



MINUTES

Sustainability Advisory Committee Meeting

Monday, May 11, 2026
City Hall Council Chambers
4:00 p.m.

Present: Ashley Nordlund Ashley Shouldice
Kim Mowrey Rory McMillan
Craig Debbo Brie McCardle
Peter Kirby

Regrets: Stephanie Charles, Councillor Lisa Moncrief, Lisa Devlin

City Staff: Greg Breen, Director of Infrastructure & Operations
Heather Pihulak, Deputy CAO/City Clerk
Andrew Smith, General Manager of Recreation & Culture

1. Call Meeting to Order and Land Acknowledgment

Ashley Nordlund, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and read a Land Acknowledgment.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

Kim Mowrey declared a pecuniary interest regarding Harvest Kenora and Brie McCardle declared a pecuniary interest regarding Lake Smart Funding.

3. Adopt Minutes of Previous Meetings

Motion #1 - Moved by A. Nordlund, Seconded by R. McMillan & Carried: -

That the Minutes of the Regular Sustainability Advisory Committee meeting held April 13, 2026 be confirmed as written and filed.

4. Previous Action Items

Active Transportation Plan – Kim and Stephanie met and they thought that under theme 2, green infrastructure and transit and we could change to transportation then we could work towards the goals of the plan. Some ideas were communication/education regarding active transportation benefits, stay safe, highlight active transportation during open street market, supporting opportunities that encourage residents to participate through NWHU and provide additional funding for project component of area such as additional benches.

The committee supported editing theme 2 and it makes sense to broaden it a bit given the transit project is complete. The Accessibility Committee prefers that when projects are at the 30% design stage, we bring the projects to the committee for input. Greg will share the Lakeview Drive project with the committee at the end of the meeting.

Moved by Kim Mowrey, Seconded by C. Debbo & Carried:-
Green infrastructure and sustainable transportation -

Composter update – transfer station reported that there were approximately 12 composters left.

5. Budget Balance

The committee's budget balance is \$10,995.

6. New Business

Microgreens & Shoots Presentation – this was a presentation that was provided to councilor Moncrief regarding microgreens and shoots. If members feel they would like to take advantage of any portion of this offering Agritech would be happy to breakout the price. There are three components;

- presentation
- completing the 'at home' growing manual
- development of a growing kit for sale

They have taken time to review the plan, and would suggest Fabian do a presentation that includes his prior content with the Dryden Horticultural Society, but builds upon it by:

- Completing a new at-home how-to manual for growing microgreens and shoots at home, safely, including "what you need" and some various options for where you may obtain those supplies (prioritizing local suppliers where possible). This will include staged photos explaining the process.
- Public presentation of the prior and new manual content, including an instructional process with the materials. This could potentially be recorded and published as part of the how-to manual and other materials.
- Development of at-home microgreen and shoot growing kit; we deliver to Kenora every week and could facilitate direct and rapid distribution at scale of these at-home growing kits, in addition to our regular product line. At a minimum it would help people get started, and as they learn the process, they are likely to start experimenting with other media or tools, which is exactly what we want to encourage! This may also become a resource for the local schools.

Councillor Moncrief is in support of this initiative in part or in whole and fall may be the best time, perhaps to present it to the community. The presentation and manual are particularly of interest to the Committee.

To my knowledge no local groups are developing starter kits for home sprout growing. Also, a regional business that currently offers delivery service to our community is local in my opinion. Our support/sponsorship of any or all of these would be recognized in their materials and literature.

Fabian came in and did a presentation in Ashley Shouldice's classroom and while it may be different than the one that was done there, she feels that is a high cost for the program that is delivered. Ashley S. suggested someone that came to her classroom to help them set up their program and possibly we could reach out to them.

The committee agreed to defer this matter for one year.

Ontario's 7th annual Provincial Day of Action on Litter - Tuesday, May 12, 2026. The City has been promoting this through social media channels.

2026 Communities in Bloom –Andrew Smith, General Manager of Recreation & Culture attended to advise the group of the City's participation in the 2026 Communities in Bloom contest. There will be a free review of our entire community, there are two portions, 1) judges come, they review the locations and they tell us what we do well 2) there is a document we provide to the judges to highlight the important areas of the competition.

Environmental Action section – Andrew is looking for volunteers to assist with completing this portion of the competition. Judging takes place July 15 & 16 and we want to have this completed over the next month. The information and pictures are what Andrew would be looking for. It would be nice if we could sit at the next meeting and review it together. The committee will take it away and complete it individually and then come back and complete it together. They received a grant from RBC this year and are redeveloping the program this year.

This item will return to next agenda with preparation from committee in advance.

Request for Funding – Harvest Kenora

The following request was received from Harvest Kenora:

Harvest Kenora is pleased to submit this proposal requesting funding support for the installation of a small off-grid solar power system at Homerun Gardens, located at the Old Keewatin Ballpark in Keewatin. This project would power a new Market Stand shed that serves as a critical hub for Harvest Kenora's Market Stand — one of our primary sources of earned revenue. We believe this project is directly aligned with the priorities and principles of the City of Kenora's Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) 2022–2031, and we welcome the SAC's consideration of it for funding support.

The Proposed Project is to install a small off-grid solar power system at Homerun Gardens to power a new Market Stand shed that will support our Market Stand operations. The system will provide reliable, renewable electricity for refrigeration and freezer storage used by the Market Stand — eliminating the need for a grid connection or fossil-fuelled generator at the site.

The solar system includes:

- 3 x New 440W N-type bifacial solar panels mounted on a south-facing treated timber frame above the market shed
- 1 x Used/Pre-owned 4,000W inverter/charger with MPPT charge controller, 120V output, circuit breakers and control panel
- 1 x Used/Pre-owned 24V DC AGM lead acid battery bank with pre-fabricated interconnects
- 1 x New SmartShunt for accurate state-of-charge tracking

The system has been designed and estimated by Regenerate Solar (Keewatin, ON), a local solar installer. In a bid to reduce the overall cost of the system, and lower the burden on the City of Kenora Waste Transfer Facility, Regenerate Solar has designed the system to implement Used/Pre-Owned power system equipment where possible; should the project proceed it would be a direct diversion of equipment otherwise destined to be E-Waste, extending the usable lifespan of otherwise "retired" equipment, and all at a more accessible cost.

Project Budget includes:

Timber frame structure for solar panel mounting - \$2,147.00

Off-grid solar system components & installation - \$6,141.55

Total (Regenerate Solar Estimate #1186) \$8,288.55

Harvest Kenora is requesting the SAC's support for the full project cost of \$8,288.55, with a formal estimate from Regenerate Solar available upon request (Estimate #1186, dated April 9, 2026).

Alignment with the City of Kenora Sustainability Action Plan - This project directly supports the SAP's vision, guiding principles, and several of its 14 identified sustainability projects. SAP Project 3 — Renewable Energy Demonstration

The SAP identifies a goal to "implement and promote demonstration projects to showcase delivery of renewable energy in Kenora" and to "incentivize private homeowners and builders to integrate energy efficient alternatives." This solar installation would serve as a visible, real-world demonstration of off-grid renewable energy in a community setting — exactly the kind of tangible, local example the SAP envisions. Regenerate Solar, named in the SAP as a key partner for Project 3, is the installer for this project, further reinforcing its fit.

SAP Project 7 — Local Food Security - The SAP calls for expanding local food production and food security capacity, with a goal of having locally grown foods available year-round. Harvest Kenora's Market Stand is a direct embodiment of this goal. By powering the Market Stand shed with solar energy, this project ensures the Market Stand can operate reliably, maintain cold storage for perishables, and baked goods made with harvested produce from Homerun Gardens, and continue to serve as a local food access point — while doing so sustainably.

SAP Guiding Principles

This project aligns with several of the SAP's seven guiding principles:

- Align economic and environmental benefit — the solar system reduces ongoing energy costs while delivering a clear environmental benefit; it extends the life of usable solar equipment, while reducing capital costs
- Seek solutions that provide multiple benefits — the project supports food security, renewable energy demonstration, and organizational sustainability simultaneously
- Support and enable social equity — a stronger, more financially sustainable Harvest Kenora means greater capacity to serve all members of our community
 - Focus on local actions and local benefits — the project is local in scope, local in impact, and uses a local installer

Harvest Kenora operates as a non-profit community organization with limited capital resources. While the Market Stand generates earned revenue that sustains our programs, we do not have the reserves to fund this infrastructure investment independently. SAC support would enable a project that would otherwise not move forward — and would deliver lasting, visible sustainability benefits to the community.

The off-grid nature of the system means there is no ongoing utility cost, no grid connection required, and no emissions associated with powering the Market Stand. Once installed, the system will serve Harvest Kenora's operations for many years with minimal maintenance.

We also note that Regenerate Solar — the local installer providing this estimate — is explicitly named as a key partner in the SAP's energy conservation projects. Supporting this proposal would help activate and advance those partnerships in a tangible, community-facing way.

We believe this project is a strong fit for SAC funding: it is affordable, actionable, locally grounded, and squarely within the intent of the Sustainability Action Plan. It would deliver a practical renewable energy installation, strengthen local food security, and support a community organization that serves Kenora residents every week.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss this project further with the SAC, answer any questions, or provide additional documentation including the full Regenerate Solar estimate. Thank you for your time and for the important work the SAC does on behalf of our community!

Peter asked if Harvest Kenora has applied to the LOWCF for funding. It was questioned if they are still going ahead regardless of the funding levels.

It was questioned if we get to put up a sign that we supported this initiative.

We will invite Harvest Kenora to the next meeting, so a representative is there to answer questions.

Request for Funding – LakeSmart – The LakeSmart team is lake outreach and do a lot of events. Lake of the Woods District Stewardship Association's LakeSmart program is seeking funding support for the 2026 operating season to expand environmental stewardship, invasive species prevention, and community education initiatives throughout the Lake of the Woods region. Operated by a team of four post-secondary students from May through August, LakeSmart delivers hands-on environmental outreach, education, and action based programming that reaches thousands of lake lovers and stewards annually.

Through shoreline outreach, youth engagement, invasive species prevention, public education, and stewardship initiatives, LakeSmart continues to play a key role in protecting the ecological health of the region while building stronger environmental awareness across communities.

LOWDSA is seeking funding support for the LakeSmart program totaling \$2,700 to enhance environmental stewardship, invasive species prevention, and community outreach initiatives throughout the 2026 operating season.

Decontamination Station Signage & Printed Resources — \$500

Support will also fund A-frame directional signage, educational handouts, and outreach materials used at the decontamination station. These resources help improve traffic flow, increase public awareness, and promote responsible boating practices through the Clean, Drain, Dry campaign.

Community Outreach & Environmental Education Matiowski Farmers' Market Vendor Space (10 Weeks) — \$500

Funding will support LakeSmart's presence at the Matiowski Farmers' Market throughout

the summer season. The market booth provides an opportunity to connect directly with residents and visitors through:

- Environmental education and stewardship outreach
- Children's activities and learning resources
- Invasive species awareness
- Seedling distribution and shoreline stewardship information

This initiative allows LakeSmart to engage the public in approachable, hands-on sustainability education within a highly visible community setting.

Clean, Drain, Dry Billboard Initiative

Billboard Permit Application — \$750

LakeSmart is installing a Clean, Drain, Dry billboard along the highway to promote aquatic invasive species prevention across the region. Funding support will help cover permit application costs associated with the long-term installation of this public education tool. The billboard will serve as a highly visible reminder to boaters and visitors entering the watershed to take preventative action before entering local waterways.

LakeSmart Team Visibility & Professional Outreach LakeSmart Uniforms — \$510

Funding will support branded LakeSmart uniforms for staff during the May–August operating season. Uniforms help create a professional, approachable presence while increasing public recognition of the program at events, boat launches, shoreline visits, and community outreach activities.

Recognition Opportunities

In recognition of sponsorship support, LakeSmart would be pleased to include the SAC logo on:

- Printed educational materials
- LakeSmart uniforms
- The boat decontamination trailer
- The Clean, Drain, Dry billboard

This partnership would demonstrate SAC's commitment to environmental stewardship, community education, and the long-term protection of the Lake of the Woods watershed.

LakeSmart continues to evolve into one of the region's most impactful environmental education and stewardship initiatives. By combining hands-on action with public outreach and youth engagement, the program helps build a stronger culture of stewardship throughout the watershed. Support for these initiatives will directly contribute to protecting local lakes, shorelines, and ecosystems while empowering communities to take part in meaningful environmental action.

It was questioned if Mاتیowski's Market may be an opportunity to promote the litta traps and it was confirmed it is. They reach approximately 200,000 people in the summer months.

Brie and Kim left the room @ 5:15 p.m.

We haven't invested a lot in the lake side of things, protecting the lake. They do a lot of great work and many people reaching LOWDSA would not be aware of our committee.

We have enough to fund both initiatives, but the committee felt that we should take off the \$510 for the shirts and the parking permit has already been covered by the City.

R. McMillan, Seconded by C. Debbo & Carried -

That the committee supports a donation of \$1,750 for the purchase of:

- Decontamination Station Signage & printed Resources \$500.00
- Matiowski Farmer's Market 10-week Vendor Space \$500.00
- Billboard Permit Application \$750.00

Harvest Kenora – the committee would like to know how many people are involved, how many people participate. They are collecting the products themselves. There are other community gardens, but they don't ask us for money. Would like to know how much the number of gardeners, outreach they are doing, extending invitation for more involved. That is about food security and you get the community to garden.

We will ask Erin to come to the June 1st meeting for someone to attend to answer questions.

Jones Road Landfill – Paul Wills will attend June's meeting.

Next Meeting Date

Monday, June 1 @ 4p.m.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.