

ANNUAL REPORT

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

FY 2026

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SUMMARY OF REPORT

It is with great pleasure that we submit this summary of the work that the Environmental Advisory Board (EAB) has accomplished over the past year. We have been able to accomplish several of the items on our work plan in the last year and look forward to continuing our work in the year ahead to provide the City Council with invaluable information/guidance. A primary focus of our work plan is to align with implementation actions in Raleigh's Community Climate Action Plan. For a summary of our prioritized recommendations for the City Council, please refer to the Recommendations section.

MISSION STATEMENT

The EAB is an all-volunteer board created by the City Council in 2006. The City Council deemed it in the public interest and affirmed the importance of protecting the environment by creating the board that provides the Council with expert and comprehensive advice on various matters related to environmental quality and safety.

EAB RECOMMENDATIONS

Below are the EAB's recommendations that align with the EAB's 2026 work plan items:

Accessible Transportation Options

The Environmental Advisory Board strongly supports clean, safe, accessible transportation options that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants generated by motor vehicles. Specifically, the Board:

- Supports periodic tracking of the recommendations put forward through the Active Mobility Study and encourages City Council to consider ways to **advance the policy and funding recommendations** that emerged from the study.
- Encourages providing additional resources that **promote participation** and **community engagement** in the e-bike voucher program and additional strategies outlined in the Active Mobility Study to inform transportation and transit investments that meet community needs.
- Support Transportation efforts to expand its network of physical signage and on-street infrastructure related to enhancing bike and pedestrian **wayfinding**.

Affordable Housing Sustainability Features

The Environmental Advisory Board strongly supports City housing projects that are designed and constructed in ways that provide **affordability, address energy burden, increase access to walkability** and multi-modal transportation, and effectively **manage stormwater** in flood-prone areas.

Specifically, the Board recommends that the City:

- Look for opportunities to support and expand public-private partnerships that increase residents' **access to clean energy and weatherization programs** designed to reduce energy burden and provide safer, healthier housing options.

- Encourage continued prioritization of intermodal connectivity to City-led affordable housing projects - specifically to **Bus-Rapid-Transit corridors and other public transit routes proximate to mixed-use development zones** where increased walkability and access to business districts may result in a reduction of GHG emissions from vehicle miles traveled.
- Encourage continued consideration and incorporation of green stormwater infrastructure devices and other nature-based solutions into **design and construction of new construction and rehabilitated housing developments** to ensure effective stormwater management in heavily saturated areas.
- Staff should continue to evaluate opportunities to increase sustainability features with affordable housing, specifically focused on **cost savings, quality of life and access to resources** including economic, health, transportation and resilience outcomes.

Effective Management of City's Waste Streams

The Environmental Advisory Board strongly supports City departments utilizing innovative technology, policies, processes, and community-wide education to manage the collection, processing, and diversion of growing waste streams from organic waste to construction and demolition and its 18,000+ electronic devices from City projects and facilities.

Specifically, the Board recommends:

E-waste Recommendations:

- IT to continue to partner with Sustainability to **track and identify opportunities to improve e-waste reporting and education**; and **strengthen redeployment tracking** integrating standardized planning, real-time monitoring, and compliance tools to ensure timely, compliant, and efficient movement through the City's asset management system.
- Continue to **build on the success of the e-waste reduction, diversion and recycling programs** by **exploring new opportunities** for repair of city-owned infrastructure, such as a repair-first Policy and a student run repair bench.
- As IT has identified the next opportunity to reduce **the City's electronic waste** by consolidating physical desk phones to softphones during phone system upgrades, explore additional best practices to implement responsible disposal of devices as the industry and technologies advance.

C&D Recommendations:

- **Continue to update the website and outreach materials with best practices** which include education about how to handle C&D non-household waste and opportunities to divert C&D waste streams from the landfill, highlighting example projects to serve as models, promoting reuse whenever possible, and encouraging recycling as a best practice.
- Continue to **provide education, guidance and information on the proper disposal of Construction and Demolition Waste**. This includes guidance from resources such as: the Construction Industry Compliance Assistance (CICA) Center which is a best practice national organization that provides the construction industry with compliance assistance; including C&D Waste Management best practices. Resources for contractors include: C&D Debris State-to-State Resources Tool; recycling and diversion guides; and hazardous and non-hazardous separation.

Solid Waste Services Recommendations:

- Encourage increased community engagement and education by the Solid Waste Services Department intended to increase residents' understanding of opportunities to divert **recyclable and e-waste materials** decreasing contamination rates of collected waste, increasing amount of **collected waste that is recycled or reused**, and **diverting higher rates of recyclable materials** from the landfill.
- Staff should continue to evaluate opportunities to support enhancement of services offered by the Yard Waste Center **to increase processing of organic materials** and to **divert more tonnage away from the landfill** - including implementing the leaf collection and processing program (recently moved from Transportation), as well as the exploration of a regional food-waste processing facility.
- Request that the City evaluate best practices for potential opportunities and benefits to begin **e-waste and battery collection methods** and explore ways to begin collection and processing of e-waste to **divert from the general landfill** waste stream.

EAB ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The board worked through multiple work plan items in FY2026. In addition to the recommendations that came from those board discussions, the EAB also:

- Received presentations from the following city departments, divisions, and offices:
 - Transportation (on micro-mobility and reducing vehicle-miles-traveled)
 - Planning and Development (on Raleigh's efforts to grow sustainably)
 - Housing and Community Development (on sustainability opportunities for affordable housing development)
 - Sustainability (on the annual Community Climate Action Plan Implementation Report)
 - Raleigh Water (on the City's proactive approach to combatting PFAS and other forever chemicals entering the City's water supply)
 - Solid Waste Services (on sustainability initiatives being undertaken by the Department under new leadership)
 - Information and Technology (on sustainable processes to manage the City's e-waste)
 - Sustainability (on construction and demolition policies and practices for City facilities)
- Selected the 19th Annual Environmental Award Winners. The awards celebration was held on April 24, 2026, during the Earth Day celebration at Dix Park. The Board's March meeting was designated to serve as the jury for the awards.
- Hosted a virtual education event in partnership with Raleigh Water and Sustainability featuring a nationally renowned keynote speaker with the goal to educate residents on the issue of PFAS exposure. Nearly 75 attendees received tips and actions they can take in their everyday lives to reduce exposure to forever chemicals.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



2026 Environmental Awards

The Raleigh Environmental Awards celebrate the best in climate action, community engagement, and corporate stewardship in our city. The City's Office of Sustainability supports the work of the EAB. Staff partner with the EAB to host the annual awards. Each year, the EAB recognizes organizations, businesses, projects and individuals that demonstrate positive environmental benefits and engage the community, mitigate climate change, contribute to environmental justice, and show the business case for environmental stewardship. In 2026, the Environmental Awards solicited nominations from across the city and extraterritorial jurisdiction to feature the best of Raleigh's climate champions. The slate of nominees and awardees showcased our community's increasing investment and innovative approaches to address climate challenges for our communities across the region.

The EAB held a jury day in March 2026, where members were joined by guest jurors from the Public Art and Design Board and the Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Greenway Advisory Board deliberate and select the 19th Annual Environmental Award Winners. The Annual Awards Celebration was held on April 24, 2026, at a **large Earth Day event** at Dorothea Dix Park with **more than 5,000 people in attendance**.

These winners represent the hard work of dozens of community members to make Raleigh a healthier, greener, and more sustainable city; and represent our community's dedication to climate action, environmental stewardship, innovation and education.

In addition to the Environmental Awards, the Office of Sustainability partners with the Transportation Department, Stormwater Management Division, Raleigh Water, Solid Waste Services, and the Office of Strategy and Innovation on the following awards and contests:

- Commute Smart Award (Transportation)
- Capture it! Stormwater Arts Contest (Stormwater)
- Drinking Watershed Protection Award (Raleigh Water)
- Trashion Competition (Solid Waste Services)
- Dare to be Green Award (Strategy and Innovation)



The individuals and organizations recognized have made incredible contributions to preserve and enhance Raleigh's natural environment. This year's winners show a broad range of environmental actions and commitment to environmental stewardship. The winners are celebrated and staff promote them publicly through various outreach.

Forever Chemical Education Event

The Raleigh Environmental Advisory Board supported the Office of Sustainability and Raleigh Water to host a virtual education event to offer residents with knowledge to understand and reduce everyday exposure to PFAS, also known as forever chemicals. Since forever chemicals are found in everyday items like food packaging, cookware and clothing, the education event helped Raleigh residents understand how they can reduce exposure through simple, everyday actions.

Other Topics

The Board supported other city efforts, including the Sir Walter Raleigh Awards, by designating a board representative. The board also continues to communicate with the public about environmental issues and to promote city activities such as the Environmental Awards and Earth Day.



Environmental Advisory Board, June 2026

Scott Greenman, Chair
Denzel Burnside, Vice Chair
Lamya Badr
Robert Bennett
Veronica Bitting
Jeb Bullard
Vincent Potter
Margot Shrift
Sana Siddiqui