regular Meeting

### Minutes

335 South Broadway  
De Pere, WI 54115  
[www.deperewi.gov](http://www.deperewi.gov)

Tuesday, November 11, 2025

5:30 PM

Council Chambers/Virtual

I. Call to Order

1. Roll Call

II. Public Comment on Matters not on the Agenda. Comments made during the public comment period shall pertain only to matters under the jurisdiction of the Sustainability Commission. §6-3(f) DPMC

None

III. Items

1. Approval of the October 14, 2025 Sustainability Commission Meeting Minutes

Aldersperson Nelson moved to approve the October 14, 2025 Sustainability Commission meeting minutes, seconded by Commissioner Lawton. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Casey Nelson
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Randall Lawton
<b>AYES:</b>	Emily Henrigillis, Randall Lawton, Rachel Leonard, Casey Nelson, Jonie Panick, Nicole Slavin, Carmen Van Schyndel

2. Discussion on Composting Education with Mary Swifka of Wild Ones

Commissioner Van Schyndel stated that she had received Mary Swifka's name from Betty Marovich. Ms. Marovich attended a presentation by Mary Swifka at Mosquito Hill that she thought would be beneficial for the Sustainability Commission. Commissioner Van Schyndel reached out to Ms. Swifka, and said she was willing to do an educational series of presentations for the commission. Commissioner Van Schyndel asked if Ms. Swifka would give a brief summary of her presentations to the commission.

Mary Swifka from Wild Ones was present online to give a brief summary of the presentations that she offers. Ms. Swifka explained that she has been a long time member of Wild Ones, which is a national organization with a goal of informing people about composting, natural landscaping, and gardening with native plants. Ms. Swifka is the program chair for the Fox Valley Area and stated the presentations usually provide a science background of what composting is and how it is done, along with explaining the difference between green and brown materials and acceptable and unacceptable materials for composting. Usually she brings a sample of the different types of composting equipment available, along with providing a list of dos and don'ts to help the composting run smoothly. She also highlights how to use the compost once it is done. Ms. Swifka also stated that all presentations can be tailored to the attendees of the program.

Commissioner Van Schyndel stated this information will be brought back to the commission to see if this is something that the commission wants to move forward with.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, requested that item 11 on pollinator gardens be moved up in the agenda because there is an individual in the audience to speak on the item.

### 3. Discussion on Winter Salt Week 2026

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that Commissioner Henrigillis requested this item to be placed on the agenda highlighting winter salt week, which is January 26th - 30th, with the intent of raising awareness of salt pollution.

Commissioner Henrigillis stated that the cups have been made, and now the commission needs to figure out how to provide more education to the residents. She stated that today there was a pre-salt week discussion that De Pere Public Works was a part of, which highlighted what homeowners and municipalities can do to limit salt use. Salt use pollutes water, with 1 teaspoon polluting 5 gallons of water permanently.

Alderson Nelson questioned what the cups were. Commissioner Henrigillis stated that the commission ordered cups that show the amount of salt that should be used to salt driveways and sidewalks. The cups bring awareness to residents and can be picked up at the MSC.

Commissioner Leonard suggested that the cups be distributed to local businesses that can give them out to residents that purchase salt. She agreed to spearhead contacting and distributing the cups to the De Pere True Value.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

### 4. Discussion on Native Landscaping around City Storm Water Detention Ponds

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that the commission requested information regarding the required native landscaping around the city storm water ponds. The special provisions of what is required per city projects are included in the packet and specifically require Mesic Prairie plantings. This mixture creates a natural buffer around the ponds, and keeps geese out of the ponds. The plantings should not be mowed as it takes a while to get established.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

### 5. Consideration and Possible Action on Reid Street Banner Initiative Advertising

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that the Reid Street banner was discussed at both the July and September commission meetings. Betty Marovich, previous Administrative Assistant, put together four options that could be used for the banner, using the slogan "Don't be a Grinch, Use Only a Pinch" to help reduce salt usage on city sidewalks and driveways.

Alderson Nelson questioned the wording of polluting water "forever."

Chase Kuffel recommended eliminating the QR code from the banner and possibly adding a link to the city website. Mr. Kuffel also stated that the legal department will need to be consulted to see if the Grinch images can be used.

Commissioner Leonard moved to approve option 1 with the elimination of the QR code and adding a link

to the city website, pending legal approval, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Rachel Leonard
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Nicole Slavin
<b>AYES:</b>	Emily Henrigillis, Randall Lawton, Rachel Leonard, Casey Nelson, Jonie Panick, Nicole Slavin, Carmen Van Schyndel

6. Discussion on Sustainable Educational Series

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that prior to Betty Marovich's departure, she put together the attached list of potential sustainable education topics. The potential list was discussed with the following being the preferred topics: composting, natural landscaping, bats, and the green roof.

Comissioner Leonard mentioned the idea of partnering with the Mulva Center and possibly using their space.

Commissioner Henrigillis mentioned that the Nelson Family Pavilion, library, or the Locktenders House would be potential sites as well.

Aldersperson Nelson questioned if these could be tied into another city event like the Farmers Market or the beer gardens. Mr. Kuffel explained that these presentations would be more formal in nature, and be an actual sit-down presentation of the topic.

Mr. Kuffel stated he will bring the topic back to the commission with some venue options.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

7. Discussion on Sustainability Commission Work Plan

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that the work plan has been updated after the last discussion. The clean energy initiative has been updated, showing the commission is now working toward participating in the Green Tier Legacy Communities. Also, other initiatives were updated where commissioners have agreed to spearhead the initiative.

8. Consideration and Possible Action on Initiative Prioritization - Adopt-a-Drain

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that this topic was tabled at the last meeting as Commissioner Henrigillis was excused from the last meeting. This item is being brought back to discuss promotional items for the program. Past discussions on the program are included in the packet of information, with two popular suggestions being silicone bracelets and signage.

Commissioner Van Schyndel stated that at the past meeting there was a lot of discussion on the tiered recognition program, referral program, and the possibility of an annual recognition event. The commission would like to find a way to incentivize residents who actually clear the drains and not just sign up for the program.

Commissioner Henrigillis questioned if a winner was chosen for the rainbarrel. Mr. Kuffel explained that the rainbarrel was shipped to Florida, so it had to be reordered. Once the rainbarrel arrives, a winner will be chosen.

Commissioner Henrigillis stated that she likes the idea of a recognition event, where a speaker could possibly be brought in. She questioned how many inlets have been adopted. Mr. Kuffel stated that he believes that there are around 30 inlets adopted, with around 8–12 adoptees.

Commissioner Leonard suggested that part of the promotional items could be a card that could be dropped off at area businesses. Instead of businesses adopting a portion of a highway to clean, they could adopt a drain close to their business. Commissioner Leonard agreed to develop a promotional card that could be delivered to local businesses.

Mr. Kuffel stated that there are start-up kits still available to be given out at the Municipal Service Center.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

#### 9. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization - Composting

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated the composting numbers have been updated. Currently, there is a steady 26 participants of the program, where we started out at 62. This decrease is not due to the requirement of the W-9 form, it is just a lack of participation.

Commissioner Van Schyndel stated she has done some research on resources that are out there for residents and came across an organization called AROW. When reaching out to AROW, Commissioner Van Schyndel found out they work closely with Festival Foods and was able to connect with the individual there. This individual stated that Festival Foods composts all of their pre-consumer food waste, and she is interested in finding out more of what their program looks like. Also, UWGB has a food composter. Commissioner Van Schyndel stated there are updates or changes to this initiative, just more research needs to be completed.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

#### 10. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization - Clean Air Initiative

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated he has nothing new about this initiative.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

#### 11. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization - Pollinator Gardens / Planned Natural Landscapes

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, requested that this item be moved to after item 2 on the agenda because there is an individual in the audience to speak on the item.

Aldersperson Nelson stated that with the No Mow May program being eliminated in the city, we have been discussing options on how to promote pollinators in De Pere. Aldersperson Nelson stated he has been talking with Eben Erhard of the Beautification Committee, and they came up with an idea of preparing a list of five plants that would be great for pollinators that could be given to residents, guiding them on what plants work best and possibly incentivizing them for creating pollinator gardens. Also, in the future, mapping out places that have great pollinator gardens and the potential flight patterns of the pollinators could be implemented.

Aldersperson Nelson moved to open the meeting to public comment at 5:55 pm, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Eben Erhard explained that this program is something that has evolved over time. When the city dropped

the No Mow May program, the new policy was to allow residents to grow tall blooming plants, which is extremely vague. Mr. Erhard stated he is involved in a pollinator corridor group and many of the surrounding communities that dropped No Mow May were looking for alternative programs. This is how the Five for Flyers (bees, birds, hummingbirds and butterflies) program came about. The program is homeowner-based, doesn't cost the municipality much money, it is easy to market, and it is easy for the homeowner. The program would list five plants that are native to the area, easy to grow, are non-aggressive spreaders, and that bloom for a long period of time that are good for the flyers. The five plants that are suggested are butterfly weed, meadow blazing star, purple coneflower, smooth penstemon and rattlesnake master. To implement the program, the city could first just publish the recommended list. To add to the program, the city could provide homeowner signage to promote it. To further enhance the program, the city could provide kits to homeowners and plant gardens in city open spaces. Mr Erhard stated that the commission could work with retail suppliers to try to get them to stock the plants and incorporate signage for them, and stated he would be willing to work with the suppliers. The program could also be expanded in the future to add five annuals for flyers and more. Any native planting is great, and this program would give residents some education and provide direction without costing a lot.

Commissioner Leonard stated she loves this program to replace No Mow May and would love to be able to track on a map what the residents are planting in their home gardens. The commission has funds available to print out signs for the program.

Mr. Erhard gave information on what the City of Green Bay is doing, stating they are providing pollinator kits to their residents. They prepared 200 kits with 15 plants per kit, as well as signage for the garden as part of their pollinator corridor. They also have planted gardens in city parks that include signage that people can look up to see the flight path of the flyers. They are also trying to develop a pollinator garden map, but are running into problems with incorrect data entered.

Commissioner Van Schyndel questioned if the five recommended plants are readily available in stores. Commissioner Henrigillis stated they are not available in big box stores, but stores that sell native plants.

Commissioner Slavin stated that she really likes the program. It can be implemented with little to no cost and can be built upon.

Commissioner Lawton shared that he put in a pollinator garden a year ago. He shared the list of plants with the individual that helped install his garden. He stated that the five listed plants have limitations and only flower in the summer and suggested that plants be included on the list that flower in early spring and into fall. Mr. Erhard stated that when developing the program he looked for simplicity and picked only five plants. The program could be enhanced to also list late bloomers, but a lot of late bloomers also spread aggressively.

Commissioner Slavin moved to close the meeting to public comment at 6:14 pm, seconded by Commissioner Lawton. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Aldersperson Nelson stated that he thinks signage is very important to go along with the pollinator gardens.

Commissioner Henrigillis provided a brief summary of the planned natural landscape topic. She prepared the enclosed flyer to bring awareness of some common invasive species that are found in landscaping and provided alternatives that could be planted instead.

Commissioner Leonard suggested adding disposal tips for the invasive species and why the plant is

considered an invasive species.

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated this item will come back as an action item at the next meeting.

Discussion only. No action necessary.

12. Discussion on Initiative Prioritization - Green Energy

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that the last update was that the Commission is going to be working on the Green Tier Legacy Community.

Commissioner Leonard gave an update on the research she has completed on the Green Tier initiative. She stated that she review the City of Green Bay's work plan and what they use for reporting their energy usage. Green Bay uses an EPA worksheet that looks at an energy resource mix at a regional level. WPS has a more specific energy resource mix that can be utilized online. Commissioner Leonard also stated that the City of Eau Claire utilizes a computer program that provides yearly reporting that provides a ton of data and a lot of tech support. This program might be a good option for the commission to consider, which would be much more economical and could be utilized for other initiatives. Commissioner Leonard feels it might be a good idea to have this company provide a presentation on what the program is, how much it costs, and how it can be used for the commission initiatives.

Mr. Kuffel stated that the commission will not be going through with the RFP process for this initiative and will instead be looking for other groups that can provide help.

Discussion only. No action required.

13. Consideration and Possible Action on Canceling the December 9, 2025 Sustainability Commission Meeting

Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer, stated that in previous years, the commission has elected to cancel the December meeting due to holiday schedules.

Aldersperson Nelson moved to cancel the December Sustainability Commission meeting, seconded by Commissioner Panick. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Casey Nelson
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Jonie Panick
<b>AYES:</b>	Emily Henrigillis, Randall Lawton, Rachel Leonard, Casey Nelson, Jonie Panick, Nicole Slavin, Carmen Van Schyndel

IV. Future Agenda Items

None

V. Adjournment

Commissioner Van Schyndel moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 pm, seconded by Commissioner Slavin. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>Passed (UNANIMOUS)</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Carmen Van Schyndel

<b>SECONDER:</b> Nicole Slavin
<b>AYES:</b> Emily Henrigillis, Randall Lawton, Rachel Leonard, Casey Nelson, Jonie Panick, Nicole Slavin, Carmen Van Schyndel

Respectfully submitted,  
Grace Lahtela



**City of De Pere, Wisconsin**

**III.2**

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**FROM:** Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion on Recent Public Works Awards  
**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Discussion only. No action necessary.

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ATTACHMENTS:  
2026 0113 CE\_SC\_Recycling Excellence

# CITY OF DE PERE MEMO



To: Members of the Sustainability Commission  
From: Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
Date: January 13, 2026

RE: **Discussion on Recent Public Works Awards**

To end 2025, the Department of Public Works was awarded two separate awards with ties to sustainability:

## **2025 Recycling Excellence Award**



From left to right, Scott Thoresen, Director of Public Works; Greg Veaser, Equipment Operator; Tony Fietzer, Street Superintendent, posing with Recycling Excellence Award

The City of De Pere, a Green Tier Legacy Community since 2019, offers a robust recycling program to its residents. Over the past five years, the city has made extensive efforts to improve the quality of residential recycling, focusing on “clean recycling.” Public Works staff toured the materials recovery facility where its recyclables go to see firsthand how contamination affects recycling processing

operations. The city's recycling operator team has increased inspections of curbside recycling, tagging carts, providing informational flyers and/or leaving unacceptable material behind, to ensure proper recycling compliance. In addition, the Public Works Department added a QR code educational sticker to recycling carts. The QR code takes the user to the Tri-County Recycling website, which provides information on what is recyclable in curbside carts, videos of the recycling facility, and links to Tri-County Recycling-supported recycling apps like Betterbin and Waste Wizard. The site also allows residents to type in a specific item and will identify if it is recyclable and/or how to properly dispose of it. The city also started its own plastic bag recycling program with the help of Trex Company, diverting more than 5,500 pounds of plastic bags and film from landfills. Lastly, the city goes above and beyond to reach children with recycling education. The garbage and recycling drivers carry coloring books, activity books, toy recycling trucks and stickers in their trucks and hand them out whenever kids might be near during collection. In addition to sharing these items on the street, recycling drivers have visited schools several times a year to showcase the recycling trucks and talk about the importance of recycling. The city hosts a Big Rig Gig every September where recycling trucks and equipment from other organizations come together to showcase to kids and families.

#### **2025 APWA Wisconsin Snow and Ice Control Award**

The City of De Pere was recognized for our snow and ice control for municipalities with populations greater than 25,000 residents. This award was established to promote excellence in the management and administration of public works snow and ice operations and to promote the best practices in ice and snow removal while minimizing environmental impacts. The City was nominated for national recognition by the American Public Works Association representing the state of Wisconsin.



**City of De Pere, Wisconsin**

**III.3**

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**FROM:** Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
**SUBJECT:** Consideration and Possible Action on Reid Street Banner Initiative Advertising  
**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** None.

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ATTACHMENTS:  
03\_Reid Street Banner

# CITY OF DE PERE MEMO



To: Members of the Sustainability Commission  
From: Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
Date: January 13, 2026

RE: **Consideration and Possible Action on Reid Street Banner Initiative Advertising**

The intent of this item is to provide an update regarding the installation of banners over Reid Street after discussions with the City Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department.

## **Discussion**

Due to safety concerns, the City Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department does not install banners starting in mid-December through the end of February. During this time, only the Christmas garland is installed during the holiday season. Additionally, the summer months of May, June, July and August are booked solid advertising for events throughout the City. Outside of these months, the Sustainability commission would need to coordinate with the Health Department to reserve a slot during the following months:

- March
- April            Pollinators?
- September    Adopt A drain?
- October
- November    Salt?

The Commission would need to pick initiatives that suit the available months, have banners designed, ordered and approved, and reserve the given time slots in coordination with the Health Department. Staff listed initiatives that may suit the available timeslots above.

## **Recommendation**

Staff does not have a recommendation for the Commission.



**City of De Pere, Wisconsin**

**III.4**

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**FROM:** Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion on Sustainability Commission Work Plan  
**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Discussion only. No action necessary.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**  
2026 0113 CE\_SC\_ Commission Work Plan

# CITY OF DE PERE MEMO



To: Members of the Sustainability Commission  
From: Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
Date: January 13, 2026

RE: **Discussion on Sustainability Commission Work Plan**

## De Pere Sustainability Commission Work Plan

**Objective of Work Plan:** To address identified gaps, implement recommendations, and advance the De Pere Sustainability Commission's mission by ensuring success across all current initiatives. When new initiatives are proposed, the commission will evaluate using the established evaluation criteria and add to the Work Plan when applicable. Work plan will be updated as necessary when updates in each initiative is provided at commission meetings.

### Initiative: **Adopt-A-Drain**

- Goals:
  - Increase community participation
  - Improve visibility and public awareness
  - Establish measurable success metrics
- Actions:
  - Develop outreach plan
    - Create marketing materials
    - Leverage farmer's market, social media, and passive engagement methods (passive methods TBD - example would be storm drain stencils)
  - Engage community
    - Idea: Partner with local organizations to promote the program
    - Idea: Introduce friendly competition or campaign
    - Idea: Provide incentives such as bumper stickers, swag, etc.
    - Idea: Evaluate collaboration opportunities to scale program visibility (ex: other communities, other programs with same goal)
  - Define success metrics and tracking methods
    - Determine what program 'success' looks like - metric
    - Determine how to measure program results (ex: water quality improvements, participation, etc.)
    - Gather feedback and track participation satisfaction

- Analyze data to report outcomes and set next 12 month goals
  - Communicate program results to the initiative participants and the broader community
- Lead Commissioners: Emily Henrigillis and Nicole Slavin

**Initiative: Composting**

- Goals:
  - Assess current program viability
  - Assess future program options
  - Increase community participation
- Actions:
  - Review current program and identify improvements for future program development
    - Analyze participation metrics
    - Identify improvements based on public and city feedback and metrics
  - Refocus outreach and engagement
    - Idea: Host Q&A sessions at Farmers Markets on home compost practices.
    - Idea: Pilot a smaller-scale composting initiative to test and learn
  - Identify alternative partners/models
    - Investigate collaborations with farms or other compost facilities
    - Research other city composting programs
    - Tour regional recycling and composting facilities for insights and best practices
  - Evaluate and make final decision on future program
    - Compile findings from previous actions to make recommendation
    - Recommend whether to continue, restructure, or sunset the initiative based on findings
    - Once recommendation approved, then:
      - Develop outreach plan to increase community awareness
        - TBD once final program determined
      - Develop engagement plan to increase participation in program
        - TBD once final program determined
      - Implement metrics and tracking
        - TBD once final program determined
- Lead Commissioner: Carmen Van Schyndel

**Initiative: Clean Air - ON HOLD**

- Goals:
  - Improvement community engagement and awareness on air quality issues
- Actions: TBD
- Lead Commissioner: Jonie Panick

**Initiative: Planned Natural Landscape**

- Goals:
  - Support pollinators

- Increase community adoption of native plant landscaping.
- Provide educational resources to overcome knowledge gaps.
- Promote sustainable land-use practices.
- Actions:
  - Refocus outreach and engagement
    - Increase social media marketing
    - Create marketing content
      - Create handouts
        - Idea: Replacement plants
      - Interview those that have changed their landscape and create marketing campaign around their case study/success story
        - Highlight process, reasons for changing, maintenance, and more
    - Engage community
  - Create success metrics and tracking
- Lead Commissioner: Emily Henrigillis

Initiative: **Urban Orchards**

- Goals:
  - Support pollinators
  - Have fruit available for anyone and everyone to pick - make De Pere a greener/healthier place
- Actions:
  - Urban Orchards are already established
  - Increase pollinator habitats around urban orchards to support healthy growth
- Note - The orchards do need regular maintenance and this falls to Public Works or Parks Department
- Lead Commissioner: Maintenance = Public Works/Parks; Pollinator habitats = Emily Henrigillis

Initiative: **Clean Energy**

- Goals:
  - Create an energy baseline for De Pere.
  - Align with state and federal energy policies.
  - Develop long-term action plans for energy sustainability and resilience.
  - City to complete Green Tier Legacy Community submittal to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in 2026.
- Actions: *Rachel to provide*
- Lead Commissioner: Rachel Leonard



City of De Pere, Wisconsin

III.5

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**FROM:** Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion on Initiative Prioritization — Adopt a Drain  
**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Discussion only. No action necessary.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**  
2026 0113 CE\_SC\_Initiative Prioritization\_Adopt a Drain

# CITY OF DE PERE MEMO



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To: Members of the Sustainability Commission  
From: Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
Date: January 13, 2026

RE: **Consideration and Possible Action on Initiative Prioritization – Adopt-a-Drain**

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The purpose of this item is to evaluate the Adopt-a-Drain program against the initiative prioritization evaluation criteria.

## **Adopt-a-Drain**

### **Origin**

Starting in 2024, the Adopt-a-Drain program was created to formalize the cleaning of storm sewer inlets within the public right-of-way. Residents who sign up to adopt a drain are provided with a drain cleaning kit to help their cleaning efforts. Participants are encouraged to take photos and document the amount of debris cleaned up at the inlets as part of their adoption.

### **History**

August 20, 2024, the Adopt-a-Drain program is adopted by Common Council as an educational and outreach tool.

On October 2, 2025, the Adopt-a-Drain program was included in the City Newsletter and is routinely promoted on City social media channels.

On October 6, 2025 an advertisement campaign started with the De Pere Cinema showcasing the promotional Adopt-a-Drain video the commission created.

In the third quarter of 2025, the Sustainability Commission awarded a rain barrel to all participating and newly joined residents for the Adopt-a-Drain program.

Currently, the Adopt-a-Drain program has 22 adopters who clean 30 inlets throughout the City.

## **Status**

The program is slowly growing in participation. Additional education and outreach is recommended. There currently is a promotional period going on where all current and new drain adoptees that complete a cleaning log in the month of October get entered to win a rain barrel.

## **Discussion**

The following discussion was tabled from the October 14, 2025 Sustainability Commission Meeting. Additional advertising materials like silicone bracelets were discussed.

The Adopt-a-Drain program that was proposed at the August 13, 2024 Sustainability Commission was approved by Common Council at their August 20, 2024 meeting. The intent of this item is to discuss the plan for the Adopt-a-Drain program moving forward and decide if/how volunteers could/should be rewarded for their cleaning efforts. Here are some ideas to consider:

### Start-up Kit (Enacted):

The start-up kit was the most commonly seen option offered by other community adopt-a-drain programs. Many communities only offer a start-up kit and no other incentives. Most commonly included items are listed below. Their approximate cost is listed behind each item.

- Bucket (\$5) (\$7 with 7" x 7" sticker affixed)
- Dustpan/Broom (\$7)
- Gloves (reusable (\$2) or disposable (\$6))
- Safety vest (\$2)/shirt (\$10)
- Welcome packet (in-house)
- Paper clean-up report forms (in-house)

Some start-up kits also included these additional items:

- Yard sign (\$4), sticker (\$2-3), stencil, window cling

### Annual Recognition Event:

Annually the City could host an appreciation event for volunteers. Invitations could be for volunteers, volunteers +1, or family. Volunteers could be recognized for most cleanings, most weight/mass collected, etc. The cost of this event would depend on the number of volunteers and whether additional guests were invited, along with venue and meal options. In other locations, such as Superior, WI they partner with their Parks Department to hold one large volunteer appreciation event each year. The City does not currently have a volunteer appreciation event, but could work in coordination with Police Department for recognizing Crossing Guards. Superior's event often occurs in conjunction with a public concert and volunteers get food truck vouchers, appreciation swag, and a raffle ticket.

Tiered Recognition Program:

A tiered recognition program would be the most labor intensive of the options for staff to track the participation, but would give members an incentive to keep working towards. This would pair well with offering an annual recognition event. Below is an example of a tiered recognition program.

- Level 1: Window cling/sticker for minimum 1 cleaning in first year
- Level 2: Themed tote bag for minimum 12 cleanings reported within a year
- Level 3: Themed baseball cap or beanie for 3 years of service and minimum 12 cleanings reported per year
- Level 4: Themed T-shirt for 5 years of service and minimum 12 cleanings reported per year
- Level 5: Plaque to be displayed at (Location to be determined) for 10 years of service and minimum 12 cleanings reported per year

Referral Program:

A referral program would promote current volunteers to recruit additional volunteers to adopt drains. The new volunteer would be able to write the name of the referring volunteer on their registration form. For each referral, the volunteer would be submitted for a monthly/quarterly/annual prize drawing. To prevent fake registrations, we could require a certain number of clean-up logs be created by the new volunteer before the referral is entered for prizes. This would pair well with offering an annual recognition event.

Volunteer Spotlight:

Each month, the City could spotlight one of the volunteers on their social media account as a thank you for their efforts.

**Recommendation:**

Staff has no recommendation regarding an incentive or reward program for Adopt-a-Drain. The Commission will need to consider if they wish to offer such a program and what kind.



**City of De Pere, Wisconsin**

**III.6**

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**FROM:** Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion on Initiative Prioritization — Composting  
**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Discussion only. No action necessary.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**  
2026 0113 CE\_SC\_Initiative Prioritization\_Compost

# CITY OF DE PERE MEMO



To: Members of the Sustainability Commission  
From: Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
Date: January 13, 2026

RE: **Discussion on Initiative Prioritization - Composting**

The purpose of this item is to evaluate composting and the composting reimbursement program against the initiative prioritization evaluation criteria.

## **Composting Reimbursement Program History**

### **Origin**

The City of De Pere wanted to provide a program to incentivize residents for using local composting services. This program started out as a partnership with a local composting company and has since turned into a partnership directly with City residents to reimburse invoices from local composting services.

### **History**

- December 13, 2022 – Greener Bay Compost presents to the De Pere Sustainability Commission regarding the benefits and ease of private composting and wishes to enter a public-private partnership with the City.
- In 2023, the City budgets \$10,000 to hire a composting consultant in 2024 with the intent to enter into a partnership with Greener Bay Compost.
- April 2024 – A formal partnership between the City of Green Bay and Greener Bay Compost is established where the City will reimburse 50% of the registration fees for those residents utilizing their composting services.
- August 2024 – Greener Bay Compost raises their subscription fees 20%.
- September 2024 – Greener Bay Compost indicates they will terminate their contract with the City of De Pere if we do not budget what they deem to be sufficient funding for composting services in 2025. The City indicates that enough budget is present to meet current demand with room for moderate growth.
- December 31, 2024 – The partnership with Greener Bay Compost is terminated due to their budgetary concerns.
- January 1, 2025 – The City launches the compost reimbursement program where residents are directly reimbursed by the City in lieu of reimbursing Greener Bay Compost for subscription

fees. The annual budget is increased to \$12,000 and the City carries over left over funds from 2024 to further bolster reimbursement funds.

- January 1, 2026 – The annual budget is a portion of \$12,000. This money is also to be used for consulting for other sustainable initiatives.

**Status**

The city-led compost reimbursement program has entered its fourth quarter of existence.

At the end of 2024, there were 62 residents registered with the City of De Pere who subscribed through private composting services. Once the City started the compost reimbursement program in 2025, the program has seen the following participation numbers:

<b>Month</b>	<b>Every-4-Week Subscribers</b>	<b>Every-Other-Week Subscribers</b>	<b>Total Subscribers</b>	<b>City Participation</b>
<b>January</b>	15	22	37	\$465
<b>February</b>	15	22	37	\$465
<b>March</b>	15	23	38	\$480
<b>April</b>	11	21	32	\$414
<b>May</b>	10	21	31	\$405
<b>June</b>	10	21	31	\$405
<b>July</b>	10	17	27	\$345
<b>August</b>	9	17	26	\$336
<b>September</b>	10	17	27	\$345
<b>October</b>	9	14	23	\$291
<b>November</b>	10	12	22	\$270
<b>December</b>	10	12	22	\$270
<b>Total 2025 Participation to date:</b>				<b>\$4,491</b>

Participation numbers have been updated as residents continue to submit invoices and W-9 forms for reimbursement. Staff is still processing 4<sup>th</sup> quarter reimbursements as they are submitted. Currently the program sits at 26 active residents as we have one resident who confirmed they are no longer participating.



**City of De Pere, Wisconsin**

**III.7**

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**FROM:** Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion on Initiative Prioritization — Clean Air Initiative  
**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Discussion only. No action necessary.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**  
2026 0113 CE\_SC\_Initiative Prioritization\_Clean Air

# CITY OF DE PERE MEMO



To: Members of the Sustainability Commission  
From: Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
Date: January 13, 2026

RE: **Discussion on Initiative Prioritization – Clean Air Initiative**

The purpose of this item is to evaluate the clean air initiative program against the initiative prioritization evaluation criteria.

## **Clean Air Initiative History**

### **Origin**

In March 2024, a carbon monoxide leak at Crandon Elementary School resulted in the school closing for repairs and inspections. This event resulted in the Sustainability Commission pivoting from providing air quality monitors to providing carbon monoxide detectors to the school districts. Carbon monoxide detectors were viewed as a cheaper and more feasible alternative. Up to this point, the Commission has led the “No Idling Campaign” and has handed out “No Idling” signs for properties near schools in an effort to limit car idling during school pick-up and drop-off to improve air quality. Newsletters regarding the “No Idling” campaign have been provided to the School Districts during the 2023-2024, and 2024-2025 school years.

### **History**

- September 2021 – A idling ban ordinance is not approved by Common Council due to policing concerns and is returned to the Sustainability Commission for discussion.
- January 2023 – A clean air resolution is passed by Common Council encouraging residents to limit how much they idle vehicles.
- February and March 2023 – The idle limit program, “Idle Citizen” campaign, and clean air initiative is kicked off where commissioners attend school pick up and drop off and encourage parents to not idle their vehicles.
- July 9, 2024 – Sustainability Commission pivots from air monitors to carbon monoxide detectors due to the leak at the Crandon School District.
- August 8, 2024 – West De Pere School District indicates they have no need for carbon monoxide detectors.

- September 10, 2024 – Staff meets with the Unified School District of De Pere to discuss the commission providing carbon monoxide detectors. They show interest and indicate they will attend the November Sustainability Commission meeting.
- November 12, 2024
  - Staff meets with Notre Dame Academy staff to discuss their carbon monoxide detector needs. No indication of need is provided.
  - Unified School District of De Pere fails to attend the Sustainability Commission Meeting to discuss carbon monoxide detector needs.
  - No Idling Campaign newsletter is approved by the Sustainability Commission. Staff forwarded on the newsletter to the School Districts on November 13, 2024 for consideration and/or inclusion in their district correspondence.
- January 14, 2025 – Sustainability Commission discusses alternative methods to promote clean air in lieu of going through the schools. For example, a banner could be hung above Reid Street near St. Norbert College.

**Status**

Staff awaits direction from the commission as to next steps for this initiative.



**City of De Pere, Wisconsin**

**III.8**

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**FROM:** Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
**SUBJECT:** Consideration and Possible Action on Initiative Prioritization —  
Pollinator Gardens / Planned Natural Landscapes  
**RECOMMENDED  
ACTION:**

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ATTACHMENTS:  
2026 0113 CE\_SC\_Initiative Prioritization\_Pollinator Gardens

# CITY OF DE PERE MEMO



To: Members of the Sustainability Commission  
From: Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
Date: January 13, 2026

RE: **Consideration and Possible Action on Initiative Prioritization – Pollinator Gardens / Planned Natural Landscapes**

The purpose of this item is to evaluate pollinator gardens and the planned natural landscapes initiatives against the initiative prioritization evaluation criteria.

## **Pollinator Gardens / Planned Natural Landscapes History**

### **Origin**

The pollinator garden initiative started in March 2024, when the Sustainability Commission voted to discontinue “No Mow May.” The Common Council urged the commission to continue to champion our pollinators and further promote the new Natural Landscaping Ordinance in lieu of “No Mow May.” This coupled with complaints regarding the City’s urban orchards led to the genesis of the Sustainability Commission looking to have pollinator gardens installed at our City parks.

### **History**

Annually, the Sustainability Commission promotes pollinator week which results in a proclamation made by the Mayor at Common Council. Pollinator week typically falls on the third week in June (June 16-22, 2025).

- March 12, 2024
  - No Mow May is Discontinued
  - Selena Darrow of Rooted In, Inc. outlines her complaints to the Sustainability Commission regarding the City’s urban orchards.
- April 6, 2024 – Selena Darrow of Rooted In, Inc. requested that the Commission allocate money to establish pollinator gardens at our urban orchards.
- August 26, 2024 – Staff met with the The Plant Gal to discuss the feasibility of pollinator garden installation at Braisher Park, Samantha Park, VFW Park, and Voyageur Park. Estimate for materials only came to be approximately \$4,000.
- October 9, 2024 – Staff met with the City Urban Orchard Committee to determine the feasibility of constructing pollinator gardens. Approval was received to pursue approval with the Board of Park Commissioners.

- November 21, 2024 – Staff met with the Board of Park Commissioners and received unanimous approval for the construction and maintenance of Pollinator Gardens at City Parks.
- March 11, 2025 – Staff provided a draft request for proposals for the creation of Pollinator Gardens to the Sustainability Commission for comment. No Proposals ended up getting submitted.

### **Status**

The commission is evaluating how to best approach having pollinator gardens installed. Additional educational and outreach programs are being discussed (e.g. the garden tour or educational brochures).

### **Discussion**

In November, there were two topics of discussion regarding Planned Natural Landscapes:

Per correspondence from Commissioner Nelson:

#### *Five For Fliers*

*The program would provide five recommended plants that are selected to be highly beneficial for bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and songbirds. While five plants is fairly limited I chose that for ease of supply as well as the signing ability of the "Five for Fliers" name. 'Five for Fliers' shares the ring in the name that 'No Mow May' did giving ease in marketing. As someone that thinks both locally and nationally I think that the 5 plants should be regionally selected and would be adjusted for other parts of the country, but here are the species that I would choose locally and for the upper midwest:*

- *Asclepias tuberosa (butterfly weed)*
- *Liatris ligulistylis (meadow blazing star)*
- *Echinacea Purpurea (purple coneflower) or Little Bluestem*
- *Penstemon digitalis (smooth penstemon)*
- *Eryngium yuccifolium (rattlesnake master)*

Second, Commissioner Henrigillis created the attached, draft, Planned Natural Landscapes handout discussing common invasive species found in neighborhood landscaping and common, Wisconsin Native, plants that could replace these species. Commissioner Henrigillis would like to see if the City could find a partner to help promote this.

In the past month, Commissioner Henrigillis met with the Conservation Corp and the Green Bay Botanical Gardens. Per Commissioner Henrigillis:

*The Botanical Gardens would be willing to donate 750 plants to the City to give away in May. This would be a 15 plant kit for 50 kits - it would be 15 different plants. The plants would do best in full sun. They were originally going to try and give away 5000 plants on Mother's Day, however, after our meeting today, he is willing to donate some of those plants.*

*The Conservation Corps are also open to partnering with us. We would have to decide how much work we want to do versus would we be willing to give money to the Conservation Corp to cover some administrative costs and they would include us in their sign ups, pick ups, etc. The cost for partnering with the Conservation Corps would be approximately \$500.*

*Here is how the Conservation Corp is approaching their plant giveaway. They, as of right now, will be giving away 300 plant kits (4500 plants). They plan to do a lottery sign up starting in late January or early February and the sign up will be open for 3 weeks. Winners would be notified around Earth Day.*

*They would be willing to include us on this sign up - Maria mentioned that our GIS person and probably social media person would need to partner with these same folks in the City of Green Bay. They are offering an early bird pick up option on May 15 but are asking folks to pick up plants on May 22 and May 23. Folks that receive these kits from the City of Green Bay will also receive a yard sign (the program will be called Neighbors for/and/& Nature), and a very extensive packet about the plants - how to care for them, etc. Maria will also be giving some educational presentations, in March, about the kits.*

#### **Next Steps**

The Sustainability Commission would need to determine if we would want to partner with the Conservation Corps or lead our own plant give away.

# Planned Natural Landscapes

## Common Invasive Species Found in Your Landscaping

### What's an invasive species?

An invasive species is an organism that is not from North America whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health

### Replace

Plants like buckthorn (1), burning bush (2), and Japanese barberry (3) are very common plants that can be found in our neighborhood landscaping. These plants are all invasive species and can be harmful to our natural environments.



### Attract

By replacing common invasive plants with plants from Wisconsin, our bees, birds, and butterflies have access to plants that can benefit them.

Some great replacements for common woody invasive plants are:

1. Pagoda dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)
2. American filbert (*Corylus americana*)
3. Oldfield common juniper (*Juniperus communis* var. *depressa*)





**City of De Pere, Wisconsin**

**III.9**

**Request for Sustainability Commission  
Action**

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**MEETING DATE:** January 13, 2026  
**DEPARTMENT:** Public Works  
**FROM:** Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion on Initiative Prioritization — Green Energy  
**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Discussion only. No action necessary.

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**ATTACHMENTS:**  
2026 0113 CE\_SC\_Initiative Prioritization\_Green Energy

# CITY OF DE PERE MEMO



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To: Members of the Sustainability Commission  
From: Chase Kuffel, Assistant City Engineer  
Date: January 13, 2026

RE: **Discussion on Initiative Prioritization – Green Energy**

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The purpose of this item is to evaluate the Green Energy work plan against the initiative prioritization evaluation criteria.

## **Green Energy**

The De Pere Common Council approved the City of De Pere Sustainability Commission's Work Plan on December 6, 2021 following the Clean Energy Resolution #21-87 passed on August 17th, 2021. Pursuant to the directives of resolution #21-87 that "the City will advance energy efficiency and conservation projects, programs and outreach as a means of rapidly reducing the need for centralized fossil energy generation" with intent that "the city of De Pere will account for these goals in its future budget cycles and will collaborate with the De Pere Sustainability Commission to develop a work plan which identifies cost-effective measures to transition to clean energy and net-zero carbon emissions".

The actions prioritized in the work plan include a city baseline assessment and inventory to analyze the City's greenhouse gas emissions. Consistent with the allowable actions in the work plan, the Sustainability Commission is requesting funds to implement the initiation of a baseline study. This funding request is contingent upon the availability of grant opportunities that the Commission has identified in the sections below.

Further activities developed in the Work Plan are to be taken by the Sustainability Commission to be executed congruent to the baseline assessment preparation. We are initiating public involvement to identify stakeholders and community values to inform the objectives and community targets of subsequent surveys.

Staff is currently evaluating the time and resource commitments to complete the Green Tier submittal requirements.