

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

MEETING PACKET

McCloskey Conference Room — City Hall

Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

Or virtually at:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/84327085962?pwd=naI8LVmKZSoinPUHbXuw3h7oqMyi5g.1>

Meeting ID: 843 2708 5962

Passcode: 034238

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8. Resolution 2026-01 (re: City's response to lapse in SNAP benefits)
9. Memo Introducing Resolution 2026-02
10. Resolution 2026-02 (re: Flock automatic license plate readers)



NOTICE AND AGENDA

Tuesday, February 10, 2026, 6:00 p.m.

McCloskey Conference Room — City Hall

or virtually at

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/84327085962?pwd=naI8LVmKZSoinPUHbXuw3h7oqMyi5g.1>

Meeting ID: 843 2708 5962 | Passcode: 034238

Note: Agenda item times are approximate and subject to change

Commission on Sustainability Members

Seat	Commissioner	Appointed By	Term
C- 1	Tara Dunderdale	City Council	1 Feb 2025 — 31 Jan 2027
C-2	Justin Vasel	City Council	1 Feb 2025 — 31 Jan 2027
C-3	Matt Austin	City Council	1 Feb 2024 — 31 Jan 2026
C-4	Christopher Miles	City Council	1 Feb 2026 — 31 Jan 2028
C-5	Zach Ammerman	City Council	1 Feb 2026 — 31 Jan 2028
C-Ex	Dave Rollo	City Council	Appointed 10 Jan 2024
IU	Quentin Gilly	IU Office of Sustainability	Appointed 21 Nov 2024
MCC	Ross Carlson	Monroe County Commissioners	Appointed 24 Nov 2025
M-1	Alex Jorck	Mayor	1 Feb 2026 — 31 Jan 2028
M-4	Chenghuai Xu	Mayor	1 Feb 2025 — 31 Jan 2027
M-5	Annalise Janke	Mayor	1 Feb 2024 — 31 Jan 2026
M-6	Diana Ogrodowski	Mayor	1 Feb 2025 — 31 Jan 2027

- Call to Order** 6:00 pm
- Roll Call**
- Approval of Agenda**
- Approval of Minutes: January 13, 2026**
- Public Comment** 6:05 pm (10m)
up to 3 minutes per person
- Reports from Commissioners** 6:15 pm (15m)
 - Chair (Justin Vasel) 6:15 pm (5m)
 - Waste Management Working Group (Matt Austin) 6:20 pm (5m)
 - Council Ex-Officio (Dave Rollo) 6:25 pm (5m)
- Discussion of Topics Not the Subject of Resolutions** 6:30 pm (40m)
 - Grant Report: Grandview Hills Pollinator Garden (Tara Dunderdale) 6:30 pm (10m)
 - Election Planning (Justin Vasel) 6:40 pm (10m)
 - O'Neill Capstone Statement of Work & Presentation Scheduling (Alex Jorck) 6:50 pm (10m)
 - BCOS and Earth Day 2026 7:00 pm (10m)
- Resolutions for Second Reading and Discussion** 7:10 pm (5m)
 - Resolution 2026-01: To Applaud The City's Response To The 2025 Lapse In Federal Funding Of SNAP Benefits
- Resolutions for First Reading and Discussion** 7:15 pm (10m)
 - Resolution 2026-02: Concerning Automated License Plate Reader

Surveillance Technology And Its Implications For Social
Sustainability, Community Resilience, And The United Nations
Sustainable Development Goals

10.	Report from Staff Liaison (Shawn Miya)	7:25 pm (5m)
11.	Member Announcements	7:30 pm (0m)
12.	New Business	7:30 pm (0m)
13.	Adjournment	by 7:30 pm

Next Regular Meeting: March 10, 2026 at 6 pm

As a quorum of the Commission or its committees may be present, this gathering constitutes a meeting under the Indiana Open Door Law (I.C. § 5-14-1.5). For that reason, this statement provides notice that this meeting will occur and is open for the public to attend, observe, and record what transpires.



Minutes

Tuesday, January 13, 2025 6:02pm

McCloskey Conference Room — City Hall

1. **Call to Order:** Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

2. **Roll Call:**

Members

Commissioner	Present	Virtual	Note
Tara Dunderdale	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Justin Vasel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Matt Austin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dave Rollo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Quentin Gilly	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Alex Jorck	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Jami Scholl	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Annalise Janke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Diana Ogrodowski	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Chenghuai Xu	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Zero Rose	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Zach Ammerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ross Carlson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	



City Staff

Shawn Miya

Jolie Perry

Audrey Brittingham

3. Approval of Agenda

ACTION: Matt moved to Approve the agenda. Diana seconded.

Action: Justin moved to amend the agenda to move the item 7b to before reports from commissioners. Zach seconded. Motion passed with a roll call vote of 10-0-0

Vote to approve agenda passed with a voice call vote of 10-0-0

4. Approval of Minutes: Dec 9, 2025

ACTION: Ross moved to approve the minutes Zach seconded.

Motion passes with a roll call vote of 9-0-1

5. Public Comment

No Public Comment

7b. Counting Miles: methods for estimating transportation-related GHG emissions

(Zach Ammerman; Expert Guest: Wes DiSivestro)

Wes DeSilvestro gave a brief explanation of a greenhouse gas emissions inventory. The city's upcoming inventory will utilize suggestions from the report.

Question from Tara about google starting to charge or self the project - unlikely in the short term based on the field.



Question from Alex about change in focus to scope 2 emissions - Wes and Zach said that is not likely to be an immediate concern. We shared an important goal is year over year comparability of the data to measure policy impacts.

Alex asked about the commission's role in using this presentation.

Shawn recommended the commission launching an anti-idling campaign. Projects for the Bloomington Energy works like EV charging or company fleet transition could be promoted. The city is planning to use the recommended method from this presentation in the upcoming inventory.

Tara asked about retroactive application - Wes confirmed they will be applying it back to the 2018 baseline.

Tara asked about timeseries data - not available with the EIE may be available with private data serieses.

Question from Ross about if electric vehicle emissions are measured at the power level - Zach and Wes confirmed that the model uses the generation.

Jami asked about the raw materials impact of shifts to solar panels, batteries, and other tech. Chengui shared some examples from the EU of how these are considered.

6. Reports from Commissioners

a. CHair's report:

Jami, Zero and Annalise's terms are ending this month.



First class for the capstone project meets this week. Justin and Alex are attending, other commissioners should not attend to avoid quorum.

Scheduling a full day retreat - discussion of a planning survey.

Shawn said that staff has to be present at public meetings. Audrey from city legal said this is city rule to ensure open door violations and quorum issues. Sub groups might need to be noticed separately from the full meeting. Justin asked where the policy is written in the city - Audrey said it is a practiced by every board and commission but was not sure if and where this policy is documented. Justin raised concern that the city could prevent BCOS meetings from occurring. Audrey clarified that the requirement is that the from the city and onus is on the city to provide staff at any meetings that BCOS sets. BCOS is not prevented from scheduling this meeting.

Elections are coming up in March - Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, from municipal code - Vice chair is from our bylaws. We can choose a chair and vice chair or co-chair. Review of officer rules and their duties.

There is flexibility in how we run the elections - can be decided formally at the February meeting in advance of the March annual meeting.



- b. Waste group no report
- c. Councilmember Rollo is not present - no council report.

7. Discussion of Topics Not the Subject of Resolutions

- a. Dissolution of ad hoc committee. Justin moves to dissolve the committee. Tara Seconds - Vote passes with a roll call vote of 10-0-0. Tara commented that the process gave us information for a resolution and a lot of lessons were learned about the challenges of working collaboratively outside of business meetings while staying in compliance with open door law.

Justin moves to extend the meeting to 7:35. Jami seconds. Motion passes with a roll call vote of 10-0-0.

8. Resolutions for Second Reading and Discussion

- a. n/a

9. Resolutions for First Reading and Discussion

- a. Resolution 2026-01 - Resolution applauding the city's efforts to provide funding for food security during the lapse in federal funding. Justin moved to move the resolution to a second reading. Matt seconded. Motion passed with a roll call vote of 10-0-0

10. Report from Staff Liaison

- a. Some local businesses have applied for technical assistance, submitted projects, or have scheduled upcoming meetings with ESD



staff. There are volunteer opportunities linked to the project for canvassing, group presentations and home

11. Member Announcements

n/a

12. New Business

n/a

13. Adjournment

n/a

7:34



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

CHAIR'S REPORT FEBRUARY 10, 2026

Justin Vasel

Organizational Updates

We welcome Christopher Miles (seat C-4) to the Commission!

Z. Ammerman (seat C-5) was reappointed by Council on Feb 4, 2026.

There are currently three vacancies (seats M-2, M-3, and M-5) and one carryover (C-3 M. Austin).

11 of 14 seats are filled; our quorum threshold is 6.

The Secretary officer position is now vacant following Z. Rose's departure. Given the proximity to next month's elections, we will not elect an interim Secretary. Vice Chair T. Dunderdale will carry out the Secretary's duties.

Resolution 2025-04 (BCOS Name Change)

We adopted this resolution on Nov 18, 2025 recommending our Commission's name be changed to "Bloomington Commission on Sustainability and Resilience."

Resolution was transmitted to Council President Stosberg on Nov 25, 2025. Her recommendation was that the Committee on Council Processes take it up as part of a broader set of changes to BMC Title 2 they were planning for 2026.

Council introduced Ordinance 2026-04 for first reading on Feb 4, 2026, which includes the name change. Second reading and vote expected Feb 18.

2026 Strategic Planning Retreat

A poll was circulated about scheduling preferences for a strategic planning retreat. Based on six responses, Saturday, February 28th has the best availability. Responses favored a partial day with focused sessions and a working lunch.

Commissioner Gilly suggested the IU Sustainability E-House as a venue. I toured it in January and believe it would work well: centrally located, accessible, equipped with presentation technology, and easily able to accommodate commissioners and members of the public. It also features solar panels and a geothermal system—an ideal backdrop for a sustainability-focused retreat.

A retreat gives us something our monthly meetings cannot: sustained time to think together. Imagine a morning session dedicated to looking inward (how can the Commission itself function more effectively?) An afternoon session focused outward (which policies can we influence, which projects deserve our support?) And time to discuss outreach (how do we better connect with other boards and commissions, community organizations, and the public?)

This isn't work we can do in 90-minute increments at a boardroom table. It requires space, continuity, and the kind of conversation that only happens when we're not watching the clock.

Scheduling Constraints

At our last meeting, staff indicated that an extended weekend retreat may not be feasible due to limited staff availability. This raised a question I posed during that meeting: what legal requirements would prevent BCOS from meeting if staff is unavailable, provided the meeting is properly noticed and quorum is established?

In the weeks since, Vice Chair Dunderdale and I have discussed this with city staff via email. The responses have been contradictory. The Deputy Clerk stated clearly that the Commission "CANNOT" conduct business under any circumstances without staff present. The Deputy Mayor, in the same email thread, implied that while meetings should be planned with staff input, if circumstances prevented staff from attending, the Commission could likely proceed.

I want to be clear: I do not believe the City is acting in bad faith. The City has legitimate interests in ensuring legal compliance. But the Commission shares that responsibility. We are capable of adhering to Open Door Law requirements, keeping records, and counting quorum—with or without staff physically present.

We value our staff partners and have no desire to exclude them from any meeting. The concern Vice Chair Dunderdale and I share is whether BCOS has the autonomy and authority to conduct its business so long as it complies with applicable laws.

Under state law and municipal code, two requirements must be met for the Commission to conduct business: proper public notice and access (per the Open Door Law) and a quorum (per BMC and our Bylaws). There is no statute or ordinance requiring staff presence.

If staff approval is strictly required for BCOS to meet, then the practical effect is that staff can veto any Commission action—not by intent, but by unavailability. I am not suggesting staff would use this power improperly. But if BCOS has a desire to meet at a time or duration that staff cannot accommodate, and staff availability is treated as a prerequisite, then it is staff who has the final say over Commission business.

Why This Matters

We meet monthly for 90 minutes. Accounting for public comment, reports, and procedural business, we have perhaps 12 hours per year for substantive discussion. A retreat would give us additional time to chart priorities for the year ahead—time we simply don't have in our regular meetings.

We are already struggling to fit everything into our allotted time. Our options are to do less, or to dedicate special time to planning so that our business meetings can focus on decision-making. A retreat is how we do the latter.

Path Forward

I will continue working with our Staff Liaison to find an arrangement that works for everyone. I remain committed to collaboration with City staff. But their scheduling constraints should not prevent the Commission from carrying out its business within the bounds of the law.

2025 Annual Report

The report is largely complete but still missing some details. Once ready, I will circulate by email along with a comment spreadsheet that commissioners can individually fill out and send back. We will review the comments at the following meeting and vote to approve once the Commission is happy with the changes.

External Updates

- The City is considering ending the Kirkwood Outdoor Dining Program
- Ordinance 2026-04 (Expect second reading Feb 18)
 - Renames BCOS
 - Requires all board and commission members to sign a code of conduct
 - Consolidates provisions related to Boards & Commissions found in Chapters 2.12 and 2.08 into one place: Chapter 2.02.

Misc Reminders / Notes

- WRDMC Compost Bin & Rain Barrel Sale
 - Order deadline: April 15, 2026. Pickup dates: April 24/25
- Bloomington Energy Works

Resources

- Websites
 - [BCOS Webpage](#)
 - [BCOS OnBoard Page](#)
- Commission Documents
 - [2024 Annual Report](#)
 - [Bylaws](#)
 - [Standard Operating Procedures](#)
- Working Group Grants
 - [Standard Operating Procedure](#)
 - [Application Template](#)
- BCOS Templates
 - [Resolution Template](#)
- Bloomington Policy Documents
 - [Bloomington Municipal Code](#) (BMC)
 - [Climate Action Plan](#) (CAP)
 - [Comprehensive Plan](#)
 - [Unified Developer Ordinance](#) (UDO)

Grandview Hills Pollinator Gardens

Sustainable Neighborhoods Grant Report to BCOS

Project Plan

\$1000 Grant +

\$242.40 Neighborhood match

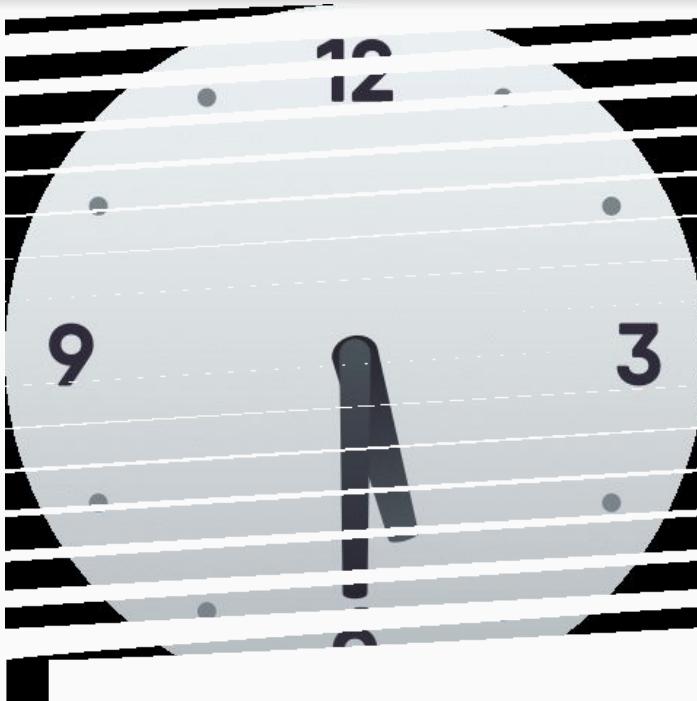
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240 plants for gardens in 6
homes



Additional Resources Required

Time and Labor



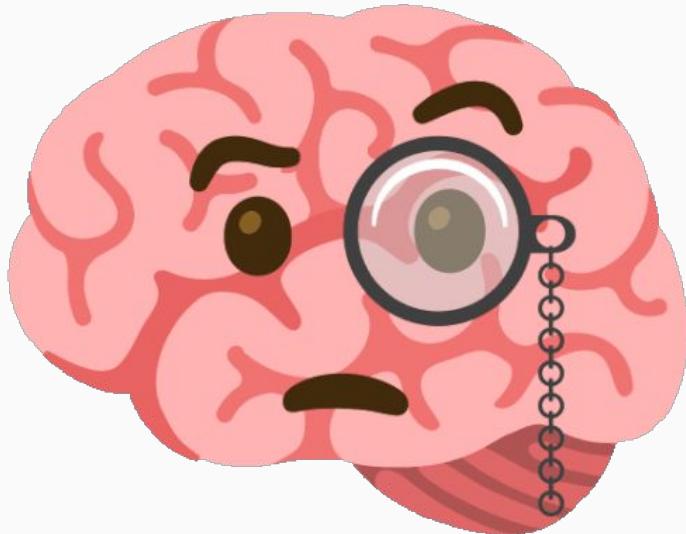
- Grant application and follow-up
- Neighborhood Communication
- Bed preparation
- Garden planting
- Weeding
- Watering
- Documenting progress

Money



- Mulch
- Water
- Professional support
- Additional Materials

Knowledge



- Grant application and follow-up
- Plant care
- Weed identification
- Pest control
- Documentation

The Gardens

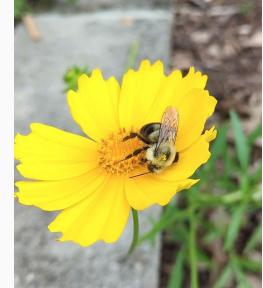
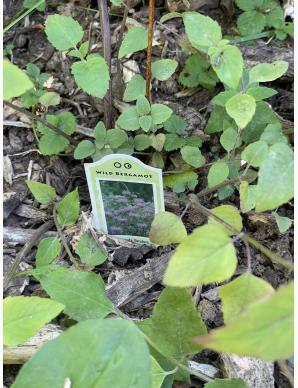
Site Selections



Progress



Blooming



Results

83%

Of plants in the 6 gardens survived as of October 2025

Reflections

“I should have flagged them...as some of my wildflower packets grew in there as well.”

“I think my biggest difficulty was keeping other weeds out, even with mulch.” I'm excited for the opportunity to tend it again as it emerges in the spring, hopefully hitting the target windows to curb the worst weeds.

she removed all the invasive vines she could before planting, many grew back, choking out some of the new plants. Health issues also made it difficult to keep up with yard work.

“This summer was hot and humid, which made it difficult for me to get outside to do any yard work. Weeds nearly choked the garden in July, but I was finally able to get them under control and save most of my plants in August.”

“I had to do a lot of weeding early on and again mid summer but the plants did so well they bullied a lot of stuff out.”

Reflections

I have never seen so many butterflies--one day we counted seven feeding on the native plants at the same time! There were also a variety of bees--bumblebees and honeybees, and some insects I have never seen before."

"The new plants have brought **joy and beauty** to owners and neighbors alike"

"I saw **monarch caterpillars** on the milkweed and have had some **hummingbirds** hanging out in my yard for the first time this year. Lots and lots of **milkweed bugs** (who ate many of those yellow aphids) and tons of bumble bees."

"I have seen more butterflies, including **monarchs** and spicebush **swallowtails**, as well as a lot of **bumble bees and honey bees** (and probably other types of bees!) this summer."

"This pollinator garden gave me so much more than pollinators this summer. It gave me education, joyful flowers, and hope for a future food garden. **Most importantly though, I am glad we did this as a group.** We haven't gathered at every step, but we have been able to share info and celebrations along the way. Being part of this common goal has helped me **feel more connected to the community of our neighborhood**, and I am beyond grateful for that. I look forward to more projects in the future!"

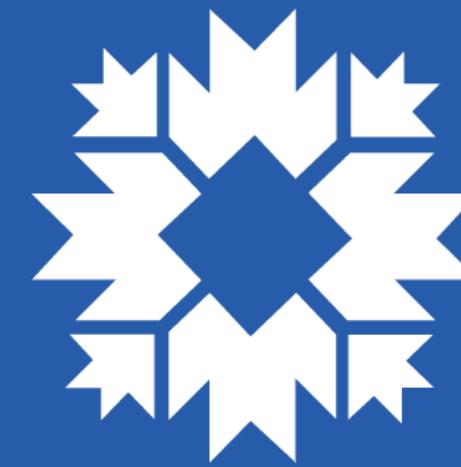
Conclusion

Growing native species and **sharing the experience with different gardeners** enabled various levels of successful outcomes.

A variety of factors – shade versus sun, wet versus dry site, various styles of gardening techniques and cultivation methods, time available to tend the plots, weather constraints, soil types, previous use of yard plots, and individual family needs – all worked together to yield **different but quite successful and mostly enjoyable end results**.

The benefit of dispersing the grant between multiple neighbors, and over a wide variety of site conditions, provided different outcomes. These differences underscored the **benefits of spreading the risk of planting native plots among many people**. This approach ended up working to our advantage.

This grant provided a model for sustainable steps forward, and the opportunity to build on this neighborhood experience and community in the near future.



**CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY**

Election Planning

February 10, 2026

Justin Vasel

Officer Elections 2026

Rules & Requirements

	Rule	Description
Bloomington Municipal Code	BMC § 2.08.020(9) Officers	Each board, commission and council shall elect a chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as may be necessary. Such entity may appoint a non-member to serve as secretary.
	BMC § 2.08.020(10) Duties of the Secretary	The secretary of each board, commission or council shall keep for every meeting written minutes in which the results of any vote are recorded and, when appropriate, specific findings of facts and conclusions are set forth.
BCOS Bylaws Article II (Officers)	BCOS Bylaws II.1 Officer Election	Officers shall be elected by vote of the commission members annually at the Annual Meeting [March] by a majority of the current membership of the Commission. It shall be the right of the Commission to decide annually on the Structure of the Executive Office(s). The Commission will decide by vote at each annual election whether to elect officers as Co-Chair or Chair and Vice Chair.
	BCOS Bylaws II.2 Officer Eligibility	All officers shall be members of the Commission and no member shall hold more than one office at a time.
	BCOS Bylaws II.3 Officer Term	Officers shall be elected to serve until the next Annual Meeting. Their terms of office shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected. Officers may serve more than one term. Officers shall deliver to their successors all accounts, papers, records, and other Commission property within two weeks of their expired term.

Officer Elections 2026

Types of Officers & Duties

Officer	Duties
Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare the agenda for all meetings• Preside over all meetings (except when she/he designates VC)• Distribute agenda and related documents no less than 48h prior to meeting• Organize and submit the Commission's Annual Report in coordination with other members of the Executive Committee
Co-Chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newly-elected Co-Chairs shall decide how to divide responsibilities enumerated for the Chair and Vice Chair. All responsibilities must be explicitly assigned to an individual, and the list of responsibilities shall be presented in written format to the Commission by the next regular meeting
Vice-Chairperson	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Serve as Chairperson in their absence• Perform duties that may be delegated by Chairperson• Aid Chairperson on request• Post notice of vacancies of the Commission's Advisory Committee positions and the requirements thereof• Perform such other duties applicable to the office as prescribed by the parliamentary authority adopted by the Commission• In absence of Secretary, serve as or appoint a Member to serve as Secretary
Secretary per BMC § 2.08.020(10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keep, for every meeting, written minutes in which the results of any vote are recorded and, when appropriate, specific findings of facts and conclusions are set forth.
Treasurer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate the preparation of the annual budget as required by BMC § 2.08.020(13)• Facilitate the efforts of commission members to identify funding sources in order to execute the strategic goals of the commission

Officer Elections 2026

Nominations & Process – How Structured Do We Want It?

DISCUSSION



Statement of Work:
Feasibility Analysis of Enacting a Sustainable Energy Utility

Prepared for: Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS)

Prepared by: SPEA-V 600 Capstone, Spring 2026

Faculty Advisors: Professor Emeritus John Rupp and Professor Nikos Zirogiannis

February 6, 2026

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Introduction

Project Background and Strategic Intent

In 2021, the City of Bloomington, Indiana published its Climate Action Plan (CAP), with goals of reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions “25% below 2018 emissions levels by 2030” and achieving “carbon neutrality by 2050” (City of Bloomington, 2021). One of the eight focal areas or sectors of the CAP is Energy and the Built Environment, which accounts for the most substantial portion (77%) of the city’s GHG emissions (City of Bloomington, 2021). Bloomington established five Energy and Built Environment sector goals aimed at improving energy efficiency and accelerating the transition to low- and no-carbon electricity sources. Shifting to greener sources of electricity generation and reducing overall energy consumption are vital approaches toward meeting the established CAP goals and moving towards carbon neutrality.

Problem Statement: Structural and Economic Barriers

Despite clear targets and strategic intent, Bloomington faces significant structural and economic barriers to implementation of the CAP goals. Bloomington is located within the service territory of a regulated investor-owned utility (IOU) which may influence the extent to which the city can play a role in electricity generation, pricing, and infrastructure investment decisions. Duke Energy serves as the community’s IOU; however, the degree of influence from Duke Energy remains an open question. According to Duke’s most recent Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), Duke Energy’s energy mix currently relies heavily on coal (74.7%) followed by natural gas (21.4%) (Duke Energy, 2024). The company projects a 20-plus-year outlook in which coal remains part of the energy mix, with plans to phase it out while expanding natural gas around 2030. Solar energy, however, remains stagnant until 2039 (Duke Energy, 2024). Due to these circumstances, the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability (BCOS) advocates investigating alternative models that could advance the city’s CAP goals.

One alternative for the integration of clean energy in Bloomington is the development of a Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU). SEUs are organizational models designed to advance energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other sustainability objectives through locally tailored programs and financing mechanisms (Houck & Rickerson, 2009). Rather than replacing traditional utilities, SEUs operate alongside existing providers, where they focus on distributed generation and community-based energy solutions. Ann Arbor, Michigan - another mid-sized college city with an ambitious climate action plan serviced by a regulated IOU (DTE Energy) – is piloting an SEU as a means of accelerating progress towards climate goals while also maintaining energy reliability and affordability (The City of Ann Arbor, 2021).

Statutory authority, regulatory oversight, and policy considerations within Indiana’s Code will shape the feasibility of establishing an SEU in Bloomington. Understanding the legal, financial,

technical, and social dimensions of creating and then implementing such a municipal utility is essential before pursuing any significant change to Bloomington's energy landscape. For this reason, a comprehensive feasibility analysis is necessary to evaluate the practicality, functionality, and benefits of an SEU, alongside any alternatives that could advance the City's CAP goals within existing constraints.

This Statement of Work outlines the scope, objectives, and methodology for a multidisciplinary feasibility analysis of an SEU and other potential sustainable energy scenarios for the City of Bloomington. Through coordinated research across legal, policy, financial, technical, environmental, and social domains, the analysis will assess the viability of an SEU and comparable alternatives using the five attributes, hereafter called Pillars, of electric service utility per IC 8-1-2-0.6: reliability, affordability, resiliency, stability, and environmental sustainability (Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission, 2023). The findings of this analysis will inform a set of actionable recommendations for Bloomington's Commission on Sustainability to support Bloomington's long-term energy and climate goals.

Primary Project Objective & Research Questions

Primary Research Questions

The main objective of this project is to determine the feasibility of a Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU) for the City of Bloomington, Indiana. The primary research questions are:

1. How feasible is implementing a Sustainable Energy Utility in the City of Bloomington, Indiana, considering relevant constraints and opportunities in legal, financial, technical, environmental, and social domains?
2. Are there viable alternative scenarios that could support Bloomington in making progress on energy-related carbon emission goals without creating an SEU?

The Five Pillars of Electric Utility Service (IC 8-1-2-0.6)

To complete a robust analysis of Bloomington's options for increasing energy sustainability, the project team will also evaluate alternative scenarios to a parallel SEU ranging from options closer to the status quo to more assertive strategies. This assessment will involve analyzing the current federal and state policies involving energy generation, transmission and distribution in Indiana, the impact and influence of relevant stakeholders, and the financial and technical implications of each potential scenario including an SEU. This information will be compiled and used to evaluate scenario alignment with the five Pillars of electric utility services listed above. Additional risk and stakeholder analyses will be performed to add depth and better inform decision-making. This will result in a detailed understanding of each alternative scenario and their impacts on Bloomington's goals as well as their likelihood of successful implementation, which will be used to develop recommendations for the client to weigh. This feasibility project will culminate in a written report

comprising the research, analyses, and recommendations for the client along with a presentation that will be given in late April of 2026.

Research and Analytical Methodology

Key Project Phases

1. Literature Review and Background Research
2. Analysis
3. Reporting of Results

Phase 1. Literature Review and Background Research

The project team will conduct a literature review and perform background research within four main disciplines or domains: Legal and Policy, Financial, Technical and Environmental, and Social. The focus and objectives of each research group are described in more detail below. Research teams working within each area will prepare information based on existing literature, reports, and expert consultants that will serve as input for the analysis during Phase 2. While the team will divide into groups to focus on each topic, internal communication will be frequent and will enable flexibility and collaboration.

Task 1.1 Familiarization with Client Sustainability Goals and Potential Scenarios

All project members will familiarize themselves with the sustainability goals of the City of Bloomington as well as background on SEUs and more traditional utility structures. This process will enable the project team to determine energy scenarios to analyze in Phase 2.

Task 1.2 Perform Background Research on Facets of Energy Generation and Distribution

The project team will divide into groups to conduct research on how each domain interacts with utilities, energy generation, transmission, distribution, and energy use. These groups and their objectives are outlined below.

1.2.1 Legal/Policy Research

Objectives:

- a. Determine limiting factors in Indiana's utility regulation that may inhibit the realization of sustainable energy policies/utility models.
- b. Identify areas of regulatory uncertainty to determine and clearly define potential pathways for the successful implementation of an SEU under Indiana law.
- c. Evaluate local ordinances and consider associated implications in relation to the implementation of an SEU in Bloomington.
- d. Assess federal and regional policy frameworks concerning generation and transmission and their implications regarding the implementation of an SEU in Bloomington.

1.2.2 Financial Research

Objectives:

- a. Review existing SEU initiatives to identify potential financing mechanisms (loan, grant, public-private roles), their challenges and benefits.
- b. Identify potential funding sources that may be viable for Bloomington: federal, state, city programs, philanthropic, and foundation funding (pros, cons, constraints).
- c. Evaluate the financial cost-effectiveness of SEU initiatives by calculating and comparing their Levelized Cost of Energy (LCOE) across different scenarios.
- d. Quantify existing electricity costs in Bloomington and compare them with projected costs under proposed SEU scenarios.

1.2.3 Technical and Environmental Impact Research

Objectives:

- a. Evaluate the City of Bloomington's technical readiness to support a city-led SEU in ways that complement Duke Energy and improve the electricity grid's overall reliability for Bloomington constituents.
- b. Identify the electrical, digital, and physical infrastructure requirements necessary for an SEU that provides measurable co-benefits for the City of Bloomington and Duke Energy.
- c. Analyze which distributed energy resources (DERs) best align with the City of Bloomington's emissions goals while also supporting utility-scale system needs.
- d. Assess the environmental impacts of alternative pathways to an SEU, including benefits for both the City of Bloomington and Duke Energy.

1.2.4 Social Support and Impact Research

Objectives:

- a. Identify key community stakeholders and whether they would be likely to support green energy initiatives in Bloomington.
- b. Determine factors anticipated to assist or hinder community acceptance of an SEU and strategies by which to facilitate greater acceptance of an SEU or alternative pathway.
- c. Evaluate potential equity implications associated with SEU implementation, particularly as they relate to socially vulnerable populations, along with potential strategies for orienting SEU development towards social equity co-benefits.

- d. Assess the community resilience implications of SEU development and alternate approaches to local renewable energy growth as they relate to energy insecurity and exposure to climate change impacts.

Task 1.3 Draft Report Background Research Section

During Phase 1, the research groups will compile and synthesize their findings into a draft of the background section to be included in the report.

Phase 2. Analysis

Task 2.1 Scenario Comparative Analysis

Utilizing the information obtained during Phase 1, the team will define and analyze each scenario considering the five key pillars of electric utilities outlined in the Indiana Code. Prior research, along with tools including but not limited to cost-benefit analysis, risk analysis, and comparison to city carbon emissions reduction and equity goals, will inform the work in Phase 2.

2.1.1 Scenario Outlining

Alternative scenarios, including an SEU, will be refined and defined based on the legal, policy, financial, technical, environmental, and social research completed in Phase 1.

2.1.2 Scenario Alignment with Pillars of Electric Utilities

The option of implementing an SEU, along with alternative scenarios for Bloomington, will be evaluated based on the five Pillars and ranked for each attribute from poor to excellent. A matrix modeled after Table 1 will be produced to enable visual comparison.

Table 1. Example Scenario Pillar Alignment Table. Ratings given for example only.

Pillar	Baseline	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Reliability	Good	Fair	Fair	Poor
Affordability	Fair	Good	Poor	Good
Resiliency	Good	Poor	Good	Fair
Stability	Good	Good	Fair	Fair
Environmental Sustainability	Poor	Fair	Fair	Excellent

Task 2.2 Risk Analysis

The risk analysis will holistically evaluate the feasibility of implementing an SEU and alternative scenarios. Even if a scenario appears to meet Bloomington's needs and circumstances, real-world

application means that outcomes may differ from what is ideal. The risk analysis will explicitly outline the uncertainties of each scenario and clarify trade-offs that may influence decision-making.

2.2.1 Risk Identification

Using information gathered in Phase 1, team leads from each research domain will present potential risks and uncertainties and will inform the risk analysis. Included risks will be those that affect the feasibility of each scenario meeting expected outcomes rather than impact on actual implementation.

2.2.2 Risk Assessment Matrix

The risk analysis will assess the effect of possible risks on outcomes for each scenario, specifically the likelihood of occurrence, magnitude of impact, and degree of uncertainty of each risk that outlined in 2.2.1 above. This will result in a tabular depiction of each risk with factors ranging from low to high, an example of which is provided below.

Table 2. Example Scenario Risk Assessment Matrix. Rankings given for example only.

Scenario 1: (example)			
Risk	Likelihood	Magnitude of Impact	Degree of Uncertainty
Risk 1	Low	High	High
Risk 2	Medium	Medium	Low
Etc.			

Task 2.3 Stakeholder Impact Analysis

The team will investigate how each policy scenario would impact relevant stakeholders across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Anticipated stakeholder impacts will be represented with both direction and magnitude, ranging from strongly positive to strongly negative. Stakeholder modeling will augment these findings with information on stakeholders' level of interest in policy scenarios and influence over the policy domain, along with guidance on engagement.

2.3.1 Stakeholder Identification

Based on the specifics of each policy scenario and the range of potential impacts, a list of stakeholders will be compiled that includes their name, stance, level of interest, level of influence, value proposition, and engagement strategy. The more subjective aspects of this analysis such as stance and interest and influence levels will be based on publicly available information, including historical actions and positions, stated missions and viewpoints, along with other sources as available and appropriate. For stakeholders where public information is insufficient to determine stance and interest, direction and magnitude of anticipated impacts will be used as substitute metrics.

2.3.2 Stakeholder Modeling

Once relevant stakeholders for an SEU and identified viable alternative scenarios have been compiled, their impact will be assessed using a dual-axis model (Figure 1) representing stakeholders' level of interest (lowest to highest) in these scenarios on one axis and their level of influence (lowest to highest) in the relevant policy space on the other axis (Rocky Mountain Institute, 2026). This modeling will be augmented with information on potential impact on direction and magnitude per the descriptions above (Table 3). Based on the position of stakeholders within this model, stakeholder profiles and recommendations as to their prioritization and engagement will be provided in the final report.



Figure 1. Example Stakeholder Interest Dual-Axis Model Visualization. Graphics and scoring metrics for impact/stance, interest, and influence are subject to change.

Table 3. Example Stakeholder Modeling Table. Scoring metrics are subject to change.

Stakeholder	Projected Impact/Stance	Level of Interest	Level of Influence
SH A	Strong Positive	Very High	Very High
SH B	Negative	Low	High
SH C	Strong Negative	High	High
SH D	Positive	Low	Moderate
Etc.			

Phase 3. Reporting of Results

Task 3.1 Report Writing

One of the main products of this feasibility study will be a written report delivered to the client for their consideration.

3.1.1 Draft the Report

The report draft will include Phase 1 background information on the characteristics, obligations, and limitations of scenarios within legal, financial, technical, and social domains. The report will present and discuss several possible scenarios to meet the goals of sustainable energy in Bloomington, and each will be analyzed based on attribute criteria, risk factors, and stakeholder impact. Finally, the report will present recommendations of courses of action for the client to consider based on the results of the presented analyses.

3.1.2 Edit the Report

The draft will be sent to internal advisors for review and may be sent to the client for comments. An expert with experience in the energy industry will review the draft to provide additional insights and verification of findings. The project team will edit the draft based on recommendations and additional requests.

3.1.3 Prepare and Deliver the Final Report

The edited report will be finalized and sent to the client for use at their discretion.

Task 3.2 Presentation of Recommendations to the Client

Upon completion of the final report, the team will present the findings of the project to the client.

Scope of Work

The scope of this project is that of a feasibility study and report. The project team will be performing research and analyses that will enable the completion of a written report and presentation regarding the feasibility of developing a Sustainable Energy Utility similar to that piloted in Ann Arbor, Michigan, along with alternative scenarios that could make progress towards Bloomington's energy-related carbon emission goals without creating an SEU.

Should the client consider the results of this feasibility analysis favorably and proceed toward implementation of an SEU, additional work will be required. This additional work would consider how the creation of an SEU would be accomplished in structure, timeline, detailed costs, and staff capacity requirements. However, such work is outside the scope of this preliminary feasibility analysis. Surveying stakeholders or otherwise gathering direct input from the community is also outside the scope of this project. Additional requests made by the client after the approval of this Statement of Work will be considered but not guaranteed for the satisfactory completion of this feasibility project.

Project Personnel and Responsibilities

Role	Name	Responsibilities
Advisors	John Rupp and Nikos Zirogiannis	Provide guidance to project team, find expert consultants, and advise direction of feasibility report
Project Manager	Bronwyn Meldrum	Manages the organization and execution of class meetings, oversees work performed, finalizes deliverables, and ensures project deadlines are met; compiles progress reports
Research Lead Manager	Laura Schairbaum	Organizes and oversees research teams. Guides research questions, analysis, and production of reports
Internal Liaison	Vincent (Vinny) Zarlengo	Facilitates communication with the project team, gathers collaborative information from research teams
External Liaison	Evelyn (Evie) Sellers	Communicates with consultants and contacts outside of the project team, serves as a point of contact for the client
Data Archivist	McKenzie Jones	Oversees organization of digital files, preserves past versions of documents, and compiles the bibliographic reference list produced by research teams.

Phase 1 Research Teams		
Role	Name	Responsibilities
<i>Legal and Policy</i>	Lead: Trent Stocum McKenzie Jones Miles Powell	Directs and oversees research on legal and policy factors relevant to feasibility analysis and final deliverables. Retrieves and organizes information on legal and policy factors to meet objectives outlined in Section 1.2.1
<i>Financial</i>	Lead: Arista Laura Schairbaum Joshua Pine Noel Baker	Directs and oversees research on financial factors relevant to feasibility analysis and final deliverables. Retrieves and organizes information on financial factors to meet objectives outlined in Section 1.2.2
<i>Technical and Environmental</i>	Lead: Sushobhan Bhattacharai Lauren McDonald Vinny Zarlengo Liv Myers Farah Vianda	Directs and oversees research on technical and environmental factors relevant to feasibility analysis and final deliverables. Retrieves and organizes information on technical and environmental factors to meet objectives outlined in Section 1.2.3
<i>Social</i>	Lead: Eveline Gordon Liv Myers Farah Vianda Noel Baker Evie Sellers	Directs and oversees research on social factors relevant to feasibility analysis and final deliverables. Retrieves and organizes information on social factors to meet objectives outlined in Section 1.2.4

Phase 2 Analysis Teams		
Role	Name	Responsibilities
Scenario Comparative Analysis Lead	Laura Schairbaum	Compile research from Phase 1 and manages the creation of the scenario alignment table
Risk Analysis Lead	Noel Baker	Compile research from Phase 1 and manages the creation of the risk assessment matrix
Stakeholder Analysis Lead	Evie Sellers	Manage the identification and analysis of stakeholders and the creation of the stakeholder model
<i>All other members</i>	<i>One or more members from each Phase 1 research team will be assigned to an Analysis Team</i>	Contributes insights from domain specialty, supports organization of team's analysis and deliverables.

Phase 3 Working Groups		
Role	Name	Responsibilities
<i>Report Writing</i>	Liv Myers Vinny Zarlengo Arista Miles Powell	Responsible for the main authorship of the feasibility report using research from Phase 1 and analyses from Phase 2
<i>Report Editing</i>	Laura Schairbaum Bronwyn Meldrum Eveline Gordon	Manage the editing of the report based on consultant and advisor feedback, ensure formatting and writing are consistent
<i>Layout and Graphic Design</i>	Joshua Pine Farah Vianda	Prepare visual layout and graphics for the report, including textual explanations of tables and graphics.
<i>Presentation Materials</i>	Evie Sellers	Create slides for the client presentation
<i>Presenters</i>	Evie Sellers Bronwyn Meldrum Miles Powell Sushobhan Bhattarai	Present the findings of the feasibility report to the client at the conclusion of the project

Timeline

Phase	Deliverable	Date	Internal Deliverable	Client Deliverable
Phase 1	Draft Statement of Work & Organizational Plan	3 February 2026	X	
	Final Statement of Work & Organizational Plan	12 February 2026		X
	Project Progress Report	19 February 2026	X	
	Report Background Draft	24 February 2026	X	
Phase 2	Project Progress Report	5 March 2026	X	
	Analysis and First Draft Feasibility Report	26 March 2026	X	
Phase 3	Second Draft Feasibility Report	14 April 2026	X	
	Third Draft Feasibility Report	21 April 2026	X	
	Practice Final Presentation	23 April 2026	X	
	Final Presentation to Client & Delivery of Final Feasibility Report	28 April 2026		X

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City of Bloomington. (2021, March). *City of Bloomington Climate Action Plan*. <https://bloomington.in.gov/sustainability/climate-action-plan>

Duke Energy. (2024, November). *2024 Duke Energy Indiana Integrated Resource Plan (Volume I)*. <https://www.duke-energy.com/home/products/indiana-integrated-resource-plan>

Houck, J., & Rickerson, W. (2009). *The Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU) Model for Energy Service Delivery*. Bulletin of Science, Technology, and Society, 29.

Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission. (2023). *General Administrative Order of the Indiana Regulatory Commission*.

Rocky Mountain Institute. (n.d.). *RE+ City Cohort Action Guide. Stakeholder Mapping Matrix*. RMI. Retrieved <https://rmi.org/rental-toolkit/prepare/identify-stakeholders/>.

The City of Ann Arbor. (2021). *Ann Arbor's Sustainable Energy Utility. Technical Report*.

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM

TO: SPEA-V 600 Capstone Team; Professor John Rupp; Professor Nikos Zirogiannis
FROM: Bloomington Commission on Sustainability, Client
DATE: February 10, 2026
SUBJECT: Feedback on Statement of Work: Feasibility Analysis of an SEU

First, let me commend the team on a very professional, structured, and expansive Statement of Work (SOW). The roadmap you have laid out aligns well with the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability's (BCOS) high-level objectives and gives me confidence in a high quality final product.

To ensure the final report provides the highest level of actionable value for the City, I would like to suggest the following specific feedback and revisions to the scope of work. These adjustments focus on improving how actionable the final report is.

1. Hard-Coding Metrics for the "Five Pillars"

The SOW currently proposes a qualitative assessment (e.g., "Fair" or "Good") for the Five Pillars of Electric Utility Service. While this style of comparison is commonly seen in utility IRP proceedings, it is limiting for additional comparison and analysis. To hold the most weight with City Councilmembers, we recommend moving to **quantitative** indicators.

Examples:

- **Affordability:** Defined as a specific percentage deviation from Duke Energy's current and projected Schedule RS rates.
- **Resiliency:** The number of hours/days a proposed SEU microgrid can operate in "island mode" (independently of the Duke grid) using local storage and generation.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Measured in metric tons of \$CO₂\$ avoided relative to the 2024 Duke Energy IRP baseline.

2. Financial Modeling Considerations

- A. Moving Beyond LCOE in Financial Research
 - a. While Levelized Cost of Energy (LCOE) is a common metric, it is increasingly viewed as an incomplete way to measure the value of clean energy, and doesn't normally include the cost of capital for a municipality or the administrative overhead of running a new utility department.
 - b. Consider using a metric such as Value-Adjusted LCOE to more completely model the value (or lack thereof) of SEU assets (see research by CATF for details).
- B. Incorporating Projected Electricity Costs
 - a. The SOW currently mentions analyzing "existing electricity costs" in Bloomington. However, a feasibility study looking toward 2050 cannot rely on today's rates alone. Duke Energy's rates are expected to fluctuate significantly based on their 2024 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) and planned capital investments.

DRAFT

- b. Please expand Task 1.2.2 to include **Projected Electricity Costs**. The SEU's value proposition should be measured against where Duke's rates are *going*, not just where they are *now*. This will provide a much more realistic "avoided cost" calculation for the City.
- C. Affordability of Utility Operations
 - a. While a simple comparison of LCOE to "current electricity costs" will result in an analysis telling us if the energy is cheap to produce, a more useful analysis would examine if the utility is affordable to run.
 - b. A pro forma cash flow model may be outside the scope of work, but it would be amazing to include.

3. Reframing Stakeholder Benefits

The current SOW mention of identifying benefits to both the "City of Bloomington and Duke Energy." I would like to clarify the framing of this research.

- While it is important to understand the *impact* on Duke Energy, our primary objective of this study is the benefit to the **City of Bloomington and its residents**.
- The SEU is a potential alternative to the status quo; therefore, your analysis should focus on the **public interest**. Duke Energy is the incumbent utility whose business model may be challenged by this transition, rather than a co-beneficiary of the SEU's implementation. Please pivot the language in the SOW to focus on "Managing Regulatory and Utility Friction" rather than "Providing Benefits to Duke Energy."

I fully expect that the report as described in the Statement of Work would have been highly valuable and authoritative. Incorporating these shifts will only increase the potential utility, especially in making it more practical for and impactful to City Councilmembers and other stakeholders.

I look forward to seeing your work and engaging with you throughout the semester.

Best regards,

Alex Jorck
Commissioner, Bloomington Commission on Sustainability



1

Passed X-Y-Z

2 Sponsor:

3 Justin Vasel

4

RESOLUTION 2026-01

5 TO APPRAUD THE CITY'S RESPONSE TO THE 2025 LAPSE IN FEDERAL 6 FUNDING OF SNAP BENEFITS

7 WHEREAS, community resilience—the capacity to anticipate, withstand, and recover from
8 disruptions—is a critical component of sustainability; and

9 WHEREAS, the federal government shutdown in late 2025 led to a lapse in appropriations for
10 the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), threatening
11 food access for more than 16,000 individuals within the Hoosier Hills Food
12 Bank's six-county service area, including Monroe County; and

13 WHEREAS, on November 3, 2025, the City of Bloomington provided \$46,000 in emergency
14 funding to Hoosier Hills Food Bank to help sustain food access for residents
15 across south-central Indiana, enabling the food bank to purchase and distribute
16 approximately 330,000 pounds of food—the equivalent of 275,000
17 meals—through its mobile pantries and 84 partner agencies; and

18 WHEREAS, materials included in the Bloomington Common Council's November 5, 2025
19 meeting packet shared critical resources for finding food and contributing to
20 mutual aid efforts, and called upon residents, businesses, civic groups, and
21 neighborhood associations to join in a "Bloomington Food Resilience Effort" by
22 committing to regular food bank donations, organizing mutual aid networks,
23 volunteering consistently, amplifying local needs through social, professional, and
24 faith-based platforms, and staying informed and connected; and

25 WHEREAS, the meeting packet also included a letter to Mayor Thomson expressing support
26 for additional emergency appropriations to meet rising community needs,
27 including potential use of the Jack Hopkins Social Services Fund.

28 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BLOOMINGTON
29 COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY, THAT:

30 SECTION 1. The Commission applauds Mayor Kerry Thomson and the Administration
31 for acting swiftly to provide emergency funding to Hoosier Hills Food Bank in response to the
32 federal government shutdown.

33 SECTION 2. The Commission applauds the Common Council for directing affected
34 residents to critical food access resources and for encouraging those with means to support local
35 food assistance organizations through donations, volunteering, and mutual aid.

36 SECTION 3. The Commission recognizes that local action in times of federal disruption
37 exemplifies the community resilience essential to a sustainable Bloomington.

38 PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability upon this 10th day
39 of February, 2026.

40

41

42

JUSTIN VASEL, Chair
Bloomington Commission on Sustainability

43 *The views expressed here are solely those of the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability, as approved in their public meetings, and do not*
44 *necessarily reflect the views, policies, or positions of the City of Bloomington. Only the Office of the Mayor has the authority to issue policy*
45 *statements on behalf of the Executive Branch of the City of Bloomington.*



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability
From: Justin Vasel, Alex Jorck, Zach Ammerman
Date: February 5, 2026
Subject: Introduction of Resolution 2026-02 Concerning Automated License Plate Reader Surveillance

Purpose

We are introducing Resolution 2026-02 for the Commission's consideration at its upcoming meeting. This memo provides context for the resolution and summarizes its recommendations.

Why This Belongs on Our Agenda

BMC 2.12.100 establishes this Commission to advance sustainable policies across environmental, social, and economic dimensions, with the UN Sustainable Development Goals guiding our work. Resolution 2026-02 addresses the social dimension of sustainability—specifically, how mass surveillance technologies affect community trust, democratic participation, and the transparent governance that SDG 16 requires. Our statute also empowers us to advise on policies affecting community resilience, which depends on residents feeling safe to organize, attend public meetings, and engage in civic life.

What the Resolution Does

The resolution makes findings that mass surveillance implicates social sustainability and falls within our statutory mandate, and that the national record demonstrates policy safeguards have proven insufficient to prevent misuse.

It recommends that the Common Council conduct a public hearing on the Flock deployment and adopt a Community Control Over Police Surveillance (CCOPS) ordinance, modeled on the ACLU's April 2024 Model Bill, requiring Council approval before any city agency funds, acquires, or uses surveillance technology.

It recommends that the City Administration disable the cameras, decline to renew the contract, and disclose camera locations, data-sharing arrangements, and a full accounting of system usage.

A Statement of Values section acknowledges legitimate public safety concerns while clarifying that our concerns are structural—about participating in a

nationwide surveillance network—rather than directed at the Bloomington Police Department.

Why Now?

The national landscape has shifted significantly. At least 23 municipalities have canceled, paused, or rejected Flock contracts since February 2025. Federal legislators have requested an FTC investigation. Security researchers documented 51 vulnerabilities, and journalists demonstrated cameras were exposed to the open internet. Illinois found Flock violated state law by sharing data with federal immigration authorities. We believe the Commission should make its voice heard while there is still an opportunity to influence the City's approach.

Our Request

We ask that commissioners review the resolution before the meeting and come prepared to discuss. We welcome questions, suggested amendments, and debate.

Justin Vassel, BCOS Chair
Alex Jorck, BCOS Commissioner
Zach Ammerman, BCOS Commissioner

Encl: BCOS Resolution 2026-02 (Draft)



1

Passed X-Y-Z

2 Sponsors:

3 Justin Vasel

4 Alex Jorck

5 Zach Ammerman

6

RESOLUTION 2026-02

CONCERNING AUTOMATED LICENSE PLATE READER SURVEILLANCE TECHNOLOGY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY, COMMUNITY RESILIENCE, AND THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

11 WHEREAS, Bloomington Municipal Code Section 2.12.100 establishes the Bloomington
12 Commission on Sustainability to "promote and advance sustainable policies and
13 practices in Bloomington across environmental, social, and economic
14 dimensions"; and

15 WHEREAS, BMC 2.12.100 further provides that "The United Nations Sustainable
16 Development Goals (SDGs) provide a more detailed and comprehensive
17 framework for organizing and prioritizing sustainability goals and actions" and
18 that "The SDGs shall guide the commission's work"; and

19 WHEREAS, BMC 2.12.100(8)(B) empowers the Commission to "advise and make
20 recommendations to the Bloomington Common Council, city administration, and
21 city boards and commissions on policies and programs that infuse the work of city
22 government with an operating philosophy based on sustainability and community
23 resilience"; and

24 WHEREAS, the social pillar of sustainability encompasses equity, justice, democratic
25 participation, community cohesion, and the protection of human rights, all of
26 which are necessary conditions for achieving environmental and economic
27 sustainability goals; and

28 WHEREAS, United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 ("Peace, Justice and Strong
29 Institutions") calls upon signatories to "promote the rule of law at the national and
30 international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all" (Target 16.3), to
31 "develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels" (Target
32 16.6), to "ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative
33 decision-making at all levels" (Target 16.7), and to "ensure public access to
34 information and protect fundamental freedoms" (Target 16.10); and

35 WHEREAS, the City of Bloomington contracted with Flock Group Inc. ("Flock Safety") for
36 the deployment of roughly 40 automated license plate reader (ALPR) cameras and
37 associated subscription services; and

38 WHEREAS, Flock Safety operates a nationwide surveillance network comprising more than
39 80,000 cameras across more than 5,000 communities in 49 states, performing
40 more than 20 billion vehicle scans monthly, with more than 75 percent of its
41 approximately 5,000 law enforcement agency customers participating in
42 cross-jurisdictional data sharing that allows officers to search license plate records
43 captured anywhere in the network without a warrant; and

44 WHEREAS, Flock's technology captures not only license plate numbers but also detailed
45 vehicle characteristics including make, model, color, body type, bumper stickers,
46 damage patterns, and whether plates are missing or covered, enabling searches by
47 vehicle description even without plate information; and

48 WHEREAS, federal inquiries and security experts have identified significant cybersecurity
49 vulnerabilities within Flock Safety's infrastructure, including at least 35
50 compromised customer accounts, 51 separate security vulnerabilities¹, and
51 documented negligence in protecting sensitive data from unauthorized access or
52 manipulation²; and

53 WHEREAS, Senator Ron Wyden and Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi requested a Federal
54 Trade Commission investigation of Flock Safety in November 2025³, citing
55 compromised accounts and negligent cybersecurity practices; and

56 WHEREAS, the consolidation of sensitive movement data into a vulnerable,
57 privately-managed network creates a systemic risk of exploitation by
58 unauthorized parties, which can facilitate stalking, harassment, or other criminal
59 activities, thereby undermining the community trust and resilience essential to
60 sustainable governance; and

61 WHEREAS, investigations by the Electronic Frontier Foundation, 404 Media, Senator Ron
62 Wyden, and other researchers have documented that federal agencies including
63 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)⁴, the Secret Service, and the Naval
64 Criminal Investigative Service have accessed Flock's nationwide camera
65 network⁵, despite Flock's ongoing assurances to local customers that no such
66 federal access exists⁶; and

¹ Examining the Security Posture of an Anti-Crime Ecosystem v1.2-PR, GainSec (Nov 11, 2025) (Online at
72 https://github.com/GainSec/anti-crime-ecosystem-research/blob/main/whitepaper/GainSec_Whitepaper_AntiCrimeEcosystem.pdf
73 f)

² Flock Exposed its AI-Powered Cameras to the Internet. We Tracked Ourselves., 404 Media (Dec 22, 2025) (Online at
71 <https://www.404media.co/flock-exposed-its-ai-powered-cameras-to-the-internet-we-tracked-ourselves/>)

³ Letter from Sen. Wyden and Rep. Krishnamoorthi to FTC Chair (Nov 3, 2025) (Online at
70 https://www.wyden.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/wyden_letter_to_ftc_on_flockpdf.pdf)

⁴ ICE Taps Into Nationwide AI-Enabled Camera Network, Data Show, 404 Media (May 27, 2025) (Online at
69 <https://www.404media.co/ice-taps-into-nationwide-ai-enabled-camera-network-data-shows/>)

⁵ ICE, Secret Service, Navy All Had Access to Flock's Nationwide Network of Cameras, 404 Media (Oct 16, 2026) (Online at
68 <https://www.404media.co/ice-secret-service-navy-all-had-access-to-flocks-nationwide-network-of-cameras/>)

⁶ Does Flock Share Data with ICE or Federal Agencies?, Flock Safety Blog (Jan 6, 2026) (Online at
67 <https://www.flocksafety.com/blog/does-flock-share-data-with-ice-or-federal-agencies>)

74 WHEREAS, documented uses of Flock camera data nationally include: tracking of a woman
75 suspected of obtaining an abortion in Johnson County, Texas⁷; monitoring of
76 political protests and demonstrations in Tulsa, Oklahoma and elsewhere⁸; searches
77 using discriminatory and ethnically derogatory language⁹; and stalking of
78 individuals by law enforcement officers¹⁰, including a Georgia police chief
79 arrested in November 2025 for using Flock cameras to harass multiple victims¹¹;
80 and

81 WHEREAS, data from Oak Park, Illinois revealed that 84% of Flock-related traffic stops
82 involved Black drivers in a community where Black residents comprise only 19%
83 of the population¹², raising serious concerns about racially disparate impacts; and

84 WHEREAS, the State of Illinois found that Flock violated state law by allowing Customs and
85 Border Protection access to Illinois ALPR data¹³, prompting the City of Evanston,
86 Illinois to terminate its Flock contract in August 2025¹⁴, and

87 WHEREAS, at least 23 municipalities have canceled, paused, or rejected Flock contracts since
88 February 2025¹⁵, including Austin, Texas¹⁶; Cambridge, Massachusetts¹⁷; Eugene
89 and Springfield, Oregon¹⁸; and Sedona, Arizona¹⁹, citing concerns about federal
90 data sharing, civil liberties, transparency, and community trust; and

91 WHEREAS, sustainable governance requires that residents feel safe to organize, attend public
92 meetings, speak at hearings, and engage in civic life without fear of surveillance,
93 and the Commission's own work on food resilience, climate action, housing, and

⁷ *Flock Safety and Texas Sheriff Claimed License Plate Search Was for a Missing Person. It Was an Abortion Investigation.*,
113 Electronic Frontier Foundation (Oct 7, 2025) (Online at

<https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2025/10/flock-safety-and-texas-sheriff-claimed-license-plate-search-was-missing-person-it>

⁸ *How Cops Are Using Flock Safety's ALPR Network to Surveil Protesters and Activists*, Electronic Frontier Foundation (Nov 20,
111 2025) (Online at

<https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2025/11/how-cops-are-using-flock-safetys-alpr-network-surveil-protesters-and-activists>

⁹ *License Plate Surveillance Logs Reveal Racist Policing Against Romani People*, Electronic Frontier Foundation (November 3,
109 2025) (Online at

<https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2025/11/license-plate-surveillance-logs-reveal-racist-policing-against-romani-people>

¹⁰ *Sedgwick police chief tracked ex-girlfriend 164 times using license plate cams*, KAKE (Aug 18, 2024) (Online at

https://www.kake.com/home/sedgwick-police-chief-tracked-ex-girlfriend-164-times-using-license-plate-cams/article_21fdfdba-5

[dc5-11ef-95c4-8be8baa3f10c.html](https://www.kake.com/home/sedgwick-police-chief-tracked-ex-girlfriend-164-times-using-license-plate-cams/article_21fdfdba-5)

¹¹ *Georgia police chief charged with using license plate readers to stalk and harass people*, Associated Press (Nov 20, 2025)
106 (Online at <https://apnews.com/article/georgia-plate-readers-stalk-harass-chief-arrested-39adb6f89fc2074da61f2801fe3f180>)

¹² *84% of drivers stopped by Oak Park police in Flock traffic stops were Black*, Freedom to Thrive Oak Park (Apr 16, 2024)
104 (Online at

<https://www.freedomtothriveop.com/blog/84-of-the-drivers-stopped-by-oak-park-police-in-a-flock-traffic-stops-were-black>

¹³ *Giannoulias' Audit Finds License Plate Reader Company in Violation of State Law: Flock Safety Shared Illinois Data with
102 U.S. Customs and Border Protection*. Secretary Orders Flock to Shut off Data Access, Illinois Office of the Secretary of State
103 (Aug 25, 2025) (Online at <https://www.ilsos.gov/content/dam/news/2025/august/250825d1.pdf>)

¹⁴ *City Deactivates Flock Cameras & Terminates Contract*, City of Evanston, IL Press Release (Aug 27, 2025) (Online at:

<https://www.cityofevanston.org/Home/Components/News/News/6676/249>

¹⁵ *Procurement Power—When Cities Realized They Can Just Say No: 2025 in Review*, Electronic Frontier Foundation (Dec 28,
99 2025) (Online at

<https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2025/12/procurement-power-when-cities-realized-they-can-just-say-no-2025-review>

¹⁶ *Hays County Votes to Terminate Flock Safety Contracts in 3-2 Vote*, KXAN (Oct 14, 2025) (Online at

<https://www.kxan.com/news/hays-county-votes-to-terminate-flock-safety-contracts-in-3-2-vote/>

¹⁷ *Statement on the Flock Safety ALPR Contract Termination*, City of Cambridge (Dec 10, 2025) (Online at

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/news/2025/12/statementontheflocksafetyalprcontracttermination>

¹⁸ *Eugene and Springfield both announce end of Flock camera usage*, OPB (Dec 6, 2025) (Online at

<https://www.opb.org/article/2025/12/06/eugene-springfield-end-flock-cameras/>

¹⁹ *Sedona Rejects License Plate Readers, Removes Flock Safety Cameras*, AZ Central (Oct 5, 2025) (Online at

<https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/local/arizona/2025/10/05/sedona-removes-flock-safety-license-plate-readers/86268179007>

95)

115 other sustainability priorities depends upon robust community participation and
116 advocacy; and

117 WHEREAS, peer-reviewed research has found that awareness of public surveillance cameras is
118 negatively associated with perceived neighborhood cohesion, suggesting that
119 surveillance infrastructure may accelerate the erosion of community social
120 bonds,²⁰ and the International Association of Chiefs of Police has acknowledged
121 that ALPR systems produce “a chilling effect on social and political activities”,
122 and can cause people to “become more cautious in the exercise of their protected
123 rights of expression, protest, association, and political participation because they
124 consider themselves under constant surveillance”²¹; and

125 WHEREAS, the core principle of sustainability—meeting present needs without compromising
126 the ability of future generations to meet their own needs—applies not only to
127 environmental resources but also to democratic institutions, civil liberties, and the
128 relationship of trust between government and residents; and

129 WHEREAS, surveillance infrastructure, once deployed and normalized, is historically difficult
130 to dismantle, and decisions made today about the acceptable scope of government
131 monitoring will shape the civil liberties environment that future Bloomington
132 residents inherit; and

133 WHEREAS, community resilience—a concept explicitly referenced in the Commission's
134 statutory authority—depends upon trust between residents and government, social
135 cohesion, and the willingness of community members to engage with civic
136 institutions, all of which are undermined when residents reasonably fear that their
137 movements are being tracked and their data shared with unknown agencies for
138 unknown purposes; and

139 WHEREAS, environmental justice communities—those disproportionately burdened by
140 environmental harms—are frequently the same communities subjected to
141 disproportionate surveillance, and the Commission cannot credibly advance
142 environmental equity while remaining silent on surveillance practices that burden
143 the same populations; and

144 WHEREAS, the precautionary principle²², widely embraced in sustainability practice, counsels
145 that when an action raises threats of harm, precautionary measures should be
146 taken even if cause-and-effect relationships are not fully established, and the
147 documented harms associated with ALPR surveillance warrant precautionary
148 restraint; and

149 WHEREAS, transparency and public deliberation are foundational to accountable institutions
150 under SDG 16, and the procurement of surveillance technology through

²⁰ Takagi, et al (2020). *What Do Security Cameras Provide for Society? The Influence of Cameras in Public Spaces in Japan on Perceived Neighborhood Cohesion and Trust*. Journal of Experimental Criminology, 17, 477-464.

²¹ <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11292-020-09437-8>

²² *Privacy Impact Assessment Report for the Utilization of License Plate Readers*, International Association of Chiefs of Police (2009) (Online at https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/all/k-m/LPR_Privacy_Impact_Assessment.pdf)

²² *The Precautionary Principle*, International Institute for Sustainable Development (Oct 2022) (Online at <https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2020-10/still-one-earth-precautionary-principle.pdf>)

155 sole-source contracting without public notice or council deliberation does not
156 reflect the participatory decision-making that sustainable governance requires.

157 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BLOOMINGTON
158 COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY, THAT:

159 SECTION 1. Findings

160 The Commission finds that:

- 161 (a) Mass surveillance technologies, including automated license plate reader systems,
162 implicate the social dimension of sustainability and fall within the Commission's
163 statutory mandate to advise on policies affecting sustainability and community resilience.
- 164 (b) The deployment of ALPR surveillance systems raises substantial concerns under United
165 Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16, which the Commission is statutorily directed
166 to apply in guiding its work.
- 167 (c) The documented national record of ALPR misuse—including immigration enforcement,
168 reproductive healthcare surveillance, protest monitoring, racially discriminatory
169 application, and abuse by individual officers—demonstrates that policy safeguards and
170 audit mechanisms have proven insufficient to prevent harm.
- 171 (d) Participation in nationwide data-sharing networks creates risks that local policy controls
172 cannot adequately mitigate, as data collected in Bloomington may be accessed by
173 agencies and for purposes over which the City has no authority.
- 174 (e) The procurement of surveillance technology without public deliberation is inconsistent
175 with the transparent, participatory, and accountable governance that SDG 16 requires and
176 that sustainable policymaking depends upon.

177 SECTION 2. Recommendations to the Common Council

178 The Commission respectfully recommends that the Bloomington Common Council:

- 179 (a) Conduct a full public hearing on the Flock deployment, including testimony from civil
180 liberties organizations, affected community members, and independent experts.
- 181 (b) Introduce and adopt a Community Control Over Police Surveillance (CCOPS)²³
182 ordinance modeled on the ACLU's April 2024 Model Bill²⁴, requiring Council approval
183 before any city agency funds, acquires, or uses surveillance technology. The ordinance
184 should apply retroactively, requiring approval of existing surveillance technology within
185 180 days or cessation of use.

186 SECTION 3. Recommendations to the City Administration

187 The Commission respectfully recommends that the City Administration:

- 188 (a) Disable all currently deployed Flock cameras in Bloomington, and do not renew contracts
189 with Flock Safety.
- 190 (b) Publicly disclose the locations of all Flock cameras currently deployed in Bloomington.
- 191 (c) Disclose what data-sharing arrangements are currently in effect and which agencies have
192 access to data collected from Bloomington cameras.

²³ Community Control Over Police Surveillance (CCOPS), American Civil Liberties Union (Online at
195 <https://www.aclu.org/community-control-over-police-surveillance>)

²⁴ Model Bill: An Act to Promote Transparency and Protect Civil Rights and Civil Liberties With Respect to
193 Surveillance Technology, American Civil Liberties Union (April 2024) (Online at:
194 <https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/2023/08/ACLU-CCOPS-Model-Bill-April-2024.pdf>)

196 (d) Provide a full accounting of how ALPR data has been used since deployment, including
197 the number of searches conducted, the purposes documented, and any instances of data
198 sharing with federal agencies or out-of-state law enforcement.

199 (e) Ensure that any future consideration of surveillance technology procurement includes
200 notification to relevant city boards and commissions and opportunity for public comment
201 before contracts are executed.

202 SECTION 4. Statement of Values

203 The Commission affirms that:

204 (a) Safe communities are sustainable communities, and the Commission does not dismiss
205 legitimate public safety concerns.

206 (b) However, public safety and civil liberties are not inherently in conflict, and Bloomington
207 should pursue safety strategies that do not require mass surveillance of residents'
208 movements.

209 (c) The Commission's concerns are not with the Bloomington Police Department's actions or
210 intentions, but with the structural risks inherent in participating in nationwide
211 surveillance networks controlled by private corporations and accessible to federal
212 agencies.

213 (d) Intergenerational responsibility requires that we consider not only the immediate utility of
214 technologies but also the long-term implications for the kind of community we are
215 building and the civil liberties infrastructure we leave to future residents.

216 SECTION 5. Transmittal

217 The Chair is directed to transmit copies of this Resolution to the Mayor, all members of the
218 Common Council, the City Clerk, the Corporation Counsel, the Chief of Police, the Board of
219 Public Safety, and the Bloomington/Monroe County Human Rights Commission.

220 PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability upon this ____ day
221 of _____, 2026.

222

223 JUSTIN VASEL, Chair
224 Bloomington Commission on Sustainability

225 *The views expressed here are solely those of the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability, as approved in their public meetings, and do not*
226 *necessarily reflect the views, policies, or positions of the City of Bloomington. Only the Office of the Mayor has the authority to issue policy*
227 *statements on behalf of the Executive Branch of the City of Bloomington.*