



AGENDA
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024
6:30 P.M. IN THE CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on January 17, 2024

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Park Advisory Commission joint meeting recap
- B. 2024 Draft Work Plan

6. NEW BUSINESS

- A. 2024 Environmental Resources Expo

7. DISCUSSION

- A. Staff updates
 - VLAWMO Watershed Mgmt Plan public survey
- B. Commission member updates
- C. Do-outs
- D. March agenda

8. ADJOURNMENT



City of White Bear Lake
Engineering Department

MEMORANDUM

To: Environmental Advisory Commission
From: Connie Taillon, P.E., Environmental Specialist
Date: February 16, 2024
Subject: **Action Items for February 28, 2024 EAC Meeting**

Agenda item 5A. Park Advisory Commission joint meeting recap

The joint meeting with the Park Advisory Commission (PAC) will be held on February 15, 2024. The purpose of the joint meeting is to review the parks maps with the PAC and discuss ideas and next steps in creating an implementation plan for invasive species removal and restoration projects on City property.

Action: Summarize feedback from the Park Advisory Commission members and determine next steps based on this feedback.

Agenda item 5B. 2024 Draft Work Plan

The draft 2024 work plan is included in the February agenda packet.

Action: Review the draft 2024 work plan and discuss priority goals for 2024.

Agenda item 6A. 2024 Environmental Resources Expo

The Environmental Resources Expo exhibitor list from 2023 is included in the February agenda packet.

Action: Update the exhibitor list for 2024.

Agenda item 7A. VLAWMO Watershed Mgmt Plan public survey

Vadnais Lake Area Water Management Organization (VLAWMO) is in the beginning stages of updating their 10-year Watershed Management Plan which will guide projects and programs from 2027-2036. VLAWMO is currently gathering feedback that will be incorporated into the next generation plan through numerous avenues including a public survey (both virtual and at hard copy stations), virtual coffee chats, and an initial in-person planning meeting.

Action: Consider taking the public survey or attend a virtual or in-person coffee chat and/or planning meeting. The brief online survey and other engagement event information can be found at the following link: <https://www.vlawmo.org/about/2027-2036-watershed-plan/> .



**MINUTES
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION
OF THE CITY OF WHITE BEAR LAKE, MINNESOTA
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024
6:30 P.M. IN THE CITY HALL CONFERENCE ROOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ATTENDANCE

Chair Schroeher called the meeting to order at 6:37 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sheryl Bolstad, Chris Frye, Chris Greene, Bonnie Greenleaf, Jeff Luxford, Gary Schroeher (Chair)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Rick Johnston (Vice Chair)

STAFF PRESENT: Connie Taillon, Environmental Specialist

VISITORS PRESENT: None

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The commission members reviewed the agenda and had no changes.

It was moved by member **Luxford** seconded by member **Bolstad**, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried, 6:0.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Commission meeting on December 20, 2023. The commission members reviewed the draft December 20, 2023 meeting minutes and had the following changes: Item 1A, change 7:51 to 6:51. Item 7A, sentence 4, change Manager to Member. Item 7A, last sentence, change Manger to Member.

It was moved by member **Greenleaf** seconded by member **Greene**, to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2023 meeting minutes as amended.

Motion carried, 6:0.

4. VISITORS AND PRESENTATIONS

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Joint work session recap

Member Bolstad complimented Chair Schroeher on his presentation to City Council at the joint work session and was happy to see that most of the Council members were in attendance. Member Frye wondered if the commission asked Council for anything specific. Chair Schroeher replied that the commission asked Council for feedback on

their 2024 priorities, and that Councilmember Edberg was very supportive of buckthorn removal. Member Luxford said that he regrets not asking Council what they want to see the EAC to work on. In response to Councilmember Edberg's interest in removing buckthorn, member Greenleaf suggested that the commission organize one buckthorn removal event this fall. Chair Schroeher mentioned that buckthorn removing tools are available through the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District. When asked how long he stayed at the joint work session, Chair Schroeher said that he attended most of the Park Advisory Commission (PAC) discussion, which was a more informal discussion than the Environmental Advisory Commission discussion, with more than one member presenting.

B. 2024 Draft Work Plan

The commission members reviewed the draft 2024 work plan. Chair Schroeher moved the buckthorn removal event from September to October. Member Luxford suggested that a request for volunteers at the fall buckthorn event be included in the spring newsletter and also submitted to the White Bear Press. Taillon will add this note to the work plan. The commission members are interested in beginning conversations with the Marketfest coordinator about possibly transitioning Marketfest to a zero waste event. Member Luxford suggested creating a list of tasks and asking for feedback. The list could include educating the public by staffing volunteers at each waste station, identifying haulers that offer compostable waste pick up, and working with the Marketfest vendors to switch to certified compostable products. Member Frye suggested looking at Mill City as an example. Chair Schroeher offered to email the Marketfest coordinator to see if she would be interested in meeting to discuss zero waste events.

C. Joint meeting with Park Advisory Commission

Taillon stated that she is working with the PAC staff liaisons to schedule a date for the joint meeting. She asked for thoughts on meeting agenda items in addition to reviewing and commenting on the restoration location maps. Member Greenleaf suggested talking about the plan and implementation priorities. Member Bolstad asked to include a budget discussion and how to prioritize projects on the agenda. Taillon mentioned that funding could possibly come from the SWPP budget. Member Bolstad responded that the PAC should be aware that funding could potentially come from the SWPP Fund and that the EAC can lead these projects. Chair Schroeher recommended that the meeting be scheduled with the PAC as soon as possible. He suggested turf to pollinator garden projects be included in the discussion. He offered to invite Metro Blooms to a future meeting with the PAC to introduce their pollinator demonstration garden technical and funding assistance program.

6. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2024 Environmental Resources Expo

Chair Schroeher asked Taillon to add the 2024 Environmental Resources Expo discussion to the February agenda.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Staff updates

None

B. Commission member updates

Member Greenleaf announced that her church is looking at installing ground mount solar with pollinator plantings. There are various rebates and credits available to help lower the cost of solar.

Member Frye noted that he is on the zoning code update committee which has met once so far, in November. The next meeting is scheduled for early February.

D. Do-outs

New do-out items for January 17, 2024 include:

- Chair Schroeder to contact Marketfest coordinator to gauge her interest in making Marketfest a zero waste event.
- If Marketfest coordinator is interested in further discussion about converting Marketfest to a zero waste event, commission members to create a 'to do list' and timeline for this process.

E. February agenda

Commission members asked Taillon to add the following to the February 21, 2024 agenda: 2024 Environmental Resources Expo, draft 2024 Work Plan.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, it was moved by member **Bolstad** seconded by member **Frye** to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 p.m.

Motion carried, 6:0

Environmental Advisory Commission 2024 Work Plan - DRAFT

Month	Recurrent Agenda Items	Activities/Events /Speakers
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • Priority goal(s) planning 	
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring newsletter articles • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	Articles: Request for volunteers (buckthorn removal)
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals • National Mayor’s Water Challenge • Discuss upcoming annual SWPPP meeting 	
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	Schedule tour of R&E facility at a date TBD
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • High priority goals 	
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Resource Expo planning • Fall newsletter articles 	Environmental Resource Expo, July 25th
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Work Plan • Environmental Resource Expo recap 	
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Work Plan • Volunteer Recognition Dinner presentation 	
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Work Plan • Commission Officer Election – Chair, Vice-Chair 	Buckthorn Brigade date TBD
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Work Plan • Joint workshop planning 	Volunteer recognition dinner
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve 2025 Work Plan • Joint workshop planning 	Holiday Treats

High Priority Goals for 2024

- Invasive species management and native plant restoration plan
- Downtown tree planting
- Water conservation
- Electrify City equipment
- Marketfest zero waste discussion

High Priority Goals for 2023

- 'Reduce recycling contamination' education grant availability
- Pollinator plantings
- Solar on buildings
- Buckthorn removal

Ongoing initiatives

- Recycling containers: waiting for County
- Downtown Revitalization Project
 - EV chargers
 - Boulevard trees
- Zero Waste Events
- Promote electric lawn equipment

Joint work session notes – Jan 2023

Mayor comments:

- Water conservation a priority
- Not interested in a local single use bag ban/charge
- Helpful to create a plan assigning priorities and costs to pollinator/native plantings in collaboration with Parks Commission

Councilmember Walsh comments:

- He was at a National Night out near Dillion Ditch and was wondering if we could look into pollinator plantings at that location.
- What about pollinator plantings at Bossard Park on the sloped areas.

Joint work session notes – Jan 17, 2024

Attendance: Mayor, Edberg, Walsh, Hughes, West

Mayor questions

- *EAC liaison role in downtown committee?*
- *How do residents receive bags for curbside food scraps program?*
- *Did the big trees by the Hardware store get discussed in the DT steering committee?*

Councilmember Walsh comments/questions

- *Will any trees be removed as part of the downtown project?*
- *Need to make a point to add downtown trees to budget*
- *Thinks downtown trees are meaningful and a good goal. Lindy said that there are also opportunities to add other types of plants downtown*

Councilmember West

- *Have a volunteer group, or more than one group for buckthorn removal*

Councilmember Edberg

- *Is public engagement too much to handle? Could time be used more to work with volunteers?*
- *Get the most value from the time that you put in.*
- *He hates buckthorn and has no issue painting the stump with an herbicide.*
- *Look at scout troops, school groups, etc. to help with buckthorn removal. Are there other groups?*
- *Along with buckthorn removal, also reforestation initiatives. The public would benefit from an expert determining tree species and how to provide diversity. Re-establish/reforest the urban forest.*
- *Consider education around environmentally friendly lawn care.*
- *Water is critical, such as the quality of White Bear Lake and Birch Lake. Raise awareness of chlorides and how it relates to water quality and road safety.*
- *'Buckthorn Brigade'*

GreenStep Cities best practices: <https://greenstep.pca.state.mn.us/best-practices>

Climate Smart Municipalities topics for Steering Committee

- Community solar and solar panels on City buildings
- Charge for plastic bags
- Single use plastics
- Climate change resolution
- Partner with Xcel Energy for Projects
- Air quality-lawn equipment (City and private)
- Energy focus, specifically renewables

Ramsey County Solid Waste Master Plan topics

- Curbside collection of bulky items for recycling
- Inclusion of small businesses in City recycling service
- Textile recycling (curbside, special collection, or drop-off) – required by 2019

MS4 Permit topics

- Salt management education
- Dog waste
- Other stormwater topics

You're invited: Help build the Watershed Mgmt Plan

Who: All who live, work, recreate, or have an interest in local water resources.

When: Survey is open February 5–March 13.

What: VLAWMO is a local government agency in the Northeast Metro.

The VLAWMO watershed covers all or parts of Gem Lake, North Oaks, Lino Lakes, White Bear Lake, White Bear Township, and Vadnais Heights. (See map)

Why: Public input is needed to guide the upcoming **2027-2036 watershed mgmt plan**. Your input shapes the plan's priority issues and strategies, and how VLAWMO keeps the public informed.

The finished plan will be a tool for completing studies, forming partnerships, budgeting, and applying for grants to protect and improve local water resources.

It's a new chapter for the watershed, we hope you'll join us!

THANK YOU!

For questions contact Nick Voss at (651) 204-6070.

Event schedule:

Watershed Plan Virtual Coffee Chats

February 13: 10 am

February 20: Noon

February 27: 6 pm

VLAWMO Grants 101

March 7: 6 pm

Initial Planning Meeting

April 24: 6 pm
*Survey results presented,
window for public input*

Visit VLAWMO.org/events for more details.

Visit our website

For more info and to



take the survey online.

**[www.vlawmo.org/
watershedplan](http://www.vlawmo.org/watershedplan)**

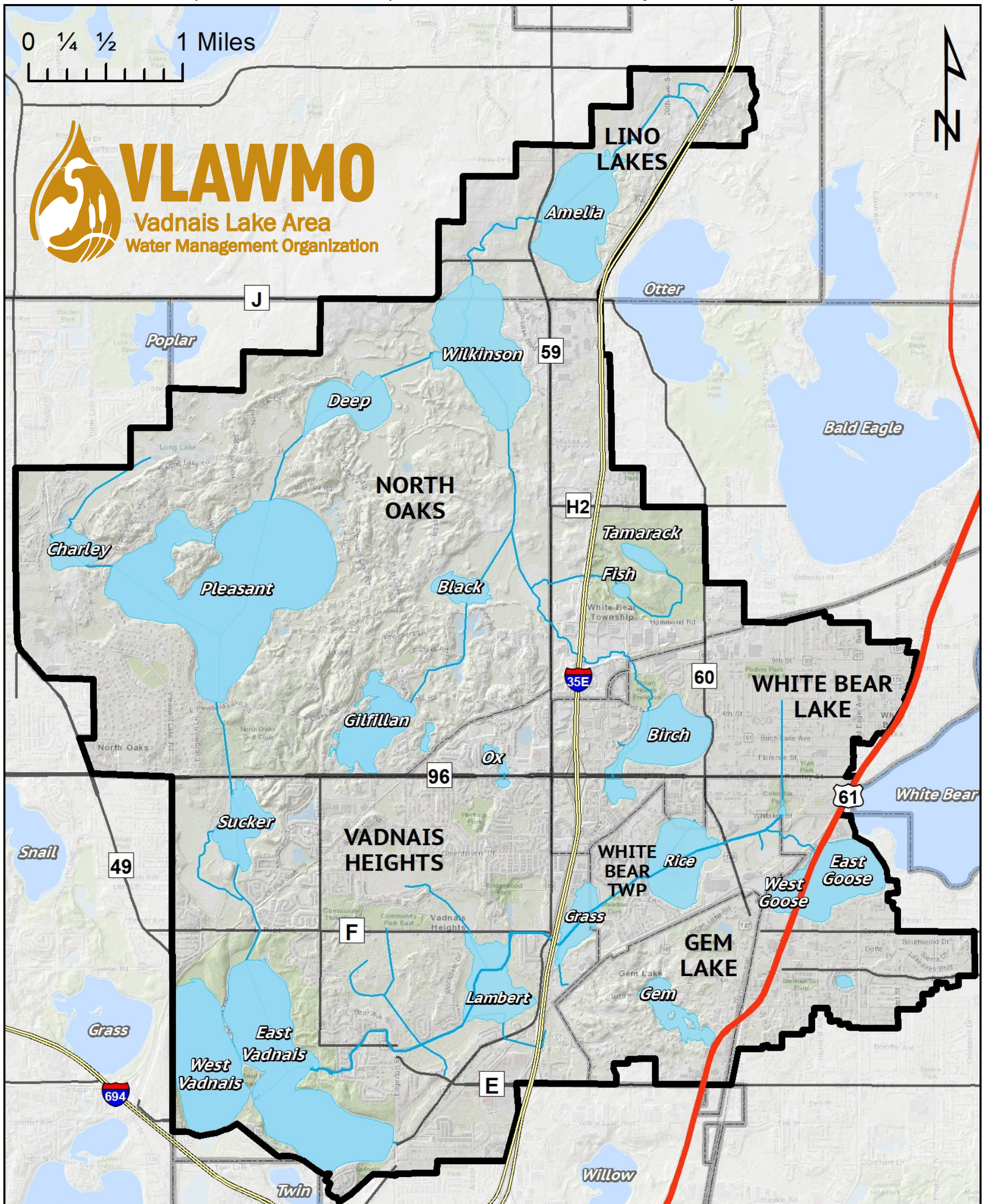
Follow us @VLAWMO:



The VLAWMO Watershed

consists of all the land area within the bold black line.

The survey will ask if you live, work, or visit this watershed (i.e. recreation). All are invited to participate!



How will the 2027-2036 Watershed Management Plan shape our relationship to water?

Your input helps us discover the answer together.
Thank you for your ideas and feedback!

Current Do-Outs

Commission Members

- Gary to contact Marketfest coordinator to gauge her interest in making Marketfest a zero waste event.
- If Marketfest coordinator is interested in further discussion about converting Marketfest to a zero waste event, create a 'to do list' and timeline for this process.
- Enter work plan information into Google work plan document (problem statement, list possible results, and define steps to achieve the results for each goal assigned to each member in the work plan list).
- Review GreenStep Cities best practices and tailor 2024 work plan items with this program
- Add GSC numbers to Google doc.
- Gary to invite Metro Blooms to a future meeting.
- Gary offered to lead the 'reduce recycling contamination' work plan item.
- Gary to organize a potential buckthorn removal event with RWMWD and YMCA at the YMCA and Lakewood Hills Park.

Staff

- ~~—Coordinate the joint parks discussion with Andy.~~
- ~~—Revise prairie restoration site SP-PR2 on the Stellmacher Park restoration map to remove the area from the outfield of the baseball diamond.~~
- ~~—Set up a joint meeting with the Parks Commission for early next year.~~
- Highlight environmental related items from the zoning code for a future discussion.
- Research if the City has a policy regarding recycling in public spaces
- Look into recycling cart stickers
- Ask about starting a fall Trash to Treasure day
- Email air quality sensor info to Public Works
- Schedule tour of R&E facility at a date TBD
- Add AIS ID information to the website