

Staff Updates for Sustainability Commission – January 2025

Office of Sustainability and Innovation

- **A²ZERO Home Energy Advisor hits milestone, helping over 500 Ann Arbor households.** Over 500 Ann Arbor homes have now received customized plans for advancing sustainability, energy efficiency and health through the City's A²ZERO Home Energy Advisor (HEA). Launched in the spring of 2024, the HEA is a free program open to all city residents including homeowners, renters and landlords that performs comprehensive on-site home assessments and provides written reports detailing recommendations and resources individuals can take to save money and make their homes more sustainable. The HEA also provides follow-up support and standalone consultations for specific questions folks may have about things such as appliance replacements, contractor quotes, and more. Those interested can learn more or sign up at www.a2zerohea.org.
- **City of Ann Arbor's Green Rental Housing Ordinance Went into Effect Jan 6, 2026.** The Green Rental Housing Ordinance requires every rental unit in Ann Arbor to meet a minimum energy efficiency level at the time of its rental inspection. Passed in June 2025, the Ordinance helps ensure that all rental units in Ann Arbor meet a minimum baseline of health, comfort, and efficiency as Ann Arbor works to achieve its A²ZERO carbon neutrality goals while reducing energy costs. Learn more about the Ordinance and how to comply at osi.a2gov.org/greenrentalhousing.
- **Expression of Interest: Public Electric Vehicle Charging.** In December 2024, The City of Ann Arbor was awarded the Charging & Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) grant with the goal of building a public electric vehicle charging station network that is affordable, safe, reliable, and widely accessible. The funding allows Ann Arbor to address gaps in charging infrastructure, particularly in low-income areas, multifamily properties, and large retail locations. The City is working with a variety of stakeholders including community organizations, local schools and libraries, residential neighborhoods, and the private sector. As of December 2025, the City is preparing a final Call-Out to invite any possible remaining site hosts to participate in the CFI grant program through our [Intake Form](#) on our website.
- **A²ZERO Ambassador Applications Now Open!** The A²ZERO Ambassador Program is a 12-session training program that hosts community members to explore pathways for advancing local sustainability initiatives, resilience, and carbon neutrality in Ann Arbor. Sessions are held weekly on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 PM. Ambassadors will gain increased knowledge, tools, and resources to discuss sustainability and learn about specific actions they and their communities can take to advance carbon neutrality. No previous experience is required, and all interested in sustainability are encouraged to apply at osi.a2gov.org/ambassadors.

- **Submit your Climate Action Hero!** Every month, A²ZERO Climate Action Heroes recognizes a community member who inspires others to make positive change and help the community achieve its A²ZERO goals. These heroes will be recognized here in the Charging Station, in the Ann Arbor Observer, on OSI social media accounts, and at a yearly celebration with the Mayor and City Administrator – and all of the year’s other Heroes! To nominate an individual as an A²ZERO Climate Action Hero, please visit osi.a2gov.org/hero. Congratulations to Annie Broderick for being January 2026’s Climate Action Hero.
- **Sustainable Food Business Coalition 2025 Food & Hospitality Social**, Jan 12, 2 – 3 PM, Cobblestone Farm: Do you know of someone in the food industry who’s interested in sustainability? Invite them to mix and mingle while connecting with fellow industry leaders, learning about local resources, and exploring opportunities to engage in Ann Arbor’s growing sustainable food business ecosystem. Register today at osi.a2gov.org/SFBC2026Kickoff.
- **Sustainability Forum: New Initiatives for a New Year – Charting a Path for Sustainability Progress in 2026**, Jan 27, 6 – 7PM, Ann Arbor District Library Downtown: The start of a new year offers us the opportunity to reflect on the past and affirm our values and intentions for the future. Join Ann Arbor’s Office of Sustainability and Innovations, along with other community leaders, for the first session of the 2026 Sustainability Forums series to explore exciting new sustainability initiatives, programs, and commitments coming to Ann Arbor in 2026! Come to learn, ask questions, engage with community members, and cultivate your own “sustainable resolution” for the coming year. Learn more at osi.a2gov.org/events
- **Sustainable Energy Utility Contractor Open House**, Jan. 14, 15, and 20. The SEU will be hosting a series of 3 open houses in January for contractors interested in working with the SEU. These are targeted toward businesses working in solar/storage, geothermal/HVAC, and utility software and consulting services. For details, see [contractor webinar recording online](#) and [register at the online form](#).

Public Services

- **Help Grow a Stronger Urban Forest.** The Citizen Pruner Program trains volunteers to properly prune young street and park trees alongside city forestry staff. After completing a required webinar and field training, volunteers work in teams at scheduled winter work days. More info here: <https://www.a2gov.org/forestry/citizen-pruner-program/>
 - Webinar training: Saturday, Jan. 10, 9-11 a.m. (link to be sent out separately before the training)
 - Field training: Saturday, Jan. 17, 9-11 a.m. at Buhr Park (meet at the tennis courts, 2751 Packard Road)

- Citizen Pruner Workdays are 9 a.m.-noon
Saturday, Jan. 31, Saturday, Feb. 26, Sunday, Feb.15 and Sunday, Feb.22
- **Celebrating Ann Arbor's Drinking Water Research on the National Stage.** This year the Ann Arbor Water Treatment Plant earned national recognition at the American Water Works Association's Water Quality Technology Conference, where our team delivered five presentations—a notable achievement for a single utility. While we continue to meet all state and federal drinking water regulations, research helps us refine our treatment processes, prepare for future challenges, and ensure that residents benefit from the latest advancements in water technology. Current projects include: • Evaluating our UV disinfection system to optimize performance • Exploring new softening technologies as we plan upgrades to our historic 1930s softening basins • Studying treatment approaches for emerging contaminants, ensuring we stay ahead of evolving water quality issues • Improving the efficiency and reliability of our data management systems.
- **Keeping Sidewalks Safe.** Residents and property owners are responsible for clearing snow/ice from adjacent sidewalks, crosswalk ramps and bus stops. Keeping sidewalks safe can be aided by a variety of de-icing products. Each de-icing option has benefits, limitations and drawbacks.

The city provides city residents with up to 5 gallons of a sand/salt mixture, per visit at these locations:

- Veterans Memorial Park
- Gallup Park
- Allmendinger Park
- Buhr Park
- Burns Park
- Leslie Park

Residents should bring their own shovel and bucket, and load material themselves from the marked pile. This material is not for contractors. For more information, and maps to help you find the material, please visit www.a2gov.org/snow.

