



**CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK
SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY GROUP
REGULAR MEETING**

Thursday, November 13, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Highland Park City Hall, Pre-Session Conference Room , 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois

PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with the Statutes of the State of Illinois and the Ordinances of the City of Highland Park, a Meeting of the Sustainability Advisory Group of the City of Highland Park is scheduled to be held at the hour of 6:00 PM on Thursday, November 13, 2025 at the City of Highland Park City Hall, 1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois, during which it is anticipated there will be a discussion of the following:

Individuals with questions or feedback about an agenda item can address the Advisory Group in the following ways:

1. **EMAILS FOR THE RECORD.** Email the Sustainability Advisory Group staff liaison, Sustainability Manager, Austin Knight at aknight@cityhpil.com. If you wish to have your comments read into the record, limit your communication to 200 words or less. Public comments received by 3:00 PM the day of the meeting will be read under Business from the Public. Public comments should contain the following information:
 - In the subject line, identify, "SAG Meeting – Read into the Record
 - Name, Address, City Phone (optional)
 - Topic or agenda item number of interest
 - Organization or agency representing, if applicable
2. **EMAILS WITH UNLIMITED INFORMATION.** Individuals who do not wish to have their comments read into the record can email Sustainability Manager Austin Knight an unlimited number of words. Emails will be forwarded to the Sustainability Advisory Group if requested.
3. **TELEPHONE.** Individuals with no access to email may leave a message with Sustainability Manager Austin Knight at 847.926.1037 by 3:00PM day of meeting.
4. **LIVE COMMENTS.** Individuals are able to address the Commission/Advisory Group during the meeting. Questions/comments are limited to written testimony into the record or spoken comments, not both. Comments should be limited to three minutes or less.

MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order

- I. Roll Call**
- II. Approval of Minutes**
 - October 22, 2025 Special Meeting
- III. Business from the Public**
- V. New Business**
 - (a) Discussion: 2026 Work Plan Details
- VI. Other Business**
 - (a) City Staff Update
 - (b) Chairman Update
 - (c) Advisor Comments
- VII. Adjournment**

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY GROUP OF
THE CITY OF HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS**

MEETING DATE: Wednesday, October 22, 2025

MEETING LOCATION: Pre-Session Conference Room – Highland Park City Hall
1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

At 6:31 PM, Chair Futterman called the Sustainability Advisory Group (“SAG”) Special meeting to order and Sustainability Manager Knight called the roll.

Advisors Present: Chair Futterman, Foerster, Klee, Hopkins

Advisors Absent: Advisors Geelhoed, Fine

Staff Present: Assistant to the City Manager Ashley Palbitska, Sustainability Manager Knight

Also Present:

MINUTES

(a) Approval of the September 11, 2025 Sustainability Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

Advisor Klee moved to approve the minutes as amended. Advisor Foerster seconded the motion. Voice vote, unanimous. Chair Futterman declared the motion passed.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

NEW BUSINESS

a) **Action Item & Discussion: 2026 Work Plan**

Chair Futterman provided information that was discussed at the last meeting and noted that the consensus from the group was that not enough information was provided as to where the City was and what their role was in the sustainability plan to know what actions SAG could assist with. He pointed out a spread sheet that showed where the City was with each project, who was responsible, etc. and that this was what he requested for this meeting.

SM Knight said he would look for this document and update it to provide to the group.

Advisor Klee asked if the purple highlighted document provided is what SAG is to focus on to which SM Knight confirmed.

Advisor Forester noted that it was her understanding that the creation of the work plan was to create actions for SAG to undertake in 2026 to include the items SAG can undertake with help from staff that would be consequential and have measurable impact.

SM Knight noted that staff provided the highlighted sustainability plan action sheet to show where SAG could best provide input and the updated work plan that featured more actionable items that were of interest to the advisors.

Chair Futterman then discussed the meaning and purpose of the work plan.

Advisor Forester explained that she had put together an exercise sheet that contained objectives broken down with actions as to how the group could accomplish the goals that were to be set by the work plan. She noted that this frame of thinking through the goals would assist with determining what is needed to reach each goal.

SAG Advisors and Assistant to the City Manager (A2CM) Palbitska discussed how the budget has been used and how much is discretionary.

Chair Futterman proceeded to go review the sustainability plan, comparing it to what was highlighted by staff as points of focus.

Advisors and staff discussed a lack of focus on policy and the wish to participate in more discussions related to changing or updating current sustainability related policy; upcoming gas powered leaf blower ban; and the importance of reviewing the current sustainability plan to understand actions that have been completed, are currently being worked on and what items are outstanding that could be worked in to the drafting of the 2026 work plan. They discussed the impact Climate Coach has had and how it can be included as a tool as part of the work plan. They discussed renaming methane reduction to Greenhouse Gas Reduction to allow for flexibility in the work to be done for this action; status of community solar; and the difficulties of pursuing green business programs but interest in shifting to more promotions of businesses that are already incorporating sustainable actions within their processes.

Advisor Klee recommended outlining the goals for the work plan instead of creating particular actions under each goal to allow for flexibility.

Chair Futterman explained that there has to be a balance between specifics and generalities. He recommended having a tracking document that will help with the focus of items/actions they are going to work on. The work plan would be for City Council and the spreadsheet would be for the actions they want to take under those topics.

Advisor Foerster recommended that there should be two tools along with focus areas. She noted that one tool could be a communication plan and the other could be Climate Coach.

The Advisors and staff continued discussions on the topics to be placed on the work plan. They reviewed the purpose of the work plan, Council's involvement and the responsibilities of the SAG. They reviewed the need for actionable, smart objectives in order to hold the group accountable and have the ability to demonstrate work completed by the end of the year. The consensus was to include four focus areas of communication, community education, natural areas, and greenhouse gas reduction.

Chair Futterman noted that meeting bi-monthly may slow the momentum of the group and asked if the schedule can be changed to meet monthly.

A2CM Palbitska explained that the meeting resolution was already approved for 2026 but if special meetings were needed, SAG could schedule a special meeting. She reviewed the requirements for calling a special meeting.

The Advisors discussed the purpose of the meeting on November 13th and agreed that the discussion would include the creation of actionable steps for the topics and goals that were generated for the 2026 work plan. They agreed that all members would bring ideas to that meeting, which would assist with the building of meeting agendas for 2026.

SM Knight noted that he will work to update the requested spreadsheet and provide that information to the Advisors ahead of the meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

a) **City Staff Update**

None

b) **Chair Update**

Chair Futterman provided information on the Pumpkin Smash event that is taking place on November 7th. SM Knight said he will send out details to all Advisors after the meeting.

c) **Advisor Comments**

None

ADJOURNMENT

Advisor Hopkins moved to adjourn Advisor Klee seconded the motion. Voice vote, unanimous. Chair Futterman declared the meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Austin Knight, SM

FY2026 SUSTAINABILITY ADVISORY GROUP ANNUAL WORK PLAN

Jurisdiction and Purpose:

The Sustainability Advisory Group (“SAG”) was established by Resolution R166-2018. The Sustainability Advisory Group is a recommending body to City Council and has the following duties and responsibilities:

- Provides advisory recommendations on matters related to the preservation, enhancement, management and protection of the City's environment and natural resources;
- Provides advisory recommendations pertaining to education, outreach, and communications regarding preservation and enhancement of the City's environment and natural resources;
- Provides advisory recommendations regarding proposed amendments and variations to environmental and natural resources-related policies, regulations, ordinances, and plans; and
- Provides advisory recommendations regarding implementation of and updates to the City’s Sustainability Plan.

FY2026 Members:

- Jay Futterman
- Michael C. Klee
- Stephanie Foerster

- Student Liaisons: Lucas Hoobler, Amelia Griffin
- Council Liaison: Anthony Blumberg
- Staff Liaison: Austin Knight

The Sustainability Advisory Group meets the second Thursday of every other month at 6:00 PM or as posted, as set forth in the SAG’s annually adopted meeting schedule.

FY 2026 Objectives

1. Implement pathway(s) for achieving long term goals of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan:
 - a. Reduction of Greenhouse Gas emissions by 45% by 2030
 - b. Reaching net zero carbon as community by 2035
2. Prioritize accomplishing goals laid out in the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan; 2026 focus areas:
 - a. Communication
 - Community Education
 - Climate Coach
 - b. Energy
 - Greenhouse Gas Reduction
 - c. Natural Areas
 - Air, water, soil quality

Operating Expense Requests

	Amount
Programming & Events: Arbor Day, Shred Events, Solar Home Tour, Election Sign Recycling, Compost Kitchen Pails etc included in the Sustainability Fund Budget.	\$7,900
FY2026 TOTAL REQUEST:	\$7,900

Advisory Group FY2025 Chairman: Jay Futterman /ap

Date: **10/27/2025**

HP Sustainability Plan - ACTIONS for 2023-2027

SMART GOALS: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound

COMMUNICATION	SMART GOAL	SPECIFIC	MEASURABLE	ACHIEVABLE	RELEVANT	TIME-BOUND
Reconvene the Green Alliance, a collaborative group of representatives from local governments and institutions such as the county, library, park district, school districts, township, hospital, and the business community.	complete	complete	Times met, Goals achieved?	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	
Promote sustainability with residents at festivals, lectures, workshops and other events, and expand food scrap composting participation at events hosted by Green Alliance organizations.			Events tabled	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Add more citywide sustainability actions to the searchable online map and continue promotion of the map for use by residents, businesses, and property owners.	Create list of 12 actions and add one to the online map each month	Create list of actions and add one to the online map each month	Things added to the map	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	monthly
Compile year-end achievements on all tasks and measurable goals and draft annual citywide work plans in cooperation with the City's departments.	Publish annual report listing achievements and develop annual workplans	Airtable major projects webpage	the list	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Promote participation in the Solar Home tour combined with a showcase of electric vehicles.	social media posts and distribute flyers at local businesses at least one month before the tour	social media posts and distribute flyers at local businesses	Evs and participants involved	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Develop targeted communication plan with a goal of reducing residential natural gas use.	Include residential natural gas savings and rebate information in HP newsletters and host speaker series on energy efficiency	Include residential natural gas savings and rebate information in HP newsletters and host speaker series on energy efficiency	natural gas reduction	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Incorporate sustainability issues into City communications on a regular basis.	Include sustainability information in Highlander, Speaker Series, eNews, Facebook, Etc.	Include sustainability information in Highlander, Speaker Series, eNews, Facebook, Etc.	number of communications featuring sustainability	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	ongoing
Continue to promote community solar, and opportunities for group purchasing discounts for solar and other renewable energy technologies.	Include community solar and group solar purchasing information in HP newsletters	Include community solar and group solar purchasing information in HP newsletters	number of communications featuring sustainability	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	ongoing
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Engage the Chamber in a discussion about its priorities and concerns of its member businesses. Specific to sustainability, the discussion will explore how the subject of sustainability can be used to promote local businesses and how the City can recognize and support businesses that practice and promote sustainability, as well as local goods & services.	Schedule a meeting with the Chamber	Schedule a meeting with the Chamber	Number of businesses met with	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	End of 2026
Promote the environmental awards through its multiple communication platforms, including recognizing landscape contractors that utilize sustainable methods and low emission equipment.	Develop website & social media posts to promote the awards	Develop website & social media posts to promote the awards	Amount of applicants	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Evaluate and establish criteria for an Environmental Business Recognition Program acknowledging businesses who have implemented environmentally friendly processes into their operations and incorporate innovation and continuous improvement.	Develop list of criteria for Environmental Business Recognition Program	Develop list of criteria for Environmental Business Recognition Program	Criteria set for each level, system for awarding in place, list of businesses per year awarded	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Evaluate establishing sustainability incentives for local businesses and multifamily residential properties to implement sustainability improvements to their properties.	Evaluate whether incentives are possible and if so, how they will be funded and how they will be awarded	Evaluate whether incentives are possible and if so, how they will be funded and how they will be awarded		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Continue Highland Park Composts! Program and outreach to continue growing food business participation in composting. Continue promoting those businesses that implement or continue composting.	Grow the list of Highland Park Composts! participants	Grow the list of Highland Park Composts! Participants	Amount of businesses in this program each year	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Evaluate the effectiveness of the City's plastic bag recycling ordinance and consider alternative methods of reducing plastic bag use.	Schedule a meeting of stakeholders during 2026 to discuss plastic bag recycling and develop a strategic plan.	Schedule a meeting of stakeholders to discuss plastic bag recycling and develop a strategic plan.		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	end of 2026
Encourage battery-powered landscaping equipment. Educate licensed landscapers about gas leaf blower restrictions, and implement gas leaf blower ban as of Jan 1, 2027.	Develop and annually distribute a communication/ mailing to educate and inform landscapers of the 2027 leaf ban	Develop and distribute a communication/ mailing to educate and inform landscapers of the 2027 leaf ban	Number of landscapers reached	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	by 2027
ENERGY						
Consider 100% green power for future residential aggregation contract.	Include an option to provide pricing for 100% green in next RFP	Include an option to provide pricing for 100% green in next RFP		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	ongoing
Participate in efforts by the Metropolitan Mayor's Caucus to negotiate changes to the ComEd franchise agreement to enable the City to recoup costs of energy upgrades to City buildings.	Contact MMC to develop a strategy	Contact MMC to develop a strategy		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	End of franchise agreement
Promote energy efficiency programs offered by the utilities for the City, residents and businesses.	Host bi-annual webinars with the utilities to share information about EEPs	Host webinars with the utilities to share information about EEPs	attendees to webinars	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	bi-annually
Promote the Lake County Property Assessed Clean Energy ("PACE") financing program for energy efficiency projects on commercial facilities.	Host a webinar with Illinois Energy Conservation Authority	Host a webinar with Illinois Energy Conservation Authority	Number of PACE projects	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	end of 2026
Explore opportunities to install behind the meter solar panels at various City properties including the water plant.	By 2026, create a list of all applicable properties and engage a SME to perform feasibility analysis	Create a list of all applicable properties and engage a SME to perform feasibility analysis		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	2026
Continue annual updates of the GHG emissions inventory and monitor progress toward the reduction goal.	Update GHG inventory annually in November	Update GHG inventory		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Consider stretch code adoption, when available.	Finish Stretch Code Grant by 2026	Review Illinois Stretch Code details	Complete grant	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	End of 2026
Review SolarApp to streamline solar permitting and review.	Develop and launch a SolarApp pilot program.	Develop and launch a SolarApp pilot program.	Develop pilot plan	Unlikely	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD - Community Development not interested
Track solar installations in a format that complies with CDP reporting requirements.	Upon installation, ensure tracking systems are in place to measure the amount of energy generated from each installation	Ensure tracking systems are in place to measure the amount of energy generated from each installation		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	upon installation
Work toward net zero for new City buildings; incorporate renewable energy and electric only into new and major renovation projects.	As applicable, from a list of planned new buildings and major renovations, create plan for associated net-zero projects	From a list of planned new buildings and major renovations, create plan for associated net-zero projects	Number of net zero features per building	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually

Webpage done

Continue to maximize energy efficiency incentive programs offered by the utilities to the public sector, including custom programs.	Annually, from a list of planned City projects, identify applicable EE incentive programs	From a list of planned City projects, identify applicable EE incentive programs	Amount of funds received	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Continue lighting retrofits with LED fixtures.	Annually, from an inventory of all non-LED facilities (or areas of facilities), create a cap plan for replacement/retrofitting	From an inventory of all non-LED facilities (or areas of facilities), create a cap plan for replacement/retrofitting	% of buildings converted to LED	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	End of 2025 - Project approaching completion
Monitor the Volkswagen Settlement Fund, managed by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Inflation Reduction Act and other incentives for fleet funding opportunities.	Provide quarterly updates on funding sources and develop a plan of pursuit as applicable	Provide updates on funding sources and develop a plan of pursuit as applicable		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	quarterly
Review the Sustainable Fleet Policy and adjust as needed to embrace technological advances. Consider vehicle disposal to address inefficient vehicles remaining in operation elsewhere.	Annually, review the Sustainable Fleet Policy for updates and changes.	Review the Sustainable Fleet Policy for updates and changes.		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Continue adding hybrid and electric vehicles to the City fleet, including police patrol vehicles and for 2026 for the Fire Department.	Annually, track purchases of fleet vehicles and ensure hybrid/electric options are procured when feasible	Track purchases of fleet vehicles and ensure hybrid/electric options are procured when feasible	ICE vehicles converted to hybrid or electric	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually - Budget limited
Consider requiring low- or zero-emission equipment in construction and maintenance contracts.	Add pricing option request for low- and/or zero-emission equipment to all construction and maintenance RFPs	Add pricing option request for low- and/or zero-emission equipment to all construction and maintenance RFPs	Number of contracts out of total that zero or low emissions equipment is required in	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	As needed
Standardize vehicle data collection to measure impact of fleet efficiency upgrades.	In 2024, research vehicle data collection options to pilot in 2025.	Research vehicle data collection options to pilot in 2025.		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	end of 2024
Identify opportunities for the installation of electric vehicle chargers in City parking lots and continue installing conduit for future electric vehicle charging stations in City lots.	By 2026, identify options for EV charging stations in all City lots	Commission a feasibility study for EV charging stations in all City lots	Number of lots studied	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	End of 2026
Participate in the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus EV Ready program.	Bronze Complete. Achieve Silver	Achieve EV Silver	Achieve silver	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	Juen of 2026
LEADERSHIP						
Secure a GRC member to support citywide sustainability programming when program resumes operations.	Program Ended	Program Ended		No	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Add a full time sustainability staff member to the City.	complete	complete			Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	
Research opportunities to apply for recognition programs such as Cities 100 and Walk Friendly Community. Staff will facilitate discussions with City commissions and the Green Alliance to determine whether or not to pursue applications and develop work plans accordingly.	In 2026, facilitate discussions with Staff and City commissions and the Green Alliance to determine whether or not to pursue applications and develop work plans accordingly.	Facilitate discussions with Staff and City commissions and the Green Alliance to determine whether or not to pursue applications and develop work plans accordingly.	number of opportunities identified/applications	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	end of 2026
Explore opportunities for greater efficiency or impact by working in partnership with neighbors including, but not limited to, Deerfield, Highwood, Lake Forest, Lake Bluff, Wilmette, and Glencoe, and collaboration opportunities offered at the county level.	Develop coalition of neighbors to meet annually to explore opportunities for greater efficiency or impact.	Develop coalition of neighbors to explore opportunities for greater efficiency or impact.		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Consider establishing a Sustainability Speaker Series with the Sustainability Advisory Group, and partner with other sister governments for such public education events.	complete	complete	Number of Speaker Series held	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Complete the Global Covenant of Mayors requirements by developing full climate action and adaptation plans by the end of 2023.	complete	complete			Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	
MOBILITY						
Support and collaborate with TAG on MoveHP implementation, and additional initiatives to increase the use of non motorized modes of transportation.	Reach out to TAG to inquire on where they could use support for MoveHP.	Reach out to TAG to inquire on where they could use support for MoveHP.		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Complete the Clavey Road Side Path (Green Bay to Route 41 Ramp) as recommended by the Bike/Walk Plan.	Track the completion of the Clavey Road Side Path (Green Bay to Route 41 Ramp) as recommended by the Bike/Walk Plan.	Track the completion of the Clavey Road Side Path (Green Bay to Route 41 Ramp) as recommended by the Bike/Walk Plan.		Maybe	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Construct multiple bike/walk improvement projects as part of the 10-year capital improvement plan, including Sheridan Road Sidewalk (Roger Williams Av to Cedar/Dean).	Track bike/walk improvement projects.	Track bike/walk improvement projects.		Maybe	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Collaborate with Pace Transit Services to provide better access by improving bus routes in Highland Park, and to add electric busses to routes throughout Highland Park.	Set up a meeting with Pace Transit to see how better access can be provided in efforts to edit bus routes and add electric busses.	Set up a meeting with Pace Transit to see how better access can be provided in efforts to edit bus routes and add electric busses.		Maybe	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Advance from Bronze to Silver in the Bike Friendly Communities program.	Review the HP Bike Friendly Report Card to develop plans to address "Keys to Silver" suggestions	Review the HP Bike Friendly Report Card to develop plans to address "Keys to Silver" suggestions		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
NATURAL AREAS						
Add municipal and private pollinator gardens to the City's searchable map and the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge's database.	Add pollinator garden locations to the City's searchable map and the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge's database	Add pollinator garden locations to the City's searchable map and the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge's database	Number of gardens added	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Identify information source to increase awareness regarding invasive species such as buckthorn and other topics for public education. The resource will provide information including maintenance and environmentally safe removal.	Create a communication piece with all necessary information regarding invasive species to be delivered or made accessible to the public	Create a communication piece with all necessary information regarding invasive species to be delivered or made accessible to the public	Invasive species reduction	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	ongoing
Continue to develop new habitats to support plant pollinators through the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge in partnership with the Park District.	(ongoing) Develop new habitats to support plant pollinators through the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge in partnership with the Park District.	(ongoing) Develop new habitats to support plant pollinators through the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge in partnership with the Park District.		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	ongoing

Promote the benefits of native and pollinator plants and raise awareness of invasive species through educational materials and other communication vehicles.	Create a plan to promote the benefits of native and pollinator plants and raise awareness of invasive species through educational materials and other communication vehicles.	Create a plan to promote the benefits of native and pollinator plants and raise awareness of invasive species through educational materials and other communication vehicles.	link clicks, native gardens on sustainability map	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Work to replace invasive phragmites grass within the Briergate area with pollinator and native habitat.	Work to replace invasive phragmites grass within the Briergate area with pollinator and native habitat. (timing TBD)	Work to replace invasive phragmites grass within the Briergate area with pollinator and native habitat.	invasive species reduction	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Develop and enhance educational materials and programs for property owners and landscapers in the areas of Highland Park's ravines, bluffs, and shorelines.	(ongoing) Develop and enhance educational materials and programs for property owners and landscapers in the areas of Highland Park's ravines, bluffs, and shorelines.	Develop and enhance educational materials and programs for property owners and landscapers in the areas of Highland Park's ravines, bluffs, and shorelines.		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	ongoing

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Launch All In Communitywide curbside compost program for residential properties.	complete	complete			Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	
Encourage composting at sister governments' special events.	Develop a list of special events and make arrangements for signage and compost stations	Develop a list of special events and make arrangements for signage and compost stations	# of events featuring composting	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Demonstrate progress toward making City-sponsored events zero-waste.	Develop a list of City-sponsored events with zero-waste actions along with a tracking process	Develop a list of City-sponsored events with zero-waste actions along with a tracking process	# of events with zero-waste features	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Focus on opportunities to promote reuse through special events and in conjunction with SWALCO.	Develop a list of special events with reuse actions along with a tracking process	Develop a list of special events with reuse actions along with a tracking process		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	annually
Encourage use of compost by contractors, evaluate the use of compost for use in City projects, and work to provide information about compost to residents.	3-part goal could be split (maybe one each year) 2024: provide info to contractors, 2025: develop plan for City projects, 2026: provide (more) info to residents	Provide info to contractors, develop plan for City projects, and provide (more) info to residents		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	2024, 2025 and 2026
Collaborate with LRS and SWALCO to increase the City's recycling and composting rate by weight (percent of total waste) and by participation (percent of total accounts recycling/composting) for residential and commercial customers.	Schedule meeting with LRS and SWALCO in 2024 to develop a plan to increase the City's recycling and composting rate by weight and by participation for residential and commercial customers for 2025	Schedule meeting with LRS and SWALCO to develop a plan to increase the City's recycling and composting rate by weight and by participation for residential and commercial customers	Participant and weight increase	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	December 2024
Investigate options for leaf pick-up for City facilities.	During 2026, schedule a meeting with stakeholders to investigate leaf pick-up options	Schedule a meeting with stakeholders to investigate leaf pick-up options		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	December 2026

WATER

Expand enforcement of the City's phosphate ban and address the use of pesticides and salt. The City will comply with recommendations from the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission which is leading the effort to identify best practices on these issues.	Develop a plan to track enforcement and connect with LCSMC to discuss best practices resulting in action items.	Develop a plan to track enforcement and connect with LCSMC to discuss best practices resulting in action items.		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	December 2027
Investigate incentives as well as provide education to encourage residential rain gardens.	Decide whether incentives are possible and if so, how they will be funded and how they will be awarded	Decide whether incentives are possible and if so, how they will be funded and how they will be awarded	Gardens funded per year	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Lead effort with Community Development, the City Manager's Office, and the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, to identify effective and appropriate measures to meet stormwater quality regulations.	Schedule stakeholder meeting to develop a plan to address storm water quality regulations	Schedule stakeholder meeting to develop a plan to address storm water quality regulations		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	December 2026
Collaborate with Lake County Stormwater Management Commission to develop and enhance educational materials and programs for property owners and landscapers in the areas of Highland Park's ravines, bluffs, and shorelines.	Host a meeting with LCSMC to develop education campaign.	Host a meeting with LCSMC to develop education campaign.		Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Continue to incorporate green infrastructure treatments on City-owned property including the Right of Way, into its storm sewer replacement projects, and to educate private landowners about the benefits of such projects on their own properties.	Track City projects (ongoing) and develop landowner communication plan by June 2025	Track City projects (ongoing) and develop landowner communication plan		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	ongoing
Identify opportunities to encourage green infrastructure through the sewer permit requirements.	Develop strategy to encourage green infrastructure through the sewer permit requirements	Develop strategy to encourage green infrastructure through the sewer permit requirements		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Develop public education about reducing contaminants from stormwater runoff.	Develop communication plan about reducing contaminants from stormwater runoff by June 2025	Develop communication plan about reducing contaminants from stormwater runoff	impressions per post	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	June 2025
Update the City's Source Water Protection Plan (Lake Michigan - Illinois EPA requirement)	if submitted in 2023, begin update in 2027 (to submit at least every 5 years)	if submitted in 2023, begin update in 2027 (to submit at least every 5 years)		Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	December 2027
Reconstruction of permeable pavers at the following locations: Second St. Parking Lot (north of 1853 Second St) - Michael's, Allee Lane and the alley from Maple Lane to Vine Avenue.	Track progress of reconstruction of permeable pavers at the following locations: Second St. Parking Lot (north of 1853 Second St) - Michael's, Allee Lane and the alley from Maple Lane to Vine Avenue.	Track progress of reconstruction of permeable pavers at the following locations: Second St. Parking Lot (north of 1853 Second St) - Michael's, Allee Lane and the alley from Maple Lane to Vine Avenue.	Project completion	Yes	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	TBD
Collaborate with Public Works to explore options to clarify the green stormwater management infrastructure and techniques allowed in the municipal code.	Schedule meeting with Public Works to explore options to clarify the green stormwater management infrastructure and techniques allowed in the municipal code.	Schedule meeting with Public Works to explore options to clarify the green stormwater management infrastructure and techniques allowed in the municipal code.	Meetings had, code evaluated/brought to council for update.	Somewhat	Yes - Goal is part of the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan	ongoing

Green = Complete
 Orange = In Progress
 Purple = Possible SAG Actions

ACTIONS FOR 2023-2027

COMMUNICATION

Reconvene the Green Alliance, a collaborative group of representatives from local governments and institutions such as the county, library, park district, school districts, township, hospital, and the business community.
Promote sustainability with residents at festivals, lectures, workshops and other events, and expand food scrap composting participation at events hosted by Green Alliance organizations.
Add more citywide sustainability actions to the searchable online map and continue promotion of the map for use by residents, businesses, and property owners.
Compile year-end achievements on all tasks and measurable goals and draft annual citywide work plans in cooperation with the City's departments.
Promote participation in the Solar Home tour combined with a showcase of electric vehicles.
Develop targeted communication plan with a goal of reducing residential natural gas use.
Incorporate sustainability issues into City communications on a regular basis.
Continue to promote community solar, and opportunities for group purchasing discounts for solar and other renewable energy technologies.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Engage the Chamber in a discussion about its priorities and concerns of its member businesses. Specific to sustainability, the discussion will explore how the subject of sustainability can be used to promote local businesses and how the City can recognize and support businesses that practice and promote sustainability, as well as local goods & services.
Promote the environmental awards through its multiple communication platforms, including recognizing landscape contractors that utilize sustainable methods and low-emission equipment.
Evaluate and establish criteria for an Environmental Business Recognition Program acknowledging businesses who have implemented environmentally friendly processes into their operations and incorporate innovation and continuous improvement.
Evaluate establishing sustainability incentives for local businesses and multifamily residential properties to implement sustainability improvements to their properties.
Continue <i>Highland Park Composts!</i> Program and outreach to continue growing food business participation in composting. Continue promoting those businesses that implement or continue composting.
Evaluate the effectiveness of the City's plastic bag recycling ordinance and consider alternative methods of reducing plastic bag use.
Encourage battery-powered landscaping equipment. Educate licensed landscapers about gas leaf blower restrictions, and implement gas leaf blower ban as of January 1, 2027.



ACTIONS FOR 2023-2027 (continued)

ENERGY

Consider 100% green power for future residential aggregation contract.
Participate in efforts by the Metropolitan Mayor’s Caucus to negotiate changes to the ComEd franchise agreement to enable the City to recoup costs of energy upgrades to City buildings.
Promote energy efficiency programs offered by the utilities for the City, residents and businesses.
Promote the Lake County Property Assessed Clean Energy (“PACE”) financing program for energy efficiency projects on commercial facilities.
Explore opportunities to install behind the meter solar panels at various City properties, including the water plant.
Continue annual updates of the GHG emissions inventory and monitor progress toward the reduction goal.
Consider stretch code adoption, when available.
Review SolarApp to streamline solar permitting and review.
Track solar installations in a format that complies with CDP reporting requirements.
Work toward net zero for new City buildings; incorporate renewable energy and electric only into new construction, equipment replacements and renovation projects.
Continue to maximize energy efficiency incentive programs offered by the utilities to the public sector, including custom programs.
Continue lighting retrofits with LED fixtures.
Monitor the Volkswagen Settlement Fund, managed by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, the Inflation Reduction Act and other incentives for fleet funding opportunities.
Review the Sustainable Fleet Policy and adjust as needed to embrace technological advances. Consider vehicle disposal to address inefficient vehicles remaining in operation elsewhere.
Continue adding hybrid and electric vehicles to the City fleet, including police patrol vehicles and for 2026 for the Fire Department.
Consider requiring low- or zero-emission equipment in construction and maintenance contracts.
Standardize vehicle data collection to measure impact of fleet efficiency upgrades.
Identify opportunities for the installation of electric vehicle chargers in City parking lots and streets, and continue installing conduit for future charging stations in City lots.
Participate in the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus EV Ready program.

ACTIONS FOR 2023-2027 (continued)

LEADERSHIP

Secure a GRC member to support citywide sustainability programming when program resumes operations.
Add a full time sustainability staff member to the City.
Research opportunities to apply for recognition programs such as Cities 100 and Walk Friendly Community. Staff will facilitate discussions with City commissions and the Green Alliance to determine whether or not to pursue applications and develop work plans accordingly.
Explore opportunities for greater efficiency or impact by working in partnership with neighbors including, but not limited to, Deerfield, Highwood, Lake Forest, Lake Bluff, Wilmette, and Glencoe, and collaboration opportunities offered at the county level.
Consider establishing a Sustainability Speaker Series with the Sustainability Advisory Group, and partner with other sister governments for such public education events.
Complete the Global Covenant of Mayors requirements by developing full climate action and adaptation plans by the end of 2023.

MOBILITY

Support and collaborate with TAG on MoveHP implementation, and additional initiatives to increase the use of non motorized modes of transportation.
Complete the Clavey Road Side Path (Green Bay to Route 41 Ramp), as recommended by the Bike/Walk plan.
Construct multiple bike/walk improvement projects as part of the 10-year capital improvement plan, including Sheridan Road Sidewalk (Roger Williams Av to Cedar/Dean).
Collaborate with Pace Transit Services to provide better access by improving bus routes in Highland Park, and to add electric busses to routes through Highland Park.
Advance from Bronze to Silver in the Bike Friendly Communities program.

NATURAL AREAS

Add municipal and private pollinator gardens to the City's searchable map and the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge's database.
Identify information source to increase awareness regarding invasive species such as buckthorn and other topics for public education. The resource will provide information including maintenance and environmentally safe removal.
Continue to develop new habitats to support plant pollinators through the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge in partnership with the Park District.
Promote the benefits of native and pollinator plants and raise awareness of invasive species through educational materials and other communication vehicles.
Work to replace invasive phragmites grass within the Briergate area with pollinator and native habitat.
Develop and enhance educational materials and programs for property owners and landscapers in the areas of Highland Park's ravines, bluffs, and shorelines.



ACTIONS FOR 2023-2027 (continued)

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Launch All-In Communitywide curbside compost program for residential properties.
Encourage composting at sister governments' special events.
Demonstrate progress toward making City-sponsored events zero-waste.
Focus on opportunities to promote reuse through special events and in conjunction with SWALCO.
Encourage use of compost by contractors, evaluate the use of compost for use in City projects, and work to provide information about compost to residents.
Collaborate with LRS and SWALCO to increase the City's recycling and composting rate by weight (percent of total waste) and by participation (percent of total accounts recycling/composting) for residential and commercial customers.
Investigate options for leaf pick-up for City facilities.

WATER

Expand enforcement of the City's phosphate ban and address the use of pesticides and salt. The City will comply with recommendations from the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission which is leading the effort to identify best practices on these issues.
Investigate incentives as well as provide education to encourage residential rain gardens.
Lead effort with Community Development, the City Manager's Office, and the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission, to identify effective and appropriate measures to meet stormwater quality regulations.
Collaborate with Lake County Stormwater Management Commission to develop and enhance educational materials and programs for property owners and landscapers in the areas of Highland Park's ravines, bluffs, and shorelines.
Continue to use green infrastructure on City-owned property, including the Right of Way, into its storm sewer replacement projects, and to educate private landowners about the benefits of such projects on their own properties.
Identify opportunities to encourage green infrastructure through the sewer permit requirements.
Develop public education about reducing contaminants from stormwater runoff.
Update the City's Source Water Protection Plan (Lake Michigan - Illinois EPA requirement)
Reconstruction using permeable pavers at the following locations: Second St. Parking Lot (north of 1853 Second St) – Michael's, Allee Lane and the alley from Maple Lane to Vine Avenue.
Collaborate with Public Works to explore options to clarify the green stormwater management infrastructure and techniques allowed in the municipal code.

CLOSING

The City of Highland Park is committed to environmental leadership and sustainability. With focused plans in the areas of Communication, Economic Development, Energy, Leadership, Mobility, Natural Areas, Waste Management and Water, the City aims to become net zero by 2035. This goal will only be met with a comprehensive, inclusive process. All stakeholders (City government, residents, and businesses) must be committed to the goal. Data and reporting will be necessary to track progress toward the goal. Collaboration and partnerships will be key drivers to success.

The City thanks the Sustainability Advisory Group (SAG) for leading the effort of developing this plan. Members of the SAG include:

Kelly Nichols, Chair
Jay Futterman, Vice Chair
Julie Campbell
Megan Geelhoed
Michelle Kramer
Daniel M. LaCosse
Tatiana H. Papakos
William White, Student Representative
Kim Stone, Council Liaison

