



**City of Bloomington**

**Environmental Commission**

The mission of the Environmental Commission is to promote the stewardship and preservation of the city's environment and natural resources by seeking out and responding to emerging issues, addressing them with sound long-term policy recommendations, and increasing local environmental awareness and engagement.

# **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING NOTICE and AGENDA**

February 4, 2026, 5:30 PM  
McCloskey Meeting Room #135  
City Hall, 401 N Morton Street Bloomington, IN 47404  
Hybrid Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting here:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/8657231124?pwd=mPqboSiD0AhVwKSgkuW2aO7NHixihO.1&omn=81563021562>

Meeting ID: 865 723 1124

Passcode: COBPT

Auxiliary aids are available upon request with adequate notice.

## **Environmental Commission Members**

Carrie Albright, Chair

Appointed by Mayor

Term: February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2026

Heidi Brown

Appointed by Mayor

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Nadia Cain

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2026

Matt Caldie, Vice Chair & Treasurer

Appointed by Mayor

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Norman Crampton

Appointed by Mayor

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Adam Fudickar

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Shannon Gayk

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2026

Adam Martinez, Secretary

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2025 to January 31, 2027

Mitchell Owens

Appointed by Common Council

Term: February 1, 2024 to January 31, 2026

Vacancies: 3

1. Call to order and quorum confirmation:

2. Introductions and Roll Call

	<u>In Person</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Zoom</u>
Carrie Albright			
Heidi Brown			
Nadia Cain			
Matt Caldie			
Norman Crampton			
Adam Fudickar			
Shannon Gayk			
Adam Martinez			
Mitchell Owens			
City Liaison, Rachael Johnson			

3. Public comment

Limit 5 minutes per person, 20 minutes total

4. New Business

- a. Environmental Commission Plan Committee (ECPC) Recommendations Regarding Amendments to Unified Development Ordinance Response to Resolution 2025-12 Affordable Housing Incentives\*

5. Upcoming Meeting

- a. February 19, 2026, 6:00 pm, Hooker Room, Zoom, and CATS

6. Adjournment

*\* Item to be voted on*

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

The City is committed to providing equal access to information. However, despite our efforts, at times, portions of our board and commission packets are not accessible for some individuals. If you encounter difficulties accessing material in this packet, please contact Melissa Hirtzel at [hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:hirtzelm@bloomington.in.gov) and provide your name, contact information, and a link to or description of the document or web page you are having problems with.

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

The City offers virtual options, including CATS public access television (live and tape delayed) found at <https://catstv.net/>. Working group meetings may be found at <https://bton.in/ECWGreco>.

Commission appointments may serve up to 90 days after a term has expired.



## Recommendations Regarding Amendments to Unified Development Ordinance

**To:** Common Council

**From:** Bloomington Environmental Commission Planning Committee (ECPC)

**Date:** January 26, 2025

**Re:** Resolution 2025-12: Affordable Housing Incentives

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Dear City of Bloomington Common Council,

The Bloomington Environmental Commission Planning Committee (ECPC) has reviewed the Department of Planning and Transportation's recommendations for amending the Unified Development Ordinance. Our Commission appreciates the opportunity to provide input on these proposed changes. We recognize the need for affordable housing in Bloomington and strongly support incentives that allow developers and builders to include housing for a variety of Bloomington residents.

The proposed UDO amendments would allow the following changes:

- R1** (larger lots) to increase from 30% to 80% maximum impervious surface
- R2** (residential medium lot) to increase from 40% to 80% maximum impervious surface
- R3** (residential small lot) to increase from 45% to 80% maximum impervious surface
- R4** (residential urban) to increase from 50% to 80% maximum impervious surface

However, the proposed increases in allowed impervious surface percentages are associated with potentially negative environmental impacts. Our concerns fall into the categories of stormwater, heat island effect, and tree canopy cover and health.

### Stormwater

Allowing more impervious surface increases multiple stormwater-related risks. A Johns Hopkins study found that "for every percentage point increase of roads, parking lots, and other impervious surfaces, annual floods increase on average by 3.3%."

Source: Tantibanchachai, Chanapa (2020, March 5). More Pavement, More Problems, Johns Hopkins University. <https://hub.jhu.edu/2020/03/05/urbanization-increases-annual-flooding/>

As noted in the [City of Bloomington Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment](#), Indiana is projected to see a 25% increase of inland flooding by 2050.

The potential increased risk of flooding would necessitate review of culvert maintenance and sizing, stream banks and degradation, and corresponding pollutants if the stormwater management plan is not sufficient.

### **Heat Island**

Within the expected change in maximum impervious surfaces, it is possible that the tree canopy and soil quality would also be reduced potentially increasing heat and decreasing moisture levels. Urban tree canopy is associated with reduced urban temperatures, and therefore benefits both human health and reducing energy use in cities. More buildings, roads, and impervious surfaces increase how the sun's heat is absorbed and re-emitted while simultaneously preventing water from accessing and hydrating vegetation.

Source: Elmes, et al. (2017), Effects of urban tree canopy loss on land surface temperature magnitude and timing, ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing. <https://research.fs.usda.gov/treearch/54836>

### **Retaining tree canopy and tree health**

Bloomington was recognized as Indiana's first Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation in 1984 and many citywide initiatives demonstrate how Bloomington prioritizes its tree population. Trees contribute to carbon dioxide uptake, air pollution removal, and stormwater mitigation. By allowing increased impervious surface percentages, an immediate concern is how tree canopy will be affected. A 2016 study found that in an urban area with 33% to 66% impervious surface cover, trees were most likely to be in fair condition. Above 66% impervious surface cover, trees were mostly in poor condition. As mentioned previously, increased impervious surfaces may lead to lower moisture in soil, reduced air quality, and less healthy trees, a cycle that perpetuates the urban heat island effect.

Source: Dale, A., et al. (May 2016), Forecasting the Effects of Heat and Pests on Urban Trees: Impervious Surface Thresholds and the 'Pace-to-Plant' Technique. Arboriculture & Urban Forestry 42(3). [https://ecoipm.org/wp-content/uploads/Dale\\_2016\\_Arb.pdf](https://ecoipm.org/wp-content/uploads/Dale_2016_Arb.pdf)

### **Recommendations**

The ECPC unwaveringly supports affordable housing. Yet we also emphasize the need for all residents of Bloomington to enjoy the same level of environmental quality. We believe it is essential that those who live in affordable housing enjoy the same access to nature, greenspace, clean air and soil, and the same mental and health benefits as people in non-affordable housing.

To balance these environmental concerns with affordable housing needs, we recommend a tiered increase in place of a uniform increase in maximum impervious surface, such as:

**R1** → 30% to remain as is

**R2** → 40% to 50%

**R3** → 45% to 65%

**R4** → 50% to 80%

A tiered approach would more effectively take into consideration the real impact these percentage changes would have if implemented repeatedly in one area or neighborhood.

Thank you for your attention to these concerns and recommendations, and for your continued engagement with the ECPC.

Sincerely,

The Bloomington Environmental Commission Planning Committee

FOR APPROVAL