

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

MEETING PACKET

McCloskey Conference Room — City Hall
Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 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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CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

NOTICE AND AGENDA

Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 6:00 p.m.
McCloskey Conference Room — City Hall

or virtually at

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

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Note: Agenda item times are approximate and subject to change

- | | | |
|------------|---|----------------------|
| 1. | Call to Order | 6:00 pm |
| 2. | Roll Call | |
| 3. | Approval of Agenda | |
| 4. | Approval of Minutes: December 10, 2024; February 11, 2025 | |
| 5. | Public Comment <i>up to 3 minutes per person</i> | 6:05 pm (10m) |
| 6. | Reports from Commissioners | 6:15 pm (25m) |
| | A. Chair (Justin Vasel) | 6:15 pm (10m) |
| | B. Waste Management Working Group (Matt Austin) | 6:25 pm (5m) |
| | C. Ad-Hoc Committee: Sustainability Assessment Report (Tara Dunderdale) | 6:30 pm (5m) |
| | D. Council Ex-Officio (Dave Rollo) | 6:35 pm (5m) |
| 7. | Discussion of Topics Not the Subject of Resolutions | 6:40 pm (20m) |
| | A. Commission Priorities for 2025 | 6:40 pm (20m) |
| 8. | Resolutions for Second Reading and Discussion | N/A |
| 9. | Resolutions for First Reading and Discussion | N/A |
| 10. | Report from Staff Liaison (Shawn Miya) | 7:00 pm (10m) |
| 11. | Member Announcements | 7:10 pm (5m) |
| | A. Jami Scholl | 7:10 pm (5m) |
| 12. | New Business | 7:15 pm (15m) |
| | A. Officer Elections: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer | 7:15 pm (15m) |
| 13. | Adjournment | 7:30 pm |

Next Regular Meeting: April 8, 2025 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.



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

Minutes

Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

McCloskey Conference Room — City Hall

1. **Call to Order:** Justin Vasel called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

He noted that there is a busy agenda and hard stop at 7:30, so routine business would be conducted without objection whenever possible. Justin also asked Commissioners to be cognizant of staying on topic during discussions, and limiting comments and questions to those that will be useful for decision-making.

2. **Roll Call**

Members present: Justin Vasel, Zero Rose, Tara Dunderdale, Dave Rollo, Jamie Scholl, Evan Nix (virtual), Quentin Gilly, Hunter Hawley, Matt Austin

Members absent: David Maener, Andrew Guenther, Jon Eldon

City staff present: Shawn Miya, Jolie Perry

3. **Approval of Agenda**

ACTION: Justin suggested moving agenda items 7A and 7B concerning the Sustainable Neighborhoods Grant Terracycle 1.0 Report and Proposal for Terracycle 2.0 after public comment and before reports from commissioners, which was approved without objection.

4. **Approval of Minutes: September 10, 2024**

ACTION: The minutes were approved without objection.

5. **Public Comment**

None.

6. **Discussion of Topics Not the Subject of Resolutions**

- a. **Sustainable Neighborhoods Grant Report: Terracycle 1.0**

Ellee Spier reported on the Terracycle 1.0 pilot project, which was performed by GardenQuest. Spier thanked the Commission for providing the opportunity for residents to take action and test potential solutions to sustainability issues in Bloomington neighborhoods.

Key findings from Terracycle 1.0: Laminated paper products were the number one percentage of household trash diverted from landfills. Food wrappers were second, with solutions found through Kroger's free program and Terracycle. Kitchen, bathroom, and office waste were the next most popular.

Participants appreciated the accessibility of a neighborhood drop-off. Initially some households found the sorting system to be overwhelming, but that improved over time. Even when there were still some sorting issues, Terracycle has a forgiving system for mis-sorted items. Households did not have to be perfect to contribute meaningfully.

Participants learned a lot about what the City of Bloomington offers, and doesn't offer, when it comes to recycling.

Additional survey data collected: 7/10 said their households would switch to a smaller trash can if available. 6/10 said their household would switch to bi-weekly trash pickup if there was a cost reduction for it. 10/10 would like to continue if Terracycle 2.0 is funded. 9/10 said they would like to participate in a cost-sharing model if the cost meets their family's budget.

A discussion followed, with questions about where the waste is shipped (Illinois). There was also a discussion of a full carbon accounting including the fuel needed to ship the waste.

b. Sustainable Neighborhoods Grant Proposal: Terracycle 2.0

Ellee Spier presented the Terracycle 2.0 proposal, a hybrid approach testing a time-savings versus cost-savings model. The proposal has been approved by ESD. This proposal focuses on the use of most popular boxes from Terracycle 1.0: kitchen and snack boxes, as well as an all-in-one box.

Weight and volume data will continue to be collected.

MOTION: Matt Austin motioned and Zero Rose seconded to approve the Terracycle 2.0 grant proposal.

DISCUSSION: Jami Scholl expressed appreciation for looking at this through the lens of household size. Tara Dunderdale asked about additional programs, and whether data is collected about those. Any waste that can go into a free box somewhere does; only items that have no other option go into the Terracycle boxes. Hunter Hawley asked about how this could scale. Best practices could be shared with other neighborhoods that are interested in trying this.

ACTION: The motion to approve the grant received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 1. The motion passed.

7. Reports from Commissioners

a. Chair Report (Justin Vassel)

General Announcements: This is the last meeting of the year. No upcoming work sessions due to the holidays, but we will plan to pick them up again in the new year. Elections are coming up in March.

The org chart shows two vacant seats and four Commissioners with expiring terms as of January 31, 2025.

Shawn clarified that Indiana statute sets a limit of 90 days when continuing to serve in an expired seat before a reappointment decision is made by the appointing authority.

BCOS Document Repository: Everyone should now have read-only access to a Google Drive link. Shortly before the meeting, Commissioners received an email from City Attorney Larry Allen laying out the City's position that all document retention should happen through OnBoard. There was a lot to consider in that email and we should

address it at the next meeting once Commissioners have a chance to read and digest it.

Justin thanked everyone for a successful 2024 and looked forward to a productive 2025.

b. **Waste Management Working Group** (Matt Austin)

On December 19 from 3–4pm at the County courthouse, the board of directors for the Waste Reduction District of Monroe County is meeting to look at the RFP for all their recycling centers as to who they're going to choose. The choices are Rumpke and Republic.

It was noted that Rumpke sequesters methane out of their facility and recycles significantly more things, while Republic does not.

c. **Ad-Hoc Committee: Sustainability Assessment Report** (Tara Dunderdale)

Tara Dunderdale reported that the Committee is writing a first pass at the report, which will focus on energy and the built environment and looking at City code, City actions towards the goals in the Climate Action Plan, and the 2025 budget (as well as historic budgets).

Tara will try to organize a work session in the future to allow the team to work together as a group.

d. **Council Ex-Officio** (Dave Rollo)

Councilmember Rollo reported that there will be a vote on December 11 on the establishment of the Advisory Transportation Commission. Councilmembers Rollo and Ruff are offering an amendment that would reestablish Council oversight to have the final say in the traffic calming and greenways program implementation.

8. Discussion of Topics Not the Subject of Resolutions

a. **WG Grant Proposal: CanopyBloomington** (Andrew Guenther)

Justin noted that the proposal is finalized and tentatively approved by ESD, and is simply waiting on a final letter of support from one of the participants.

b. **WG Grant Proposal: Cob Bench (Evan Nix)**

Evan Nix presented the project, which aims to create a community hub with cob benches, an arbor, bike racks, native gardens, vegetable gardens, and fruit and berry plants. The project is in partnership with Redbud Books, located on Kirkwood Avenue. The goal is to provide a space for people to gather and relax using sustainable materials.

Mia from Redbud Books garnered support for the project, with over 20 signatures from neighbors and over 30 sign-ups from people willing to volunteer to build a bench.

The total project cost is estimated at \$1,200.90, with a request of \$1,000 from BCOS. Redbud Books is providing an in-kind donation of \$200, and Blue Bee Ecological Endeavors will donate plants, soil, and seeds.

The benches will be built from cob, using clay sourced from the site, reclaimed limestone

for the foundation, and sand from Home Depot. Daniel Weddle, Chief Design Officer of Terran Robotics, will certify the arbor's construction.

The project aligns with Bloomington's sustainability goals, including transportation and land use, water conservation, local food and agriculture, waste reduction, and ecosystem health.

ESD has approved this proposal.

MOTION: Jami Scholl moved, and Hunter Hawley seconded to approve \$1,000 in working group grant funds to the cob bench project.

DISCUSSION: Questions arose regarding permits, structural considerations, and the potential impact on the foundation of the building. It was clarified that the property owner is aware of the plans. There were further questions about whether a structural engineer had assessed the project, given accessibility and floor warping issues at Redbud Books. Additional concerns included whether underground utility lines were present, who assumes liability for the project, what would happen if the site proved to be unsuitable, and project timeline. The project is expected to be completed in the spring, with a community build planned around Redbud's anniversary in March.

ACTION: The motion to approve the grant received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 1. The motion passed.

9. Resolutions for Second Reading and Discussion: None

10. Resolutions for First Reading and Discussion

a. **Resolution 2024-01: Support for Proposed Changes to BMC § 2.12.100**

The Commission reviewed proposed changes to Bloomington Municipal Code (BMC) § 2.12.100 regarding BCOS definition, powers, and duties. The Commission wanted to incorporate the concept of resiliency into the definition of sustainability in that language and specify that BCOS is to advise and make recommendations to the City administration more broadly, and not just to the mayor specifically.

MOTION: Hunter Hawley moved, and Tara Dunderdale seconded to adopt Resolution 2024-01.

SECONDARY MOTION: Jami Scholl moved, and Zero Rose seconded to amend Section 1 of Resolution 2024-01 in the following way:

*"...that no single commission could address in isolation. **Additionally, BCOS is the only board or commission that is tasked with integrating the local food system into its oversight and recommendations.** BCOS's ability to integrate..."*

DISCUSSION: Jami Scholl stated that the reason for the amendment is that the Bloomington Food Policy Council no longer functions in that capacity, which leaves BCOS as the sole Commission who has food security or sovereignty as part of its purview. She emphasized that this would distinguish BCOS apart from the Environmental Commission in future discussions of their differences.

Tara Dunderdale pointed out that there are other areas where BCOS has unique

purview, and that referencing this topic in the resolution might be getting too far in the weeds on one particular issue. Justin Vasel pointed out that the purpose of the section was to formally respond to the findings of the Novak report which suggested merging BCOS and the Environmental Commission; it was not meant to enumerate all areas where BCOS might have a singular focus.

ACTION: The motion to amend Section 1 of Resolution 2024-01 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 4 , Nays: 2 , Abstain: 3. The motion failed.

ACTION: The motion to adopt Resolution 2014-01 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 9, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. The motion passed.

11. Report from Staff Liaison (Shawn Miya)

- a. Shawn encouraged everyone to attend the IU ERI Indiana Sustainability and Resilience Conference on Fri Feb 28 at the Convention Center.
- b. ESD has been working hard to update the sustainability website, which will be updated in January to reflect 2024 updates.

12. Adjournment:

ACTION: The meeting was adjourned without objection at 7:30pm.

NEXT MEETING:
JANUARY 14, 2025 6PM



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

Minutes

Tuesday, February 11, 2025, 6:00 p.m.

McCloskey Conference Room — City Hall

1. **Call to Order:** Justin Vassel called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.
2. **Roll Call**
Members present: Justin Vassel, Zero Rose (virtual), Tara Dunderdale (virtual), Dave Rollo, Jamie Scholl, Evan Nix, Quentin Gilly, Matt Austin, Jon Eldon, Chenghuai Xu (virtual)
Members absent: Hunter Hawley
City staff present: Shawn Miya
3. **Approval of Agenda**
ACTION: Matt Austin moved, and Dave Rollo seconded to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved by voice vote.
4. **Approval of Minutes: September 10, 2024**
The minutes for September 10, 2024 were not yet ready for approval.
5. **Public Comment**
None.
6. **Report from Commissioners**
 - a. **Chair Report** (Justin Vassel)
Welcomes and Farewells: Chenghuai Xu (Mayoral Appointment) was welcomed. Farewells and thanks were extended to outgoing commissioners David Maenner (Mayoral Appointment) and Andrew Guenther (Monroe County Commissioners), with specific acknowledgement of their contributions and service.

General Updates: BMC Title 2 Code Changes & Resolution 2024-01: Changes incorporating the concept of resiliency into the definition of sustainability and coordinating with the city administration generally (instead of specifically the mayor) were successfully included in the version of Title 2 changes that went before the City Council for the first reading the previous week and are expected for a second reading in the following weeks. Justin appreciated the collaborative process involved in developing the final version.

BCOS Officer Elections Next Month: Elections for chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and treasurer will occur at the March meeting. Justin outlined the current informal process of nominations on the spot but suggested potentially collecting nominations beforehand via a Google form with brief statements of intent. He welcomed suggestions on the election process. He clarified the roles of each officer, noting the treasurer position currently has minimal specific responsibilities but could become more active with external funding. Justin indicated he does not plan to run for chairperson again to encourage fresh leadership.

2024 Annual Report: Drafting of the 2024 annual report, summarizing past year activities and looking ahead, has begun. This is separate from the sustainability assessment report. Language in the new Title 2 code changes also specifies an annual report, and standardization efforts are underway at the council and city clerk levels. Justin hopes to present a draft at the next meeting and encouraged discussion on future plans to incorporate.

BCOS 20-year Anniversary: 2025 marks the 20th anniversary of the commission's first meeting in October 2005, presenting an opportunity for reflection and future planning.

b. **Waste Management Working Group** (Matt Austin)

The Waste Reduction District approved the RFP with Rumpke, with an anticipated switchover in June or July. This will allow residents to take all types of cartons to the Waste Reduction District for recycling, as Republic (the current service provider for Bloomington residents) does not accept them in their curbside program. Matt intends to continue highlighting this to promote increased recycling and reduce landfill waste.

Matt expressed interest in the Commission making a statement of support for the city signing a new RFP with Rumpke, arguing Rumpke offers more comprehensive services than Republic, particularly regarding methane sequestration (which Republic currently does not do) and broader recycling capabilities (including glass). He noted the lack of transparency in the city's RFP process with Republic, which occurs every one to two years, and that the City Council does not have direct decision-making power on this. Justin Vasel suggested drafting a resolution for a future meeting if there is sufficient interest and a presentation outlining the case.

The working group is organizing a tour of Callswell Inc. in Shelbyville (Shelby County) within the first two weeks of March to explore food waste solutions on a larger scale (they service Kroger and other large corporations). Matt is seeking additional stakeholders like IU, IU Health, and Cook to participate to potentially coordinate hauling and reduce costs. A survey regarding availability will be sent out.

Quentin Gilly mentioned IU is piloting a food dehydrator in a dining hall to reduce the weight of food waste by removing water, making transportation easier, and is looking for potential partnerships for disposal. Matt expressed interest in discussing potential collaborations.

c. **Ad-Hoc Committee: Sustainability Assessment Report** (Tara Dunderdale)

Tara Dunderdale presented a rough outline for the Sustainability Assessment Report, focusing on Climate Action Plan goals for Energy and the Built Environment. She solicited feedback and recommendations for additional data or factors hindering progress towards CAP goals.

Tara also raised concerns about the process of creating the report in light of the City Attorney's email regarding document access and the Open Door Law, which restricts collaborative work on documents outside of publicly noticed meetings. The initial plan involved a subcommittee (herself, Evan Nix, and the now-departed Andrew Guenther) conducting working sessions, which has been hampered by illness and the inability to co-work on a document. She sought guidance on the best way forward to produce a report for the next meeting, including whether to replace Andrew on the subcommittee or

if she should draft something for Evan Nix to review before presenting to the full commission.

Jami Scholl thanked Tara for her efforts and suggested exploring workflows given the constraints and the significant scope of the assessment with limited meeting time and commission capacity due to vacancies.

Jon Eldon questioned if the content focuses on the city's actions rather than the commission's activities, which Tara confirmed. The report aims to assess the city's progress towards sustainability goals and recommend policy changes, budget priorities, etc..

Staff Liaison Shawn Miya noted that while the Climate Action Dashboard contains much information on completed metrics, it does not show ongoing projects and offered to meet with Tara to provide updates and fill in gaps.

Zero Rose referenced a recent amendment to the Open Door Law regarding subcommittee structures, as informed by Ash Kulak (liaison for the CAPS commission), which might offer more flexibility for document work. He suggested discussing this with Mr. Kulak.

Shawn Miya clarified that subcommittees of commissions serving like City Council members must adhere to Open Door Law, requiring noticed meetings and inclusion of working documents in the notice.

Justin Vasel and Staff Liaison Shawn Miya discussed the City Attorney's guidance, emphasizing that members meeting to work on documents requires public notice and document inclusion in the packet.

Due to the tight timeline, the suggestion of one person (Tara Dunderdale) drafting an initial version to bring to the March meeting for review was considered a viable short-term solution. Alternatively, dividing the report into sections with individual commissioners working on separate documents that are then compiled by staff for meeting notice was also proposed. Asynchronous collaboration with only one person editing a document at a time was discussed but deemed potentially problematic based on the City Attorney's interpretation.

Tara Dunderdale agreed to proceed with drafting and reporting back next month, coordinating with Evan Nix if possible within the constraints. She inquired about the best way for other commissioners to provide recommendations for additional data – likely at the next meeting or potentially via individual emails to her (not group emails). A working session in two weeks was proposed for further input.

Jami Scholl inquired about the timeline of the last sustainability assessment report to understand the typical process, and Tara believed the most recent was from 2017, highlighting the challenges of asynchronous work.

d. **Council Ex-Officio** (Dave Rollo)

Council took action to reform transportation advisory bodies, merging the Bike and Ped Safety Commission, Traffic Commission, and Parking Commission into a single Transportation Commission, addressing infrastructure, traffic calming, bike lanes, stop

signs, and parking meter rates. Councilmember Rollo voted against this, citing ambiguity in the commission's role and the administration's interpretation of its sole power in implementation. He clarified that the new Transportation Commission is advisory only.

Councilmember Rollo announced a Sustainability and Resilience Conference hosted by the Environmental Resilience Institute (ERI) at IU on February 28th (Friday), from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., covering topics such as clean energy funding, climate action planning, resilient food systems, and agrovoltatics. There is a registration fee of \$75 (\$25 for students).

Councilmember Rollo inquired about the possibility of commissioners being reimbursed for attending and noted he had registered. Quentin Gilly suggested exploring funding through IU Sustainability given the IU association, but with the conference being so close and legal considerations, a quick answer may not be possible. Councilmember Rollo offered to investigate potential funding options.

Councilmember Rollo noted that the city's Sustainability Action Plan, adopted in 2018 as a 5-year plan, is now overdue for revision and suggested BCOS would be well-positioned to explore topics for the updated plan

7. Discussion of Topics Not the Subject of Resolutions

a. Email from City Attorney Larry Allen re: BCOS Document Access

Justin Vasel introduced the topic, noting the prior discussion during the Sustainability Assessment Report. The issue arose from the loss of access to the shared City Google Drive due to city policies and Open Door Law concerns regarding collaborative document work in a shared space.

A temporary workaround involved a read-only Google Drive folder created by Justin containing past documents. Justin acknowledged City Attorney Allen's point that this is not the official city repository. The goal is to provide commissioners, especially new ones, with access to the commission's institutional history beyond what is currently available on OnBoard. Justin noted that many older documents, including meeting minutes and presentations, and reference documents like a spreadsheet tracking other commissions, are not yet on OnBoard. While specific documents can be requested, knowing what exists is a challenge.

Commissioner Scholl suggested exploring options for a public-facing section on the city's website for BCOS, potentially with a password-protected portal for commissioners, similar to WordPress capabilities. She felt this could increase public awareness of BCOS activities. Staff Liaison Miya stated that the website is maintained by ESD and offered to add more description. Documents created by BCOS must be uploaded to OnBoard, but links to select documents could potentially be added to the front page.

Evan Nix reiterated the difficulty of knowing what documents to request without prior knowledge of their existence in the city's Google Drive. Staff Liaison Miya clarified that she had reviewed the Google Drive content and an intern had uploaded all relevant documents to OnBoard, excluding extraneous notes. She encouraged commissioners to email her any documents they find missing for upload.

b. Commission Priorities for 2025

Justin Vassel suggested that a deep dive discussion on commission priorities for 2025 would require more time and could be a focus of an upcoming work session. He referenced the Environmental Commission's practice of a brainstorming session at the beginning of the year to identify potential focus areas and match them with enthusiastic members. He proposed a similar approach or other ideas for today's general discussion.

Justin suggested a greater emphasis on policy advising through resolutions based on the commission's opinion and involvement in broader city developments, such as housing. He opened the floor for ideas on approaching the 2025 priorities.

Zero Rose suggested forming another work session before the next meeting agenda. Quentin Gilly emphasized the need for information to guide priority setting, such as city sustainability goals and upcoming residential development or infrastructure projects. Coordination with the CAPS commission's reviving housing committee was also mentioned.

Evan Nix expressed excitement for a unified commission goal for the year, focusing on policy advisement, and supported a brainstorming session with task assignment based on impact.

Jami Scholl echoed support for the brainstorming session using Post-it notes and categorizing ideas. Quentin Gilly suggested using an impact versus effort matrix to prioritize achievable high-impact initiatives, aligning with the commission's guiding documents.

Shawn Miya advised considering commissioners' term limits and ensuring at least three committed members for any project to ensure continuity.

Jami Scholl also referenced the 2022 Climate and Sustainability Progress Report, noting areas with many "not started" goals, particularly in food and agriculture, as potential priorities. She inquired about the timeline for filling mayoral appointments.

Tara Dunderdale emphasized the importance of aggressively planning for the utilization of grant funds for the year and focusing on priorities requiring funding early to encumber those funds, learning from the previous year. She inquired about the status of the Canopy Bloomington project sponsorship, which Staff Liaison Miya clarified is a contract between ESD and Canopy Bloomington, requiring a report back to BCOS but not necessarily a replacement sponsoring commissioner.

Shawn Miya stressed the December 1st deadline for grant proposals to allow sufficient review time.

Jon Eldon agreed on prioritizing the use of available resources and aiming for an earlier deadline for grant proposals (e.g., August 1st). He suggested public education around sustainable neighborhoods as a potential grant-funded priority.

A work session was tentatively scheduled for two weeks from the meeting date.

8. Resolutions for Second Reading and Discussion: None

9. Resolutions for First Reading and Discussion: None

10. Report from Staff Liaison (Shawn Miya)

Staff Liaison Miya highlighted the Sustainable Bloomington newsletter created by Jolie Perry and available on the dashboard and website.

An upcoming presentation to City Council on the greenhouse gas inventory was mentioned.

The Spring into Sustainability Challenge was promoted, encouraging organizations to register on the Zero in Bloomington platform and log climate actions by their members between March 1st and March 31st to win cash prizes. Winners will be announced at the Earth Day celebration on April 19th at Switchyard Park from noon to 4:00 p.m.

BCOS was encouraged to have a table at the event to promote sustainable neighborhoods, working group funding, and partnerships. Busman's Holiday will perform, and food trucks and various organizations, including potentially the Bloomington Environmental Commission with their Eco Heroes art contest, will be present.

Project 46, the regional climate alliance, is a sponsor of the IU ERI conference. Commissioners were asked to help spread the word about available funding programs: The Solar Energy Efficiency and Lighting Program is relaunching with an RFP for 2025, providing \$25,000 for nonprofits and small businesses for solar installations and \$20,000 for battery energy storage systems for nonprofits to increase climate resilience.

The Bloomington Green Home Improvement Program is also being revamped to substantially increase rebates for homeowners for solar installations, battery systems, electric panel upgrades, EV chargers, weatherization, windows and doors, and heat pump HVAC systems. Rebates will be 25% up to \$5,000 for the general population and 40% up to \$10,000 for low-income residents for certain projects. Clarification was provided that the rebates apply to specific components of projects.

Resources for electric coach training on heat pump HVAC systems are available.

A new Instagram account for Sustainable Bloomington is active.

An application for a Coalition for Green Capital Grant is due March 5th, requesting BCOS to be a community partner. The grant would fund a marketing firm, an energy navigator program (with potential volunteer roles for BCOS members), and technical assistance for developers, businesses, and nonprofits in renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. Staff Liaison Miya asked for BCOS's willingness to be a partner to help promote the project. Sending out a website link for more information was planned. A vote on formal partnership could occur at the work session if a quorum is present.

Tara Dunderdale suggested that she could help staff a BCOS Earth Day table. Zero Rose also confirmed that Blue Bee would have a table at the event.

MOTION: Justin Vasel moved, and [INAUDIBLE] seconded, to extend the meeting by 5 minutes. The motion passed by voice vote.

11. Member Announcements

Jami Scholl raised concerns about national trends, specifically President Trump's mention of

Indiana as a potential location for massive data centers, referencing a City Council discussion in April 2024 regarding a data center and the LEAP pipeline project affecting farmland in northern Indiana due to high water demands.

She highlighted the significant water consumption of hyperscale data centers (550,000 gallons per day) and wholesale retail facilities (18,000 gallons per day). Given Bloomington's efforts to attract tech businesses, including Vivian AI's move to The Forge, she expressed concern about the potential environmental impact on Lake Monroe, the state's largest lake, as a desirable water resource for these facilities.

Jami also noted potential impacts on local food systems and referenced the Sustainable Food Coordinator position mentioned in the 2022 Climate and Sustainability Progress Report. She emphasized the need to monitor these developments and consider preparing the community for potential impacts.

Zero Rose also raised concerns about potential cuts or delays in federal funding for green initiatives and the implications of data centers potentially relying on polluting energy sources like coal or nuclear power.

12. Adjournment:

ACTION: The meeting was adjourned without objection at 7:40pm.

NEXT MEETING:
MARCH 11, 2025 6PM



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY

Chair Report

March 11, 2025

Justin Vasel

Upcoming BCOS Calendar (Tentative)

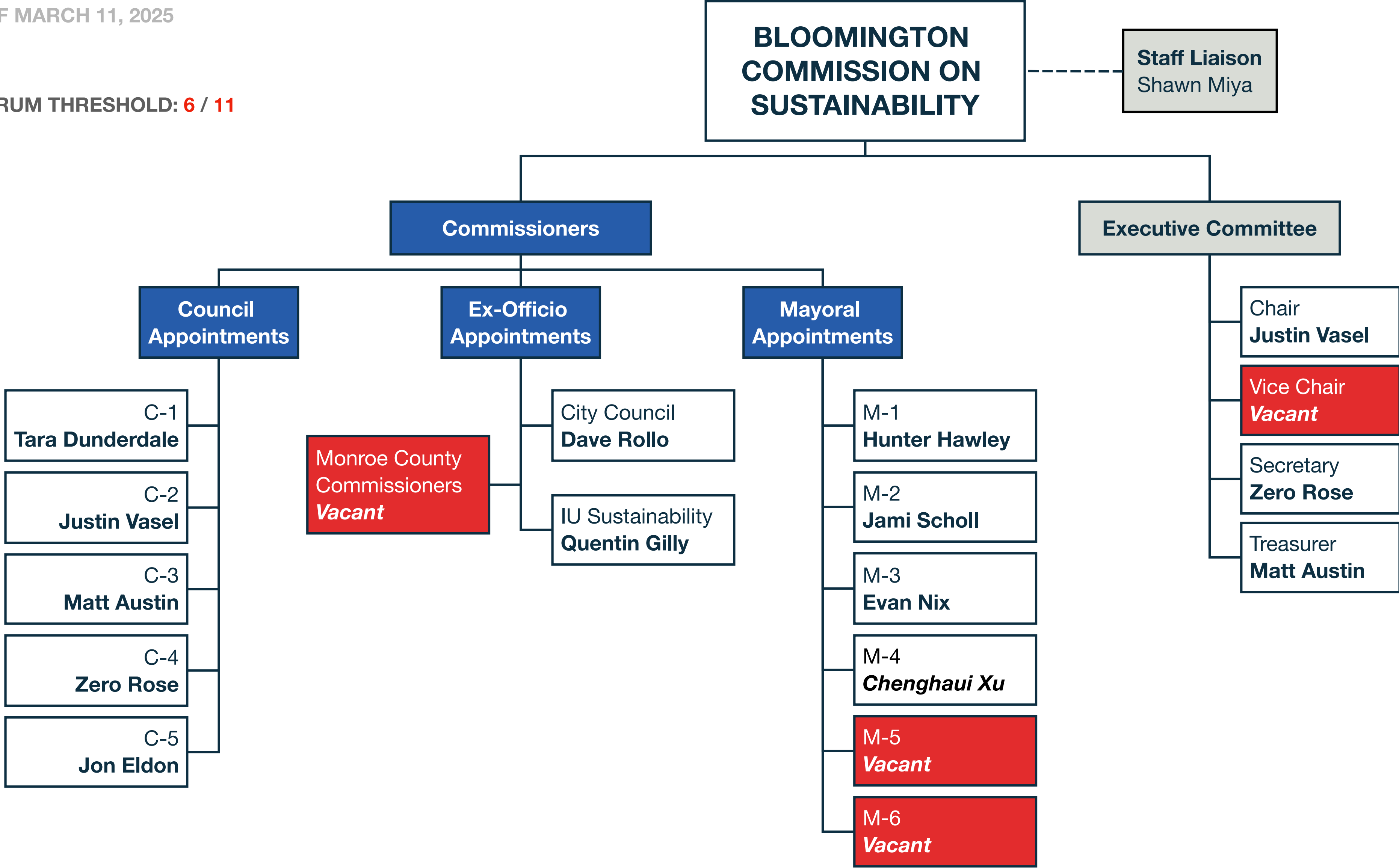
| | | Date | Event | | | Date | Event |
|-------|--|----------------|--|--|--|--------------------|----------------------|
| Today | | March 11, 2025 | Regular BCOS Meeting OFFICER ELECTIONS | | | July 8, 2025 | Regular BCOS Meeting |
| | | March 25, 2025 | BCOS Work Session | | | July 22, 2025 | BCOS Work Session |
| | | April 8, 2025 | Regular BCOS Meeting | | | August 12, 2025 | Regular BCOS Meeting |
| | | April 22, 2025 | BCOS Work Session | | | August 26, 2025 | BCOS Work Session |
| | | May 13, 2025 | Regular BCOS Meeting | | | September 9, 2025 | Regular BCOS Meeting |
| | | May 27, 2025 | BCOS Work Session | | | September 23, 2025 | BCOS Work Session |
| | | June 10, 2025 | Regular BCOS Meeting | | | October 14, 2025 | Regular BCOS Meeting |
| | | June 24, 2025 | BCOS Work Session | | | | |

BCOS Organization Chart

CURRENT AS OF MARCH 11, 2025

CURRENT QUORUM THRESHOLD: 6 / 11

RED = VACANT



Chair Priorities for 2024 – 2025

GREEN = PROGRESSED

YELLOW = STARTED

GRAY = NEEDS WORK

People

Commissioner
recruitment & onboarding

Commissioner
engagement

Outreach

Outcomes

Priorities & goals

Initiative support

Sustainability
assessments & reports

Resolutions &
recommendations

Governance

Rework Bylaws

Rethink working groups

Consider optional “working
meetings” for
brainstorming, open
discussion, etc.

Upcoming Events

| Time | Location | Event |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| March 12 6:30pm | City Hall Council Chambers | City Council Meeting Mayor & City Offices Greenhouse Gas Report Second Readings: Resolutions 2025-05 & 2025-06 to kick off UDO amendment process with sustainability improvements. |
| April 3 6pm | Waldron Arts Center 122 S Walnut St. | State of the City Address |
| April 22 | Switchyard Park | Earth Day 2025 BCOS presence? |

General Updates

- Two Commissioner Reappointments

Tara Dunderdale (C-1); Justin Vasel (C-2)

- Recent Interactions with City Council

February 19 — Affirmed BCOS support of BMC 2.12.100 Code Changes; *Ordinance 2025-05* was adopted.

March 5 — Emphasized importance of Council oversight on climate and resilience issues (re: *Resolution 2025-04*)

- 2024 Annual Report

Draft is mostly complete; awaiting finalization of 2025 priorities

- Bylaws Reform

Justin will take the lead

Step 1: Identify outdated/confusing aspects of current language and any gaps; discuss with Commission.

Step 2: Draft new language; bring to Commission to discuss and collect input.

Step 3: Incorporate input into new language; bring to Commission for a vote.

- Work Session Took Place on Feb 25, 2025

Brainstormed ideas for Commission work in 2025

Results from Work Session Brainstorm

BCOS Brainstorm 2025

| FOCUS AREA / IDEA | TYPE | | |
|--|--------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Food Security | | Energy | |
| Address lack of City policy | Policy | Benchmark building energy use | Project |
| Waste Diversion | | Partnerships | |
| “Art Remains” | Project / Events | Item swaps, etc. | Education / Events |
| Bokashi composting education | Education | Connect organizations to resources | Education / Facilitation |
| Repair / Fix-it Clinic <i>Earth Day 2026? Beyond?</i> | Education / Events | Collaborate with other sustainability groups to amplify voices and resources | Collaboration |
| Zoning/Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) | | Workshops and Events | |
| Address invasive species vs native species requirements | Policy | Include programming for kids and child care for parent attendance | Education / Events / Facilitation |
| Sustainability enforcement mechanisms | Policy | “Spaces” or TED-style Talks | Education / Events |
| Garden/food production space | Policy | Public Awareness & Education | |
| Transportation | | Grant/awareness programs | Education / Facilitation |
| Electric bikes initiative | Project | Sustainable practices demos | Education / Events |
| 10th Street improvements | Policy | Farmer’s Market table | Events |

Previously On the BCOS Radar

| Initiative | Area | Champion |
|--|--|------------------|
| Chicken Ordinance | Economic, Environmental Sustainability | |
| Bylaws Refresh | Commission Processes | Justin Vasel |
| BCOS Onboarding Materials | Commission Processes | Justin Vasel |
| Social Media & Online Presence | Strategic Engagement & Outreach | |
| Sustainability Assessment Report | Commission Duties | Ad-Hoc Committee |
| Working Group Grants | Funding | Everyone |
| Urban Agriculture and Food Security | Social, Economic Sustainability | |
| Social Equity Projects from Just Transition WG | Social, Economic Sustainability | |
| Summit District Tracking | Neighborhood Development | |
| Collaboration with Other Groups | Strategic Engagement & Outreach | |
| Native Plants | Environmental Sustainability | |

2025 BCOS Priorities: Chair's Recommendation

1. Housing & Zoning Policy

UDO & PUD

Developments: Hopewell, Summit, Trades District, Convention Center, etc

Native planting

Garden/Food production space (Food Security/Sovereignty)

2. Education & Outreach

Bokashi tutorials

Workshops and events (e.g. repair / fix-it clinics, farmers market table, sustainable practices demos)

Social Media Presence

3. ???

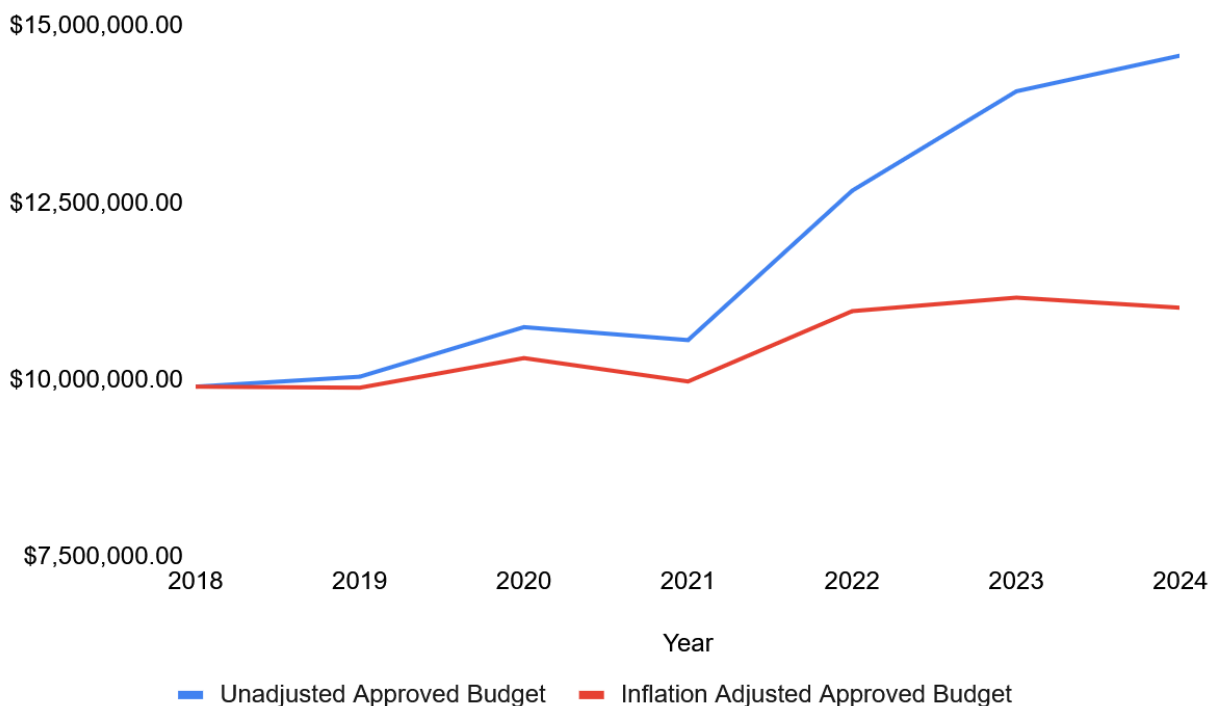
Note: choosing priorities helps guide our efforts,
and does not prevent us from tackling other topics
as we see fit.

Sustainability Assessment part 2 - draft 3.9.2025

City Budget

This section reviews the annual approved budget for the City of Bloomington from 2018 to 2024 and highlights areas aligned with the goals of the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability including Parks and Recreation, Economic and Sustainable Development, and Housing. Figures through show the real dollars as reported in the publicly available Open Finance data,¹ and inflation adjusted numbers calculated using the Bureau of Labor Services CPI inflation calculator².

Since 2018, the City of Bloomington has continued to invest in the city's parks and recreation through sustained funding. The approved funding has increased noticeably in that time, though the increase is more modest when adjusted for inflation (see Figure x).

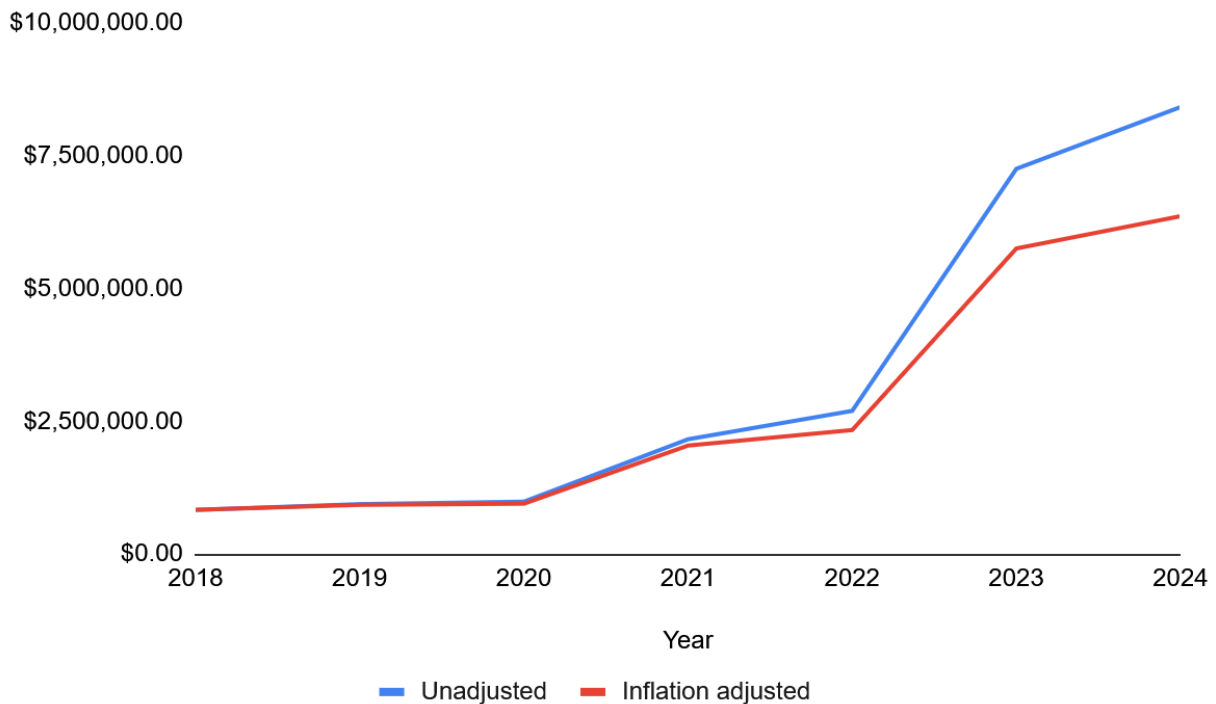


Disaggregating the parks and recreation budget shows a significant investment from the city since 2018 in the Urban Greenspaces. Adjusting for inflation, investment in Urban Greenspaces as measured by the approved annual budget tripled from 2018 to 2024 (see Figure x). However, investment in greenspace throughout the city has only matched investment in golf in recent years. Overall approved budgets for golf and urban forestry have remained relatively consistent, with some decrease in the same period.

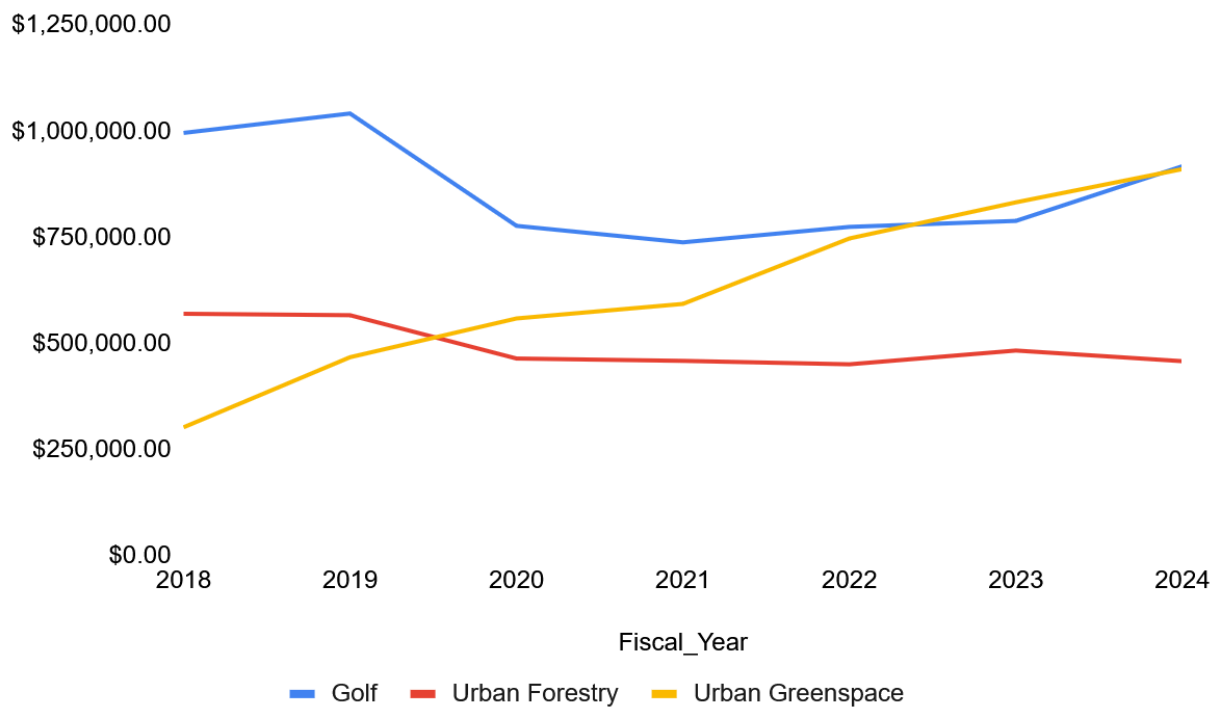
¹ <https://bloomington.finance.socrata.com/#!/view-data>

² https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm?os=win

Another area where the city has made noteworthy increases in financial investment is the office of Economic and Sustainable Development. This department, which serves as liaison between the commission authoring this assessment, is charged with supporting the city's efforts in sustainability.³ The city has demonstrated a continued interest in the work of this office through large annual budget increases. The work of this office utilizing these resources to promote sustainable development in Bloomington are discussed in the next section. .



³ <https://bloomington.in.gov/departments/esd>



Other City actions and policies

- From CAP dashboard
 - Renewable energy
 - Energy efficiency
 - Sustainable development policy
 - Heat island study
 - Green Building Program