

# City of Falcon Heights Environment Commission

City Hall  
2077 Larpenteur Avenue West

## AGENDA

Monday, February 12, 2024  
6:30 p.m.

- A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.
- B. ROLL CALL: Beth Mercer-Taylor (Chair) \_\_\_\_ Jared Mehlhaff \_\_\_\_  
John Pellegrini (Vice-Chair) \_\_\_\_ Amy Christiansen \_\_\_\_  
Emma Kostecki \_\_\_\_ OPEN  
Pedro De Filippo Vannucci \_\_\_\_  
  
Staff Liaison Lynch \_\_\_\_
- C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES  
1. January 8, 2024
- E. NEW BUSINESS  
1. 2024 Officer Nominations  
2. Minnesota GreenCorps Discussion  
3. Bee Lawn Discussion  
4. Partners in Energy Update  
5. Nature Newsflash Article Calendar
- F. INFORMATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS  
1. Staff Liaison Report
- G. ADJOURN

*Next regular meeting date: March 11, 2024*

# City of Falcon Heights Environment Commission

City Hall  
2077 Larpenteur Avenue West

Minutes

Monday, January 8, 2024  
6:30 p.m.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

Beth Mercer-Taylor (Chair)	<u>_A_</u>	
John Pellegrini (Vice-Chair)	<u>_X_</u>	Jared Mehlhaff <u>_A_</u>
Emma Kostecki	<u>_A_</u>	Amy Christiansen <u>_X_</u>
Pedro De Filippo Vannucci	<u>_A_</u>	Stephanie Skarolid <u>_A_</u>
Staff Liaison Lynch	<u>_X_</u>	

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

*Vice-Chair Pellegrini made a motion to approve the agenda. Agenda was approved by consent.*

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. November 13, 2023

*Vice-Chair Pellegrini made a motion to approve the minutes from November 13, 2023. Minutes were approved by consent.*

E. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2024 Officer Nominations

*This agenda item was tabled to the February 12, 2024 meeting due to the current Chair being absent.*

2. 2024 Schedule & Priorities

*Commissioners discussed the 2024 schedule and priorities. Priorities included EVs, Partners in Energy, green Community Park features, city trees, and greenifying Falcon Heights.*

3. Nature Newsflash Discussion

*Staff Liaison Lynch shared a list of upcoming potential Nature Newsflash articles for commissioner to volunteer to write for the City's newsletter. Additional potential articles were suggested about birds, leaves in the fall, and a series on the top five most effective ways to become more environmentally-friendly in your daily life.*

#### 4. BizRecycling Update

*Staff Liaison Lynch shared an update from Foth and WasteWise about the BizRecycling campaign that was pushed out in the summer and throughout the fall. A letter to businesses was initially sent by the City with a flyer about BizRecycling, then representatives from WasteWise contacted these businesses. Overall, there were 63 outreach contacts to 25 different businesses, and 8 site visits were performed. A final memo and report will be provided by Foth in the near future.*

#### 5. Partners in Energy Update

*Staff Liaison Lynch gave a brief update on Partners in Energy. The first Open House will take place on February 21, 2024 at City Hall at 6 PM. Snacks and beverages will be provided by Partners in Energy, preferably from a local restaurant. The next workshop will be on March 20, 2024 at 6 PM with the location to be determined, and the second Open House/3<sup>rd</sup> workshop will take place on April 27, 2024 at 6 PM with the location to be determined.*

#### 6. City Code Updates – Electric Vehicles

*Staff Liaison Lynch went over updates in City Code to allow electric vehicle charging stations. These updates are required for the EV Smart Cities program to attain bronze status. Updates will be sent to the Planning Commission for review before going to City Council.*

#### F. Information and Announcements

1. Staff Liaison Report – None.
2. Council Liaison Report – None.

#### G. Adjourn

*Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.*

*Next regular meeting date: February 12, 2024*



## ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

<b>Meeting Date</b>	February 12, 2024
<b>Agenda Item</b>	E-1
<b>Attachment</b>	N/A
<b>Submitted By</b>	Hannah Lynch, Community Development Coordinator / Planner

<b>Item</b>	2024 Environment Commission Officer Nominations - Tabled from January meeting
<b>Description</b>	<p>City of Falcon Heights, City Code - Section 2-115 (e)</p> <p><i>(e.) Chairperson; officers. Each commission shall elect a chairperson from among its appointed members for a term of one year. The commissions may create and fill such other offices as determined necessary.</i></p> <p>Generally we will also appoint a vice-chair and secretary, should the Commission wish to do so.</p>
<b>Budget Impact</b>	None
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	None
<b>Action(s) Requested</b>	Staff recommends nominating and electing officers for 2024.



## ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

<b>Meeting Date</b>	February 12, 2024
<b>Agenda Item</b>	E-2
<b>Attachment</b>	N/A
<b>Submitted By</b>	Hannah Lynch, Community Development Coordinator / Planner

<b>Item</b>	Minnesota GreenCorps Discussion
<b>Description</b>	<p>Minnesota GreenCorps (MN GreenCorps) is an AmeriCorps program coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). For the 2024-2025 program year, Minnesota GreenCorps anticipates selecting up to 58 host site organizations around the state through this solicitation.</p> <p>The Environment Commission has discussed the program in the past. Applications for the upcoming year are due on March 13, 2024. This would be a good time to discuss applying and potential service plans should we receive a GreenCorps member.</p>
<b>Budget Impact</b>	None
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	<p>Minnesota GreenCorps Host Site Application Guide</p> <p>Minnesota GreenCorps Sample Service Plans</p>
<b>Action(s) Requested</b>	Staff recommends discussing the Minnesota GreenCorps program and deciding whether or not to pursue applying.

# Minnesota GreenCorps Host Site Application Guide

## Program year 2024-2025

Minnesota GreenCorps (MN GreenCorps) is an AmeriCorps program coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). For the 2024-2025 program year, Minnesota GreenCorps anticipates selecting up to 58 host site organizations around the state through this solicitation. This document contains important information about applying to become a host site for the 2024-2025 MN GreenCorps program year. **Please review this document and all appendices carefully before submitting an application. Host site application instructions are outlined in Section V.**

**Applications are due electronically by 5:00 p.m., Central Time on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, to [mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us](mailto:mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us).**

**Note:** Operation of the 2024-2025 program year is contingent on receiving funds from ServeMinnesota and AmeriCorps. Confirmation of funds may not be available prior to the application deadline.

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# I. Program overview

## AmeriCorps overview

AmeriCorps is a national service program that connects more than 250,000 individuals each year with organizations to strengthen communities across America. AmeriCorps members provide intensive service to meet our country's critical needs in education, public safety, health, and the environment. AmeriCorps programs provide opportunities for Americans to strengthen communities and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. Visit [www.americorps.gov/](http://www.americorps.gov/) to learn more about AmeriCorps.

## Minnesota GreenCorps program overview

Minnesota GreenCorps is an AmeriCorps program coordinated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) designed to preserve and protect Minnesota's environment while training a new generation of environmental professionals. The program places AmeriCorps members with host organizations around the state to help communities increase resilience to climate change by:

- Reducing solid waste and increasing recycling.
- Reducing greenhouse gases and other air pollutants.
- Reducing water runoff and improving water quality.
- Assisting community members in taking eco-friendly actions.
- Reducing disproportionate negative impacts from pollution.
- Training new environmental professionals.

Funding for Minnesota GreenCorps is provided through a combination of resources from AmeriCorps, ServeMinnesota, and the MPCA, along with local in-kind support.

## Minnesota GreenCorps member position overview

This program year, Minnesota GreenCorps anticipates placing and supporting up to 58 full-time AmeriCorps members. Minnesota GreenCorps members serve for 11 months, from September 2024 through August 2025. Full-time members must serve 1,700 hours during their term, which equates to around 40 hours a week. As a professional development program, Minnesota GreenCorps coordinates quarterly trainings, pairs each member with a professional mentor, and provides opportunities for member participation at conferences and workshops.

## Program topic areas

The Minnesota GreenCorps program has identified four overarching areas to meet program goals.

1. Community readiness and outreach.
2. Energy conservation and green transportation.
3. Stormwater and forestry.
4. Waste reduction and recycling.

These topic areas have been selected because of their overall relevance to statewide environmental priorities, alignment with host site needs and member interest, opportunity to draw involvement of community members, and ability to generate measurable outcomes.

## II. Position descriptions

Position descriptions for the community readiness and outreach, energy conservation and green transportation, stormwater and forestry, and waste reduction and recycling topic areas are found on the following pages. While responsibilities and activities will vary depending on the host site and the project topic area, host sites must align with one or more of the essential functions listed in the position description selected.

### Community readiness and outreach member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change by advancing sustainable practices, improving infrastructure, and increasing knowledge of residents and community-based organizations. Provide outreach, education, and assistance to raise understanding and increase best practices on energy conservation and green transportation, stormwater and forestry, and waste reduction and recycling. Work with local government(s), school districts, nonprofit and community-based organizations, and other partners to adopt and implement sustainability best practices.

#### Essential functions

Provide community-based outreach, education, and assistance to individuals and community organizations through campaigns, presentations, events, trainings, workshops, social media, and other related activities. Outreach and assistance will focus on one or more of the topics listed below:

##### Community sustainability:

- Provide support to sustainability-related education activities. This could include the development and implementation of environmental events, fairs, or workshops to educate individuals.
- Support outreach activities, including dissemination of messages via website and social networking.
- Create, update, and distribute educational materials, helping ensure that education materials are relevant, informative, and accurate.
- Conduct surveys to collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on knowledge gained and/or behavior change to more sustainable environmental practices.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

##### Energy conservation and green transportation:

- Promote energy conservation best practices that reduce energy usage at home, work, and school.
- Encourage reduction of vehicle miles traveled and improved air quality through complete streets planning, education and practices, safe routes to school initiatives, and education on multi-modal transportation, mobility options, and active living.
- Promote opportunities for adopting and expanding electric vehicle usage and charging infrastructure within communities.
- Promote emission reductions to community members through educational campaigns targeting practices and behaviors that alleviate air pollution (i.e., air alert education, car-sharing, public transit, biking, etc.), and those that contribute to air pollution (i.e., gas-powered lawn equipment, backyard fires, vehicle idling, single-occupancy vehicles, and low-efficiency wood-burning boilers/stoves/fireplaces).

##### Stormwater and forestry:

- Conduct outreach to increase awareness of stormwater and community forestry best practices that prevent or reduce water pollution and improve public lands.
- Conduct and engage community members in community stormwater and forestry initiatives such as rain garden installation, tree planting, and invasive species removal volunteer events.
- Provide outreach to communities on the harmful effects of chloride (i.e., road salt and water softener discharge), promote best management practices that reduce chloride application and discharge, and help host organizations in offering Smart Salting trainings in their communities.



## **Waste reduction and recycling:**

- Promote resources to strengthen community resilience through waste prevention, recycling, composting/organics management, and food waste prevention.
- Provide community outreach and education on local food production, food waste prevention, increasing the capture and distribution of reusable materials, preventing waste, and recycling.
- Support recycling efforts by providing on-site assessments, gathering baseline data, and conducting initial waste sorts, supporting recycling system setup, delivering resident education, and conducting post implementation data collection to track project effectiveness.

## **Marginal functions (max 340 hours)**

- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the energy conservation and green transportation, stormwater and forestry, and waste reduction and recycling position descriptions.

## **Energy conservation and green transportation member position**

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to the impacts of climate change through energy conservation and green transportation. Decrease building and vehicle energy use through benchmarking, assessment, engagement, and implementation of conservation and efficiency measures. Conduct behavior change campaigns and provide education on energy savings programs and environmentally conscious practices. Encourage the transition to clean energy sources for building operations and vehicles.

### **Essential functions**

- Encourage reduction of vehicle miles traveled through safe routes to school, biking and walking initiatives, improved vehicle and fleet efficiency, complete streets planning and implementation, education about multi-modal transportation, and facilitation of safety and infrastructure improvements.
- Promote and encourage the use of hybrid and electric vehicles through education and outreach and assist with developing infrastructure for electric vehicles, including charging stations.
- Provide electric vehicle information, including operation and maintenance cost savings, to fleet managers to encourage electric vehicle use in public fleets.
- Educate community members on residential energy-saving opportunities and energy assistance programs. Encourage individuals to adopt environmentally conscious behaviors at work and home.
- Assist with the collection, benchmarking, and reporting of data on energy use for public buildings using existing databases and tools such as B3 Benchmarking, WegoWise, ICLEI, and/or Energy Star.
- Identify and facilitate state/local government opportunities to finance energy audits, retrofit projects, and retro commissioning through the Guaranteed Energy Savings Program (GESp), Local Energy Efficiency Program (LEEP), Energy Savings Partnership, state master contracts, or other opportunities.
- Retrofit public structures to improve energy efficiency by implementing energy conservation measures such as HVAC/lighting systems scheduling, upgrading to more efficient lighting, installing smart power strips/sensors, exploring plug load management strategies, etc.
- Promote community educational campaigns that target practices and behaviors that alleviate air pollution (i.e., air alert education, carpooling, public transit, biking, car sharing), and those that contribute to air pollution (i.e., gas-powered lawn equipment, backyard fires, vehicle idling, single occupancy vehicles, and recreational fires and/or wood heaters).
- Measure and track air quality data.
- Conduct surveys to collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on knowledge gained and behavior changed.
- Help institutionalize ongoing savings in energy and emissions through tracking and follow-up, revised building and vehicle operations and maintenance practices, program marketing, and continued employee engagement.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

## Marginal functions (max 340 hours)

- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the community readiness and outreach, stormwater and forestry, and waste reduction and recycling position descriptions.

## Stormwater and forestry member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change by implementing stormwater and forestry best practices to improve water quality and public lands through activities such as rain garden maintenance, erosion control, invasive species removal, and native plantings. Assist in collecting, managing, and analyzing data by inventorying and assessing stormwater best management practices (BMPs), chloride sources and concentrations, and trees and forest health. Provide outreach opportunities to increase awareness and engage community members.

*Note: member activities cannot help organizations achieve or maintain compliance for stormwater permitting.*

## Essential functions

- Inventory or assess existing stormwater BMPs and/or assist with the development or improvement of stormwater BMP assessment(s) and performance plan(s). Manage associated data.
- Identify opportunities and implement green stormwater infrastructure practices, such as rain gardens, permeable pavement, green roofs, bioswales, etc.
- Provide community outreach, education, and guidance about the benefits of green stormwater infrastructure practices and pollution prevention.
- Conduct tree inventory and manage associated data.
- Develop or update community forest management plans, Emerald Ash Borer/pest management plans, invasive species management plans, tree care plans, etc.
- Identify and implement community forestry best practices, such as erosion control, invasive species management, etc.
- Help facilitate the equitable distribution of tree canopy by conducting research, planning, and coordinating community tree plantings.
- Improve public land through activities such as clearing natural debris, planting climate change resilient plants and trees, and removing invasive species.
- Identify local chloride sources and management strategies and provide outreach, education, and guidance on proper salt application.
- Incorporate best management practices for road and sidewalk salt prevention (i.e., improved snow removal), product storage, and application.
- Conduct surveys to collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on knowledge gained and/or behavior change to more sustainable environmental practices.
- Use resources/calculators (e.g., Minnesota Stormwater Manual, minimal impact design standards (MIDS) calculator, I-Tree) to quantify the benefits of green infrastructure practices (greenhouse gas reduction, pollutant load reductions, water quality, etc.).
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

## Marginal functions (max 340 hours)

- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the community readiness and outreach, energy conservation and green transportation, and waste reduction and recycling position descriptions.

## Waste reduction and recycling member position

Strengthen host site capacity and community resilience to impacts of climate change through waste reduction, recycling, prevention of wasted food, and composting/organics management. Support efforts to incorporate the framework of sustainable materials management into programs. Increase knowledge about ways to prevent food from being wasted and track the amount of food that is rescued and sent to a food recovery organization or composted. Educate community members, students, teachers, school administrators, and facility operations staff or members of the public on waste prevention and recycling best practices.

### Essential functions

- Implement or assist with initiatives to reduce or prevent waste generation, launch, or improve organization-wide recycling, and/or launch or improve organization-wide organics management programs.
- Research, conduct, and analyze waste characteristics at a school/organization/housing complex within the community to identify high priority opportunities and develop recommendations for improving waste reduction, recycling, or organics management.
- Support recycling efforts in multi-family complexes by providing on-site assessments, gathering baseline data, and conducting initial waste sorts, supporting recycling system setup, delivering resident education, and conducting post implementation data collection to track project effectiveness.
- Increase the capture and distribution of reusable materials (i.e., implement campus-wide move in/move out reuse system, textile or building material reuse, reusable dishware and utensils, clothing or book swaps, fix-it clinics, etc.).
- Research and inform the host site, partners, and community members of state, county, or city resources that can improve waste prevention, recycling, or organics programs.
- Work with local units of government and/or partners to establish programs to educate people on preventing food from being wasted.
- Implement and/or expand community outreach and education efforts related to the production and consumption of locally produced food. Include education on proper storage of produce, expiration dates and ways to minimize food from being wasted.
- Capture food that would otherwise have been wasted and bring to food rescue organizations to be distributed.
- Establish, support, or improve volunteer programs that support waste prevention, recycling, and composting (i.e., Master Recycler and Composter or Green Warrior program).
- Document best practices through case studies and/or “how to” guides.
- Conduct surveys to collect pre/post information from participants in trainings, events, workshops, etc., on knowledge gained and/or behavior change to more sustainable environmental practices.
- Mobilize volunteers to assist in the implementation of activities.

### Marginal functions (max 340 hours)

- Assist with additional sustainability-related projects as outlined in the energy conservation and green transportation, community readiness and outreach, and stormwater and forestry position descriptions.

# III. Program and host site responsibilities

## MPCA Minnesota GreenCorps responsibilities

The MPCA is responsible for providing oversight to the Minnesota GreenCorps program on a statewide level, including member management, host site management, and compliance with AmeriCorps regulations. The Minnesota GreenCorps program coordinators are employees of the MPCA.

### A. Member selection and management

- Interview and selection: The MPCA will accept and screen all applications for member positions. The MPCA reviews applications, selects candidates for interviews, and makes offers. The MPCA has the responsibility and authority to make the final selection decisions.
- Criminal history checks: Per AmeriCorps requirements, the MPCA will conduct a criminal history check on selected member applicants. This includes a national sex offender database search, and a state and FBI fingerprint-based check. Member participation in the Minnesota GreenCorps program is contingent upon passing these criminal history checks. Some positions also require passing a driving record check, administered by the MPCA. The host site is responsible for conducting any additional checks that the host site may require.
- Program requirements: Minnesota GreenCorps program staff will track and monitor each member's progress in completing program requirements. This includes monitoring members' service hours to ensure the member will complete the minimum hour requirement by the end of the program term.
- Oversight: While the host site will provide day-to-day supervision, Minnesota GreenCorps program staff will communicate regularly with the member to provide guidance and support and help ensure the tasks and activities of the project align with the position description and goals of the Minnesota GreenCorps program. The MPCA will schedule and conduct a minimum of one site visit during the year.
- Benefits: The MPCA is responsible for administering and overseeing member benefits including living allowance, health insurance, and workers' compensation. Program staff will assist qualifying members in receiving federal student loan forbearance, childcare assistance, and the AmeriCorps education award.
- Training: The MPCA is responsible for coordinating the logistics and scheduling member required orientation and quarterly trainings. The MPCA will reimburse qualified travel expenses for members to attend Minnesota GreenCorps required training.
- Mentorship: The MPCA will work with host sites to provide each Minnesota GreenCorps member with a mentor that will provide technical assistance and support to the member throughout the program year.
- Performance management: The MPCA will work closely with the host site supervisor regarding setting expectations and, if necessary, administering discipline for performance-related issues, including but not limited to lateness, difficulty meeting deadlines, failure to complete service position duties, etc.
- Grievance procedures: The MPCA will ensure that service concerns are resolved appropriately, following the grievance procedures outlined in the Member Service Agreement.
- Release from service: Only the MPCA's designated staff has the authority to suspend (and reinstate) and/or release a member for disciplinary or personal reasons or compelling personal circumstances. Host site supervisors must actively work with the MPCA to address performance issues before release from service is considered.
- Reasonable accommodation: A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment to a job, practice, or work environment that makes it possible for an individual with a physical or mental disability to perform the essential functions of a job. The MPCA must provide such accommodations, upon request by members with disabilities, unless doing so imposes undue financial or administrative burden.
- Site partnership termination: In the event that a host site environment becomes unsuitable for a member to continue their service work, the MPCA reserves the right to terminate the site partnership.
- Personnel file: The MPCA will maintain a personnel file for each member.

## **B. Site selection and management**

- Interviewing and selection: The MPCA will accept and screen all applications for host site positions., selecting organizations to interview. The MPCA has the responsibility and authority to extend an offer to an organization and makes the final selection decisions.
- Criminal history checks: Per AmeriCorps requirements, the MPCA will conduct a criminal history check on all host site supervisors. This includes a national sex offender database search, and a state and FBI fingerprint-based check. Host site participation in the Minnesota GreenCorps program is contingent upon passing these criminal history checks.
- Oversight: Program staff will communicate regularly with the host site supervisor to ensure the tasks and activities of the member project align with the position description and goals of the Minnesota GreenCorps program and the MPCA. Minnesota GreenCorps program staff will schedule and conduct at least one site visit with each host site. The site visit will review progress in relation to the expectations laid out in the Host Site Agreement, celebrate member success, and assist with problem solving.
- In-kind: The MPCA will monitor in-kind reports submitted to OnCorps by the site supervisor and will approve in-kind reports once proper documentation is received.

## **Host site responsibilities**

Host sites, acting through a designated host site supervisor, are responsible for the following:

### **A. Member management**

- Supervisor training: Supervisors are required to participate in a one-day orientation at the start of the program year to learn roles and responsibilities. Supervisors are expected to actively participate in webinars, topic area calls, site visits, and check-ins.
- Supervision: Provide day-to-day professional supervision of the Minnesota GreenCorps member(s), equating to an average of four hours per week, per member. Set a daily schedule with the Minnesota GreenCorps member to ensure a full-time member is serving approximately 40 hours/week, and then hold the member accountable to this set schedule. Supervisors must work from the office at least two days a week; those days should be days that the member is serving in person.
- Communication: Maintain open lines of communication with the Minnesota GreenCorps member, Minnesota GreenCorps program staff, and MPCA professional staff in relation to the member's role and performance.
- Member terminology: Minnesota GreenCorps members are not "employees," "interns," or "volunteers" of the site.
- Member training: Provide site orientation including a building tour, introductions to internal and external partners, explanation of site policies, rules of conduct, site expectations, safety procedures, etc. Invite the Minnesota GreenCorps member to participate in relevant on-site training and/or staff meetings. Help the member identify training opportunities relevant to their project and/or their career development. Minnesota GreenCorps host sites must contribute \$300 for member professional development (trainings, conference registration, networking events, or other opportunities). The professional development contribution is required as in-kind match; host sites must retain receipts as documentation.
- Time tracking and reporting: Verify the member's service hours by approving their timesheet online once every two weeks through the OnCorps Reports online system. Member timesheets must be approved by supervisors on time for the member to receive their living allowance. At the same frequency, submit in-kind supervisor time through the OnCorps Reports online system. Review and approve the member's progress reports and a final report that includes lessons learned and project measures for success.

- Performance management: Complete a mid-year and end-of-year member performance evaluation. Ensure that members comply with the terms of the Member Service Agreement. Host sites must be involved with resolving problems and may be involved in the grievance procedures. The host site supervisor must work closely with Minnesota GreenCorps program staff on disciplinary action. A site may not decide to terminate a member; only designated MPCA staff have the authority to suspend or release a Minnesota GreenCorps member from service for disciplinary reasons.
- Grievance procedures: Discuss challenges with members, engage in informal problem solving, and (if required) support the Grievance Procedures included in the Member Service Agreement.

**B. Service site**

- Work environment: Maintain a work environment that is welcoming, respectful, free of harassment and discrimination, and safe.
- Workspace: Provide a reasonable workspace at the host site for members to complete project tasks. This includes a desk, phone, computer, access to office supplies, access to a printer, copy machine, and internet, and materials needed for member projects. The host site is required to provide the members with a host site e-mail address.
- Teleservice: If teleservice is allowable within the perimeters of the Teleservice Policy, provide members with necessary equipment to operate from a remote location. The member and supervisor must complete a Teleservice Authorization form for approval. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to monitor both the member’s plans, progress, and outputs while they are serving off-site.
- Travel: If traveling is required for the member service activities, the host site must provide transportation for the member (access to fleet vehicles, mileage reimbursement, bus fare reimbursement, etc.).
- Safety: Provide appropriate safety training including employee right-to-know and emergency procedures and provide personal protective equipment.
- Reasonable accommodation: Members with mental or physical disabilities have the right to request reasonable accommodations through their host site. The host site should work closely with Minnesota GreenCorps program staff and the MPCA’s Human Resource Office to support and respond to such requests.
- Insurance: If the member is using vehicles belonging to the host site organization to conduct business on behalf of the Minnesota GreenCorps program, then the host sites’ vehicle insurance is primary. The host site organization directing the member activity is responsible for liability coverage, not the MPCA. Minnesota GreenCorps does not provide indemnification.

**In-kind contribution**

The MPCA does not charge a fee for participation in the Minnesota GreenCorps program. Per AmeriCorps regulations, host sites cannot provide financial contributions to the member; supplementing the member stipend or other costs of living (e.g., housing) is prohibited. However, host sites are expected to provide in-kind contributions in the form of supervision, operating costs, and professional development costs. The expected contribution for hosting one member is \$4,800, broken down into the following categories:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Estimated minimum contribution per member</b>
Supervision (at least 4 hours per week)	\$4,000
Operating costs (office space, internet connection, phone connection, computer purchase or rental, office equipment)	\$500
Professional development (trainings, conference registration, networking events, or other opportunities)	\$300

Host sites will be required to provide written documentation verifying all in-kind contributions, including how expenses were calculated and maintain any source documentation. In-kind contributions cannot be provided from a federal source of funds unless permission has been provided from the granting federal agency.

# IV. Member information

## Eligibility and qualifications

### Minimum qualifications

- Must be a minimum of 18 years or older.
- Must be a U.S. Citizen, U.S. National, or a lawful permanent resident of the U.S.
- Must be eligible to serve an AmeriCorps service term and make the commitment to complete the 11-month (1700 hour) service term.
- Must have a two-year associate degree or completion of sophomore year in a four-year college program.
- Must have a demonstrated interest in the environment and service and community work.

### Preferred qualifications

- Ability to build and maintain relationships.
- Ability to work well independently and on diverse teams.
- Ability to take initiative and effectively manage projects.
- Ability to research and organize information.
- Effective communication, presentation, and writing skills.
- Functional computer skills: word processing, spreadsheet, database management.

### Physical requirements

- Most positions are primarily based in an office setting and require sitting, standing, and operating a computer and telephone.
- Most positions require light to moderate lifting, bending, stooping, kneeling, and carrying.
- Some (limited) positions require the use of hand tools and/or power tools (e.g., chainsaws). Personal protective equipment and safety training will be provided by the host site.
- Some (limited) positions require the ability to work outdoors in adverse weather conditions, such as wind, rain, and high or low temperatures on uneven terrain for up to 8 hours at a time.

### Additional requirements

- Positions that perform driving require a valid driver's license and ability to pass a driving record check. Some positions require access to a personal vehicle for transportation.
- Per AmeriCorps regulations, all positions require the successful completion of a criminal history check, including an FBI fingerprint check.

**While Minnesota GreenCorps members will be selected for placement based on their qualifications and commitment to service, host sites must understand that members may not necessarily bring highly specialized skills to their position.** The members are participating in the Minnesota GreenCorps program to give back to their communities and gain valuable skills and experience in the environmental field. Host sites will need to invest time in on-the-job training for the members.

The MPCA and the Minnesota GreenCorps program do not discriminate with regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, familial status, gender identity, gender expression, or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law. Reasonable accommodations provided upon request. The MPCA supports equal opportunity and affirmative action.

## Member compensation and benefits

Members earn a living allowance disbursed every two weeks, health insurance with premium paid, childcare assistance, free mental health services with counseling, student loan forbearance on eligible loans, and an education award for education expenses or qualified student loans. Members receive training from the MPCA, develop green job skills, gain professional experience, network with environmental professionals, and are paired with a mentor who provides ongoing guidance.

## Member code of conduct

### Policies and procedures

Members are expected to satisfactorily perform the functions of the position as described in the position description. Members are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined by Minnesota GreenCorps and adhere to the policies, procedures, and code of conduct of their host site, including, but not limited to confidentiality policies, internet policies, dress code, and other behavior. Members may not displace an employee, volunteer, or position at their service site.

### Attendance

Members are expected to:

- Arrive and depart from the host site on time following the set schedule. Members are responsible for their transportation to and from the host site each day; commute time does not count as service.
- If teleserving, start the service day on time following the set schedule. Host sites are encouraged to allow the member to serve remotely one day, but no more than two days, per 40-hour service week.
- Notify the site supervisor if they will be late or are sick, obtain prior approval for scheduled absences, and notify Minnesota GreenCorps program staff for absences longer than one week. Approved time away is not counted as service hours.
- Arrive on time and fully participate in required Minnesota GreenCorps training.
- Arrive on time and fully participate in required host site trainings and meetings.
- Abide by policy regarding breaks and lunch; lunch does not count as service hours.
- Serve approximately 40 hours per week as reported on the approved timesheet.

### Reporting

Members are expected to:

- Report service hours on timesheets daily. Submit timesheets into the OnCorps online system for supervisor approval at the end of each time period (every two weeks).
- Submit progress reports with accomplishment data and narrative updates. Program staff will work with the member and host site to provide tools for tracking and reporting data.
- Provide additional information to program staff as requested, including the completion of surveys.

### Training

Members are expected to arrive on time to Minnesota GreenCorps training sessions, including a required orientation at the start of the program year, and required quarterly trainings throughout the program year. Members are asked to be respectful of trainers, turn their cell phones to silent, and be engaged and responsive as participants.

### Communication

Members are expected to check their email daily and respond in a timely manner. Members must communicate with Minnesota GreenCorps program staff regarding extended absences, contact updates, or site issues or concerns. The Minnesota GreenCorps Program Coordinator will raise serious concerns and policy violations to MPCA Human Resources.



## Professionalism

Members are representatives of their host site organization, community, Minnesota GreenCorps, the MPCA, and AmeriCorps during their term of service and are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. This includes wearing appropriate attire, communicating professionally, responding to constructive feedback, limiting cell phone use to breaks, and using the internet professionally.

## Prohibited service activities

While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities, members may not engage in prohibited service activities, CFR § 2520.65.

- A. Attempting to influence legislation.
- B. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes.
- C. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing.
- D. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements.
- E. Engaging in partisan political activities or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office.
- F. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials.
- G. Engaging in religious instruction; conducting worship services; providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship; constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship; maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship; or engaging in any form of religious proselytization.
- H. Providing a direct benefit to: (1) a business organized for profit, (2) a labor union, (3) a partisan political organization, (4) a non-profit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative, and (5) an organization engaged in the religious activities, unless AmeriCorps assistance is not used to support those activities.
- I. Conducting a voter registration drive or using AmeriCorps funds to conduct a voter registration drive.
- J. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services.
- K. Census activities. AmeriCorps members and volunteers associated with AmeriCorps grants may not engage in census activities during service hours. Being a census taker during service hours is categorically prohibited. Census-related activities (e.g., promotion of the Census, education about the importance of the Census) do not align with AmeriCorps State and National objectives. What members and volunteers do on their own time is up to them, consistent with program policies about outside employment and activities.
- L. Election and polling activities. AmeriCorps members may not provide services for election or polling locations or in support of such activities.
- M. Such other activities as AmeriCorps may prohibit.

## Fundraising restrictions

- A. AmeriCorps members may raise resources directly in support of program service activities.
- B. Examples of fundraising activities AmeriCorps members may perform include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - 1. Seeking donations of books from companies and individuals for a program in which volunteers teach children to read.
  - 2. Writing a grant proposal to a foundation to secure resources to support the training of volunteers.
  - 3. Securing supplies and equipment from the community to enable volunteers to help build houses for low-income individuals.

4. Securing financial resources from the community to assist in launching or expanding a program that provides social services to the members of the community and is delivered, in whole or in part, through the members of a community-based organization.
  5. Seeking donations from alumni of the program for specific service projects being performed by current members.
- C. AmeriCorps members may not:
1. Raise funds for living allowances or for an organization's general (as opposed to project) operating expenses or endowment.
  2. Write a grant application to AmeriCorps or to any other Federal agency.

An AmeriCorps member may spend no more than 10% of their originally agreed-upon term of service performing fundraising activities, per CFR § 2520.40.

## **Nonduplication/nondisplacement**

- A. Nonduplication: AmeriCorps assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. And, unless the requirements of the nondisplacement clause (below) are met, AmeriCorps assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides, per CFR § 2540.100.
- B. Nondisplacement: A Minnesota GreenCorps AmeriCorps member is not an employee or volunteer of the host site organization. A Minnesota GreenCorps member may not displace an employee of the host site, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits. A Minnesota GreenCorps member may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any: currently employed worker, employee who recently resigned or was discharged, employee who is subject to a reduction in workforce or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures, employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick), employee who is on strike or is being locked out.
1. An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance.
  2. An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance.
  3. A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
  4. A participant in a program receiving AmeriCorps assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
  5. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that:
    - i. Will supplant the hiring of employed workers.
    - ii. Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall right pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
  6. A participant in any program receiving assistance under this chapter may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any:
    - i. Presently employed worker.
    - ii. Employee who recently resigned or was discharged.
    - iii. Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
    - iv. Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick).
    - v. Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

# V. Host site application information

## Eligibility

Eligible host sites include:

- Government entities (city, county, regional, state, tribal).
- School districts.
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. *(For-profit entities are not eligible)*
- Not for profit institutions of higher education.

Other requirements include:

- Host sites must have at least one full-time paid employee. The minimum supervision requirement is an average of at least four (4) hours per week for the duration of the program year. Supervisors must undergo AmeriCorps required criminal history checks including an FBI fingerprint check.
- Host sites are required to provide reasonable workspace for the members to complete their projects tasks, including a dedicated desk, phone, computer, and email account.
- If traveling is required for member service activities, the host site must provide transportation for the member (access to fleet vehicles, mileage reimbursement, bus fare reimbursement, etc.).
- Host sites must contribute \$300 to member professional development (training, conference registration, networking events, or other opportunities). This contribution is required as in-kind match.
- Members may not engage in AmeriCorps prohibited service activities. Member activities may not include assisting organizations with meeting requirements, coming into compliance, or avoiding fines from local, state, or federal laws or regulations. AmeriCorps members cannot displace or replace employees.

Please review the host site requirement checklist in Appendix B to make sure your organization can meet the requirements for hosting a Minnesota GreenCorps member.

## Instructions

If your organization is interested in hosting a Minnesota GreenCorps member, **please complete the application available online at [www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps); submit the completed application electronically by 5:00 p.m. Central Time on Wednesday, March 13, 2024 to [mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us](mailto:mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us).**

Application components:

- Application questions completely answered, including a completed service plan.
- Letters of support from any identified partners. (optional)\*

*\*Letters of support will be accepted at the time of application and throughout the selection process.*

Current or past host sites wishing to participate in the 2024-2025 program year must submit a new application proposing a member project that is unique from past member positions. Or, if the project is similar to past member initiatives, an explanation justifying continued organizational and/or community need. Past participation as a host site does not guarantee selection for subsequent years of the program. Previous site performance, including timeliness of in-kind and member reporting, site visit reviews, and communication with Minnesota GreenCorps program staff will be taken into consideration.

Please submit one application for each member position request. In an effort to allocate Minnesota GreenCorps member positions and resources to various communities, most organizations will only receive one member placement per year.

## Host site selection process

1. After the application period closes, a committee of MPCA staff will review and score applications using the established criteria, below.
2. Host site semi-finalists will be selected for each topic area and may be contacted for a MS Teams interview in late March or early April. Host site staff identified as on-site supervisors are expected to participate in the interview.
3. Based on application and interview, finalist host sites will be recommended to MPCA leadership for selection.
4. It is anticipated that applicants will be notified of their status in early May, contingent on AmeriCorps funding. Selection of host site projects may be contingent upon the applicant providing additional information or making service plan revisions.
5. Before entering into a grant agreement with the MPCA, host sites must provide proof of 501(c)(3) status and a board resolution if applicable.

## Program performance measures

Host site organizations will be selected in part for their commitment and ability to contribute to program performance measures. The service project may address any of the performance measures in any of the categories. **Projects must align with at least one performance measure outlined below.** In addition, MN GreenCorps prioritizes projects based in or that benefit environmental justice areas and/or mobilizes volunteers on community service projects planned and carried out by MN GreenCorps members.

### Air

- Improve air quality: members will implement measures and education aimed at reducing air pollutants by reducing vehicle miles traveled, supporting vehicle electrification, and/or promoting green transportation.
- Conserve Energy: members will conduct outreach and/or apply energy conservation measures to public buildings and/or homes. Retrofitted structures will result in reduced energy consumption and/or reduced energy costs.

### Land & water

- Reduce water pollution: members will implement nutrient reduction efforts targeting phosphorus, total suspended solids, chloride (i.e., road salt and water softeners), etc.
- Improve habitat: members will implement best management practices to treat and improve public lands through activities such as removing invasive species, planting climate change resilient trees, seeding prairie, etc.

### Waste reduction

- Reduce food waste through organics recycling: members will implement residential or institutional waste prevention or organics recycling resulting in pounds of organics prevented or diverted from the waste stream.
- Divert waste: members will integrate sustainable waste management practices into daily operations at host site and community facilities to recycle, compost, prevent, or otherwise divert material from the waste stream.

### Outreach & education

- Educate or train individuals: members will educate and/or train individuals on environmental stewardship to improve land, air, and water quality.
- Motivate individuals to change behavior: members will provide education and training that will result in individuals changing behavior or making a promise or pledge to change behavior to lessen adverse environmental impact.
- Mobilize and/or engage volunteers: members will recruit, train, and/or engage community members in local service projects.

## Criteria

As a statewide program, Minnesota GreenCorps seeks host site organizations from all areas of the state. The MPCA will consider the mix of organization type, geographic location, and other demographic factors in deciding the composition of host sites. The MPCA reserves the right to not award host sites in any of the topic areas.

Host site applications will be reviewed using the following established criteria.

<p><b>Project and performance measures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member activities clearly defined.</li> <li>Project aligns with Minnesota GreenCorps pre-scoped position description and program goals.</li> <li>Ability of the proposed activities to meet program performance measures.</li> </ul>	35 points
<p><b>Organizational capacity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizational mission or goals align with Minnesota GreenCorps.</li> <li>Qualified supervisor with related expertise to provide project support.</li> <li>Placement does not replace, displace, or duplicate existing position.</li> </ul>	25 points
<p><b>Community involvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for broader community involvement.</li> <li>Project engages, focuses on, or serves environmental justice areas per the <a href="#">EJ Story map</a>.</li> <li>Service activities target new communities that have not recently received Minnesota GreenCorps assistance.</li> </ul>	25 points
<p><b>Current or past host sites</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How proposed member position is unique from past positions or a justifiable continued need.</li> <li>Previous site performance, including timeliness of in-kind and member reporting, site visit reviews, member support, and communication.</li> </ul> <p><i>*New host sites automatically receive 15 points</i></p>	15 points
<b>Total</b>	100 points

## Grant agreement

Each host site must formally enter into a grant agreement. The agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation of the project. The recipient is expected to read and comply with all conditions of the agreement. If selected, host sites are required to be a registered vendor in SWIFT and will sign the grant agreement using DocuSign. See a sample Host Site Agreement on the MN GreenCorps' website at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps>.

## Questions

Please thoroughly review this document, along with the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) in Appendix A. Questions may be directed to [mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us](mailto:mngreencorps.pca@state.mn.us). As questions arise, an updated FAQ will be available online at [www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/mngreencorps). All questions received will be listed on the FAQ. Questions will not be answered individually.

# Appendix A. Frequently asked questions

## ***Are Minnesota GreenCorps members considered employees of our organization?***

No, Minnesota GreenCorps members are not to be considered employees or volunteers of the host site, although they will be provided with office space, computer, and other support services. They should be referred to as “members” and the activities they carry out as “service.”

## ***What if we want to apply for Minnesota GreenCorps members for projects other than the four position types?***

Projects must align with one of the four position descriptions outlined in this document. There may be other opportunities for different projects in future years.

## ***If we are selected, does the assigned member work on all four topic areas or do we select one topic area?***

Host sites are expected to select one topic area for the project that a member will carry out and identify that specific position type on their application. All positions allow for marginal function service activities where a member can assist with other sustainability-related tasks in the host community (not to exceed 20% or 340 service hours of the member’s time).

## ***Is the expectation that the project fulfills all or most of the listed essential functions?***

It is not required that the project fulfills all or most of the listed essential functions of a position description; the essential and marginal functions are guidelines for project tasks. However, the service project must align with at least one outlined performance measure; alignment with two or more measures is encouraged.

## ***What is the financial commitment to host?***

The MPCA does not charge a fee for participation in the Minnesota GreenCorps program. The financial commitment of the host site is to provide in-kind contributions in the form of supervision, office space, internet, telephone, vehicle, or travel reimbursement (when required for service activities) and professional development costs associated with hosting a member. Host sites are expected to provide any needed materials or funds for the Minnesota GreenCorps members to implement their project activities.

## ***Will money be provided to the Minnesota GreenCorps members by the MPCA to implement their projects?***

No, host sites are expected to provide any needed materials or funds for the Minnesota GreenCorps members to implement their project activities. The MPCA pays the members’ living allowances but does not have funds available to support projects.

## ***Will host sites be responsible for training their Minnesota GreenCorps members?***

Yes, the majority of the training and ongoing supervision for day-to-day service will be provided by host sites. Members will be given basic training in AmeriCorps and program policies, procedures, and project topic areas quarterly, arranged by the MPCA. Professional staff will also be available to provide guidance as “mentors” for Minnesota GreenCorps members.

## ***How much time will it take to supervise a Minnesota GreenCorps member?***

The minimum requirement is an average of at least 4 hours per week of a professional staff’s time supervising or supporting a Minnesota GreenCorps member. Supervision time may exceed this minimum requirement depending on project and member needs.

## ***What sort of reporting requirements will host site supervisors have?***

Host site supervisors must review and approve all member project reports, including progress and final reports. Supervisors must also approve member timesheets in OnCorps Reports every two weeks and submit their own supervision timesheets every two weeks. Supervisors must also submit in-kind documentation and report in-kind expenditures to the MPCA.

## ***Our organization is too small to host a Minnesota GreenCorps member. Can we submit a joint application with other local organizations and share the Minnesota GreenCorps member with them?***

It is possible for a small organization to involve another organization(s) in an application for a Minnesota GreenCorps member, but one organization must bear full responsibility for supervision, reporting, time-tracking, and other aspects of the Minnesota GreenCorps members’ work. Partnerships must be clearly defined.

***If we hosted a Minnesota GreenCorps member this current program year, can we apply again?***

Yes. Dependent on future funding and a continued program, current and/or past host sites can apply for Minnesota GreenCorps members in future years. Past performance will be taken into consideration.

***We would like to apply for two members. Would we be more likely to be considered if we only asked for one?***

Applying for more than one member does not make you any more or less likely to be selected as a host site. You might, however, be selected as a host site but only awarded only one member. In an effort to allocate Minnesota GreenCorps member positions and resources to various communities, organization have historically not received more than two member positions. Organizations must submit an application for each member position request.

***Can Minnesota GreenCorps members assist businesses?***

An AmeriCorps member cannot provide a direct benefit to a for-profit entity. However, on a limited basis, members may assist businesses owners who are community members with environmental practices when the primary goal is to improve the environment/community. Members may not assist businesses with coming into compliance or avoiding fines from any local, state, or federal environmental laws.

***Can Minnesota GreenCorps members use power tools?***

Yes, Minnesota GreenCorps members can use power tools such as chainsaws. The host site organization is responsible for providing safety training and personal protective equipment.

***Are members covered under liability insurance?***

While Minnesota GreenCorps members are covered by AmeriCorps health insurance for personal needs and under the State Workers Compensation Plan for service-related injury or illness, the host site organization directing the activity is responsible for liability coverage, not the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Minnesota GreenCorps does not provide indemnification.

***How does the member selection process work? Will we be able to review potential candidates?***

The MPCA administers the recruitment, application, and selection process for Minnesota GreenCorps members. Time constraints prevent active participation by host sites in the member selection process; sites do not participate in reviewing potential candidates or making selection decisions. Host sites are encouraged to promote member service opportunities in their community, invite candidates to apply, and provide recommendations. This does not guarantee that that member will be selected and placed with that host site.

***Do we need to have our own 501(c)(3) status in order to apply?***

No, organizations do not need to provide proof of nonprofit status with their application. However, selected host sites may be required to provide proof of 501(c)(3) status prior to entering into a grant agreement.

***Do we need a Board resolution in support of the MN GreenCorps position with our application?***

No, organizations governed by a board do not need to provide a resolution with their application. However, selected host sites will be required to provide a board resolution prior to entering into a grant agreement with the MPCA.

## Appendix B. Host site requirement checklist

**Host site applicants:** Please use the following checklist to verify your ability to participate in the Minnesota GreenCorps program. Eligible host sites must be able to respond “yes” to all of the following:

Host site requirements	Meets requirements
Host site is an eligible entity (government entity, school district, not for profit institution of higher education, or 501(c)(3) non-profit).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site has at least one full-time paid employee.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site has adequate space for the member including a phone with messaging, access to a computer that has internet and email, place to save work files electronically, access to printer and copier, is accessible to people with disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site understands and ensures that the member is not replacing the work of staff.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site supervisor will set a schedule with the member.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Host site will provide on-site training to member, including a comprehensive orientation during the first week the member is on-site.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor is able to meet with the member a minimum of 4 hours per week.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will ensure Minnesota GreenCorps member is not involved in any general site fundraising or other activities prohibited by AmeriCorps (i.e., partisan activities, religious activities, labor organizing, lobbying, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will furnish an in-kind documentation letter when requested; instructions will be provided.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor will approve/submit all reporting on time which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member timesheets bi-weekly.</li> <li>• Supervisor in-kind hours bi-weekly.</li> <li>• Progress reports.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Supervisor can attend host site orientation in September.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO



# Appendix C. Sample board resolution

WHEREAS \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organization) has applied to host an AmeriCorps member from the Minnesota GreenCorps, a program of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), for the 2024-2025 program year; and

WHEREAS, if the MPCA selects \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organization), the organization is committed to implementing the proposed project as described in the host site application, and in accordance with pre-scoped position description; and

WHEREAS the MPCA requires that \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organization) enter into a host site agreement with the MPCA that identifies the terms, conditions, roles, and responsibilities;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT \_\_\_\_\_ (name of organization) hereby agrees to enter into and sign a host site agreement with the MPCA to carry out the member activities specified therein and to comply with all of the terms, conditions, and matching provisions of the host site agreement and authorizes and directs \_\_\_\_\_ (name of a position) to sign the grant agreement on its behalf.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Print name of signing officer*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Title*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of an officer with our governing body*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date your governing body agreed to this resolution*

## Sample community readiness and outreach service plan

Member activities	Percentage of time
<p>COMMUNICATIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop communications materials such as scripts, articles, and social media posts for wide dissemination via the City’s existing communications networks including television, print materials, and e-newsletters. Communications materials will be designed to increase citywide awareness of energy efficiency and organics programs.</li> <li>Identify partnerships and avenues for greater dissemination of information.</li> </ul>	25%
<p>OUTREACH/EDUCATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop educational materials such as one pagers, presentations, and mailings for energy efficiency and organic recycling campaigns. Deliver education covering food storage, meal planning, smart thermostat programming, solar installation and financing, efficient appliance upgrades, etc.</li> <li>Create energy efficiency and organics recycling education starter kits.</li> <li>Identify community groups, events, and locations to disseminate information including mobile home communities, and residents living in the City’s areas of environmental justice.</li> </ul>	35%
<p>SURVEYS &amp; PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an outreach plan to gather resident awareness and involvement in sustainability programs.</li> <li>Develop and implement surveys to evaluate resident knowledge of and/or participation in existing energy efficiency programs. Analyze results and develop recommendations on how to improve existing programs to increase awareness and participation.</li> <li>Develop and implement surveys to evaluate resident participation in the organics drop off program. Analyze results and incorporate findings to create a pilot program modeled after the food waste reduction challenge focused on meal planning, budget impact, and focused marketing. Identify barriers to program participation, implement methods to attract new participants, measure progress, and make program modifications.</li> </ul>	25%
<p>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit and organize a volunteer pool of residents and stakeholders, identifying volunteer areas of interest, maintaining a master list of volunteers, and funneling volunteers into relevant training and opportunities.</li> <li>Organize regular volunteer events and mobilize volunteers to staff events, conduct engagement, and participate in outreach in the areas of organics, energy efficiency, and natural resources.</li> <li>Create a “train the trainer” program to increase volunteer capacity to educate and engage on sustainability topics.</li> </ul>	15%

# Sample energy conservation and green transportation service plan

Member activities	Percentage of time
<p><b>PUBLIC BUILDING ENERGY BENCHMARKING &amp; RETROFITS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain familiarity with B3 Benchmarking and Energy Star Portfolio Manager to review data integrity, analyze data, and report on energy use for public buildings.</li> <li>Develop an annual report for public building managers to understand their energy use and ways to improve public building efficiency.</li> <li>Update the annual map of building energy use and develop a presentation and report for department managers.</li> <li>Review, prioritize, and implement energy efficiency measures in two public buildings - Central Park and City Hall. Potential retrofits include: updated lighting systems and building automation systems, assessment of onsite renewable energy potential, and heating system updates.</li> </ul>	45%
<p><b>CITY FLEET EFFICIENCY:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track quarterly vehicle fuel use to quantify, analyze, and report on vehicle fuel efficiency miles traveled and miles per gallon to inform progress on emission reduction and efficiency goals using City’s Fleet Dashboard GIS product.</li> <li>Review the vehicle reservation system to increase vehicle pool efficacy and gather information from users.</li> <li>Conduct vehicle purchase research.</li> <li>Review and prioritize new EV charger installation opportunities on public property and participate in procurement and installation of 4 EV chargers. Develop an implementation plan for city equipment electrification.</li> </ul>	20%
<p><b>COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop community partnerships that promote the use of multi-modal transportation.</li> <li>Conduct research on the opportunity to introduce an EV carshare program for community residents, including identifying funding pathways and potential community partners and users.</li> <li>Develop an engagement plan and a pathway to implementation.</li> </ul>	20%
<p><b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a communications and engagement plan that outlines promotion strategies for community programs such as Home Energy Squad visits, home rehabilitation loans for low-income residents, and behavior changes such as hybrid and electric vehicle purchasing and increased walking and bicycling.</li> <li>Plan and implement 4 outreach events engaging approximately 200 community residents.</li> <li>Document results and lessons learned that can inform and benefit other communities.</li> </ul>	15%

# Sample stormwater and forestry service plan

Member activities	Percentage of time
<p>INVENTORY:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inventory non-recorded city stormwater best management practices (BMPs) and audit existing stormwater BMPs.</li> <li>Conduct a landowner driven BMP inventory.</li> <li>Update inventory information in the city database, map, and share online.</li> </ul>	20%
<p>CHLORIDE REDUCTION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update and/or develop educational tools and conduct outreach to public property owners and community residents to reduce chloride application.</li> <li>Review historic salt application data and work with public works staff to reduce the application of road salt through Smart Salt Training and by completing the Winter Maintenance Assessment tool.</li> <li>Document historical trends of the City’s deicing material usage to help establish a 5-year plan of how to best reduce salt usage through implemented BMPs.</li> </ul>	25%
<p>OUTREACH/EDUCATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop educational materials such as one pagers, flyers, and pamphlets on stormwater BMPs and tree care.</li> <li>Conduct outreach and education to 200-250 public property owners/managers and affordable housing residents in vulnerable communities about the proper application, assessment, and science behind green infrastructure such as stormwater BMPs, alternative turf, and urban trees.</li> <li>Engage residents in information sessions, educational activities, and participatory landscape planning, installation, and maintenance projects in their communities.</li> </ul>	25%
<p>SURVEYS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop pre/post surveys to evaluate participant knowledge change and/or behavior change.</li> <li>Conduct surveys of participants and stakeholders, analyze results, and make outreach/education recommendations based on findings.</li> </ul>	10%
<p>VOLUNTEER EVENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan and implement volunteer events to improve 5 acres of public lands.</li> <li>Mobilize 50-100 volunteers and organize and implement the installation and/or maintenance of 25 community rain gardens, pollinator gardens, and boulevard bioswales on public lands during 10 neighborhood events.</li> <li>Develop materials to publicize an Arbor Day tree planting event, recruit and mobilize 50 volunteers, and plan and execute the community planting of 200 trees.</li> </ul>	20%

# Sample waste reduction and recycling service plan

Member activities	Percentage of time
<p>FOOD DONATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review food donor, receiving agencies, and volunteer training materials (content, best practices, and branding) for Meal Connect (Food Rescue App) onboarding. Customize materials to local food rescue organization’s region and activities.</li> <li>Become proficient in the use of the MealConnect platform and its reporting capabilities. Make a how to guide and train other power users.</li> <li>Identify new partners for participation and provide appropriate training.</li> </ul>	20%
<p>SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research current Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP) policies and how reuse/reduction could be added to the current policies.</li> <li>Give a presentation to the employee Sustainability Team and provide reuse/reduction education to employees through new employee packets, emails, and Lunch and Learn opportunities.</li> <li>Develop and implement a pre- and post- employee survey to measure knowledge gained regarding EPP.</li> </ul>	20%
<p>REUSE FIX-IT CLINIC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a program for the community (target of 50 resident attendees) to work with volunteers on fixing household items, find and secure a location for 3 separate events, recruit 10 volunteers with varying expertise in repair (tailoring, electrician, mechanical, etc.), advertise, and implement the events.</li> <li>Establish a way to measure the weight of materials repaired.</li> <li>Develop and administer a survey to participants about their experience, behavior change, and items fixed/not fixed.</li> <li>Create a manual on how to hold the fix-it clinics for future reference; manual will be shared with other counties that are interested in holding fix-it clinics.</li> </ul>	25%
<p>MULTI-FAMILY RECYCLING:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a database of multi-family facilities.</li> <li>Conduct surveys and mini waste sorts to develop 'pre-project' baseline, gather hauler data, and conduct 'post-project' mini waste sorts to determine effectiveness/success of recycling initiatives.</li> <li>Create and distribute educational resources and provide on-site recycling system setup in at least 4 multi-family homes. Trouble-shoot any challenges presented by haulers and/or residents.</li> <li>Mobilize volunteers to assist.</li> <li>Document results and lessons learned that can inform and benefit other communities.</li> </ul>	35%



## ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

<b>Meeting Date</b>	February 12, 2024
<b>Agenda Item</b>	E-3
<b>Attachment</b>	See notes below.
<b>Submitted By</b>	Hannah Lynch, Community Development Coordinator / Planner

<b>Item</b>	Bee Lawn Discussion
<b>Description</b>	The City of Falcon Heights was recently contacted by Kari Logan from Minnehaha Falls Landscape about an educational opportunity for the residents of Falcon Heights. Russ Henry and James Wolfin are bee lawn experts and are working to educate people on the benefits.
<b>Budget Impact</b>	None.
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	Meet the Bee Lawn Presenters Article - Protect Pollinators
<b>Action(s) Requested</b>	Staff requests Commissioners discuss the potential to hold a bee-friendly lawn educational event for residents.



75% of the world's plants and 30% of human food crops depend on bees and other pollinators to reproduce

**Encourage residents of your community to feed and protect pollinators by installing no-mow bee friendly lawn at their home, church, school or business.**

Bee lawns are grown with blooming ground cover plants such as clover, thyme, and self-heal combined with no-mow fescue grass mix, making a lawn more appealing visually than a standard grass lawn, while also being attractive to bees and other pollinators. Show your community how to reduce mowing costs and eliminating the need for irrigation, fertilizers, and pesticides. **Prepare for spring and summer of 2024.**

**BOOK RUSS HENRY AND JAMES WOLFIN FOR A ONE-HOUR BEE LAWN PRESENTATION FOR YOUR CITY STAFF OR COMMUNITY GROUP NOW!**



**About Russ Henry**

Russ is a landscaper, naturalist, gardener, educator, and owner of Minnehaha Falls Landscaping. His passion for pollinators led him to become an early adopter of bee lawns. For over a decade, Russ has guided his company in bee lawn installation and maintenance and is a bee lawn leader in the landscape industry. He is the founder of Bee Safe Minneapolis, a community initiative to protect pollinators. He's a writer and presenter for the Minnesota State Horticultural Society and speaks across the Twin Cities, including the Minnesota State Fair and the Minneapolis Home & Garden Show. Russ's work has been featured in the Star Tribune and publications around the country.



**About James Wolfin**

James Wolfin is a Conservation Specialist with [Twin City Seed Company](#) where he aims to bring more visibility to bee lawns and other eco-friendly options for the lawn and garden to residents and land managers. James has been working in landscaping for the conservation of natural resources and pollinators for over a decade, including experiences with Metro Blooms, the University of Minnesota, and the University of Delaware, and helping administer the Minnesota State Program, Lawns to Legumes.

**To book Russ Henry and James Wolfin for a bee lawn presentation, call Kari Logan at 612-998-0955 or email [klogan@minnehahafallslandscape.com](mailto:klogan@minnehahafallslandscape.com).**

## Protect pollinators and your precious time

There are better ways to spend your spring and summer than mowing the lawn. The noise, smell of exhaust fumes, heat, and humidity add up to a less than pleasant chore. How many perfect Saturday afternoons have we sacrificed to appease the fickle gods of sod? Time-wasting may not be the only concern when it comes to lawn maintenance. We also need to ask ourselves if we're doing right by the environment in the little patch of Earth, we call our lawn. Many homeowners are choosing to reclaim their weekends and support wildlife through a transition to no-mow bee lawns.

We need bees. Seventy-five percent of the world's plants and 30% of human food crops depend on bees and other pollinators to reproduce. The way we manage lawns and landscapes can have a profound impact on bee health. Common landscaping practices such as short



mowing and pesticide use leave little support for bees in our landscapes.

All of our damage to the environment adds up. Many species of bees and other pollinators are facing extinction. Loss of habitat, and pesticides have led to rapidly rising rates of extinction. According to the United Nations, current species extinction rates are 100 to 1000 times higher than normal due to human activity. The good news is that you can help bees, butterflies,

and save your weekends at the same time.

The easiest way to protect pollinators at home is to replace your regular lawn with a bee lawn. Bee friendly lawns are grown with a mix of blooming ground cover combined with no-mow grasses. Bee lawns are visually appealing with blossoms throughout the season, while also providing food for bees and other pollinators.



## Your yard can **BEE** the change

“We have an all you can eat bee buffet in our backyard! Weeding has decreased, and the yard is now functional and beautiful. Our bee lawn and native plants let nature to be itself.” – Mark Van Holland



## Creating A Bee Lawn

### Transitioning To A Bee Friendly Lawn

There are two basic methods – moderate and rapid – for transitioning regular grass lawns to bee lawns. Both methods utilize the same seed mix. To ensure quality, you'll want to purchase bee lawn mix from a Twin Cities-based seed vendor. Make sure the mix you purchase includes Dutch White Clover, Self-Heal,

Creeping Thyme, and at least four types of no-mow fescue grass.

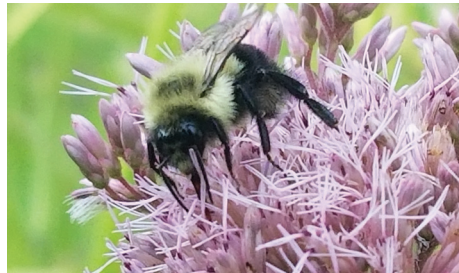
There has never been a better time to support local pollinators by transitioning to a bee lawn. Bee lawns are perfect way to enjoy a nature-filled pollinator paradise outside your front door, and get your weekends back!

### Moderate Transition

If you are patient, moderate transitions tend to cost a little less and require more time to provide habitat.

Here is how it's done:

- Three times per season (early spring, late summer, early fall) aerate using a core aerator and over-seed your existing lawn with pollinator seed mix.
- Run aerator 2-3 times over all parts of the lawn.
- Seed according to instructions on the bag, usually about 4 lb/1000 sq ft.
- Combine this with organic soy-based fertilizer and our special liquid compost extract to give the seedlings everything they need to get growing.
- Watering is optional for the moderate transition method because seed sprouts in holes left by the aerator.
- Repeat seasonally until clover, self-heal, and thyme are well established.
- Moderate transitions can be started any time during the spring, summer, or early fall. Moderate transition takes 1-2 seasons till the lawn is no-mow ready and filled with blooms for bees.



### Rapid Transition

The rapid transition method for installing a bee lawn can happen over the course of a few weeks.

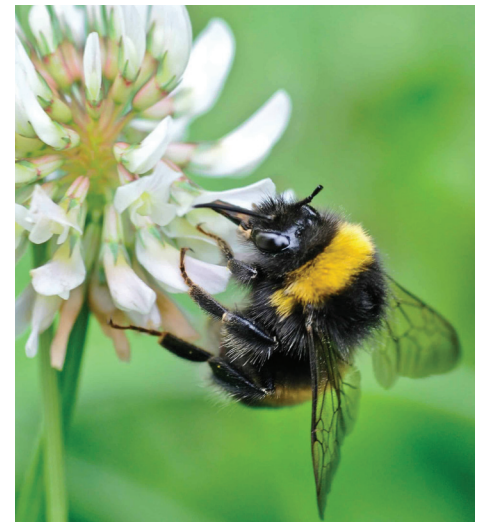
Here is how it's done:

- Remove existing lawn with sod cutter, and aerate bare ground with a core aerator. Both are available for rent locally.
- Spread compost up to one inch thick over lawn area.
- Spread seed according to instructions on the bag, usually about 4 lb/1000 sq ft.
- Cover with biodegradable, wood fiber based "net-less" roll out seed mats, available at Twin Cities seed vendors.
- Water 2-3 times per day until seed is evenly sprouted. Sunny areas tend to dry out quickly and may need more watering. Your goal is to keep the ground damp at all times during seed sprouting.
- Re-seed and continue to water any areas that don't sprout with the rest of the lawn.

### Maintaining A Bee Lawn

- Mow less. The best approach for bee lawn maintenance is to mow only one time at the end of the season in late August. This will help control taller weeds. If you feel you need to mow more to keep up with the neighborhood aesthetic, that is also okay for bee lawn plants. They can be mowed weekly if needed.
- Eliminate pesticides, fertilizers, and irrigation. Bee lawn plants do better without pampering, and pesticides are contributing to bee extinction.
- Anytime you mow, keep your mower deck height adjusted as high as it will go and keep your blade sharp. Never mow shorter than 3.5" in a bee lawn.

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## ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

<b>Meeting Date</b>	February 12, 2024
<b>Agenda Item</b>	E-4
<b>Attachment</b>	See notes below.
<b>Submitted By</b>	Hannah Lynch, Community Development Coordinator / Planner

<b>Item</b>	Partners in Energy Update
<b>Description</b>	The City of Falcon Heights has partnered with Xcel Energy and MNCEE to join the Partners in Energy Program. This is a brief overview of the current status of the program and upcoming events.
<b>Budget Impact</b>	None.
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	None.
<b>Action(s) Requested</b>	N/A - Informational



## ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

<b>Meeting Date</b>	February 12, 2024
<b>Agenda Item</b>	E-5
<b>Attachment</b>	See notes below.
<b>Submitted By</b>	Hannah Lynch, Community Development Coordinator / Planner

<b>Item</b>	2024 Nature Newsflash Article Calendar
<b>Description</b>	The Environment Commission has started up again with the “EC Corner” articles, now named the Nature Newsflash. Currently they are being run every other week. These are written by staff, Environment Commissioners, and community members.
<b>Budget Impact</b>	None.
<b>Attachment(s)</b>	2024 Nature Newflash Calendar - Draft
<b>Action(s) Requested</b>	Staff recommends reviewing schedule for 2024 Nature Newflash and recommending ideas for articles/volunteering to write articles.

Nature Newsflash Article Dates **every other week			
Date	Topic	Commissioner Assigned	Notes
January 15, 2024	Raising Chickens	Stephanie	
January 29, 2024	Lawns to Legumes		To hit February opening date for new grants
February 12, 2024	Smart Salting		
February 26, 2024	Lawns to Legumes		**Moved from January 29
March 11, 2024	Composting	John	**Moved from February 12
March 25, 2024	Pollinators	Amy	**Moved from January 29
April 8, 2024	Ramsey County Fix-It Clinics		
April 22, 2024	Earth Day	Emma	
May 6, 2024	No Mow May / Less Mow May		
May 20, 2024	Beekeeping		Maybe Pete Lindstrom?
June 3, 2024	Jumping Worms		
June 17, 2024			
July 1, 2024	Plastic Free July		
July 8, 2024	Series - Quickest/Easiest Ways to Increase Efficiency in Your Home		
July 15, 2024	Series - Quickest/Easiest Ways to Increase Efficiency in Your Home		
July 22, 2024	Series - Quickest/Easiest Ways to Increase Efficiency in Your Home		
July 29, 2024	Series - Quickest/Easiest Ways to Increase Efficiency in Your Home		
August 5, 2024	Series - Quickest/Easiest Ways to Increase Efficiency in Your Home		
August 12, 2024			
August 26, 2024	Sustainable School Year		
September 9, 2024			
September 23, 2024			
October 7, 2024	Smart Salting		
October 21, 2024			
November 4, 2024			
November 18, 2024	Food Scraps		
December 2, 2024			
December 16, 2024	Christmas Light Recycling		
December 30, 2024	Christmas Tree Recycling		