

City Council
2026 April Council Meeting
Vergas Event Center & Zoom Id number 267-094-2170 password 56587
6:30 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2026

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Citizens' Concerns**
3. **Agenda Additions and Deletions**
4. **Approval of Consent Agenda**
 - A. Council Minutes of March 17, 2026 and April 8, 2026
 - B. Bills paid between Council meetings and Council bills
 - C. Liquor Store bills for March 2026
 - D. Late water/sewer bills
 - E. 2026 Investment Schedule/Bond Schedule
 - F. General Fund Special Revenue Money Market Account
 - G. 2026 Statement of Receipts, Disbursements and Balances
 - H. Committee Reports
 1. EDA/HRA
 2. Park Advisory Board
5. **Energy and Resiliency Plan**
6. **Vergas Community Club - Shops and Hops**
 1. Street closure on May 30th from 3pm -8pm. The top half of the street will not be used.
 2. VCC Beer garden and are asking for a waiver of the fee.
7. **Otter Coffee - Live Music and Food Trucks**
 1. June 4-August 13, 2026 (Thursday's)
 2. City employees remove trash from cans both Thursday and Friday mornings.
 3. Street Parking Spaces closed in front of business from 2 pm to 7 pm.
8. **Committee Reports**
 - A. Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee
 - B. Event Center
 - C. Planning Commission
9. **Staff Reports**
 - A. Engineering Report
 - B. Clerk Treasurer Report
 - C. Utilities Report
 - D. Liquor Store Manager Report
10. **Information & Announcements**

Meetings and Events:

 - A. Household Hazardous Waste Day, Thursday, June 25, 2026, 10:00 - 2:00 Vergas Event Center Parking Lot

Employee 2026 Trainings:

 - A. League of MN Cities Annual Conference June 24-26, 2026, in Rochester (Bruhn, Albright and Stenger)
 - B. 16th Annual Operator Expo, (MN Rural Water) August 25, 2026, (Utilities Superintendent and Maintenance Operator)
 - C. Clerk's Advanced Academy- September 10-11, 2026, in Otsego, MN (Clerk-Treasurer)
11. **Adjournment**

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 - 1. EDA/HRA
 - 2. Park Advisory Board

Files Attached

- City Council Minutes 3.17.26.pdf
- 4.8.26 Board of Review.pdf
- City Council Speical Meeting Minutes 4.8.26.pdf
- 04.2026 City Bill Listing.pdf
- 03.2026 Liquor Store Bill Listing.pdf
- past_due_customers (21).pdf
- 04.2026 Investment Schedule & Bond Schedule.pdf
- 04.2026 General Fund_Special Revenue Money Market Account Report.pdf
- 3.18.26 EDA.HRA Minutes.pdf
- 4.1.26 EDA.HRA Minutes.pdf
- Park Board Minutes 4.9.26.pdf
- 04.21.2026 Claims List for Approval.pdf

**CITY OF VERGAS
COUNCIL MINUTES
VERGAS EVENTS CENTER & ZOOM
Tuesday, March 17, 2026**

The City Council of Vergas met at 6:30 PM, on Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at the Vergas Event Center and on a Zoom for a hybrid regular public hearing.

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Julie Bruhn, Mayor	P	P	P									
Bruce Albright, Member	P	P	P									
Paul Pinke, Member	P	P	P									
Dean Haarstick, Member	P	P	P									
James Stenger, Member	P	P	P									
Julie Lammers, Clerk-Treasurer	P	P	P									
Mike Dufrane, Utilities Superintendent	P	A	A									
Kyle Theisen, Liquor Store Manager	P	A	A									

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

Present via Zoom: Editor Bob Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum; and Citizens, Patrick Hollister and Michael (no last name provided)

Present in person: Attorney Dylan Ramstad Skoyles, and Citizens, Jeremy Brenning, Laura Osborn, and Cynthia McDonough with Mahube Ottowa.

Call to Order

Mayor Julie Bruhn called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Citizens' Concerns

Jeremy Brenning and Laura Osborn appeared before the council regarding an alley issue at 110 West Elm Street. Brenning explained that the alley is in disrepair, with gravel that has settled below grade level, making it impassable during winter months due to ice and during spring months due to mud. He stated they cannot use their garage for 5-8 months out of the year and have been pulled out of the alley twice in recent years. The couple showed the council a plat map indicating where gravel should be located and requested approximately 9 yards of class 5 gravel to be bladed back to restore the alley surface. Brenning noted that about 5 years ago, one scoop of gravel was added to address a raised manhole cover that causes vehicles to bottom out. Osborn mentioned they had previously inquired about annexing the alley but were advised by the city attorney that the manhole cover location would create issues. The residents explained they currently have to mow the grassed-over area in summer and cannot access their garage during muddy spring conditions. They also noted a large mud puddle near the fire hydrant on West Elm Street that needs attention.

Albright, representing the street committee with Pinke, acknowledged their concerns and committed to meeting with them before the April council meeting to evaluate the situation and return with recommendations. The committee will schedule a site visit to address all concerns and ensure proper solutions are implemented.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

The agenda was modified to add the Lion's raffle to the consent agenda and to include West Central Initiative Food Council's "Growing Local Together" presentation by Patrick Hollister via Zoom as agenda item 5. The Event Center Advisory Board item was removed from the consent agenda since it appears in committee reports. The remaining items were renumbered accordingly.

Motion by Stenger, seconded by Pinke, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda included council minutes from February 17, 2026, bills paid between meetings, liquor store bills, late water/sewer bills, investment and bond schedules, money market account information, statement of receipts and disbursements, and various committee reports. The Lion's raffle was added to the consent agenda, and the Event Center Advisory Board item was removed as it appears in committee reports.

Motion by Pinke, seconded by Stenger, to approve the consent agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

West Central Initiative Food Council - Growing Local Together

Hollister from West Central Initiative presented via Zoom about the expanding food council program. He explained that Partnership for Health has operated a 4-county local food council (Becker, Clay, Otter Tail, and Wilkin) for four years and received a Minnesota Department of Health grant to expand to 16 counties. Hollister invited council members to a meeting on Tuesday, April 7th from 4-6 PM, available either online or at five in-person locations including Fergus Falls and Moorhead (with dinner provided for in-person attendees). The meeting serves as both recruitment for new food council members and an opportunity for those interested in food-related projects without joining the council itself. The food council focuses on strengthening local food systems by promoting farmers markets, farm-to-school programs, farm-to-institution initiatives (hospitals, nursing homes, senior living facilities), and supporting local farmers and agriculture. Registration is available through a QR code on the provided flyer or by contacting Hollister directly.

Bruhn noted the connection to the city's Green Step Cities program and energy resilience advisory board work. Hollister confirmed familiarity with Green Step Cities, having worked with Fergus Falls, Becker County, and Moorhead, and encouraged bringing Green Step ideas to the food council meeting for potential synergy and collaboration.

Vergas Community Club - Looney Days

Lammers presented the Looney Days committee's request for the same street closures used in the past two years for 2026 events. The request includes street fair on Saturday, street dance Saturday night, and car show and parade on Sunday using the same routes and streets as the previous year. The committee also requested permission for a beer garden and to waive associated fees.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to approve the Looney Days street closures and beer garden permission with fee waiver. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Reports

Event Center

Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) - Cynthia McDonough

Stenger introduced Cynthia McDonough from Mahube Ottawa in Detroit Lakes, who presented the Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) program. McDonough explained that SAIL is a balance and strength class designed for fall prevention, typically recommended for ages 60 and over, though she has accommodated people in their fifties. The program runs twice weekly for one hour over 12 weeks (24 classes total), with McDonough providing all equipment through a mini-grant that covers weights and supplies but not all costs. She offers the class free to communities and has never been charged facility fees at other locations like town halls and community centers. McDonough outlined her tentative schedule for Monday and Wednesday mornings from 10-11 AM, requiring setup time starting at 9:30 AM. The program accommodates various ability levels, from seated exercises for wheelchair users to standing exercises. She noted the potential for training local volunteers to continue the program after her 12-week instruction period, as she currently has 26 trained volunteers maintaining classes in other communities.

The discussion centered on the city's building use policy that charges \$15 per session for exercise classes. McDonough requested fee waiver or reduction given the free community service nature of the program. Council members debated consistency with other programs, noting that Zumba classes now collect donations to cover the \$15 fee after the policy change. Bruhn raised concerns about setting precedents for fee waivers, while other council members noted the distinction that this program charges no participant fees unlike other exercise programs. The discussion revealed that under previous policies, exercise classes were free, but recent changes implemented fees to cover building operating costs like electricity and maintenance.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Stenger, to allow SAIL to use the building at no cost, acknowledging potential policy ramifications to be addressed with future similar organizations. The motion passed unanimously.

Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee

Albright reported on the 1 PM committee meeting's recommendation to eliminate brush disposal at the yard waste facility while continuing to sell \$65 permits for lawn clippings, leaves, and garden materials. The committee cited multiple violations, unauthorized fires set by users, constant smoke complaints from neighbors, liability concerns, and enforcement difficulties as reasons for the recommendation. Albright detailed ongoing problems including people lighting brush piles independently, violations during burning

bans when debris accumulates, a December fire that cost \$1,200 with mutual aid response, and regular dumping of oversized materials like stumps and large logs. He noted the site's proximity to buildings and wooded areas creates fire hazards, and the county operates several alternative brush disposal sites. The committee explored limiting access to residents only but determined policing would be difficult and costly. Approximately one-third of users lack permits despite over 300 permits being sold, with debris coming from as far as east of Dent. Current permits generate about \$19,000 annually, with \$7,000 allocated for equipment costs plus wages. Council members expressed concerns about eliminating services for residents who maintain well-kept yards as expected by the city. Stenger noted that communities typically provide yard waste services and questioned directing residents to drive to Frazee for brush disposal. Haarstick suggested more frequent burning and better management could address issues. Discussion included liability concerns, the visual impact of large brush piles as visitors enter town, and the December incident where employees thought a fire hadn't started but it ignited hours later, leading to emergency response. The committee considered various alternatives including scheduled staffed hours, better camera systems, and resident-only policies.

Attorney Dylan Ramstad Skoyles emphasized that rule violations would continue regardless of rule changes, suggesting the core issue is enforcement rather than rule content. He recommended better surveillance systems and prosecution of violators as deterrents, noting that catching and prosecuting violators typically reduces repeat offenses. After extensive debate about balancing community service provision with operational challenges, the committee agreed to table the decision until a special meeting following the April 8th Board of Review meeting. In the interim, permits will be sold for yard waste only (no brush), allowing more time for community input and alternative solution development.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to hold a special council meeting on Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 1:30 PM immediately following the Board of Review to discuss Yard Waste facility. The motion passed unanimously.

Personnel Meeting

Form

Bruhn reported that the personnel committee met and conducted maintenance personnel evaluations, finding performance fully successful based on established standards. The committee developed a recommendation based on their previous policy approval requiring a handover process for employee absences of two weeks or more. The committee proposed a handover work duties checklist format for all single-person positions to ensure continuity when employees are absent, whether expectedly or unexpectedly. The checklist requires employees to document work tasks, frequency, and basic instructions, such as daily garbage collection with notes on garbage can locations. The format aims to provide whoever covers the position with essential information about duties and locations rather than detailed procedures. This applies to key positions including the two maintenance/utilities staff, City Clerk/Treasurer Julie Lammers, Deputy Clerk Rachel Nustad, and Liquor Store Manager Kyle Theisen, but not to supervised positions like liquor store clerks who perform similar duties under management oversight.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to approve use of the handover work duties checklist. The motion passed unanimously.

The council established a completion deadline of end of April for all applicable employees to submit their checklists, with Lammers responsible for distributing forms and communicating the timeline.

Staff Reports

Engineering Report

No update.

Clerk Treasurer Report

Lammers presented two items. First, she requested approval for Deputy Clerk Rachel Nustad to attend the loss control workshop on March 31st in Mahanomen, complementing the previously approved attendance of Maintenance Operator Matt and herself at the April 1st Alexandria workshop. This arrangement ensures office coverage while maximizing training opportunities through their League of Minnesota Cities membership at no additional class costs beyond mileage.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Stenger, to approve Deputy Clerk Rachel Nustad's attendance at the loss control workshop. The motion passed unanimously.

Second, Lammers requested approval to hire Alyssa Hartmann as a part-time clerk at the liquor store based on management recommendation.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to approve hiring Alyssa Hartmann as part-time liquor store clerk. The motion passed unanimously.

Information & Announcements

The council reviewed upcoming meetings and events. The Board of Review is scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 1:00 PM at the Vergas Event Center with equalization specialists present. The Trail Masterplan meeting with Hobart Township was corrected to Thursday, April 16, 2026, at 6:30 PM (not 7:00 PM as initially stated) at the Hobart Township building. Patrick and Kevin will present analysis previously provided to Hobart Township, with a preparatory meeting scheduled for the first week of April to finalize the presentation addressing township questions.

Employee training schedules were noted including various professional development opportunities for city staff throughout 2026.

Adjournment

Motion by Stenger, seconded by Pinke, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The business for which the meeting was called was completed and adjourned at 7:45 PM.

Recorded by
Deputy Clerk
Rachel Nustad (assisted by ClerkMinutes)

Julie Lammers, CMC
Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

DRAFT

CITY OF VERGAS
Board of Review
Wednesday, April 08, 2026 1:00 P.M.

The City Council of Vergas met for the annual board of review at 1:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 8, 2026, in a hybrid meeting in the Smart Room at the Vergas Event Center and on Zoom with the following members present: Mayor Julie Bruhn, Council Members, Paul Pinke, Bruce Albright, James Stenger and Dean Haarstick. Absent: none. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers, Otter Tail County Appraiser Dawn Swisher, Appraiser Joel Dulski, and Nick Nordmark. Citizens; Neil Strawhorn, Rick Nelson and Bryan Giese.

Mayor Bruhn called the meeting to order.

Appraiser Swisher reviewed the City of Vergas and Otter Tail County rate changes.

General Assessment Information: 1. 2026 market values are based upon sales activity from 10-1-2024 to 9-30-25. 2. The Minnesota Department of Revenue requires a sales ratio of 90% to 105%.

No property contacted the County Appraiser before the meeting:

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to adjourn the meeting as the business for which the meeting was called, having been completed, was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Clerk-Treasurer
Julie Lammers, CMC

**CITY OF VERGAS
COUNCIL MINUTES
VERGAS EVENTS CENTER & ZOOM
Wednesday, April 8, 2026**

The City Council of Vergas met at 1:30 PM, on Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at the Vergas Event Center and on a Zoom for a hybrid special council hearing.

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Julie Bruhn, Mayor	P	P	P	P								
Bruce Albright, Member	P	P	P	P								
Paul Pinke, Member	P	P	P	P								
Dean Haarstick, Member	P	P	P	P								
James Stenger, Member	P	P	P	P								
Julie Lammers, Clerk-Treasurer	P	P	P	P								
Mike Dufrane, Utilities Superintendent	P	A	A	A								
Kyle Theisen, Liquor Store Manager	P	A	A	A								

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

Present via Zoom: Editor Bob Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum.

Present in person: City Maintenance Operator Matthew Engebretson, and Citizens, Eileen Giese, Bryan Giese, Neil Strawhorn and Rick Nelson.

Call to Order

Mayor Julie Bruhn called the meeting to order at 1:33 PM.

Yard Waste

Bruhn turned the meeting over to Albright to present the yard waste committee's recommendations. Albright explained that he and Pinke had conducted an analysis of the city's yard waste facility operations following significant problems with brush disposal that culminated in a major fire on December 1st. The fire required five local fire departments to respond and resulted in damage to a county dumpster, with crews having to return multiple times to fully extinguish the blaze. Albright reported that the city attorney had researched the legal requirements for operating a yard waste facility. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency does not require special permits for such operations, only a generic form indicating the types of materials accepted. The site has been closed since the December fire, but with spring approaching, residents were requesting information about reopening plans.

The committee presented three options for consideration:

Option 1: Continue Current Operations - Maintain the existing system where Vergas property owners receive free permits while non-residents pay \$65 annually. Last year, over 300 permits were sold, generating approximately \$9,000 in revenue after administrative costs. This revenue helps fund equipment upgrades that are not otherwise budgeted. Albright noted that local businesses support keeping the site open as it brings people to town who may patronize local establishments.

Option 2: Eliminate Woody Debris - Continue accepting grass clippings and leaves but eliminate brush and woody debris to reduce fire risks and allow for proper composting. The committee questioned whether permit sales would remain at current levels without the woody debris option.

Option 3: Residents Only - Restrict use to Vergas residents only, similar to other communities. This would eliminate the permit revenue but reduce volume and management challenges.

Albright emphasized the service value to the broader community, noting that permits are sold to residents from throughout the area. Township officials had indicated that when the site was closed, illegal dumping in road ditches increased significantly.

City Maintenance Operator, Matthew Engebretson, shared his perspective, expressing support for keeping the site open given the substantial permit revenue. He suggested temporarily closing the site when brush piles become too large and recommended establishing specific operating dates from April through October. Engebretson described the challenges of managing large piles, particularly during burn bans when material accumulates to dangerous levels. He noted ongoing issues with illegal dumping of non-permitted materials, including mattresses, couches, and even vehicle parts. Stenger suggested operating the facility normally for one year while implementing stricter enforcement and better communication about violations. He recommended warning residents that

continued problems could force closure or restrictions. Lammers inquired about the possibility of creating two separate dumping areas to allow burning one pile while the other receives new material. The group discussed this concept but noted space limitations due to the county's recycling operations at the same location. The discussion addressed enforcement challenges, with cameras present but limited deterrent effect. Albright noted that most users comply with regulations, but a small percentage create significant problems. The group considered installing gates and limiting access hours, but cost estimates for proper fencing exceeded \$28,000, and alternative barrier options were discussed.

Public input came from Bryan Giese, who strongly supported keeping the facility open and emphasized the need for better enforcement of size restrictions and commercial dumping violations. He noted witnessing large stumps that clearly violated the 4-foot length and 6-inch diameter limits and suggested imposing penalties on violators. Neil Strawhorn inquired about residents' ability to burn brush on private property with burn permits, which was confirmed as still allowable. There was brief discussion about a previous incident involving allegations of commercial dumping, but details were limited.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Stenger, to keep the yard waste facility open with the same fee structure as last year, posting hours from 8 AM to 8 PM, maintaining the right to close during burn bans or when piles become excessive, keeping gate installation as an option, having Albright write a warning letter to accompany permits and post on the website, and reevaluating the program in November. The motion passed unanimously.

Lammers clarified that permits could begin being sold immediately and that maintenance staff would open the facility on Monday morning, April 13th, at 8 AM.

Adjournment

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The business for which the meeting was called was completed and adjourned at 2:20 PM.

Recorded by
Deputy Clerk
Rachel Nustad (assisted by ClerkMinutes)

Julie Lammers, CMC
Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

CITY OF VERGAS
 Bill Listing for March 19, 2026 to April 17, 2026

VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
Chelsey Aasness	Event, return deposit	75.00
City of Vergas	Water and Sewer	66.25
City of Vergas	Payroll	11,292.45
Internal Revenue Services	2026 Withholding Tax	53.26
Julie Lammers	MCFOA Conference, mileage and meals	298.70
Lake Region Electric	Sign, electricity	61.08
LMC Insurance Trust	Deductible	1,000.00
MN Dept. Revenue	Sales Tax	141.00
MN Dept. Revenue	2026 Withholding Tax	251.44
Public Employees Retirement Assoc.	Payroll	1,684.82
Tonya Borough	Event, return deposit	75.00
United States Post Office	Stamps	546.00
Vergas Fire & Rescue	Fire Training Reimbursed	1,000.00
Vergas State Bank	HSA Contribution	510.00
Total for bills paid between Council Meetings		<u>\$17,055.00</u>

City of Vergas Liquor Store Checks Paid in March 2026

Vendor	Description	Total
Absolute Ice		119.95
Artisan Beer Company		456.80
Arvig Communications	Security, phone	156.95
Bergseth Bros		10,529.16
Beverage Wholesalers		1,632.58
Blue Cross/Blue Shield	Employee Insurance	3,195.20
Breakthru Beverage MN Wine and Spirits		2,949.78
City of Vergas	Parking Lot Assessments	4,381.44
City of Vergas	Payroll	6,358.91
City of Vergas	Water/Sewer	67.76
Colonial Life	Em. Reimb. Life insurance	51.26
Corporate Technologies	Computer and telephone updates	36.00
D-S Beverage		8,297.33
Elan Financial	Folgers and bottle sleeves	201.36
Fricke Consultin	POS System	165.00
Great Plains Nat Gas	Utility	238.14
Hanson's Plumbing & Heating	New Sewer line	17,134.00
Internal Revenue Service	Withholding Tax	1,840.58
Johnson Brothers Liquor Co		7,345.10
League of Mn Cities	Safety Group Training	265.44
League of MN Cities	Workers Comp	1,796.00
Merchant Service	Credit Card Fees	913.16
MN Dept. of Revenue	Sales Tax	4,299.00
MN Dept. Revenue	Withholding Tax	269.29
MN Life Ins Company	Employee Life Ins.	69.00
Otter Tail Power Company	Utility	324.18
Phillips Wine & Spirits		2,747.51
Public Employees Retirement Assoc.	Payroll Retirement	1,155.20
Refine Homes	Gutters	418.12
Southern Glazer's of MN		7,183.01
Theisen, Kyle	Cell phone reimbursement	25.00
Vergas Hardware	Supplies	66.84
Vergas Sate Bank -HSA	Employee HSA	461.00
Vestis		54.33
Viking Coca-Cola Bottling Co		224.70
Total Expenses for March		<u>\$85,429.08</u>
March Receipts		
ATM Payment for February		<u>120.00</u>
March Sales Receipts		<u>55,711.06</u>
March Receipts		<u>\$55,831.06</u>
March Operating Income (Loss)		<u>(29,598.02)</u>
Jan-Feb Operating Income (Loss)		<u>(30,616.85)</u>
2026 Total Operating Income (Loss)		<u>(60,214.87)</u>

City of Vergas
Past Due Customers

Account Type All
 Account Category All
 Route: All
 Past Due Days 90
 Status Active
 Exclude Payment Plans False

Route	Sort	Account #	Customer Name	Status	Parcel #	Service Address	Aged Days	Past Due Amt.	Total Balance	Deposit Balance	Last Pymt. Date	Last Pymt. Amount	Meter #	Meter Type	Pay Plan	
2	0	3001	Meyer, Jesse	Active	82000990214000	102 Altona Ave	101	84.25	383.93	0.00	12/23/2025	263.55	88707172	WATER	No	
2	0	530	Hoard, Daniel	Active	82000990130000	390 S Pelican Ave	101	50.20	367.67	0.00	12/23/2025	108.00	87476693	WATER	No	
2	0	7701	Estate, BJ's Real	Active	82000990046000	130 E Elm St	114	116.24	676.93	0.00	01/14/2026	27.00	88917785	WATER	Yes	
2	0	80	Penney, Joyce	Active	82000990045000	120 E Elm St	137	134.87	495.57	0.00	01/06/2026	150.00	88707227	WATER	No	
Total							Count: 4	385.56	1,924.10							

City of Vergas Investments

	<u>Account Number</u>	<u>12/31/25 Purchase</u>	<u>Sold</u>	<u>Interest Earned</u>	<u>03/31/26</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	<u>Maturity Date</u>
General Fund	325657	283,731.72	0.00	43,160.71	555.40	241,126.41	0.75% MMDA
2019 Street Debt Fund	325657	203,073.29	0.00	0.00	419.04	203,492.33	0.75% MMDA
Parking Lot/Alley	325657	138,334.17	0.00	138,334.17	0.00	0.00	
Liquor Store Fund	325657	77,360.14	0.00	77,360.14	0.00	0.00	
Sewer Reserve	19753	28,962.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	28,962.87	3.50% 12/27/2026
Sewer and Water Debt Service	19759	39,441.07	0.00	0.00	497.07	39,938.14	2.50% 7/17/2026
Liquor Fund	20338	156,645.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	156,645.95	2.50% 12/14/2026
Totals		<u>927,549.21</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>258,855.02</u>	<u>1,471.51</u>	<u>670,165.70</u>	

City of Vergas Bond Schedule

<u>Title</u>	<u>Purchase Date</u>	<u>Req. Balance</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	<u>Bank</u>	<u>Maturity Date</u>	<u>Balance 12/31/2025</u>	<u>Interest Paid in 2026</u>	<u>Balance 3/31/2026</u>	<u>Amount Paid in 2026</u>
Street Debt Service Fund									
General Obligation Improvement Refunding Bonds, Series 2015A	12/15/2015	\$299,000.00	2.42%	Vergas State Bank	2/1/27	61,000.00	808.25	33,000.00	28,000.00
General Obligation Improvement Refunding Bonds, Series 2019A (412)	6/11/2019	\$985,000.00	3.26%	First National Bank of Omaha	2/1/40	785,000.00	12,030.63	740,000.00	45,000.00
Taxable Lease, 2023	10/24/2023	\$230,000.00	5.90%	Vergas State Bank	2/1/39	224,000.00	6,945.50	213,000.00	11,000.00
Parking Lot, 2025	9/10/2025	\$147,000.00	5.20%	Vergas State Bank	2/1/36	147,000.00	0.00	147,000.00	0.00
Water Fund									
General Obligation Water Revenue Note, Series 2022A	2/1/2022	<u>\$132,000.00</u>	3.25%	Vergas State Bank	2/1/32	95,000.00	950.00	<u>82,000.00</u>	<u>13,000.00</u>
Total		\$1,793,000.00				1,312,000.00		1,215,000.00	97,000.00

2019 Street Project/General Fund/Special Revenue Money Market Account

	01/01/2026		2026	2026		
	Balance	Interest	Interest	Purchased	2026 sold	3/31/2026
Uncommitted Funds	142,961.85	22.51%	268.57	0.00	43,160.71	100,069.71
City Shop	8,694.12	1.96%	17.95	0.00	0.00	8,712.07
Easements	5,297.58	1.19%	10.91	0.00	0.00	5,308.49
Event Center	973.41	0.22%	2.01	0.00	0.00	975.42
Event Center Electronic Sign	10,178.27	2.29%	20.99	0.00	0.00	10,199.26
General	14,755.40	3.32%	26.82	0.00	0.00	14,782.22
Park	36,099.65	8.14%	74.5	0.00	0.00	36,174.15
Sand Seal (Seal Coating)	13,194.65	2.97%	27.22	0.00	0.00	13,221.87
Sidewalk	7,928.17	1.79%	16.37	0.00	0.00	7,944.54
Street Improvements/Equipment	42,138.70	9.50%	86.95	0.00	0.00	42,225.65
Yard Waste	1,509.32	0.34%	3.11	0.00	0.00	1,512.43
Liquor Store	77,360.14	0.00%	0	0.00	77,360.14	0.00
2025 Parking Lot Alley Project	138,334.77	0.00%	0	0.00	138,334.77	0.00
2019 Street Project	203,073.29	45.77%	419.04	0.00	0.00	203,492.33
Balance	702,499.32	100.00%	\$974.44	\$0.00	\$258,855.62	444,618.14 ***

***Committed total should not drop below \$170,000 or be above \$290,000 at the end of the year.

Current Committed Total 241,125.81

**Vergas EDA/HRA
Government Services Center & Zoom
5:30 PM on Wednesday, March 18th, 2026**

EDA/HRA Mission: Retain and promote business in our community, adding housing so that we prosper and increase our tax base, keeping Vergas a vital community.

The City of Vergas Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA) met on Wednesday, March 18th, 2026, at 5:30 PM in a hybrid meeting at the Vergas Government Services building and on Zoom.

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bruce Albright, President/Council Liaison	A	P/P	P									
Paul Sonnenberg, Member	P	P/A	P									
Kevin Zitzow, Member	P	P/P	A									
Jennifer Carlson, Member	A	A/P	P									
Vanessa Perry, Member	P	P/P	P									
Julie Lammers, City Clerk-Treasurer	P	P/P	P									

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

Present via Zoom: Editor Bob Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum.

Present in person: CEDA Representative Kaite Gehring

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Albright at 5:30 PM.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

The agenda was modified to move item 6 (419 Dianne Avenue) to the end of the meeting as it required a closed session.

Motion by Sonnenberg, seconded by Perry, to approve the agenda with the requested change. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Recommendations to City Council

None.

Minutes

Motion by Perry, seconded by Sonnenberg, to approve the minutes from February 4, 2026, and February 23, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Update

Lammers presented the financial update, noting that the only changes from the previous month were mileage payments to her and that Keystone had now received their check, contrary to what the report initially indicated. All other financial items remained unchanged from the previous month.

Motion by Sonnenberg, seconded by Carlson, to approve the treasurer's report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

CEDA Representative Katie Gehring

Grant Applications

Gehring reported that a new grant application had been received just yesterday from Vergas Auto for paving their parking lot. The estimated cost was \$20,000, with work to be performed by Kevin Zitzow and others. Gehring noted that the only missing element from the application was documentation showing where materials would be sourced, which Kevin would need to provide if the application was approved.

Motion by Sonnenberg, seconded by Perry, to accept the Vergas Auto application with the condition that material sourcing documentation be provided. The motion passed unanimously.

Lammers reported that there was funding available for only two more grants, with the final grant being limited to approximately \$4,000.

First Children's Finance Update

Gehring provided an update on the First Children's Finance committee, explaining that they had completed their first onboarding meeting. The lead analysis for Vergas showed a need for 35 childcare spots. Perry expressed concern about the length of future meetings, noting that the next meeting was scheduled for another three hours in early April. Gehring indicated she would work with the committee to better focus their efforts on specific needs like rate studies, fundraising assistance, or advocacy rather than general curriculum discussions. She also mentioned discovering a local childcare provider on Sybil Lake in rural Vergas that was helping meet some of the demand.

Daycare

Goals

The committee confirmed their primary goal was to provide affordable and sustainable daycare in Vergas, with Albright clarifying that this could include working with others to bring childcare to the community. The emphasis was placed on sustainability rather than just affordability, recognizing that parents desperately needed local childcare options.

Opportunity

Albright provided background on the three options previously considered. The committee had initially favored the Otter Tail model with stick-built construction, but funding limitations had changed their approach. The second option involved working with Dynamic Homes or similar manufacturers. Albright had spoken with Josh Hanson about a Dynamic home in Sunny Oaks that included a 5-foot crawl space and cost \$350,000 or less. The third option of purchasing Ebersviller's four-unit apartment building had been eliminated due to the asking price being three times the assessed value and community concerns about reducing senior housing availability. Perry and Albright discussed the challenges with modular construction, particularly regarding the base-level materials typically included in standard quotes. Perry, drawing from her experience as a landlord, expressed concerns about the durability of basic materials in a daycare setting and suggested that necessary upgrades might bring the cost closer to stick-built construction.

The committee agreed that someone should schedule a meeting with Dynamic Homes to get detailed specifications and tour their available models to make an informed comparison.

Funding

Gehring presented comprehensive funding scenarios showing potential fundraising gaps depending on the construction approach chosen. She had prepared fundraising materials including brochures and information packets, with different donation levels and recognition opportunities. The committee discussed setting a fundraising goal of \$500,000 to cover potential upgrades and ensure adequate funding regardless of the final construction method chosen. The group reviewed a preliminary list of potential donors and funding sources, with Bruce noting some additional prospects not included in the initial assessment. They discussed the importance of transparency in fundraising materials and agreed to include information about the project structure, noting that the EDA would own the facility and rent units to childcare providers rather than operating the daycare directly.

Annual Meeting

The committee planned their annual meeting for Wednesday, April 29th at 5:30 PM at Billy's Corner Bar. The format would include a social hour starting at 5:30, followed by dinner and speakers. They discussed the need for an engaging speaker who could provide practical business value to attendees, similar to previous successful presentations on social media marketing. Katie suggested Tammy Anderson, a childcare consultant with fundraising expertise, as a potential speaker option.

Motion by Sonnenberg, seconded by Carlson, to hold the annual meeting on April 29th at Billy's Corner Bar at 5:30 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting would serve as the official kickoff for the daycare fundraising campaign, with fundraising materials distributed to attendees and local businesses invited to participate.

419 Dianne Ave

Motion by Sonnenberg, seconded by Perry, to close the meeting with statutory authority under Minn Stat 13D.05 subd. 2. The sale of 419 Diane Ave. Motion passed unanimously.

Recording is available at the city office and may be opened by court order.

Closed meeting was opened.

Motion by Perry, second by Sonnenberg, to accept the offer for 419 Diane Avenue pending qualification of the purchaser. The motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

The committee moved into closed session to discuss the property offer for 419 Dianne Avenue. Following the closed session discussion about an offer from DuWayne Ditterich for \$17,000 on the challenging corner lot, the committee reopened the meeting.

Motion by Perry, seconded by Carlson, to adjourn the meeting at 6:40 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Recommendations

None.

Follow Up Actions

- Gehring: Schedule the meeting with Dynamic Homes and coordinate with local team members to attend.
- All team members: Review the draft fundraising materials and provide feedback to Gehring within the next day or two.
- Gehring: Update fundraising materials based on team feedback and prepare final versions for printing (in coordination with West Central Initiative).
- Lammers: Post an update about the daycare project status on the city's Facebook page after review of materials.
- Team: Set fundraising goal at \$500,000 for public communications and update materials/thermometer accordingly.
- Gehring: Reach out to potential annual meeting speakers to vet and invite as appropriate.
- Team: Begin fundraising activities in advance of grant decision, targeting identified businesses and individuals.
- Team: At April 1st meeting, finalize plans and materials for the annual meeting, including having a copy of the fundraising packet for each attendee.
- Team: Consider adding a community event or interaction component to the annual meeting to increase engagement.

**Vergas EDA/HRA
Government Services Center & Zoom
5:30 PM on Wednesday, April 1st, 2026**

EDA/HRA Mission: Retain and promote business in our community, adding housing so that we prosper and increase our tax base, keeping Vergas a vital community.

The City of Vergas Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA) met on Wednesday, April 1st, 2026, at 5:30 PM in a hybrid meeting at the Vergas Government Services building and on Zoom.

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bruce Albright, President/Council Liaison	A	P/P	P	P								
Paul Sonnenberg, Member	P	P/A	P	P								
Kevin Zitzow, Member	P	P/P	A	P								
Jennifer Carlson, Member	A	A/P	P	P								
Vanessa Perry, Member	P	P/P	P	P								
Julie Lammers, City Clerk-Treasurer	P	P/P	P	P								

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

Present via Zoom: Editor Bob Williams of the Frazee-Vergas Forum.

Present in person: CEDA Representative Kaite Gehring

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Albright at 5:30 PM.

Agenda Additions and Deletions

Gehring indicated they would discuss a new grant opportunity and updated floor plans for the daycare project. No formal changes were made to the agenda.

Status of Recommendations to City Council

None.

Minutes

Lammers noted that minutes were not available due to updates received from a loss control meeting she attended that day. The minutes for March 18, 2026, will be presented at the next meeting.

Financial Update

2026 Income and Expenses

Lammers reported that the EDA sold the property at 419 Dianne Avenue, which cost the EDA \$685.10 due to assessments that had to be paid from the proceeds. The EDA also paid Keystone their grant portion. Otherwise, there were no changes since the previous month.

Motion by Carlson, seconded by Sonnenberg, to approve the financial report as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

CEDA Representative Katie Gehring

Grant Applications

Gehring announced a new grant opportunity through the Department of Children, Youth, and Families with a May 18th deadline. The grant offers up to \$500,000 but requires a 1:1 match, with a completion deadline of 2029. This grant is specifically for construction or renovation of early childcare facilities and differs from their DEED application. The board discussed funding options for the required match, including potential bonds through the city's bonding authority or short-term loans from Vergas State Bank. Lammers explained that the city has bonding capability as long as they can prove ability to repay. The board considered using the \$150,000 from Alliance as part of the match and obtaining additional pledges from community organizations like the Lions Club. Gehring mentioned there would be a Zoom conference on April 15th to answer questions about the grant application. The board decided to pursue letters of commitment from local organizations to demonstrate matching funds.

Motion by Zitzow, seconded by Perry, to give Gehring and Lammers approval to move forward with applying for the grant. The motion passed unanimously.

First Children's Finance Update

This item was not discussed in detail during the meeting.

Daycare

Goals

The board continued working toward establishing a daycare facility to serve the community's needs.

Opportunity

A. Build

Gehring reported on a meeting with Dynamic Homes to discuss modifications to previous floor plans. The revised plans included several changes: adding an island in the kitchen instead of a peninsula, including space for an upright freezer, converting the second bathroom into a pantry with crawl space access, and moving the washer and dryer to a hallway closet. Albright suggested taking the plans to local stick builders like Refined Homes and Franklin Construction for competitive bids once Dynamic provides their updated pricing. Perry raised concerns about Dynamic's previous statement that their bid represented only 60% of the project completion, questioning the true cost implications when adding the remaining 40% of work needed. The board agreed to wait for Dynamic's updated pricing before making decisions about proceeding with modular versus stick-built construction. They planned to schedule a special meeting once pricing is received.

B. Purchase and remodel

This option was not discussed during the meeting.

C. Funding

Gehring presented marketing materials for community outreach and fundraising. The board discussed whether to send letters to potential business donors or focus on in-person meetings for larger contributions. The consensus was that major donors would need personal visits rather than just letter campaigns. The board reviewed donation tier structures on the marketing flyer, considering options like \$100-\$5,000, \$5,000-\$10,000, \$10,000-\$25,000, and \$25,000+ categories. Discussion included operational considerations such as property taxes (which would apply since the facility would be rented), insurance costs for rental properties, and rental rates. Zitzow questioned whether the proposed \$750 per unit rental rate would be sufficient to cover expenses including property taxes, insurance, snow removal, and lawn care.

Annual Meeting

The board discussed preparations for the annual meeting scheduled for April 29th. They reviewed potential speakers including a retired chamber president from Fargo and a business consultant named Carrie. Lammers also mentioned the possibility of having Carlson from Minnesota SBDC speak about the Minnesota Paid Leave Act, which would provide valuable information to local businesses at no cost. The board decided to include the daycare project flyer with annual meeting invitations to increase awareness and potentially boost attendance. They discussed printing arrangements and formatting for the invitations.

Adjournment

Motion by Perry, seconded by Carlson, to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Recommendations

None.

Follow Up Actions

- Gehring: Apply for the Department of Children, Youth, and Families grant (due May 18th), in coordination with Lammers, including determining the specific ask amount and securing necessary match/pledges.
- Lammers: Contact the Lions (and potentially other community organizations) to request a letter of support or pledge for the grant match.
- Lammers: Run the bonding/loan approach by Vergas State Bank to confirm city's ability to secure a bond or short-term loan for the grant match.
- Gehring: Get a revised quote from Dynamic Homes based on the discussed floor plan modifications and email it to the group.
- Group: Schedule and hold a special meeting after receiving the new Dynamic Homes quote to decide between Dynamic and stick-built options before the annual meeting.
- Julie/Gehring: Prepare marketing/fundraising materials (flyer/letter) for the annual meeting, but wait to send until after the decision on construction method (Dynamic vs stick-built).
- Gehring: Send the latest version of the marketing materials/flyer to the group for review before posting to the website.

- Lammers: Post the finalized marketing materials/flyer to the EDA HRA website after group review.
- Group: Decide on tiers for donor recognition and confirm with Katie for inclusion in marketing materials.
- Gehring: Get a quote from local printers (or determine in-house printing needs) for producing enough copies of the flyer for the annual meeting.
- Group: Invite and confirm speakers (e.g., retired Fargo Chamber president, Carrie Haverkamp, or SBDC representative) for the annual meeting, with follow-up by Vanessa.
- Gehring: Keep the group posted on speaker confirmations for the annual meeting.
- Lammers: Meet with Sherri Hanson before the annual meeting to coordinate her update presentation.
- Lammers: Send out invitations for the annual meeting, potentially in coordination with the community club for broader distribution.
- Lammers: Double check state law regarding EDA HRA procurement/bidding requirements and share findings with the group.

DRAFT

CITY OF VERGAS.
 Park Board Advisory Board Minutes
 Vergas Event Center & Zoom Teleconference
 3:00 PM on Thursday, April 9th, 2026

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dean Haarstick, Council Appointment	P	N/A	A	A								
Sherri Hanson, Member	P	N/A	P	P								
Chuck Hanson, Member	P	N/A	P	P								
Steph Hogan, Member	P	N/A	P	P								
Tiffany Prindle, Member	A	N/A	A	A								
Tony Sailer, Member	P	N/A	P	P								
Rachel Nustad, Secretary of the board	P	N/A	P	P								
Mike DuFrane, Utilities Superintendent	P	N/A	A	A								

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

Present via person: Julie Lammers

Present via zoom: Editor Bob Williams of the [Frazee-Vergas Forum](#)

Call to order

The City of Vergas Park Advisory Board was called to order by S. Hanson on Thursday, April 9th, 2026 at 3:00 PM.

Additions and Deletions

The board discussed removing items from the agenda that were not relevant for this meeting. There was some confusion about which agenda version was being used, as some members thought pickleball and Story Walk items had already been removed. Rachel Nustad suggested keeping soccer nets on the agenda as she wanted to discuss that topic, while agreeing to delete Story Walk and pickleball items.

Minutes

Motion by Hogan, seconded by Sailer, to approve the minutes from March 12, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Recommendations to City Council

None.

Long Lake Park Master Plan

Review of the Plan

The board engaged in extensive discussion about the Long Lake Park Master Plan, which was originally developed in 2022. The preliminary cost estimate for the full master plan was \$1,273,000, which includes landscaping, mulch, limestone, bike racks, tables, trash receptacles, rubber surfacing, benches, a stage pavilion projected at \$145,000, and flush restrooms estimated at \$95,000 with \$45,000 for city sewer connection.

The board discussed the need to break the project into manageable phases rather than attempting to complete the entire plan at once. Key priorities identified included:

Bathroom/Restroom Facilities: This emerged as the top priority, with multiple board members emphasizing the poor condition of current facilities. A letter from a 7-year-old was referenced, stating "the bathroom the parks bathroom smells. I could not sit on it because it was cold and smelly. It was dark in there, and I did not feel safe." The board agreed that connecting to city sewer with flush toilets would be the most impactful improvement.

Traffic Pattern and Parking: The plan includes a one-way traffic pattern with entrance near the current bathhouse location and exit where the current entrance is located. The county has already approved this change. New diagonal parking would be created on the lakeside of the driveway, though the board noted the angles shown in the current plan appear incorrect for the proposed traffic flow.

Amphitheater/Pavilion: The board discussed combining the bathhouse with an amphitheater structure, which would share walls and reduce costs. The Vergas State Bank has expressed interest in sponsoring this facility, potentially calling it the "Vergas State Bank Pavilion."

Safety Concerns: The board emphasized safety improvements, particularly closing off the current parking area where families watch children to prevent vehicle-pedestrian conflicts. This area could be converted to sand or potentially include a splash pad, though cost concerns were raised about splash pad maintenance and water usage.

Engineering Challenges: Sailer raised concerns about the natural spring location and its impact on the proposed entrance location. There was also discussion about the positioning of the highway and whether the county would consider moving it, though this was deemed unlikely.

Sales Tax Update

Lammers provided an update on the sales tax legislation. The house has introduced bill HF 4718, with Tom Murphy presenting the introduction and first reading while waiting for a hearing date. For the senate, Lammers testified before the committee on bill SF 4727. Other cities that testified included Taylor Falls, Northfield, Baxter, Milton Lake, Elk River, and Saint Cloud. Committee chair Anne Rust called Vergas's request "a really unusual request, but very fiscally responsible," which Lammers noted as the most positive feedback heard. The city is asking for 5 years of sales tax authority. Sydney, Jordan Rasmussen's aide, conveyed that Jordan said Lammers "did a really good job" with her testimony.

The timeline requires approval by the end of May to meet September ballot requirements for the November election. If approved, September and October would be used for public education and campaigning for voter approval.

Budget

Sailer reviewed the current budget, noting that repair and maintenance supplies had already been heavily utilized. The bathhouse funds showed \$67,000 available. The board discussed wood chips for playground areas, which are typically ordered every other year. Nustad suggested exploring recycled tire surfacing as a potentially more cost-effective long-term alternative, though initial costs would be higher.

Other Business

Baseball Committee Update: Sailer reported ordering 600 feet of tubing for fence repairs and a new sprayer for field paint. He emphasized the importance of using the correct size paint cans and noted that paint is preferable to chalk for field marking.

Detroit Lakes Partnership: Sailer discussed conversations with Nick Courney from Detroit Lakes about potentially hosting part of their baseball tournament in Vergas. Detroit Lakes is facing field limitations due to their JV field reconstruction, and using Vergas fields would save travel costs. The fee structure is \$100 per game, with Detroit Lakes being willing to pay this rate due to fuel savings.

Soccer Nets for Little Field: Nustad proposed adding soccer nets to the little field as an accessible recreational option. She researched costs, finding that heavy-duty steel/aluminum semi-pro nets cost between \$700-1200 per pair, while official stadium grade nets cost around \$4000. She posted on Facebook seeking donated or used nets and suggested conducting a survey to gauge community interest before making purchases. The board discussed the possibility of building nets using PVC pipe or having them constructed locally to reduce costs.

Water Ski Team: The board reviewed the transfer of the water ski team business to a new LLC. The new operators plan four shows during the season with practices on Tuesdays and Fridays. They will use the same dock location and are seeking sponsorships with temporary signage during show season. Sponsors include McLaughlin and surf boat dealers who want to display boats during shows. The team requested permission for a demonstration using surf boats during their Saturday night show. The city maintains liability protection while the team carries their own insurance for shows and practices.

Trail Connection Meeting: A trail connection meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 16th at 6:30 PM at Hobart Town Hall to discuss the Heartland Regional Trail and Heartland Lakes Trail connections.

EDA Annual Meeting: The annual EDA meeting is scheduled for April 29th at 5:30 PM at Billy's Corner Bar, featuring speakers Katie Gehring and Darren Dunlop. The meeting includes a free roasted chicken dinner and will discuss the Long Lake Master Plan among other community development topics.

Next Meeting Date/Time

The next meeting is scheduled for the second Tuesday of May, which is May 14th.

Adjournment

Motion by C. Hanson, seconded by Hogan, to adjourn the meeting at 4:10 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Nustad, Deputy Clerk (assisted by ClerkMinutes)
Secretary of the Park Board

Recommendations to City Council

None.

Follow Up Actions

- Nustad: Create and distribute a survey (potentially via Facebook/community club) to gauge community interest in soccer nets and other uses for the little league field
- Lammers: Update the group once she hears back from the state regarding the sales tax bill status
- Lammers and Nustad: Work on visuals/diagrams showing proposed bathhouse and amphitheater locations for the April 29th EDA meeting and email to all members
- Nustad: Add swimming lessons to the agenda for the next meeting
- All interested: Attend the trail connection meeting at Hobart Town Hall on Thursday the 16th
- Lammers: Present update on sales tax and phased master plan at the EDA meeting on April 29th

DRAFT

Date Range : 3/20/2026 To 4/21/2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Claim #</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Account #</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Detail</u>
04/21/2026	Arvig	All Depts, security and internet	25919	\$616.08			
					609-49751-321-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$156.95
					100-43010-321-	City Shop	\$78.45
					100-45110-321-	EVENT CENTER	\$111.00
					100-41010-321-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$269.68
04/21/2026	Barefoot Lawns, LLC	PK, 2025 Herbicide	25920	\$1,486.14			
					100-45210-400-	Parks	\$1,486.14
04/21/2026	Colonial Life	2026 Employee Reimbursed Insurance	25921	\$232.82			
					100-41405-999-	Clerk	\$135.66
					609-49751-999-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$51.26
					100-43110-999-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$11.87
					100-45210-999-	Parks	\$11.87
					100-41405-999-	Clerk	\$22.16
04/21/2026	Core & Main LP	Water & Sewer, Curb box and lid Inv CNV1000014433	25922	\$247.34			
					601-49440-530-	Water Utilities - Administration and General	\$247.34
04/21/2026	Corporate Technologies, LLC	All Depts, Tech, Computer Inv #229521, 228791, 229983	25923	\$460.60			
					100-41010-200-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$104.64
					100-41110-200-	Council/Town Board	\$60.00
					100-41310-200-	Mayor	\$15.00
					601-49440-200-	Water Utilities - Administration and General	\$60.00
					602-49490-200-	Sewer Utilities - Administration and General	\$54.76
					100-43110-200-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$42.20
					100-45210-200-	Parks	\$42.20
					609-49751-200-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$39.60
					100-45110-200-	EVENT CENTER	\$42.20

Date Range : 3/20/2026 To 4/21/2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Claim #</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Account #</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Detail</u>
04/21/2026	Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota	Employees Health Insurance Premium June 2026	25924	\$5,013.30			
					100-41405-131-	Clerk	\$454.21
					601-49440-131-	Water Utilities - Administration and General	\$780.33
					602-49490-131-	Sewer Utilities - Administration and General	\$780.33
					100-43110-131-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$326.12
					100-45210-131-	Parks	\$326.12
					609-49751-131-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$2,346.19
04/21/2026	Crestline Software, LLC	Utility Billing Program Service Inv 18570	25925	\$889.08			
					601-49440-200-	Water Utilities - Administration and General	\$444.54
					602-49490-200-	Sewer Utilities - Administration and General	\$444.54
04/21/2026	Ditterich Mercantile	Office, coffee	25926	\$22.85			
					100-41010-210-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$22.85
04/21/2026	Epic Sports	Park, Baseball Field fence topper, Paint Marker and paint	25927	\$1,363.76			
					100-45210-359-	Parks	\$1,363.76
04/21/2026	Matthew Engebretson	St, Pk, reimbursed cell phone	25928	\$25.00			
					100-43110-321-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$12.50
					100-45210-321-	Parks	\$12.50
04/21/2026	Frazee-Vergas Forum	Gg, Subscription and legal ads	25929	\$460.88			
					100-41010-340-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$418.88
					100-41010-210-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$42.00
04/21/2026	Elan Financial Services	GG, computer programs, office supplies, MCFOA hotel LS, cannibus and training	25930	\$1,291.20			
					100-41405-331-	Clerk	\$633.35

Date Range : 3/20/2026 To 4/21/2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Claim #</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Account #</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Detail</u>
					100-41010-200-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$367.15
					609-49751-200-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$15.00
					100-41010-200-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$25.70
					609-49751-200-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$250.00
04/21/2026	Great Plains Natural Gas Company	Shop, Event Center utility	25931	\$1,331.15			
					100-45110-380-	EVENT CENTER	\$876.29
					100-43010-380-	City Shop	\$454.86
04/21/2026	Julie Lammers	All depts, cell phone reimbursed	25932	\$75.00			
					100-41405-321-	Clerk	\$25.00
					601-49440-331-	Water Utilities - Administration and General	\$25.00
					602-49490-331-	Sewer Utilities - Administration and General	\$25.00
04/21/2026	League of Minnesota Cities	LMC, annual conf. Albright, Stenger, Bruhn and property ins.	25933	\$963.00			
					100-43110-345-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$73.00
					100-41310-331-	Mayor	\$275.00
					100-41110-331-	Council/Town Board	\$615.00
04/21/2026	Leighton Broadcasting	Event, 2026 advertising	25934	\$110.00			
					100-45110-340-	EVENT CENTER	\$110.00
04/21/2026	KDC graphic Design & More	Yard Waste, banner	25935	\$62.50			
					100-43128-210-	YARD WASTE	\$62.50
04/21/2026	NAPA CENTRAL	Street, oil	25936	\$151.73			
					100-43110-210-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$151.73
04/21/2026	Madison National Life Ins Co, Inc	Employee short term Insurance (April -June 2026)	25937	\$67.77			
					100-45210-130-	Parks	\$6.73
					601-49440-130-	Water Utilities - Administration and General	\$6.73

Date Range : 3/20/2026 To 4/21/2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Claim #</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Account #</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Detail</u>
					602-49490-130-	Sewer Utilities - Administration and General	\$6.73
					100-41405-130-	Clerk	\$6.73
					609-49751-130-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$34.12
					100-43110-130-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$6.73
04/21/2026	MENARDS - DETROIT LAKES	Pk and St, seeds, shovel, boards	25938	\$68.30			
					100-43110-210-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$34.15
					100-45210-210-	Parks	\$34.15
04/21/2026	Minnesota Life Insurance Company	Employee Life Ins, EmployeeLife Ins. 2026	25939	\$65.80			
					100-41405-131-	Clerk	\$2.70
					100-43110-131-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$2.70
					100-43110-999-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$20.50
					609-49751-999-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$31.80
					609-49751-131-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$5.40
					100-45210-131-	Parks	\$2.70
04/21/2026	Olson Oil Co.	St, operating supplies	25940	\$493.59			
					100-43110-210-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$493.59
04/21/2026	Otter Tail Power	Park, ballfield electricity	25941	\$30.08			
					100-45210-380-	Parks	\$30.08
04/21/2026	Otter Tail Power Company	All depts, utility (March and April)	25942	\$4,504.06			
					602-49490-380-	Sewer Utilities - Administration and General	\$616.28
					100-43160-380-	Street Lighting	\$1,325.51
					100-45110-380-	EVENT CENTER	\$626.61
					100-45210-380-	Parks	\$197.15
					601-49440-380-	Water Utilities - Administration and General	\$1,319.57
					100-41010-380-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$223.30
					100-43010-380-	City Shop	\$195.64
04/21/2026	Otter Tail County Auditor-Treasurer	2026, 1st half of taxes	25943	\$2,579.05			

Date Range : 3/20/2026 To 4/21/2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Claim #</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Account #</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Detail</u>
					100-45210-440-	Parks	\$331.84
					100-43010-440-	City Shop	\$442.00
					602-49490-440-	Sewer Utilities - Administration and General	\$129.21
					100-41010-440-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$838.00
					100-45110-440-	EVENT CENTER	\$187.00
					609-49751-440-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$651.00
04/21/2026	Productive Alternatives, Inc.	Event Center, 2026 Cleaning Inv#6917	25944	\$179.97			
					100-45110-300-	EVENT CENTER	\$179.97
04/21/2026	RMB Environmental Laboratories, Inc	Water, 2026 Chemicals Inv D086829	25945	\$201.69			
					601-49440-218-	Water Utilities - Administration and General	\$201.69
04/21/2026	Steve's Sanitation, Inc.	Event, Parks, garbage pickup	25946	\$447.33			
					100-45110-384-	EVENT CENTER	\$139.53
					100-45210-384-	Parks	\$307.80
04/21/2026	Kyle Theisen	LS, phone reimbursement	25947	\$25.00			
					609-49751-321-	Liquor Store - Manager - Off-Sale	\$25.00
04/21/2026	Vergas Hardware	All Depts, supplies	25948	\$131.24			
					100-43010-210-	City Shop	\$56.41
					100-45110-210-	EVENT CENTER	\$7.61
					100-43110-210-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$12.99
					100-41010-210-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$24.24
					602-49490-210-	Sewer Utilities - Administration and General	\$29.99
04/21/2026	Verizon	GG & Event, 2026 internet and cell phone	25949	\$78.42			
					100-45110-321-	EVENT CENTER	\$38.41
					100-41010-321-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$40.01
04/21/2026	Vestis	Event, 2026 rugs and supplies	25950	\$435.13			

Date Range : 3/20/2026 To 4/21/2026

<u>Date</u>	<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Claim #</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Account #</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Detail</u>
					100-45110-210-	EVENT CENTER	\$435.13
04/21/2026	Widseth	Engineering; Inv 244192,	25951	\$3,552.50			
					100-43110-303-	Highways, Streets & Roadways	\$3,552.50
04/21/2026	Ramstad, Skoyles & Bakken, PA	Attorney fees	25952	\$621.40			
					100-41010-304-	GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$621.40
Total For Selected Claims				\$28,283.76			\$28,283.76

Bruce E Albright	City Council/Town Board	Date
Dean Haarstick	City Council/Town Board	Date
James Stenger	City Council/Town Board	Date
Julie A Bruhn	City Council/Town Board, Mayor	Date
Paul Pinke	City Council/Town Board	Date

City Council
2026 April Council Meeting
Vergas Event Center & Zoom Id number 267-094-2170 password 56587
6:30 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2026

5. Energy and Resiliency Plan

Files Attached

- Action Plan Energy & Resilience.pdf
- 03.19 Minutes Energy and Resiliency.pdf
- Proposed City of Vergas Energy & Resilience Plan.pdf

City of Vergas Energy & Resilience Action Plan

Energy				
<p>Goal: Reduce city operational energy use by 40% from 2025 baseline by 2035 thru renewable energy, energy efficiency and electrification.</p> <p>Goal: Install at least 1 type of renewable energy technology on every municipal building by 2035. (Solar photovoltaic (PV), Solar Thermal, Battery Storage, Cold Climate Air Source Heat Pumps (CCASHP), Geo Exchange heat pumps, micro Weather Energy Conversion System (WECS), thermal energy storage, low & ultra-low Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants, Electric Vehicle (EV) charging).</p>				
<p>Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt energy independence goals and objectives in policy. • Plan and budget for motor maintenance and upgrades to assure the most energy-efficient, durable, and appropriate equipment is available when upgrades or breakdowns occur. • Continue adoption of GreenStep program best practices. 				
<p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become an EV-ready city and solar ready city. (GSC BP6.5) • Phase in operational changes, equipment changes, including electric vehicles and no-idling practices for city fleet. (GSC BP12.3) • Adopt a renewable energy ordinance that allows, enables and encourages appropriate renewable energy installations. (GSC BP13.3) • Become a solar ready community, including adopting ordinances/zoning language and expedited permit process for residents and businesses to install solar energy systems. (GSC BP 26.7) 				
<p>Projects:</p>				
Enter and update utility information in B3 benchmarking. (GSC BP1.1)	5yr			
Use LED/solar-powered lighting in street, parking lot and park projects. (GSC BP4.5)	5yr			<i>Current status : LED lighting in all municipal buildings & street lighting.</i>
Install islanding capability and storage for a clean energy system in publicly accessible building to provide back-up power that can sustain function during extreme weather events. (GSC SP23.5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Designate a safe shelter with a plan that arranges adequate provisions and back up power sufficient to meet daily run-time requirements as a shelter for 1 week or longer. ○ Create a plan for resilience hub that describes community services provided during disruptions and into recovery after natural hazard events. 	5yr			<i>Current status: Battery hub to be installed in VEC as part of solar installation,</i>
Replace small combustion engine lawn and garden equipment with electric tools to decrease emissions and costs and increase efficiency. (GSC SP23.1)		10 yr		
Install renewable energy technology (i.e. solar PV/Solar Thermal) on all municipal buildings. GSC BP26.5)			15 yr	
Resilience				
<p>Goal: Increase community connectedness and civic participation through sustainability, resilience, and civic-focused events, training, engagement, and information. <i>Host up to 1 event per year.</i></p>				

<p>Goal: Educate, plan, and prepare for local climate impacts. Specifically address extreme weather events, heat events, and extreme precipitation in city planning <i>and infrastructure projects</i>. Educate city businesses and residents through timely social media posts on personal planning and preparedness for extreme weather.</p>					
<p>Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive and coordinated decision making; use a city commission or committee to lead, coordinate, report to and engage committee members on the identification and implementation of sustainability best practices. Incorporate climate resilience into city planning, policy, operations, and budgeting process. 					
<p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate working landscapes into the city by adopting an ordinance for one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agriculture and forest protection district local food production district Incubator farms, emerging farmers and land access Prairie designation Pollinator-friendly and natural landscaping to revitalize current turfgrass areas 					<p><i>Current status: Have prairie designation in city ordinance</i></p>
<p>Projects:</p>					
<p>Increase walking and biking within the community by being recognized as a walk friendly, bicycle friendly or age friendly community. (GSC BP12.1C)</p>		<p>5yr</p>		<p><i>Current status: Have walking trail from downtown, to Long Lake Park and via bridge along lake.</i></p>	
<p>Inclusive and coordinated decision making; use of a city commission or committee to lead, coordinate, report to and engage community members on identification and implementation of sustainability best practices. (GSC BP24.1)</p>		<p>5yr</p>		<p><i>Current status: Have a Energy & Resilience Advisory Board</i></p>	
<p>Communicate progress on goals; organize goals and outcome measures from city comprehensive plan, energy and resilience plan and other foundational documents and report to community members the data that shows progress toward meeting goals. (GSC BP 24.2)</p>		<p>5 yr</p>			
<p>Public education and action; conduct or support broad sustainability education, building on existing city and community relationships, networks, and events that involve: (GSC BP24.4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The entire community, community leaders Homeowners, landlords, tenants Community organizations 		<p>5 yr</p>		<p><i>Current Status: Lions organization collects plastic bags at city municipal building that are made into benches placed throughout the community. To date, 7 benches placed.</i></p>	
<p>Conduct or participate in a buy local campaign for community members and local businesses. (GSC BP27.3)</p>			<p>10 yr</p>	<p><i>Current Status: Vergas Community Club on an ongoing basis does buy local campaign thru events & use of Looney & Holiday Bucks</i></p>	

<p>Create, assist with and promote local food production/distribution within the city. (GSC BP27.3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Farmers market or coop buying club ○ Urban agriculture businesses or community-supported agriculture arrangement between local producers and consumers ○ Community or school garden, orchard, or forest. 		10 yr		<p><i>Current Status: Vergas serves as a site for the Bridge Community Pantry, which provides temporary food support one time monthly in the community to provide food support for individuals and families facing food insecurities. (second Wed each month)</i></p>
<p>Protect water and wastewater treatment facilities to reduce physical damage and sustain future function during extreme weather events. (GSC BP29.7)</p>			15 yr	
<p>Improve local energy resilience by installing distributed renewable energy systems and developing microgrids that can improve energy system resiliency. (GSC BP29.8). Install a public sector/municipally owned renewable energy technology. (GSC 26.5)</p>			15 yr	
Greenspace and Trees				
<p>Goal: Increase tree canopy in new and planned housing developments. <i>Plant 10 public trees per year</i></p> <p>Goal: Create plans and policies to support public and private planning of resilient tree species. <i>Increase the number of trees being planted by residents and businesses to 20 trees per year.</i></p> <p>Goal: Increase access and use of greenspace and blue space (i.e. lake) by community members and visitors. <i>Establish additional walking loops or trails that highlight local ecological features.</i></p>				
<p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an EAB (Emerald Ash Borer) management plan and educate community on best practices • Adopt a complete streets/living streets policy that addresses landscaping and stormwater management (GSC BP11.1) • Adopt a tree preservation and or/native landscaping ordinance (GSC 16.5) • Create Park/City land management practices/standards that maximize at least one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ low maintenance turf management; native landscaping, organic or integrated pest management, pollinator/monarch safe policies ○ sources of non-potable water or surface/rain water for irrigation • At least 20% of total land area is in protected green infrastructure or that 90% of residents are within 10 minute walk or within 1 mile to park or other public green/blue space. (GSC 18.3) 				
Projects				
<p>Certify as a Tree City USA . (GSC BP16.5)</p>		5yr		
<p>Plant and maintain at least 2-3 climate resilient trees for each public tree lost.</p>		5yr		
<p>Preserve environmentally sensitive, community valued land by placing a conservation easement on city lands by encouraging/funding private landowners. to place land in conservation easement. (GSC BP10.5)</p>		10 yr		
<p>Build city capacity to protect existing trees by one or more of the following: (GSC BP16.6)</p>		10 yr		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trained tree specialist ○ Volunteer forestry effort ○ Adopting ESB management plan ○ Participate in Tree Steward Program ○ Engage community in annual restoration or cleanup of natural resources. 				
<p>Conduct a tree inventory or canopy study of public and private trees. (GSC BP16.7)</p>		10 yr		

Water

Goal:

- Plan and prepare for changing precipitation patterns and water availability. *(Shorter term: implement green infrastructure rain water capture, and native vegetation inflow and infiltration projects in vulnerable areas in and around Vergas)*
- Integrate climate projections into water planning and wastewater management. *(Long term: lower flood risk for vulnerable areas and avoid damage from extreme events)*

Planning:
 Complete a complete GreenStep Municipal Stormwater management assessment. (GSC BP17.2)

Policy:

- Adopt and report on measurable, publicly announce surface water improvements targets for lakes. (GSC BP19.3) *-Is completed by local lake associations*
- Conserve/protect drinking and groundwater resources by creating a waterwise landscaping ordinance and/or guidance on rainwater harvesting and home water softener use. (GSC BP2.5)
- Adopt and implement guidelines or design standards/incentives for at least one of the following: (GSC BP17.5) *Have ordinance for 25% of lot to be impervious*
 - Rain Gardens
 - Rainwater harvesting
 - Green alleys or green parking lots
 - Pervious/permeable pavement or pavers
 - Tree trenches/tree boxes
- Incorporate compost and/or native landscape design.

Projects:

<p>Create/assist a lake improvement district. (GSC BP19.7)</p>	5yr			
<p>Improve smart-salting by reducing chloride use in winter maintenance and dust suppressants to prevent permanent surface water and groundwater contamination. (GSC BP17.6)</p>	5yr			
<p>Conduct or support a multi-party community conversations, assessments, plans, and actions around improving local water quality and quantity. (GSC BP19.2)</p>	5yr			

**Energy and Resiliency Advisory Board
City of Vergas**

The Energy and Resiliency Advisory Board met on Thursday, March 19, 2026, 5:30pm, at the Vergas Event Center Meeting Room.

Attendance:

2026	Jan 15	Feb 19	Mar 19	Apr 16	May 21	Jun 18	Jul18	Aug 20	Sept 17	Oct 15
Julie Bruhn	P	P	P							
Alex Ohman	A	P	A							
Bruce Albright	A	P	P							
Cal Miller	P	P	A							
Jim Courneya										

• **P: Present. A: Absent**

1. Agenda approved as distributed with one addition of WCI Central MN Food Council; Growing Local Together
2. Minutes from the February meeting were tentatively approved with no changes. Final approval when quorum.
3. Welcomed new member Jim Courneya, who will be joining the Energy & Resilience Advisory Board at the April meeting.
4. Final overview conducted on the Energy & Resilience Plan and Action Plan. Due to members not present will send out for final review with comments to Julie Bruhn by COB March 26,2026
5. Have received information regarding potential grant opportunities that are consistent with our Energy & Resilience Plan.
 - Restoring Prairies is a program to support prairies plantings. WCI has inquired about Vergas interest in this program. The grant would include cost sharing per acre to significantly offset cost of plantings, as well as workshop for community, training of city staff and management of prairie plantings. Letter of support provided to WCI who plans to apply for the grant through the 2027 Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund.
 - Greater Minnesota Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Community Program is soliciting interest in greater Minnesota in constructing additional electric vehicle charging sites. The program covers 80% of the cost with 20% community match. Estimated cost is \$6,000-12,000. Vergas submitted an EV interest form with no commitment.
6. Solar United Neighbors (SUN), a national nonprofit, helps people go solar with their homes via a group buy to reduce cost. SUN has created a new group called Lakes and Prairie Co-op that is open to residents in Otter Tail County (as well as Becker, Grant, Douglas, Pope, Stevens, Traverse and Wilkin). Solar 101 session planned for March 24th in Moriis and May 12th in Moorhead. Networking and informational opportunity. No obligation to join or install solar.
7. West Central Minnesota Food Council is offering a session to strengthen the regions local food systems. It's an opportunity to meet and network with regional food leaders, learn of funding opportunities and connect and share ideas and partnerships. Can attend in person (Fergus Falls closest site) or online on Tuesday, April 7th 4-6pm. Deadline to register is March 31, 2026.
8. Received message from Empowering Small Minnesota Communities (ESMC), who we received grant funding from, noted Vergas is eligible to receive \$8,000 to help support follow up activities related to our grant and work with ESMC. Could use to host Energy Fair and meeting any matching grant requirements.

Recommendations to City Council: Approval of the Vergas Energy & Resilience Plan

Recorder
e/s Julie Bruhn

DRAFT

City of Vergas Energy & Resilience Plan



PLACEHOLDER for cover page to include:

- Logos / organization names
 - City of Vergas
 - WCI
 - CERTs
 - RSDP
 - ESMC

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This is a co-publication of the University of Minnesota's Empowering Small Minnesota Communities (ESMC) Program. This effort is made possible thanks to funding by the Minnesota State Legislature. The ESMC is coordinated by UMN partners at the Center for Transportation Studies, the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, the Minnesota Design Center and UMN Extension Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships.

This project was made possible through collaboration between staff and elected officials from the City of Vergas, Empowering Small Minnesota Communities, West Central Initiative and the University of Minnesota. Special thanks to the wide range of community and regional partners who shared their experiences and made this work possible.

The project team included:

City of Vergas

- Julie Bruhn, City of Vergas Mayor
- Julie Lammers, City of Vergas Clerk-Treasurer

West Central Initiative

- Griffin Peck, Energy and Adaptation Planner
- Mark Kaelke, Community Planner (*formerly*)

University of Minnesota

- Heidi Auel, Central Clean Energy Resource Teams Coordinator
- Jonathan Barcenas, Humphrey School of Public Affairs Graduate Research Assistant
- Dan Handeen, Lecturer, School of Architecture & Research Fellow, Center for Sustainable Building Research
- Garrett Mosiman, Senior Research Fellow, Center for Sustainable Building Research
- Molly Zins, Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership Executive Director

Special thanks to **Otter Tail Power Company** for their collaboration and providing a baseline assessment to better understand energy use and operational efficiency of city-operated buildings. And special thanks to the **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency** for awarding Vergas the Local Climate Action Grant to support this work.

Small Minnesota communities have a tremendous number of existing assets: beautiful natural areas; essential built environments; economic strengths, and human capabilities to build upon community strengths, meet their challenges, and move toward their aspirations. The ESMC program is a community-centered collaboration with the University of Minnesota to support small communities in becoming well-positioned to benefit from federal, state, and local investments.

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7. Conclusion & Next Steps
8. Action Plan
9. Appendices
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 - B. Otter Tail Power Energy Assessment
 - C. UMN CSBR Building Assessments Report & Recommendations
 - D. Otter Tail Power Blower Door Testing Results
 - E. Energy & Resilience Advisory Board
 - F. Energy & Resilience Community Survey
 - G. MnSEIA (Minnesota Solar Energy Industries Association)
 - H. West Central Initiative Solar Assessment
 - I. Using Vergas Energy & Resilience Plan to Write Grants

INTRODUCTION & INSPIRATION

The 2023 League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) annual conference was a kick start for Vergas to engage in climate associated action. Information was presented at the conference regarding the unprecedented funding opportunities and stories were shared from various communities on impact projects. The information sparked interest and action.

The mayor, Julie Bruhn, presented the opportunities to the City Council to enhance City of Vergas resiliency and sustainability. The Council voted to make a commitment to climate action and granted the Mayor the authority to proceed. With the older municipal building infrastructure, a focus on energy was deemed the most beneficial approach as there would be energy and fiscal efficiencies and savings affecting all residents.

The year that followed entailed identifying resources, establishing contacts, participating in training, networking calls, and investigating funding opportunities. Three grants were submitted and partnerships were formed with Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTS), UMN Empowering Small Minnesota Communities (ESMC), UMN Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships (RSDP), West Central Initiative (WCI), and Vergas becoming the 149th GreenStep City in Minnesota. Primary goals were to achieve energy efficiencies and clean energy for the City of Vergas municipal buildings and operations. Goals also included engaging in a positive energy initiative with direct benefits to the community fiscally and environmentally and inspiring residential and commercial engagement to ignite interest in energy efficiencies and community sustainability.

Two grants were received, awarded by ESMC & RSDP in May 2024, that had a focus on rural settings; less than 5,000 population. The grants focused on assessing and trending energy usage and having energy audits conducted and building enclosure evaluations. The data would serve to guide planning and action to promote and achieve energy efficiencies and use of clean renewable energy.

It was a journey and learning curve requiring commitment and persistence that resulted in strong partnerships and groundbreaking work in understanding energy in the municipal buildings and moving the community forward toward resiliency and sustainability.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this plan is to provide the City of Vergas with a clear and actionable framework to address clean energy and resilience opportunities, climate challenges, drawing on recommendations from the ESMC and the Otter Tail Power Company (OTPCO) assessments. This plan reflects Vergas' desire to lead by example, demonstrating that small communities can define and act on their evolving infrastructure, energy and resilience needs.

Planning began with the City's 2019 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which laid the groundwork for long-term infrastructure management. Building on this foundation was the 2019 Housing Study and the 2022 Comprehensive Plan. The Housing Study was conducted through a resident survey to assess current and future housing needs. The Comprehensive plan entailed several engagement sessions, facilitated by WCI, which resulted in a vision and plan through 2036. The plan outlined aspects of safeguarding local assets, preserving the natural beauty of the community, and creatively meeting future housing needs was a framing principle across all the studies. Appendix A

In the fall of 2024, a 2 year energy use review was compiled, and building baseline assessments were completed to better understand energy use and operational efficiency of city-operated buildings, conducted by Otter Tail Power Company. Appendix B. With assistance from the Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR) at the University of Minnesota, the envelope of each city building was also assessed and evaluated for improvements. CSBR generated a report based on the findings and recommendations were made for each facility. Appendix C. West Central Initiative had begun working with the city thru the municipal solar coop to determine the needs for future critical loads to determine battery backup requirements, and solar energy potential as well as needs for the event center for use as an emergency shelter and resilience hub.

In the spring of 2025, the City applied for and received the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Climate Impact Implementation grant. This allowed the City to complete weatherization improvements by sealing air leaks and adding insulation on the fire hall, event center, and municipal liquor store, as recommended by CSBR. Refrigeration controls were also installed on the cooling equipment at the liquor store. In addition, blower tests were conducted pre and post the weatherization improvements. Appendix D. Through this process, the City will be able to begin tracking projects and measure efficiency gains over time through the MPCA GreenStep Cities program and B3 Benchmarking. B3 Benchmarking is a tool to track building performance using building and meter information. mn.b3benchmarking.com. This also helps Vergas gain additional recognition through the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program.

The Energy and Resilience plan also aims to protect local infrastructure from the growing risks of extreme weather events due to climate change, and to ensure Vergas remains a safe, healthy place for all residents. Community engagement has been central to shaping this vision. In the Spring 2025, a Community Input Survey, was distributed via the Maple Syrup Fest event, city communications, the City Office, and posted QR codes, where residents shared their perspectives to help guide the energy and resiliency planning.

By aligning community goals with climate preparedness and infrastructure investment, this plan positions Vergas to competitively secure funding and implement sustainable improvements for years to come. During the Spring 2025 community Input Survey, residents had the opportunity to engage with the planning process and express their interest in continued involvement. As part of this effort, individuals were invited to be considered for membership on the Energy & Resilience Advisory Board that will support the implementation of the plan. City ordinance established defining the roles and responsibilities of the new Advisory Board. Appendix E

METHODS & RESEARCH

1. Existing Planning Document Review

The City of Vergas has strategically positioned itself to achieve significant advancements in climate resilience, energy efficiency, and community well-being by building upon three foundational planning documents: the 2019 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), the 2020 Housing Study, and the 2022 Comprehensive Plan. Appendix A. This report investigates the alignment between these efforts, provides a sequencing framework for implementation, identifies grant funding opportunities, and highlights important technical considerations to optimize system investments to improve energy efficiency and improve City resiliency.

It is critical to recognize that implemented building envelope improvements recommended by the Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR) will lower facility energy demands. As a result, mechanical system sizing recommendations from the OTPCO audit may need to be recalibrated. The implementation of the MPCA grant provided funds for the weatherization efforts and blower door testing will further optimize mechanical systems sizing. Improved building shell performance will reduce the overall load of the mechanical heating and cooling systems. This presents opportunities for right-sizing the equipment, saving upfront capital costs, improving system longevity, and achieving better overall building performance and comfort.

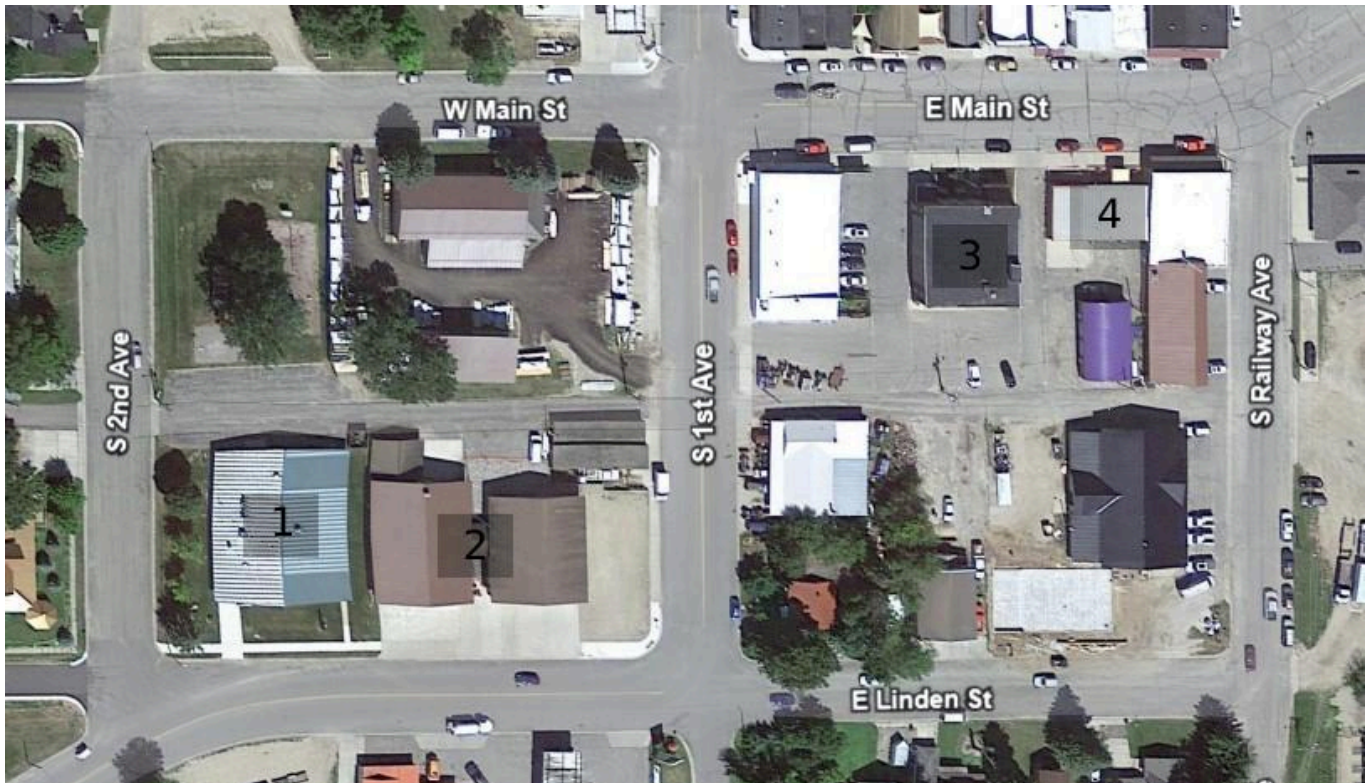
2. Energy Audits and Benchmarking

Universal Recommendation:

Across all four buildings, the Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR) recommended blower door testing as a high priority. While several clear air leakage pathways were identified through visual inspection and thermal imaging, others likely remain undetected. Blower door tests, especially when combined with thermal imaging or smoke testing, will help the City further identify total air leakage and precisely locate less visible gaps. Appendix D. This diagnostic approach is essential to efficiently prioritize weatherization improvements during the implementation of the MPCA grant. This additional exploration will determine the sequence of investments and reduce wasted effort and cost across the City's building portfolio.

Among the four facilities, the Event Center and Fire Hall have emerged as the most appropriate candidates for Resiliency Hubs, due to their size, layout, accessibility, and role in emergency management operations. The Event Center (1 in the below exhibit) is actively used for large gatherings, but current electrical limitations already exist, as experienced by frequent breaker trips when auxiliary equipment is connected. This would pose a challenge for future electrification and identifying critical loads to be powered by backup power in the event of a power outage. Action taken and completed in upgrading the electrical panel, alongside perimeter insulation and air sealing. The Fire Hall (2 in the below exhibit) has favorable energy performance but suffered from significant air leakage around overhead doors and inadequate attic insulation, both of which impacted its ability to maintain comfort and efficiency during emergencies. These improvement needs have been completed.

The City Office (4 in the below exhibit) is the best-performing building in terms of Energy Use Intensity (EUI), showing tight envelope performance and full reliance on electric mini-split systems. Minimal upgrades are needed here beyond continued monitoring of winter heating performance. Finally, the Liquor Store (3 in the below exhibit), while architecturally sensitive due to its historical value, offers mid-tier performance. It would benefit from targeted air sealing at known leakage points like the elevator shaft and rear entry, but major overhauls are less cost-effective in its current state.



Summary Table of Building Characteristics and Priorities

Category	1. Event Center	2. Fire Hall	3. Liquor Store	4. City Office
Primary Use	Assembly, Kitchen, Community Hub	Emergency Services, Meeting Space	Retail (Liquor + Second-hand)	Office/Admin + Shared w/ Post Office
Square Footage	~7,200 sq ft	~7735 sq ft	~7,840 sq ft	~2170 sq ft
Energy Use Intensity (EUI)	37.1 kBtu/ft ² ·yr	23.7 kBtu/ft ² ·yr	32.8 kBtu/ft ² ·yr	17.8 kBtu/ft ² ·yr

Resiliency Hub Potential	Yes – primary gathering site	Yes – emergency use	No – mixed-use and structural limits	No – limited capacity
Key Observations	Breaker trips with load; slab heat loss; drafty doors	Overhead door leakage; attic poorly insulated	Penthouse and rear leakage; economizer in place	Excellent performance; no gas; minimal heat loss
Recommended Focus	Upgrade electrical panel; weatherization for slab and doors	Air sealing and attic insulation	Targeted air sealing; preserve historic features	Monitoring and solar feasibility
Upgrade Priority	High – resiliency and energy	High – resiliency and heat loss	Medium – selective improvements	Low – maintain existing systems

Detailed checklists, energy savings models, and cost estimates for each facility are located in **Appendix C: Building Energy & Retrofit Plans**.

Important Note:

With building envelope recommendations completed, building energy consumption will certainly drop. This means OTPCO's heat pumps and HVAC sizing recommendations will likely **oversize systems** unless recalculated. Right-sizing these systems after envelope improvements will reduce capital costs, maintenance, and operational inefficiencies. **Reassessing mechanical design post-envelope upgrades is critical.**

	Efficiency Work (CSBR)	Potential impact on Mechanical Upgrades (OTPCO)
Fire Hall	Overhead door sealing, attic insulation	Smaller air-to-water heat pump, lower heating load
Event Center	Slab insulation, door air sealing	Downsized HVAC system, improved occupant comfort
Liquor Store	Penthouse air sealing, cooler improvements	Lower refrigeration and HVAC loads

City Office	Already efficient envelope; minor lighting upgrades	Minor HVAC recalibration needed
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3. Cross-Document Synergies and Actionable Opportunities

Public Building Retrofits and Renewable Energy Integration

The CSBR findings also highlight opportunities to enhance municipal facilities identified in the CIP and Comp Plan:

	Energy Upgrade Priority	Alignment with Existing Plans
Fire Hall	Weatherstrip overhead doors, attic insulation	CIP mentions facility maintenance; Comp Plan supports efficiency retrofits
Event Center	Install heat pumps, insulate slab edges	Identified in both CIP (Long Lake Park upgrades) and Housing Study (public amenities to retain residents)
Liquor Store	Air sealing elevator shaft, LED lighting upgrades	Enhances a major retail anchor in the local economy, reduced cost will increase business profitability.
City Office	Minor LED upgrades, explore solar capacity	CIP improvements combined with resilience goals

4. Community Engagement and Local Leadership

- Distributed a community-wide energy and climate survey in Spring 2025 through the City Office, Maple Syrup Fest, and digital QR codes.
- Collected feedback on energy priorities, barriers, awareness of climate risks, and infrastructure needs.
- Formed a volunteer **Energy and Resilience Advisory Board** made up of residents, local leaders, and city staff to review findings, advise on project phasing, and support implementation.

5. Land Use and Housing Context

- Incorporated data from the 2020 Vergas Housing Study to assess local housing stock, development pressures, and population trends.
- Identified infrastructure gaps, vacant parcels, and the need for services like sewer and water extensions for growth areas.
- Considered the role of senior housing and infill development in future energy planning.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Energy & Resilience Advisory Board

The Energy & Resilience Advisory Board (Appendix E) emerged directly from the 2025 Community Resilience & Energy Survey, which revealed broad support for local sustainability, energy affordability, and preparedness efforts. Recognizing this momentum, the City of Vergas established the advisory board to guide both the development and ongoing implementation of the Energy and Resiliency Plan and to help advance the City's progress in the Minnesota GreenStep Cities program.

This structure ensures the plan remains a tool for action and not just a record of intent. It also provides a pathway for transparency, community ownership, and sustained accountability.

Vergas Energy & Resilience Community Survey

The 2025 Community Resilience & Energy Survey was shaped by Vergas City leaders, RSDP, CSBR and CERTS and built upon the outreach foundation laid during the 2022 Comprehensive Plan. The survey was designed to gauge resident concerns about energy affordability, infrastructure vulnerabilities, and preparedness for extreme weather, while also capturing public interest in renewable energy options and environmental protections.

Distributed online and in print, the survey was promoted through local businesses, city communications, and public events. It drew 91 responses, with input from both full-time residents and non-residents, reflecting Vergas's strong seasonal and regional connections.

However, with roughly 61% of responses coming from non-residents, the need for additional outreach targeting year-round residents is clear. Future engagement strategies might include presence at public events, inserts in utility bills, city newsletter or education sessions at events and gatherings to capture a more comprehensive snapshot of full-time resident needs. These sessions can be facilitated with regional partner organizations.

Survey Summary Appendix F.

The survey (91 responses: 35 (38%) residents, 56 (62%) non-residents) indicates strong community interest in planning for city sustainability and resilience. There was a more engaged older resident demographic with limited youth representation in the survey. Respondents

expressed high concern about impacts to water quality and infrastructure, yet many lack backup plans for utility disruptions, revealing a key preparedness gap and opportunity for education and community coordination.

While current home temperature discomfort is relatively low, interest in learning about efficiency and resilience suggests proactive outreach could be effective. Heating sources vary (primarily natural gas among residents; electric and propane among non-residents), highlighting the need for targeted weatherization and resilience strategies. A moderate segment of residents is open to reducing energy costs, offering a starting point for pilot programs and peer-led engagement.

Overall, respondents strongly support environmental protection, energy efficiency, and streamlined renewable energy efforts. Planning priorities include: expanding emergency preparedness, protecting natural systems, strengthening infrastructure resilience, engaging youth, and providing accessible, practical education and incentives to build long-term community resilience.

In addition to the survey, there were a number of articles published in the local newspaper (Frazee Forum) and the City Newsletter and presentations and discussions were held at City Council meetings to keep the community informed and provide an opportunity to initiate questions and feedback. Information was framed in a way that resonates with rural community life; not just about data, technology and infrastructure, but about social cohesion, trusted networks, and protecting what makes Vergas a vibrant place to live.

Next Steps: Deepening Engagement and Peer Learning

Moving forward, the Energy & Resilience Advisory Board will play a central role in refining goals, confirming priorities, and tracking implementation progress. To strengthen this work the City, together with the West Central Initiative, are exploring peer learning opportunities that would give city council members, committee participants, and community partners a first-hand look at what's possible in small but visionary communities and inspire conversations around partnerships, pilot projects, and capacity-building for Vergas.

In the spirit of community leadership and practical innovation, this next phase will ensure that Vergas not only plans for a more resilient future, but actively builds it guided by the voices of its residents, the leadership of its committee, and the creative energy of its regional peers.

RENEWABLE ENERGY POTENTIAL

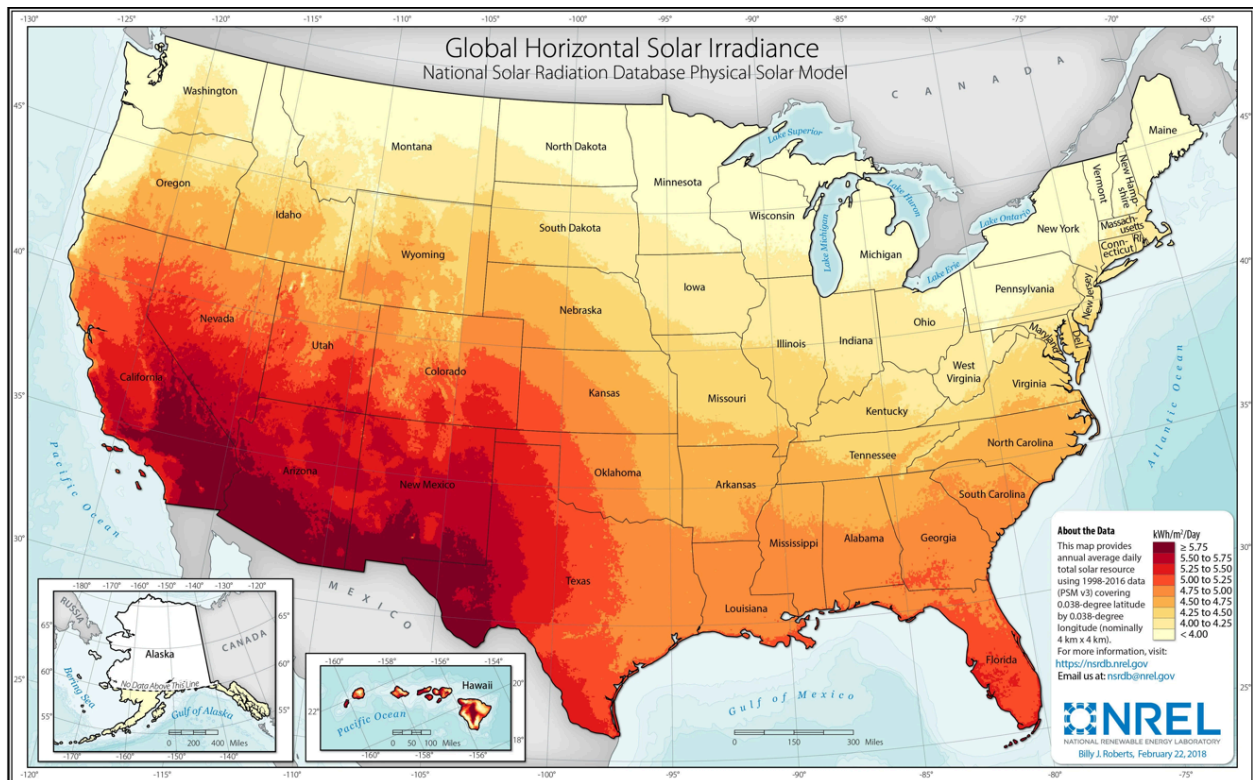
Solar Energy Potential in Minnesota and Opportunities for Vergas

The City of Vergas has taken an important step by conducting a solar site assessment and is implementing an array for the Event Center. The Fire Hall was additionally reviewed as a next step for solar. This proactive move supports the city's broader goals of energy efficiency, sustainability, and long-term cost savings. As Vergas continues to expand solar to the other sites, it is important to prioritize the energy efficiency of the site so that the solar arrays can be properly sized to the load.

Appendix G: MnSEiA (Minnesota Solar Energy Industries Association. Does Solar Work in Minnesota

Solar Energy Potential

According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), Minnesota has strong solar potential despite its northern latitude. Using the *U.S. Annual PV Solar Radiation Map* and Minnesota-specific data from the Minnesota Department of Commerce, the state receives 4.5 to 5.0 kWh/m²/day of solar energy—comparable to areas in Germany, one of the world’s solar leaders.



NREL Solar Maps (U.S.): <https://www.nrel.gov/gis/solar.html>

MN Solar Suitability App: <https://solar.maps.umn.edu/>

The *University of Minnesota Solar Suitability App* provides parcel-level analysis across the state. In Otter Tail County—including Vergas—many rooftops and open lands are rated as “good” or “excellent” for solar, indicating high solar radiation and several of the Vergas sites have favorable roof tilt/orientation.

This data, based on LiDAR and solar irradiance modeling, shows that even with seasonal variability, Minnesota's solar resources are sufficient to support distributed energy systems. Tools like the MN Solar App not only help identify optimal sites, but also will assist in planning future solar developments by visualizing annual output estimates.

For example, see the West Central Initiative Building and Solar Analysis for the City of Vergas Community and Event Center. Appendix H. When paired with efficient equipment upgrades and net metering policies, this can cover a significant portion of a small commercial or residential energy load.

Minnesota's solar development is further encouraged by state legislation such as the Solar Energy Standard (requiring 1.5% of investor-owned utilities' retail electricity sales to come from solar by 2020) and initiatives by Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) to support rural communities.

What This Means for Vergas

Even in northern regions, solar performs reliably due to:

- **Cold Climate Efficiency:** Solar panels operate more efficiently in colder temperatures, improving performance on sunny winter days.
- **Seasonal Production:** While winter has shorter days, summer months make up for this with long daylight hours—ideal for energy generation.
- **Net Metering & Incentives:** Minnesota's policies allow homeowners and businesses to receive credit for excess energy produced, enhancing return on investment.

In Vergas, this means:

- The Event Center's solar assessment is viable and with the gap funding provided by WCI the breakeven point occurs within two years of operation this will lead to lower operating costs. Appendix H
- Other municipal buildings like the Fire Hall, Liquor Store, and City Shop may also be good solar candidates when paired with energy efficiency upgrades.
- Energy benchmarking and retrofits—like those already proposed in the ESMC & OTPCO report—can help ensure solar is deployed cost-effectively by reducing the building's baseline energy demand first.

Solar energy is not only viable in Vergas, it is a smart investment. The Event Center solar assessment, approved and in process of implementation, is a stepping-stone toward broader clean energy adoption. By embracing solar, the community can:

- Reduce energy costs.
- Build environment and climate resilience.
- Establish an energy source as part of emergency management
- Attract sustainability-minded residents and businesses.

Renewable Energy Opportunities & Actions

To support decision-making and implementation, the City utilized the energy and assessment findings and became a Green Step City and evaluated the best practices guide as the means to evaluate each city-operated building for upgrade opportunities. This information helped prioritize current and future projects based on feasibility, impact, and alignment with available funding.

GreenStep Cities program. A voluntary challenge, assistance and recognition program to help communities achieve sustainability and quality of life goals. greenstep.pca.state.mn.us

Energy Efficiency Opportunities:

- Identified and completed simple retrofits such as LED lighting, occupancy sensors, and weather sealing.
- Evaluated building envelopes for insulation upgrades and air infiltration improvements.

Mechanical System Upgrades:

- Reviewed age, efficiency, and operational performance of existing HVAC systems and water heaters.
- Identified opportunities to transition to air-source or air-to-water heat pumps and phase out aging gas systems.

Solar Readiness and Resilience Potential:

- Assessed rooftops and adjacent areas for solar installation potential.
- Calculated critical electrical loads to inform solar-plus-storage resilience strategies.

To support effective implementation, it is recommended that the Energy and Resilience Advisory Board work on further improvements, utilizing the plan action goals and Green Step Program Best Practices, and prioritize action goals into short (5 years), medium (10 years), and long-term (15 years) phases based on cost, impact, and urgency. This phased approach would help prioritize quick wins while allowing time to plan for larger capital improvements. Aligning each project type with available incentives: Tax Incentives, utility rebates, and GreenStep Cities actions can also maximize financial leverage and improve building conditions.

Additionally, integrating findings into the B3 Benchmarking platform would allow for ongoing performance monitoring and energy tracking across city-owned buildings. This data-driven approach could inform future updates to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), support grant applications, and help the City assess the effectiveness of implemented projects over time.

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

The Vergas Energy and Resilience Plan provides a practical, community-driven roadmap for strengthening infrastructure, improving energy performance, and preparing for climate-related risks. Grounded in past planning efforts and informed by technical assessments, grant investments, and community input, the plan positions Vergas to act strategically by protecting local assets, supporting residents, and demonstrating how small communities can lead through

thoughtful, phased action. By aligning policy, funding, and implementation, Vergas is building a resilient foundation that will sustain community well-being, environmental stewardship, and economic vitality for years to come.

Key Takeaways & Action Priorities

- Build on existing plans: Leverage the CIP, Housing Study, and Comprehensive Plan as a coordinated framework for energy and resilience investments.
- Implement high-impact facility upgrades: Prioritize weatherization, air sealing, insulation, and blower door testing to reduce energy demand and right-size mechanical systems.
- Develop resilience hubs: Advance the Event Center and Fire Hall as emergency-ready facilities with solar, backup power, improved electrical capacity, and enhanced building performance.
- Strengthen data-driven decision-making: Use B3 Benchmarking, GreenStep Cities, and ongoing audits to track performance and guide investment sequencing.
- Advance clean energy adoption: Further pursue solar development and solar-friendly policies to reduce costs and support long-term energy independence.
- Prepare for extreme weather: Integrate climate projections, infrastructure protection strategies, and emergency planning into capital and operational decisions.
- Engage community leadership: Support the Energy and Resiliency Advisory Board and continue resident engagement to guide implementation and build local ownership.
- Align housing and land use planning: Address growth, daycare needs, senior housing needs, and infrastructure extensions while incorporating energy efficiency and resilience.
- Maximize funding opportunities: Coordinate project timing with state and federal grants, utility programs, and incentives to accelerate implementation.
- Lead by example: Position Vergas as a model for rural communities demonstrating that strategic planning, partnerships, and local leadership can drive meaningful climate and energy action.

ACTION GOALS insert action plan

City of Vergas Energy & Resilience Action Plan

Energy
<p>Goal: Reduce city operational energy use by 40% from 2025 baseline by 2035 thru renewable energy, energy efficiency and electrification.</p> <p>Goal: Install at least 1 type of renewable energy technology on every municipal building by 2035. (Solar photovoltaic (PV), Solar Thermal, Battery Storage, Cold Climate Air Source Heat Pumps (CCASHP), Geo Exchange heat pumps, micro Weather Energy Conversion System (WECS), thermal energy storage, low & ultra-low Global Warming Potential (GWP) refrigerants, Electric Vehicle (EV) charging).</p>

Planning:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Adopt energy independence goals and objectives in policy. · Plan and budget for motor maintenance and upgrades to assure the most energy-efficient, durable, and appropriate equipment is available when upgrades or breakdowns occur. · Continue adoption of GreenStep program best practices. 				
Policy:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Become an EV-ready city and solar ready city. (GSC BP6.5) · Phase in operational changes, equipment changes, including electric vehicles and no-idling practices for city fleet. (GSC BP12.3) · Adopt a renewable energy ordinance that allows, enables and encourages appropriate renewable energy installations. (GSC BP13.3) · Become a solar ready community, including adopting ordinances/zoning language and expedited permit process for residents and businesses to install solar energy systems. (GSC BP 26.7) 				
Projects:				
Enter and update utility information in B3 benchmarking. (GSC BP1.1)	5yr			
Use LED/solar-powered lighting in street, parking lot and park projects. (GSC BP4.5)	5yr			<i>Current status : LED lighting in all municipal buildings & street lighting.</i>
Install islanding capability and storage for a clean energy system in publicly accessible building to provide back-up power that can sustain function during extreme weather events. (GSC SP23.5) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Designate a safe shelter with a plan that arranges adequate provisions and back up power sufficient to meet daily run-time requirements as a shelter for 1 week or longer. ○ Create a plan for resilience hub that describes community services provided during disruptions and into recovery after natural hazard events. 	5yr			<i>Current status: Battery hub to be installed in VEC as part of solar installation,</i>
Replace small combustion engine lawn and garden equipment with electric tools to decrease emissions and costs and increase efficiency. (GSC SP23.1)		10 yr		

Install renewable energy technology (i.e. solar PV/Solar Thermal) on all municipal buildings. GSC BP26.5)			15 yr	
Resilience				
<p>Goal: Increase community connectedness and civic participation through sustainability, resilience, and civic-focused events, training, engagement, and information. <i>Host up to 1 event per year.</i></p> <p>Goal: Educate, plan, and prepare for local climate impacts. Specifically address extreme weather events, heat events, and extreme precipitation in city planning <i>and infrastructure projects. Educate city businesses and residents through timely social media posts on personal planning and preparedness for extreme weather.</i></p>				
<p>Planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Inclusive and coordinated decision making; use a city commission or committee to lead, coordinate, report to and engage committee members on the identification and implementation of sustainability best practices. · Incorporate climate resilience into city planning, policy, operations, and budgeting process. 				
<p>Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Incorporate working landscapes into the city by adopting an ordinance for one or more of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ agriculture and forest protection district ○ local food production district ○ Incubator farms, emerging farmers and land access ○ Prairie designation ○ Pollinator-friendly and natural landscaping to revitalize current turfgrass areas 				<p><i>Current status: Have prairie designation in city ordinance</i></p>
Projects:				
Increase walking and biking within the community by being recognized as a walk friendly, bicycle friendly or age friendly community. (GSC BP12.1C)	5yr			<p><i>Current status: Have walking trail from downtown, to Long Lake Park and via bridge along lake.</i></p>
Inclusive and coordinated decision making; use of a city commission or committee to lead, coordinate, report to and engage community members on identification and implementation	5yr			<p><i>Current status: Have a Energy & Resilience Advisory Board</i></p>

of sustainability best practices. (GSC BP24.1)				
Communicate progress on goals; organize goals and outcome measures from city comprehensive plan, energy and resilience plan and other foundational documents and report to community members the data that shows progress toward meeting goals. (GSC BP 24.2)	5 yr			
Public education and action; conduct or support broad sustainability education, building on existing city and community relationships, networks, and events that involve: (GSC BP24.4) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The entire community, community leaders o Homeowners, landlords, tenants o Community organizations 	5 yr			<i>Current Status: Lions organization collects plastic bags at city municipal building that are made into benches placed throughout the community. To date, 7 benches placed.</i>
Conduct or participate in a buy local campaign for community members and local businesses. (GSC BP27.3)		10 yr		<i>Current Status: Vergas Community Club on an ongoing basis does buy local campaign thru events & use of Looney & Holiday Bucks</i>
Create, assist with and promote local food production/distribution within the city. (GSC BP27.3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Farmers market or coop buying club o Urban agriculture businesses or community-supported agriculture arrangement between local producers and consumers o Community or school garden, orchard, or forest. 		10 yr		<i>Current Status: Vergas serves as a site for the Bridge Community Pantry, which provides temporary food support one time monthly in the community to provide food support for individuals and families facing food insecurities. (second Wed each month)</i>
Protect water and wastewater treatment facilities to reduce physical damage and sustain future function during extreme weather events. (GSC BP29.7)			15 yr	

<p>Improve local energy resilience by installing distributed renewable energy systems and developing microgrids that can improve energy system resiliency. (GSC BP29.8). Install a public sector/municipally owned renewable energy technology. (GSC 26.5)</p>			15 yr	
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Greenspace and Trees

Goal: Increase tree canopy in new and planned housing developments. *Plant 10 public trees per year*

Goal: Create plans and policies to support public and private planning of resilient tree species. *Increase the number of trees being planted by residents and businesses to 20 trees per year.*

Goal: Increase access and use of greenspace and blue space (i.e. lake) by community members and visitors. *Establish additional walking loops or trails that highlight local ecological features.*

Policy:

- Create an EAB (Emerald Ash Borer) management plan and educate community on best practices
- Adopt a complete streets/living streets policy that addresses landscaping and stormwater management (GSC BP11.1)
- Adopt a tree preservation and or/native landscaping ordinance (GSC 16.5)
- Create Park/City land management practices/standards that maximize at least one of the following:
 - low maintenance turf management; native landscaping, organic or integrated pest management, pollinator/monarch safe policies
 - sources of non-potable water or surface/rain water for irrigation
- At least 20% of total land area is in protected green infrastructure or that 90% of residents are within 10 minute walk or within 1 mile to park or other public green/blue space. (GSC 18.3)

Projects

<p>Certify as a Tree City USA . (GSC BP16.5)</p>	5yr			
<p>Plant and maintain at least 2-3 climate resilient trees for each public tree lost.</p>	5yr			
<p>Preserve environmentally sensitive, community valued land by placing a conservation easement on city lands by encouraging/funding private landowners. to place land in conservation easement. (GSC BP10.5)</p>		10 yr		

<p>Build city capacity to protect existing trees by one or more of the following: (GSC BP16.6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Trained tree specialist o Volunteer forestry effort o Adopting ESB management plan o Participate in Tree Steward Program o Engage community in annual restoration or cleanup of natural resources. 		<p>10 yr</p>		
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<p>Conduct a tree inventory or canopy study of public and private trees. (GSC BP16.7)</p>		<p>10 yr</p>		
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Water

Goal:

- Plan and prepare for changing precipitation patterns and water availability. *(Shorter term: implement green infrastructure rain water capture, and native vegetation inflow and infiltration projects in vulnerable areas in and around Vergas)*
- Integrate climate projections into water planning and wastewater management. *(Long term: lower flood risk for vulnerable areas and avoid damage from extreme events)*

Planning:
 Complete a complete GreenStep Municipal Stormwater management assessment. (GSC BP17.2)

Policy:

- Adopt and report on measurable, publicly announce surface water improvements targets for lakes. (GSC BP19.3) *-Is completed by local lake associations*
- Conserve/protect drinking and groundwater resources by creating a waterwise landscaping ordinance and/or guidance on rainwater harvesting and home water softener use. (GSC BP2.5)
- Adopt and implement guidelines or design standards/incentives for at least one of the following: (GSC BP17.5) *Have ordinance for 25% of lot to be impervious*
 - o Rain Gardens
 - o Rainwater harvesting
 - o Green alleys or green parking lots
 - o Pervious/permeable pavement or pavers
 - o Tree trenches/tree boxes
- Incorporate compost and/or native landscape design.

Projects:

Create/assist a lake improvement district. (GSC BP19.7)	5yr			
Improve smart-salting by reducing chloride use in winter maintenance and dust suppressants to prevent permanent surface water and groundwater contamination. (GSC BP17.6)	5yr			
Conduct or support a multi-party community conversations, assessments, plans, and actions around improving local water quality and quantity. (GSC BP19.2)	5yr			

APPENDIX A

Summary of Existing City of Vergas Planning Documents

2019 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

The 2019 CIP prioritized:

- **Street and Utility Improvements:** West Lake Street, East Scharf Avenue, Bennett Road, and Townline Road.
- **Water and Sewer Extensions:** Focused on service expansion into unconnected city parcels.

- **Parks Improvements:** ADA-compliant upgrades at Long Lake Beach and restroom facility replacements.
- **Stormwater Drainage:** Minimal underground systems required; reliance on overland drainage remains effective.

2020 Housing Study

Key findings included:

- **Aging Housing Stock:** Median year built was 1956, but structures are generally well maintained.
- **High Ownership Rates:** 93% owner occupancy.
- **Senior Demographic Concentration:** 54% of the population is aged 55 or older.
- **Growth Potential:** 47 vacant lots ready for residential development; need for more accessible and affordable housing.

2022-2036 Comprehensive Plan

Themes include:

- **Land Use:** Emphasizing compact growth, infill development, and shoreline preservation.
- **Housing:** Support for new energy-efficient housing options.
- **Public Facilities:** Prioritization of upgrades tied to climate resilience.
- **Transportation:** Strong support for regional trail connections and multimodal accessibility.
- **Energy and Sustainability:** Integration of renewable energy, energy conservation, and water management across projects.

The Comprehensive Plan serves as the high-level strategic framework under which CIP and housing initiatives can operate synergistically.

APPENDIX B

Otter Tail Power Building Assessment: Energy Use & Operational Efficiency

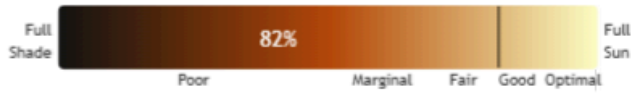
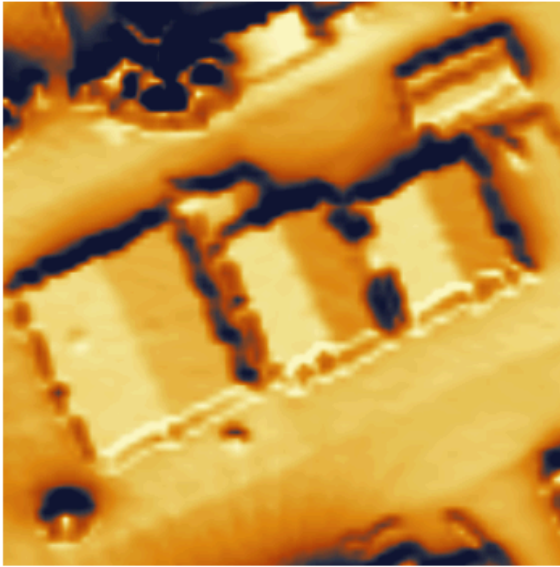
Fire Hall	120 West Linden Street, Vergas MN 56587
Array Size: 34 Kw DC	
Site Summary: This building is located just east of the Event Center and features a gable roof structure. To maximize solar gain and increase energy production during evening hours, the west-facing slope is recommended for array placement. Utilizing just one of the two available west-facing slopes, the roof can accommodate a 34 kW DC system, provided there are no obstructions such as vents or rooftop equipment.	

RESULTS

45,295 kWh/Year*

System output may range from 43,321 to 47,886 kWh per year near this location.

Month	Solar Radiation (kWh / m ² / day)	AC Energy (kWh)
January	2.45	2,297
February	3.60	3,061
March	4.79	4,283
April	5.87	4,830
May	5.82	4,807
June	6.27	4,905
July	6.86	5,429
August	6.14	4,936
September	4.59	3,689
October	3.56	3,105
November	2.37	2,099
December	2.00	1,854
Annual	4.53	45,295



This site is **Good**. It would need a **5.06 kW** system to generate **50%** of average household use. This system would cost approximately **\$18,967**. System payback is **13.8 years** after tax credit.

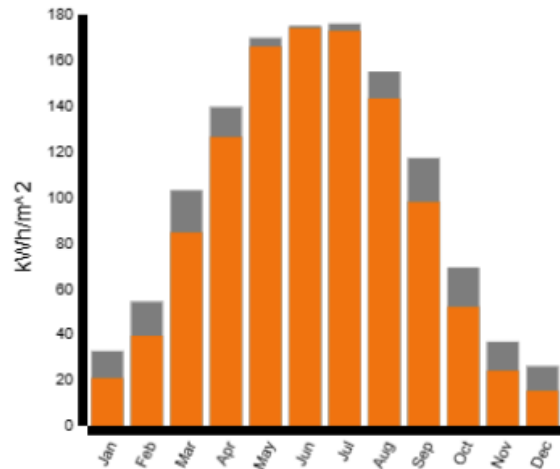
Utility Service Provider:

Otter Tail Power
 215 South Cascade Street P.O. Box 496
 Fergus Falls, MN 56538
 (218) 739-8200
www.otpc.com

Site Details:

Total Annual Insolation: 1106.22 kWh/m²
 Avg Insolation per Day: 3.03 kWh/m²
 Source Data: Spring 2008-Spring 2010

Amount Actual Sun



Vergas Off Sale Liquors

111 West Main Street, Vergas MN 56587

Array Size: 27 Kw DC

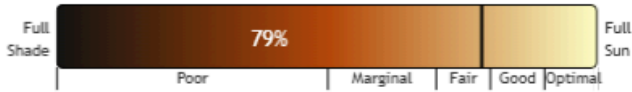
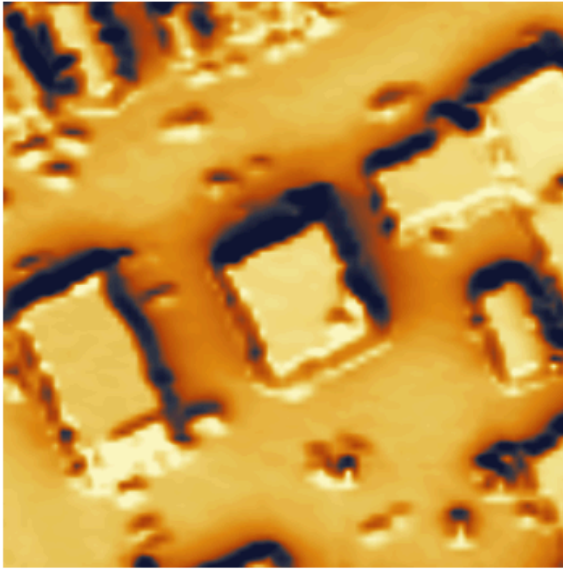
Site Summary: This building is located west of the City Office and accommodates two tenants. It features a flat roof, and if the structural capacity allows, a ballasted solar mounting system is recommended to avoid penetrations to the roofing membrane.

RESULTS

35,655 kWh/Year*

System output may range from 34,101 to 37,695 kWh per year near this location.

Month	Solar Radiation (kWh / m ² / day)	AC Energy (kWh)
January	2.45	1,808
February	3.60	2,409
March	4.79	3,372
April	5.87	3,802
May	5.82	3,784
June	6.27	3,861
July	6.86	4,273
August	6.14	3,886
September	4.59	2,904
October	3.56	2,444
November	2.37	1,652
December	2.00	1,459
Annual	4.53	35,654



This site is **Fair**. It would need a **5.07 kW** system to generate **50%** of average household use. This system would cost approximately **\$19,030**. System payback is **13.8 years** after tax credit.

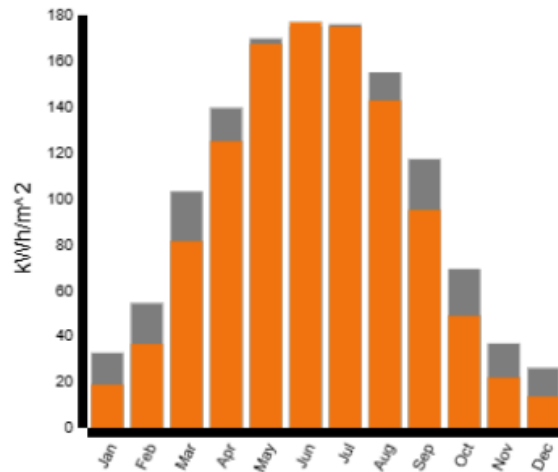
Utility Service Provider:

Otter Tail Power
 215 South Cascade Street P.O. Box 496
 Fergus Falls, MN 56538
 (218) 739-8200
www.otpeco.com

Site Details:

Total Annual Insolation: 1102.34 kWh/m²
 Avg Insolation per Day: 3.02 kWh/m²
 Source Data: Spring 2008-Spring 2010

Amount Actual Sun



City Shop

311 Glenn St, Vergas MN 56587

Array Size: 20 Kw DC

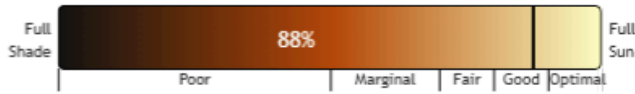
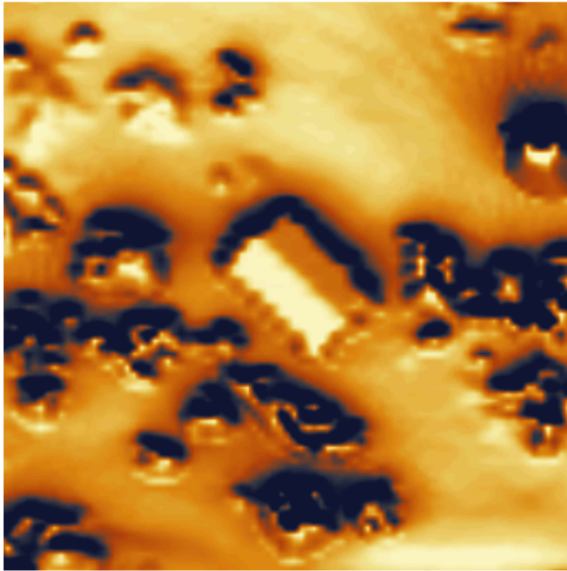
Site Summary: This building is situated just south on Pelican Avenue, adjacent to the water tower. The recommended location for the solar array is the west-facing slope of the gable roof. Several trees are in close proximity to both the building and the proposed array site; these should be trimmed or removed to minimize shading and reduce the risk of damage from falling branches or debris.

RESULTS

26,637 kWh/Year*

System output may range from 25,475 to 28,160 kWh per year near this location.

Month	Solar Radiation (kWh / m ² / day)	AC Energy (kWh)
January	2.41	1,342
February	3.55	1,792
March	4.75	2,515
April	5.82	2,844
May	5.76	2,828
June	6.21	2,888
July	6.81	3,207
August	6.09	2,913
September	4.55	2,170
October	3.53	1,827
November	2.35	1,228
December	1.97	1,083
Annual	4.48	26,637



This site is **Good**. It would need a **4.79 kW** system to generate **50%** of average household use. This system would cost approximately **\$17,959**. System payback is **13.1 years** after tax credit.

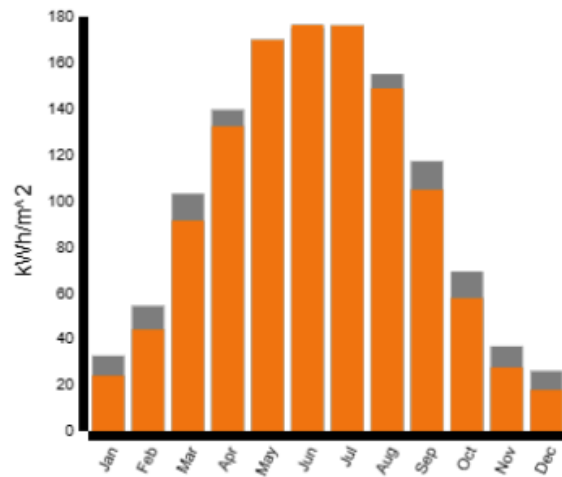
Utility Service Provider:

Otter Tail Power
 215 South Cascade Street P.O. Box 496
 Fergus Falls, MN 56538
 (218) 739-8200
www.otpc.com

Site Details:

Total Annual Insolation: 1168.84 kWh/m²
 Avg Insolation per Day: 3.20 kWh/m²
 Source Data: Spring 2008-Spring 2010

Amount Actual Sun



Government Services Center Vergas

123 E Main St, Vergas MN 56587

Array Size:16.5 Kw DC

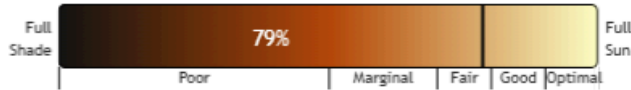
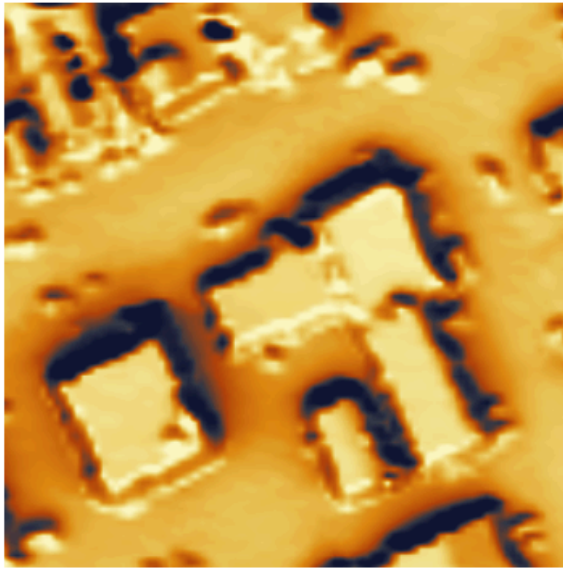
Site Summary: This building has the lowest solar potential among all the sites and features only a limited west-facing roof area. As a result, the solar array is positioned on the east-facing slope. The building is shared with the Post Office, presenting an opportunity for a collaborative solar installation with the tenants.

RESULTS

21,758 kWh/Year*

System output may range from 20,810 to 23,003 kWh per year near this location.

Month	Solar Radiation (kWh / m ² / day)	AC Energy (kWh)
January	2.41	1,096
February	3.55	1,464
March	4.75	2,054
April	5.82	2,323
May	5.76	2,310
June	6.21	2,359
July	6.81	2,619
August	6.09	2,379
September	4.55	1,772
October	3.53	1,492
November	2.35	1,003
December	1.97	885
Annual	4.48	21,756



This site is **Fair**. It would need a **5.09 kW** system to generate **50%** of average household use. This system would cost approximately **\$19,093**. System payback is **13.9 years** after tax credit.

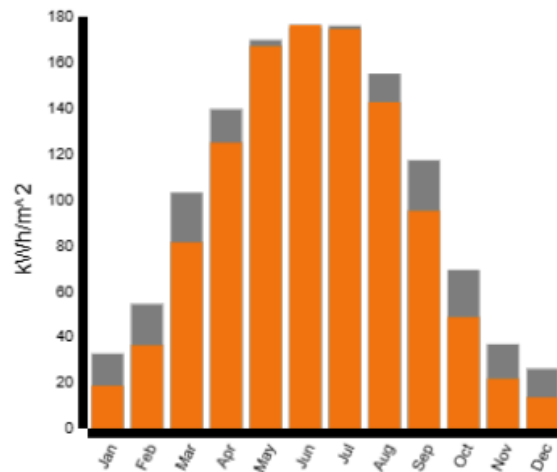
Utility Service Provider:

Otter Tail Power
 215 South Cascade Street P.O. Box 496
 Fergus Falls, MN 56538
 (218) 739-8200
www.otpc.com

Site Details:

Total Annual Insolation: 1100.30 kWh/m²
 Avg Insolation per Day: 3.01 kWh/m²
 Source Data: Spring 2008-Spring 2010

Amount Actual Sun



APPENDIX C

UMN CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDING RESEARCH – CITY OF VERGAS BUILDING ASSESSMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Four buildings owned by the City of Vergas were studied by the Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR) in 2024 and 2025 the Fire Hall, City Office, Municipal Off-Sale Liquor Store, and the Event Center.

The intent of the study was to:

1. Examine and document the historical energy use of the buildings (gas and electricity). Energy use is normalized into a whole-building metric of thousand Btu per square foot, per year (kBtu/ft²*yr). This is known as Energy Use Intensity (EUI). This unit enables comparison between buildings in the City's portfolio, and similar buildings in other locations.
2. Identify sources of energy waste that are focused on the building enclosure, since mechanical system substitutions had already been identified in an energy audit done by Otter Tail Power and Frontier Energy.
3. Document costs for recommended upgrades, using contractor bid amounts.
4. Use energy models where possible to predict savings. Note that savings from air leakage reduction are difficult to quantify, especially since the buildings have not received blower door tests and their existing air leakage is therefore unknown.

CSBR staff made an initial visit to Vergas on August 20th 2024 to perform a brief survey of the four study buildings and make preliminary observations on enclosure characteristics. The CSBR staff returned Oct 28th, 2024, when colder weather would enable visualization of heat flow through parts of the building enclosure by using a thermal imaging camera. The results of this investigation are as follows:

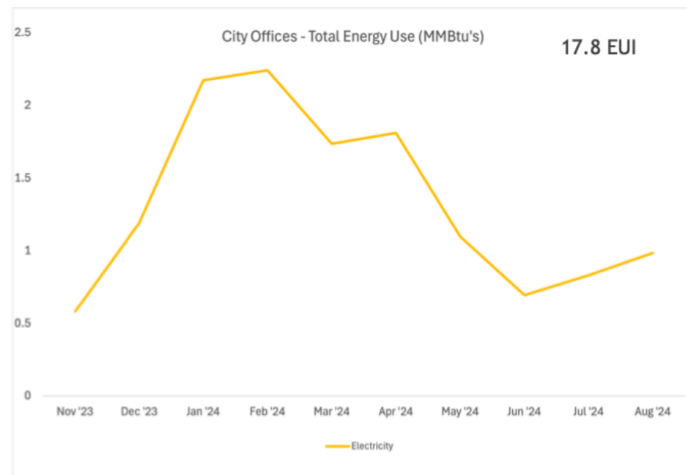
City Office



Building Overview

The Vergas City Office is a single-story structure with no basement, constructed in 1972. It shares approximately half its footprint with the U.S. Post Office. The facility is entirely electric, utilizing mini-split heat pumps for both heating and cooling, with no natural gas consumption. The Energy Use Intensity (EUI) is 17.8 kBtu/ft²-yr, significantly below the national median for small office buildings and notably efficient relative to comparable local facilities such as the Frazee Fire Hall / City Office (EUI 89.92).

Thermal imaging investigations conducted during the Center for Sustainable Building Research (CSBR) study in fall 2024 revealed no major thermal bypasses or insulation deficiencies. Electricity usage peaks during winter due to decreased efficiency of air-source heat pumps in extremely cold temperatures; however, air conditioning demands remain modest throughout the year.



Identified upgrades are based on visual and thermal imaging surveys. A blower door test is recommended to quantify overall envelope tightness and locate additional air leakage beyond visually confirmed areas.

Recommendations Checklist

Weatherization Efforts:

- No significant thermal bypasses were observed during thermal imaging inspections.
- **Recommendation:** Conduct blower door testing to identify and quantify any hidden sources of air leakage and prioritize improvements accordingly.
- **Estimated Cost:** TBD (dependent on blower door results)

Mechanical Systems Upgrades / Critical Loads:

- Heating and cooling are provided by air-source mini-split heat pumps.
- **Recommendation:** Install smart thermostats to improve temperature control, increase operational efficiency, and reduce energy consumption during winter peak demand.
- **Estimated Cost:** \$200–\$600 per thermostat (depending on selected model and labor)

Renewable Energy Opportunities:

- The roof appears suitable for a small-scale solar PV system to offset electric usage.
- **Recommendation:** Perform a solar site assessment to evaluate rooftop capacity and payback potential.

Water Environment (Future Category):

- No water environment or stormwater infrastructure recommendations at this time.
- Future integration of greywater reuse or rain garden strategies could be considered if site modifications occur.

Engineering Documentation:

- Future engineering documentation from Energy Conservation Grant (WCI)

Fire Hall



Building Overview

The Vergas Fire Hall consists of two equipment bays constructed at different times, a large meeting room, and several support areas including restrooms and offices. The building is infrequently occupied. Space conditioning relies on a mix of natural gas and electric systems, with ventilation supported by two energy recovery units (ERVs) that help mitigate heat loss during air exchange.

The building's Energy Use Intensity (EUI) is 23.7 kBtu/ft²·yr, significantly lower than the comparable Frazee facility (EUI 89.92). However, several energy inefficiencies were identified during the CSBR study, particularly related to air leakage and insufficient insulation in critical areas.

Weatherization Efforts:

- Air leakage was observed around equipment bay overhead doors (evidenced by dirt streaks, daylight penetration, and thermal imaging).
- The West equipment bay attic is under-insulated, and the attic hatch is not sealed.

- **Recommendations:**
 - Air seal all overhead doors.
 - Insulate attic floor to R-50.
 - Install weatherstripping to seal the attic hatch.

- **Estimated Cost:** \$9,200 (labor and materials)

Mechanical Systems Upgrades / Critical Loads:

- Combination of gas-fired heating and electric systems used for conditioning.
- **Recommendation:** Continue preventive maintenance and inspection of ERVs to ensure efficient recovery of heat and minimize winter losses.

Renewable Energy Opportunities:

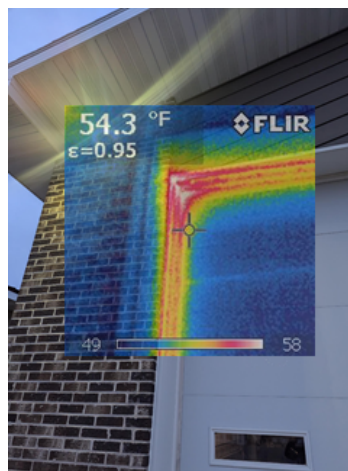
- Consider small-scale solar PV systems for lighting and auxiliary power needs.
- A resilience-oriented battery system could also support emergency operations.

Water Environment (Future Category):

- No specific stormwater or water conservation issues were identified.
- Opportunities may exist to integrate native landscaping or bioswales in future site upgrades to improve drainage and reduce runoff.

Engineering Documentation:

- Future engineering documentation from Energy Conservation Grant (WCI)



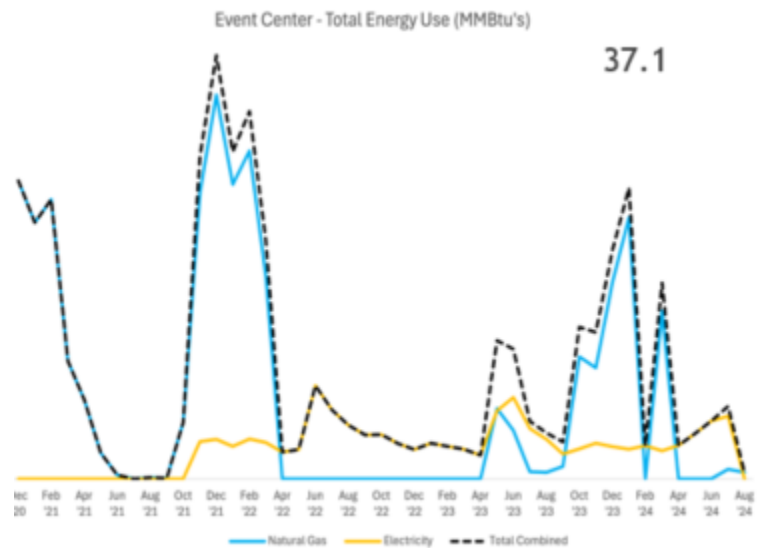
Event Center



Building Overview

The Vergas Event Center, a repurposed former school building, built in 1955, spans approximately 7,200 square feet and includes a large assembly hall, commercial kitchen, meeting room, and multiple support spaces such as restrooms. The building relies on natural gas-fired furnaces for heating and standard electric air conditioners for cooling. Warm air is distributed via ducts embedded in the ground below the concrete slab.

The building has an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) of 37.1 kBtu/ft²·yr, which is commendable compared to similar facilities like the Detroit Lakes Community Center (EUI 119.95). While electricity use remains consistent year-round, gas consumption spikes during winter months due to heating needs.



Weatherization Efforts:

- Significant energy loss was identified through the building's **exposed slab edge**, which is exacerbated by under-slab ducting and perimeter heating registers.
- Air leakage was also detected at **five storefront entry doors** via thermal imaging and occupant reports.
- **Recommendations:**
 - Install perimeter insulation at slab edge, extending ~2 feet below grade.

- Replace or repair weatherstripping on 5 exterior doors.
- **Estimated Cost:** \$8,000 (labor and materials)
- **Projected Energy Savings:** 38% reduction in heating energy use

Mechanical Systems Upgrades / Critical Loads:

- Natural gas furnaces and standard air conditioning provide HVAC.
- Ducts are embedded in the slab and may be difficult to upgrade, but air sealing and zoning strategies may enhance performance.
- **Recommendation:** Investigate control upgrades or smart thermostats for improved load management.

Renewable Energy Opportunities:

- The roof has low slope but sufficient surface area for solar.
- A **24 kW solar PV system** could produce approximately 27,000 kWh/year, covering **120%** of historical electric use (not including gas offset).
- **Recommendation:** Explore solar PV installation with optional battery storage for resilience functions.

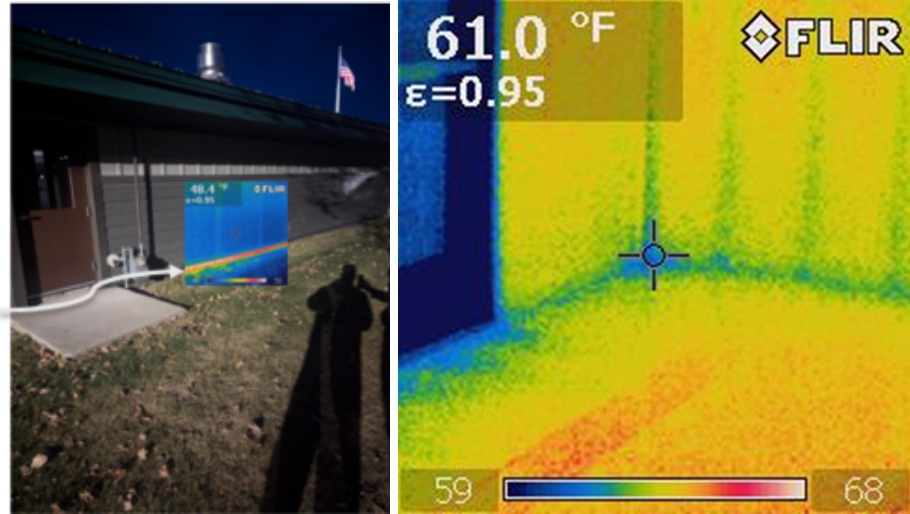
Water Environment (Future Category):

- No stormwater or water system issues were reported.
- Future upgrades could include permeable surfaces or rain gardens for managing runoff from the large roof surface.

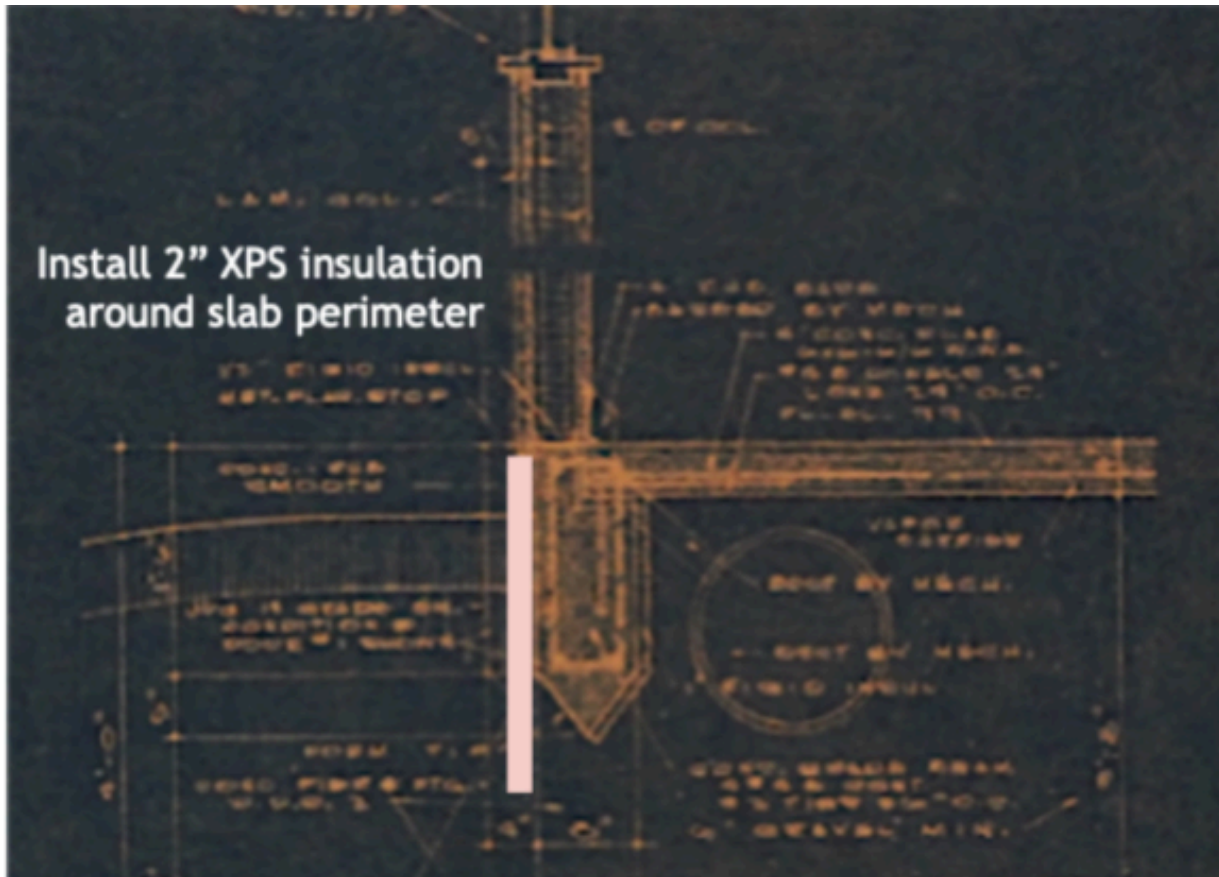
Engineering Documentation:

- Future engineering documentation from Energy Conservation Grant (WCI)

Exposed slab edge
(usually not a big deal, but
ductwork is run under the
slab on this building!)



Install 2" XPS insulation
around slab perimeter

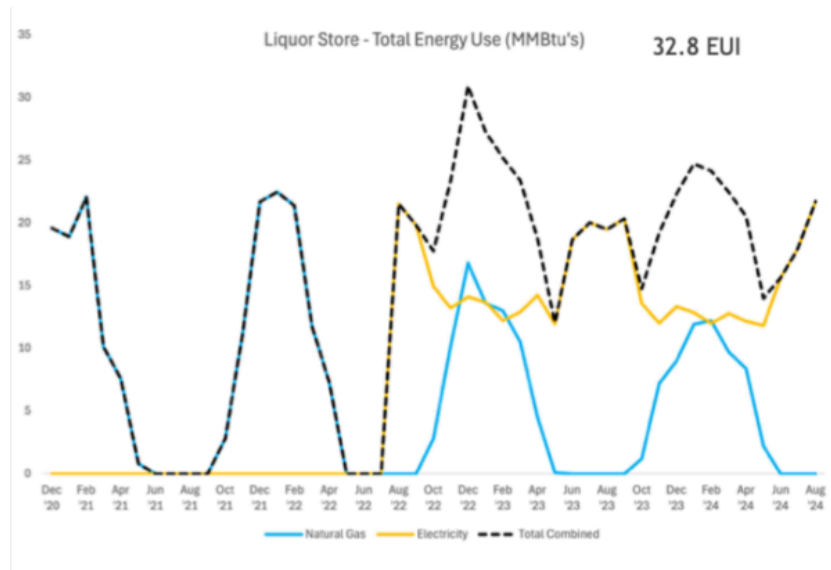


Vergas Municipal Liquor Store

Building Overview

The Vergas Municipal Liquor Store is housed in a historic two-story creamery building, built in 1903, encompassing approximately 7,840 square feet. The liquor store and storage occupy the first floor, while the second floor is rented out to a clothing retail business. The structure features a mix of interior rigid foam and exterior insulation; however, certain historic architectural features were intentionally left uninsulated to preserve community character.

The building is equipped with winter economizers that use outdoor air to cool the refrigerated cases—an uncommon but energy-efficient feature. The building's Energy Use Intensity (EUI) is 32.8 kBtu/ft²-yr, significantly lower than the nearby Frazee liquor store (EUI 80.97), even accounting for its higher refrigeration load.



Weatherization Efforts:

- Warm air loss through the **abandoned elevator penthouse** was confirmed, with unsealed access doors and insufficient insulation.
- Additional **miscellaneous air leaks** were identified at the rear entry and near the uninsulated electrical panel areas.
- **Recommendations:**
 - Airseal and insulate the elevator penthouse and roof penetration.
 - Airseal rear building leaks and other minor penetrations.
 - Install new weatherstripping on 2 exterior doors.
- **Estimated Cost:** \$3,500 (labor and materials)
- **Projected Energy Savings:** 24% reduction in EUI (based on modeled air tightness improvement from 5 ACH@50Pa to 3 ACH@50Pa)

Mechanical Systems Upgrades / Critical Loads:

- Economizers on the coolers are already in use and likely reduce refrigeration loads during the winter.
- **Recommendation:** Ensure economizer controls and sensors are functioning correctly with regular seasonal tune-ups.

Renewable Energy Opportunities:

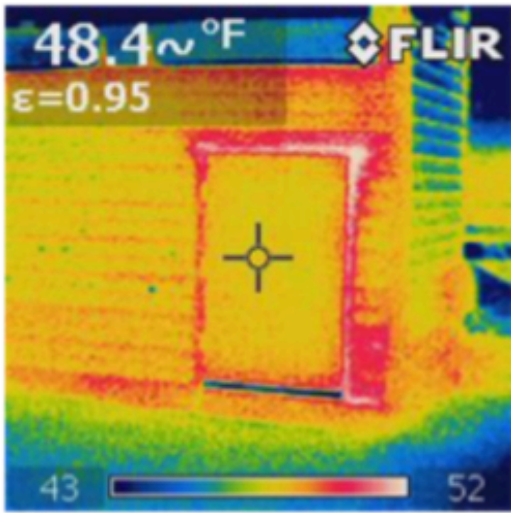
- No solar assessment conducted; architectural and roof design constraints may limit conventional rooftop PV deployment.
- **Recommendation:** Explore non-intrusive solar options such as parking canopy solar arrays or participation in community solar.

Water Environment (Future Category):

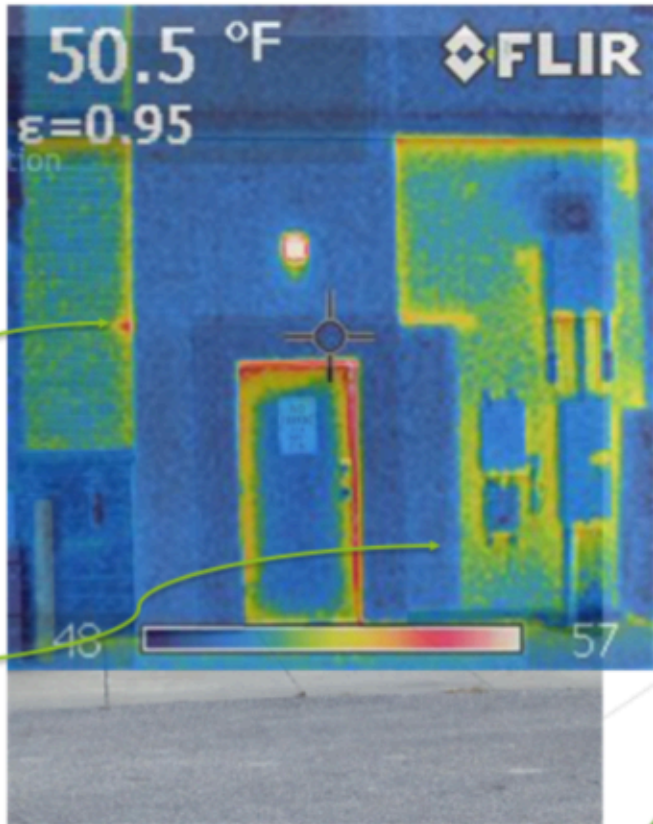
- No known water-related issues, though future opportunities could include improved drainage around the penthouse area and near back-of-house loading zones.

Engineering Documentation:

- Future engineering documentation from Energy Conservation Grant (WCI)



Old elevator shaft penthouse acts as chimney that sucks warm air out of the building. Seal it up.



Air leak

Old door opening (insulated better than section next to it)

APPENDIX D

Otter Tail Power Blower Door Tests



Weatherization Analysis Blower Door Testing Results

Customer Info:

City of Vergas

Building Info:

Name:	Event Center
*Square Feet:	7,084
*Wall Height:	10' average
Cubic Volume:	70,480

Blower Door Test Data:

	<u>Initial Date:</u> 6/24/2025	<u>Final Date:</u> 11/24/25
*CFM50:	5,563@40.3Pa = 6,400CFM50	5,297@45.2Pa = 5,656CFM50
ACH50:	5.4	4.8
EqLA: in²	660.8	584.0
ELA: in²	351.4	310.5
Areas of Concern:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm air barrier in ceiling. • Major air infiltration on the west entrance door frame and door. 	NA

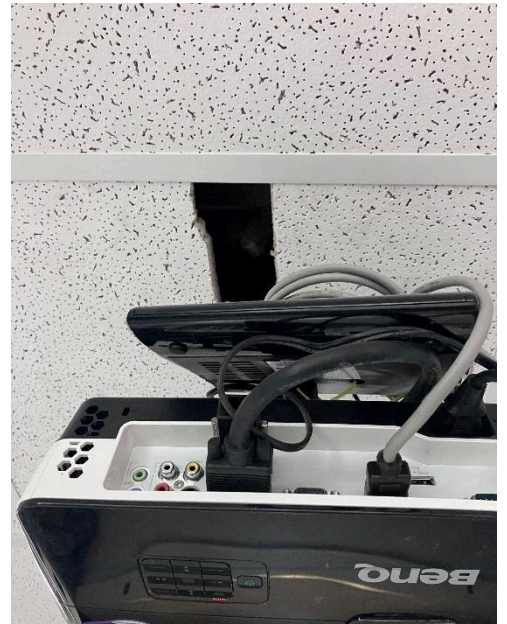
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm building envelope insulation and air barrier. 	
Measures Performed:	NA	Per Contactor Estimate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace part or all of the weatherstripping on 5 doors Install perimeter insulation

*TEC Calc Entered Data

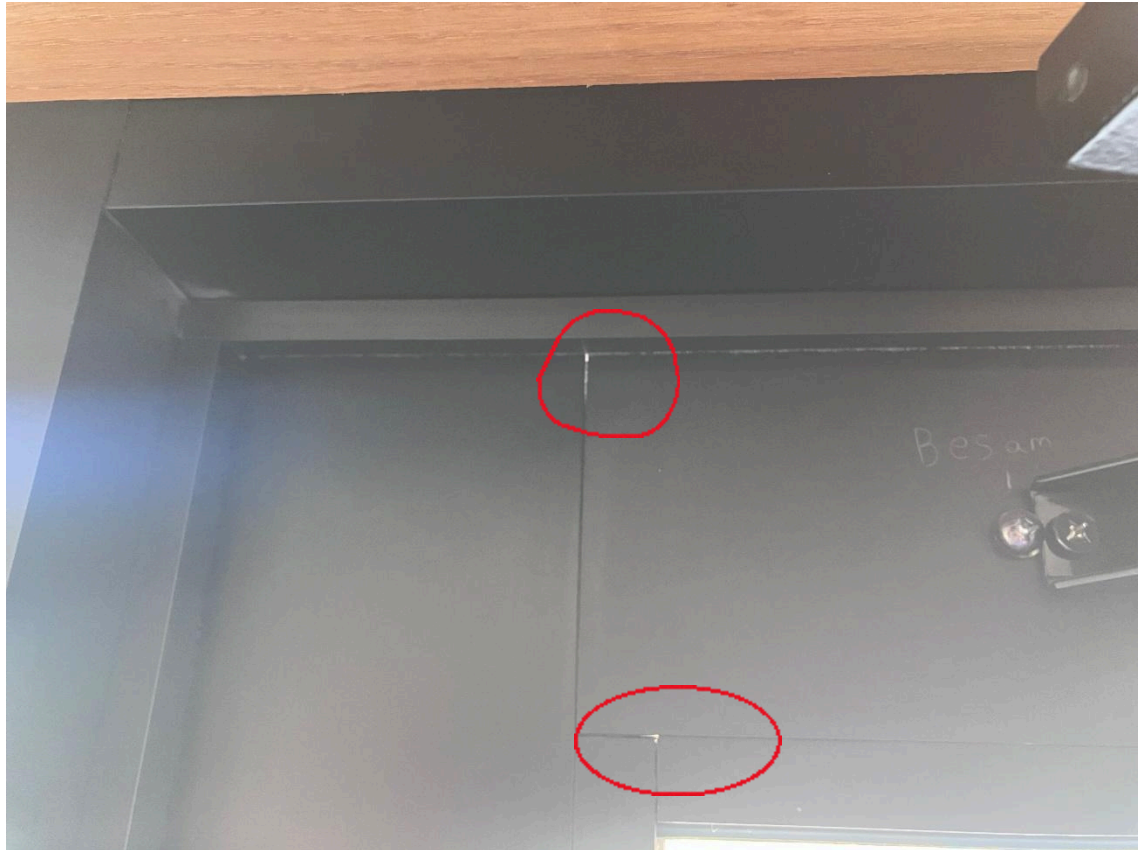
Notes: Door in main event hall northeast corner service door used for blower door testing.

Areas of Concern at Initial Date (1st Blower Door Test)

Two layers of drop ceiling along with fiberglass batt insulation are the known visible materials for ceiling insulation. Confirm an air barrier and ceiling insulation of approximately R40 to R50.



Major air infiltration through this west entrance door frame.



Light showing within seems of west entrance door.

Analysis of Results at Final Date (2nd Blower Door Test)

The weatherization efforts made to the Event Center are supported by the 2nd blower door test results. The reduction in the CFM50 measurement of 6,400 to 5,656 results in lower air infiltration rates within the building. The improvements reduced the Effective Leakage Area (ELA) by 40.9 square inches, the size of a 4" X 10" hole within the building

Cost savings for heating and cooling from the improvement will be minimal due to the small increase of the thermal resistance (R-value) to the building as a whole. However, the combination of replacement of weatherstripping and installation of perimeter insulation will help make the building more comfortable for the occupants.

How do I calculate the leakage area?

Once the leakage rate for a building has been measured, it is useful to estimate the cumulative size (in square inches) of all leaks or holes in the building's air barrier. The estimated leakage area provides us with a way to visualize the physical size of the measured holes in the building. This can be particularly important when explaining the results of a test to a building owner. Leakage area calculations are also used in infiltration models to estimate the building's natural air change rate (i.e. the air change rate under natural weather conditions).

TEC's airtightness test analysis software calculates two separate leakage areas, based on differing assumptions about the physical shape of the hole. These leakage area calculations are compatible with the two most commonly used infiltration models. Energy analysis or rating software that require the user to input airtightness test results typically specify one of these two leakage areas.

The Equivalent Leakage Area (EqLA) is defined by Canadian researchers at the Canadian National Research Council as the area of a sharp edged orifice (a sharp round hole cut in a thin plate) that would leak the same amount of air as the building does at a pressure of 10 Pascals. The EqLA is used in the AIM infiltration model.

Effective Leakage Area (ELA) was developed by Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory (LBL) and is used in their infiltration model. The Effective Leakage Area is defined as the area of a special nozzle-shaped hole (similar to the inlet of your blower door fan) that would leak the same amount of air as the building does at a pressure of 4 Pascals.

Importantly, when using leakage area calculations to demonstrate physical changes in building airtightness, we recommend using the Canadian EqLA measurement. Typically, EqLA more closely approximates physical changes in building airtightness. For example, if you performed a blower door test, and then opened a window to create a 25 square inch hole and repeated the test, the estimated EqLA for the building will have increased by approximately 25 square inches from the initial test result. The EqLA is also easier to measure, especially in windy weather, because the measurement is taken at a higher building pressure than the ELA.

Source: The Energy Conservatory www.energyconservatory.com

Weatherization Analysis Blower Door Testing Results



Customer Info:

City of Vergas

Building Info:

Name:	Fire Hall
*Square Feet:	8,713
*Wall Height:	10'
Cubic Volume:	87,136

Blower Door Test Data:

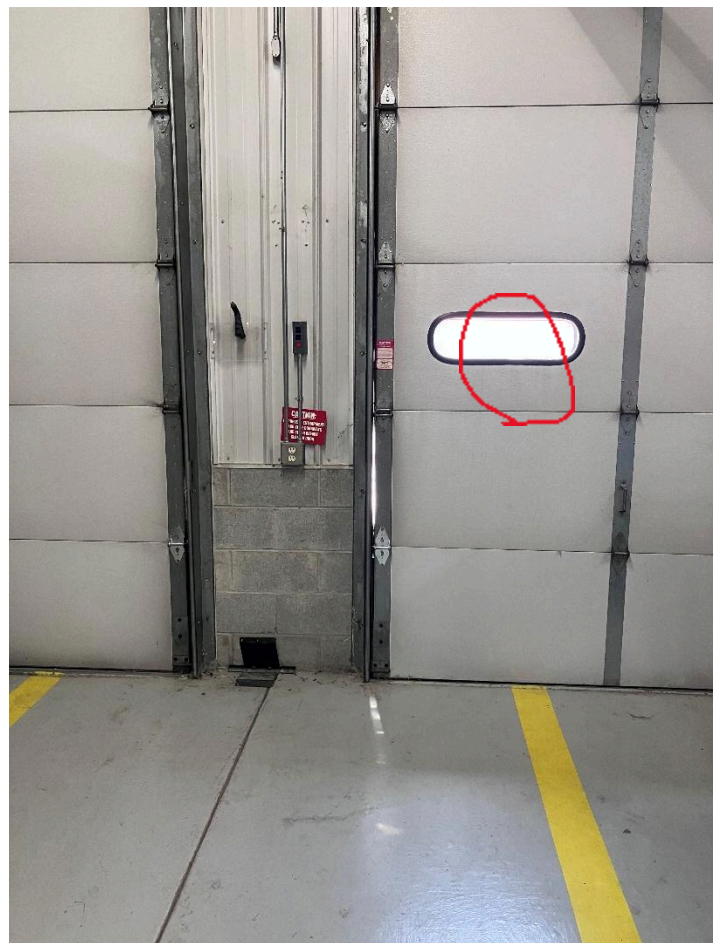
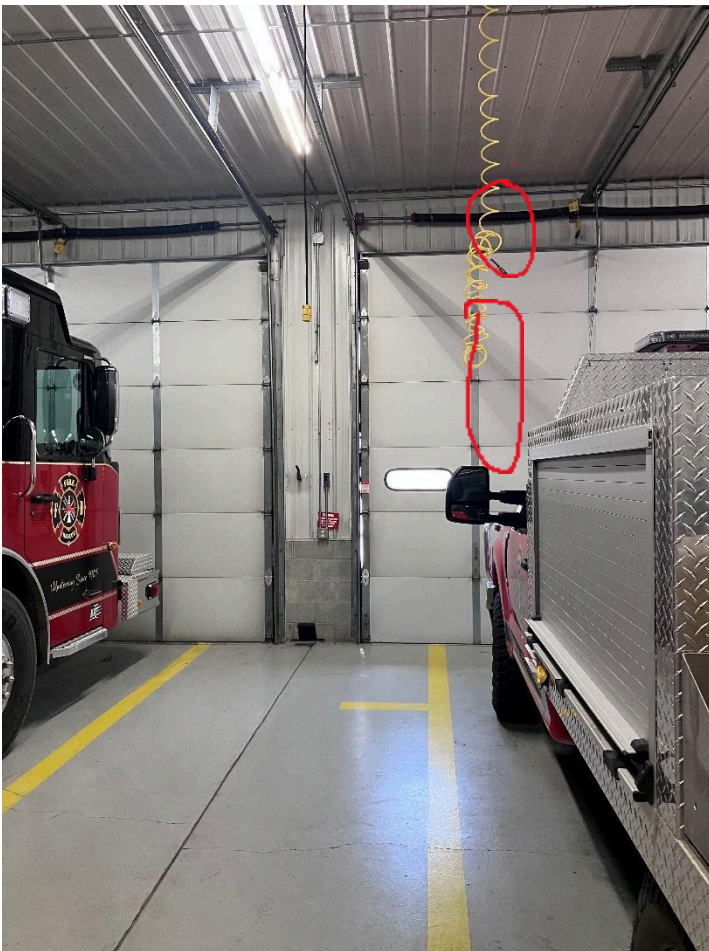
	<u>Initial Date:</u> 6/24/2025	<u>Final Date:</u> 11/24/2025
*CFM50:	4,761 @50.1Pa	4,380 @50Pa
ACH50:	3.3	3.0
EqLA:	491.5	452.2
ELA:	261.4	240.5
Areas of Concern:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm air barrier in ceiling. • Major air infiltration on the South Bay, all three east overhead garage door frames. • Minor leakage at attic hatches. 	NA
Measures Performed:	NA	Per Contactor Estimate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air seal around (4) 14'X12' doors • Insulate attic to R50 • Air seal attic hatch

*TEC Calc Entered Data

Notes: Door in North Bay, south service door used for blower door testing.

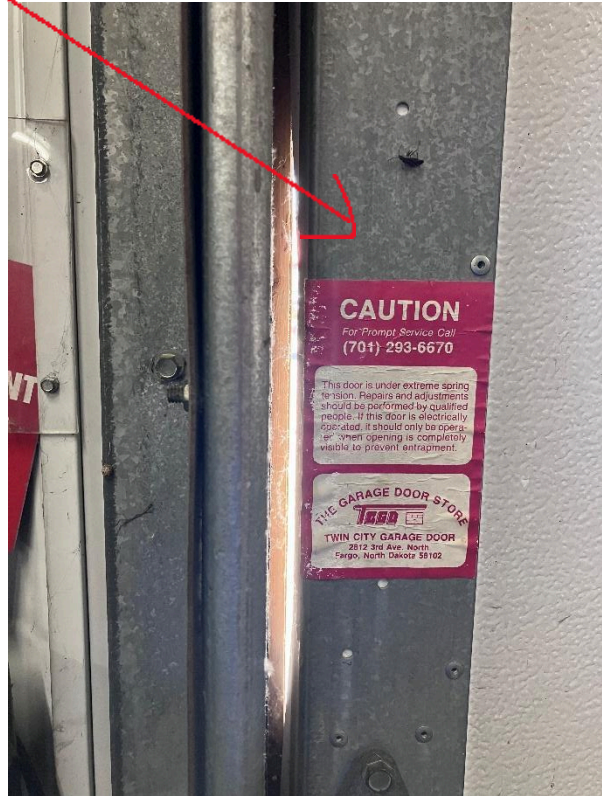
Areas of Concern at Initial Date (1st Blower Door Test)

The overhead garage doors in the south bay were significantly draftier than those in the north bay.



All three pictures are of the northernmost door in the south bay, showing each side of door.





Attic access had minor air leakage



Analysis of Results at Final Date (2nd Blower Door Test)

The age and construction style of the Fire Hall building prove to be advantages for building performance. Other than the seven large overhead doors, the building has limited openings (no windows) or penetrations found within the thermal envelope.

The initial reading ACH50 (air changes per hour at 50Pa) of 3.3 is an impressive reading, comparable to new construction standards, improvements to building performance will be difficult to achieve. The results of the air sealings measures on the (4) overhead doors and attic hatch reducing the ACH50 down to only 3.0 may seem insignificant, however keep in mind that the building in general was already well air sealed in other areas and this amount of reduction tied to only these specific two areas is an excellent result.

APPENDIX E

Vergas Community Energy and Resilience Advisory Board

I. Purpose

The purpose of the advisory board is to assist in creating and advancing the Energy and Resilience Plan, and to provide recommendations on policies and initiatives.

II. Objectives

1. Assist in creating and advancing the Energy and Resilience Plan.
2. Provide recommendations on policies and initiatives.
3. Engage the community through education and outreach.
4. Monitor progress and adapt strategies as needed.

III. Membership

The Board shall consist of five members, with three members from the resident population of the city to be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council. The appointees shall be appointed to serve staggered terms of three years, except as noted below, commencing on January 1 of the year of appointment. Upon the expiration of a term, the appointee shall continue in office until reappointed or a successor is appointed. Absences from any three meetings in a year, unless excused in advance by the Chair, constitute a vacancy. In the event of any vacancy, the Mayor, with the approval of the City Council, shall appoint a person to complete the unexpired term.

IV. Meetings & Structure

- (1) At the first regular meeting, the Board shall elect a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and a Secretary from among its appointed members, each for a term of one year. The Board may create and fill other offices as it may determine.
- (2) The Board shall hold a meeting at the call of the Chair. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Chairperson or, in the Chairperson's absence, by the Vice-Chairperson.

- (3) Written minutes of meetings shall be kept and filed with the City Clerk before the next regularly scheduled City Council meeting, but shall be subject to approval at the next Board meeting.
- (4) No expenditures by the Board shall be made unless and until authorized for the purpose by the City Council.

V. Responsibilities

The Board will consult with the City Council and the Planning Commission and shall be advisory to the City Council in matters relating to climate action planning. The Board may meet with various groups to discuss issues related to climate activities. The Board will provide periodic updates to the City Council.

Approved by Vergas City
Council June 9, 2025

APPENDIX F

Community Survey Administration, Questions & Analysis

Survey Outreach: Vergas Community Resilience & Energy Survey

Help shape Vergas' future! Your feedback will inform local energy and climate initiatives.

Purpose: This survey aims to gather feedback from Vergas residents and visitors about concerns regarding extreme weather, infrastructure, environmental impacts and energy use. Your input will help the City of Vergas plan for environmental and energy initiatives over the next five years, ensuring we address community needs and improve resilience.

How It Will Be Used: Responses will inform city planning decisions, including infrastructure improvements, emergency preparedness, and potential energy initiatives. Data will be analyzed separately for city residents and non-city residents to understand differing needs.

You could win! If you'd like to be entered into a drawing to win one of four maple syrup jugs, please include your name and email address or phone number at the end of the survey.

Survey Administration:

The survey was made available via distribution of paper, hard copies at community events and in an online survey tool format. The online survey link and QR code was shared widely at community events and in City communications.

- Maple Syrup Festival – April 12, 2025 (QR codes & paper copies available)
- Throughout April 2025 at City Hall, online, and community locations (churches, coffee shops, local businesses, etc.)
- Sent out via water bills April 2025
- City newsletter in April 2025
- May Spring Youth Event - May 10, 2025

Survey Questions:

1. Residency Status (*Check one*)

Vergas Resident Non-Resident

2. Age

Under 18 19 - 40 41- 60 61 and over

3. What types of extreme weather are you concerned about impacting Vergas in the next 5 years? (Check all that apply)

- Lake water quality Flooding Wildfires Extreme heat
 Infrastructure/services (drinking water, heating, electricity, roads) Not concerned

4. Do you have a backup plan for utility disruptions (electricity, water, heating)?

- Yes No Not sure I'd like to learn more about it

5. Has your home or business experienced uncomfortably high or low temperatures recently?

- Yes No I'd like to learn more about it

6. How do you heat your home? (Check all that apply)

- Natural Gas Propane Electricity Wood/Pellet Stove Geothermal
 Solar Other:
-

7. Would you like to learn about reducing heating/cooling/electricity costs?

- 1 (Not interested) 2 3 (Neutral) 4 5 (Very interested)
 I'd like to learn more about it

8. Do you support the following in Vergas? (Scale 1-5: 1 = Not supportive, 5 = Strongly supportive)

Energy efficiency & environment protection initiatives:

- 1 2 3 4 5 I'd like to learn more about it

Solar energy installations:

- 1 2 3 4 5 I'd like to learn more about it

Streamlining permits for renewable energy & efficiency upgrades:

- 1 2 3 4 5 I'd like to learn more about it

Ordinances that protect the natural environment (e.g., water conservation, green space, pollution control (fertilizers)):

- 1 2 3 4 5 I'd like to learn more about it

9. If you are interested in getting involved with the Vergas Community Resilience & Energy initiatives, please include your name and email or phone number here:

10. Additional Comments (Optional)

11. Enter your name and email address or phone number to be entered into a drawing to win one of four maple syrup jugs:

Survey Analysis

Overview

The survey collected 91 responses with strong resident participation (35 residents, 56 non-residents), providing a solid foundation for community-focused planning, but more efforts could be led to reach more residents of Vergas. The resident demographic skews older, with 82.4% over age 40 and 58.2% over 61, indicating an established, eventually engaged older community. A significant non-resident engagement suggests regional collaboration opportunities.

Question-by-Question Analysis

Q1-2: Residency Status & Age

The survey reveals a mature, engaged community with strong event participation but limited young adult representation. This demographic profile has significant implications for program design, communication strategies, and long-term sustainability planning. The older resident base brings stability and event engagement but requires accessible programming approaches and succession planning to ensure initiative continuity. To address the underrepresentation of younger generations, targeted youth engagement strategies should be implemented.

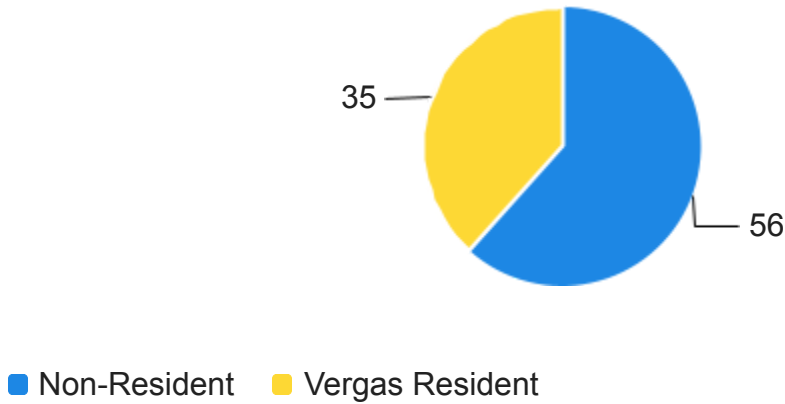
These may include creating a youth advisory committee, partnering with local schools and colleges, hosting youth-focused events or workshops, and leveraging social media platforms like Instagram or TikTok to reach younger audiences. Gamified participation opportunities and public recognition of youth voices can also foster a sense of belonging and investment in community resilience efforts. Building pathways for youth involvement now will ensure continuity, innovation, and intergenerational collaboration in Vergas' long-term planning.

Key Planning Points:

- Design programs with accessibility for older adults (large print, convenient times, multiple formats)
- Develop youth engagement strategies to build long-term program sustainability
- Leverage high event engagement for volunteer leadership and program champions
- Partner with existing senior organizations and established community groups

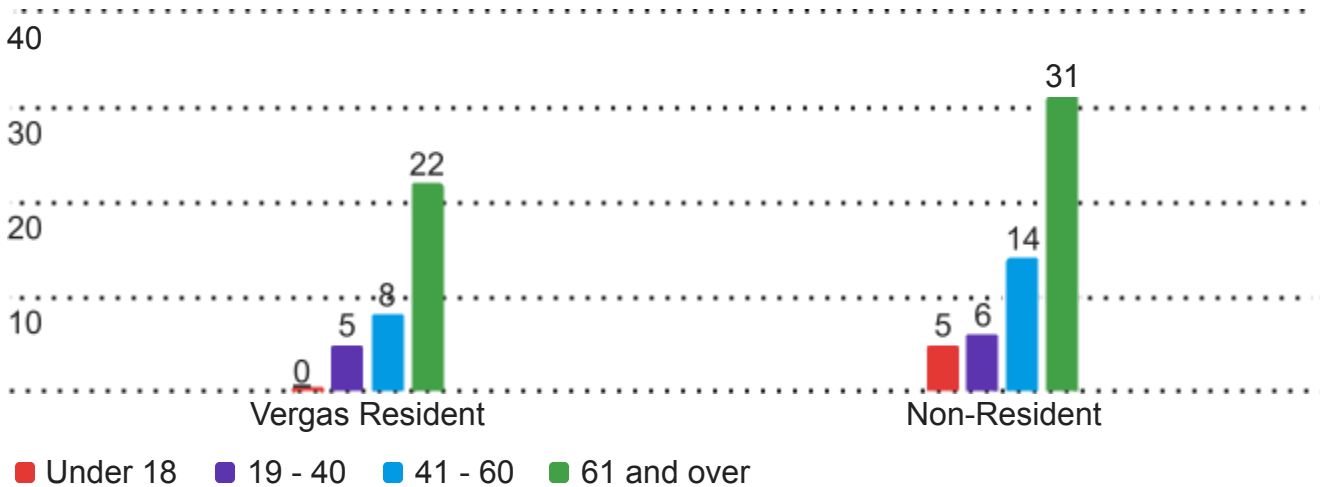
Residency Status

91 Responses



Age

91 Responses



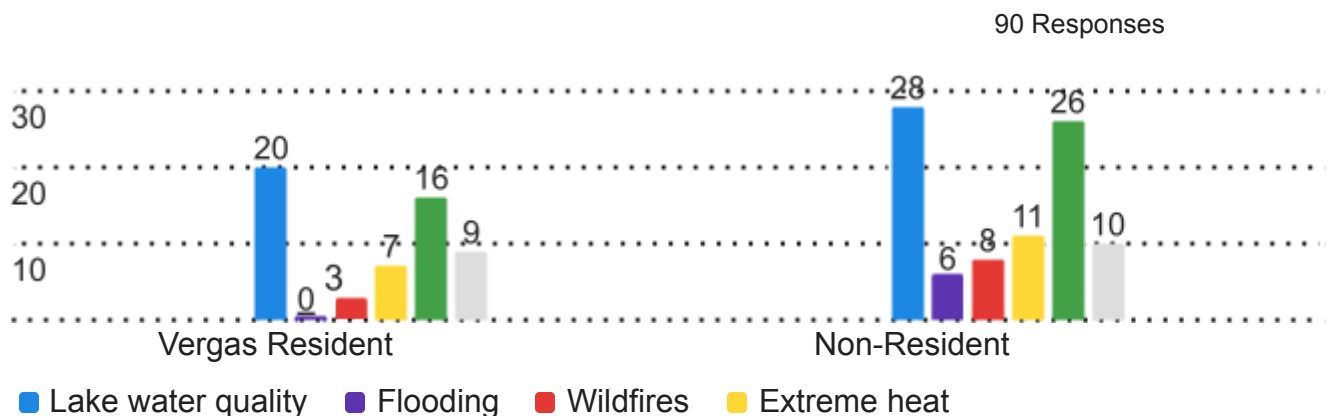
Q3: What types of extreme weather are you concerned about impacting Vergas in the next 5 years? (Check all that apply)

The majority of respondents (75% residents and 82% non-residents) were concerned about the impacts of extreme weather events in the next five years. The most significant concerns included the impacts on water quality (57.1% residents and 50.9% non-residents) and infrastructure/services (drinking water, heating, electricity, roads) 45.7% residents and 47.3% non-residents). The majority responses from both residents and non-residents indicate a general awareness and appreciation for the potential impacts on the community’s fragile natural resources, critical infrastructure and vital community services.

Key Planning Points:

- Identify the most likely hazards: extreme heat, flooding, drought, severe storms, winter extremes, wildfire smoke.
- Use local and regional climate projections, not just historical data.
- Map vulnerable areas: floodplains, low-lying neighborhoods, heat-island zones, aging infrastructure.
- Use nature-based solutions: green infrastructure, wetlands, urban tree canopy, permeable surfaces.
- Maintain and restore natural areas that buffer floods, heat, and erosion.
- Develop simple, consistent messaging for emergencies before they happen.
- Use multiple channels: text alerts, social media, local radio, community bulletin boards.
- Plan for heat emergencies (cooling centers, hydration access, outreach to seniors and outdoor workers).
- Ensure shelters and emergency services can operate during prolonged or overlapping events.
- Update emergency operations plans to reflect more frequent and intense events.

What types of extreme weather are you concerned about impacting Vergas in the next 5 years?



■ Infrastructure/services (drinking water, heating, electricity, roads) ■ Not concerned

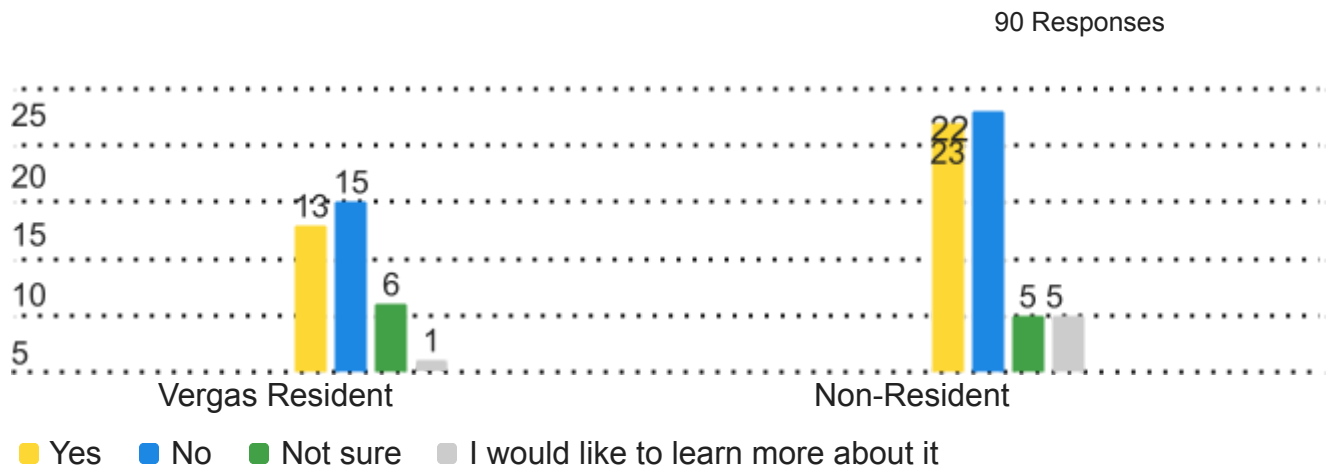
Q4: Do you have a backup plan for utility disruptions (electricity, water, heating)?

A critical disconnect exists between residents' second highest concern (infrastructure disruptions) and their actual preparedness level, with over half unsure or not having utility disruption backup plans. This gap indicates both vulnerability and risk to lack of emergency preparedness where education and resource development offers an immediate opportunity for high-impact programming to remedy this and create an opportunity for more engagement.

Key Planning Points:

- Launch emergency preparedness education as highest priority initiative
- Develop community-wide backup power and heating strategies
- Create neighborhood-level mutual aid networks for emergencies
- Partner with utilities on system resilience and outage communication
- Establish community emergency shelters with backup systems (event center and Firehall)

Do you have a backup plan for utility disruptions (electricity, water, heating)?



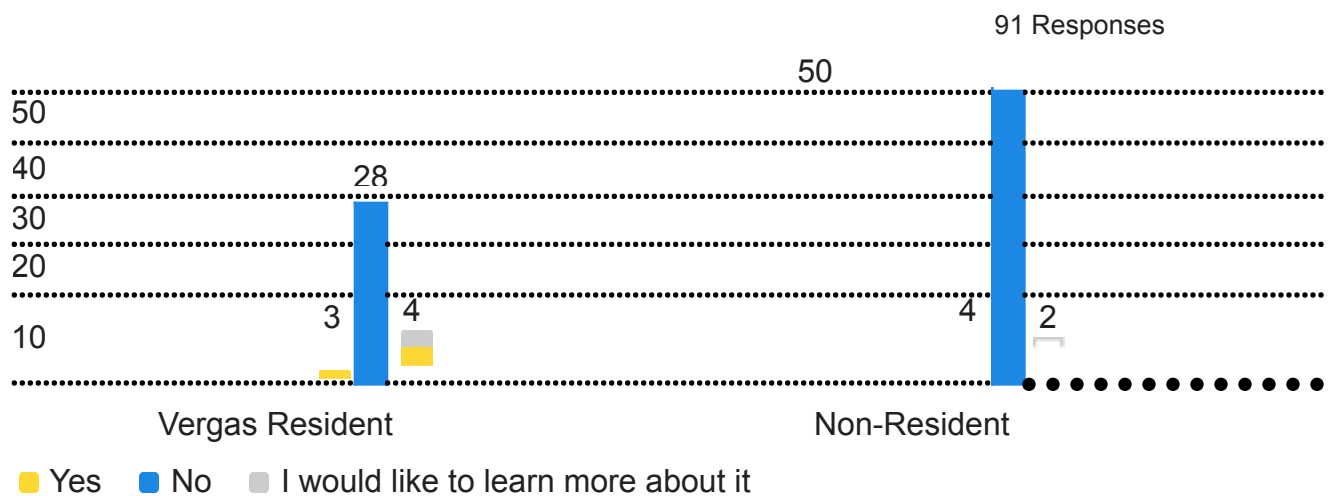
Q5: Has your home or business experienced uncomfortably high or low temperatures recently?

Only 9.7% of Vergas residents reported experiencing uncomfortably high or low home temperatures recently, while an additional 12.9% expressed interest in learning more about the issue. Among non-residents, 7.4% reported discomfort, with 3.7% open to learning more. Although current discomfort levels appear low, the interest in learning more, particularly among residents, highlights an opportunity for proactive outreach and education. This suggests that while thermal discomfort may not yet be widespread, preparedness, energy efficiency, and climate adaptation efforts remain relevant and should target awareness, prevention, and future-proofing homes against more extreme conditions.

Key Planning Points:

- Offer voluntary energy assessments and educational resources on home temperature control
- Develop early outreach and support tools before discomfort becomes more common
- Target interested residents with workshops on weatherization, HVAC options, and insulation
- Collaborate with local contractors and utilities to prepare for scalable efficiency programs
- Track seasonal changes and follow up to monitor if concerns grow during extreme weather events

Has your home or business experienced uncomfortably high or low temperatures recently?



Q6: How do you heat your home? (Check all that apply)

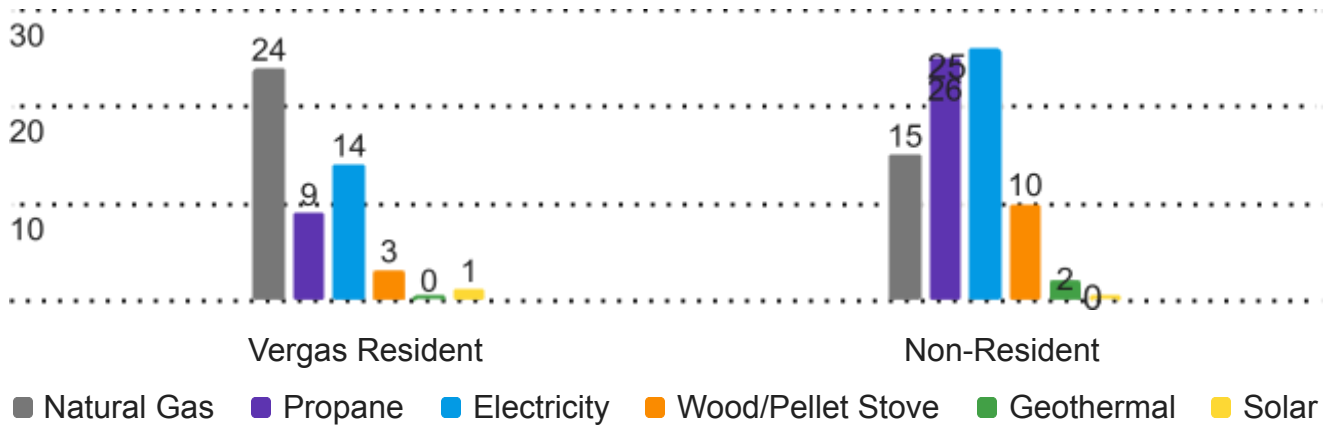
Almost 69% of Vergas residents indicated that natural gas is their primary source of heat with 40% indicating that they also use electrical heating sources. The largest percentage of non-residents (47.3) selected electric as their primary source of heat with 45.5% indicating they also use propane.

Key Planning Points:

- Map where natural gas–heated vs. electric-heated homes are concentrated.
- Identify housing types most at risk (older homes, rentals, manufactured housing).
- Identify buildings that can serve as warm-up centers with backup power.
- Coordinate with utilities on restoration priority during cold snaps.
- Encourage weatherization and efficiency upgrades to reduce heating demand.
- Support insulation, air sealing, and window improvements — especially in electric-heated homes.
- Consider incentives for backup heating or resilience upgrades where appropriate.

How do you heat your home?

90 Responses



Q7: Would you like to learn about reducing heating/cooling/electricity costs?

Among Vergas residents, 47% (16 of 34) reported low or no interest in learning about reducing heating, cooling, or electricity costs, with 15 not interested and 1 slightly not interested. However, 35% (12 residents) indicated neutral to strong interest, including 6 neutral, 7 slightly interested, and 5 very interested. While overall enthusiasm is moderate, this engaged segment presents a clear opportunity to build momentum. By focusing on residents who are already

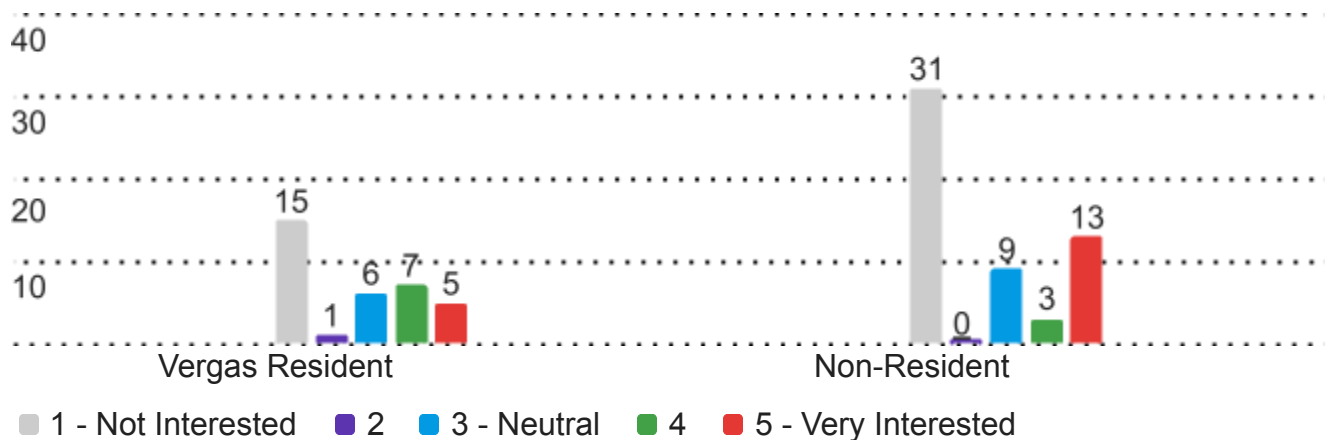
curious or open to learning, the city can lay the groundwork for broader adoption of energy efficiency practices over time.

Key Planning Points:

- Target outreach to the 35% of residents showing potential interest with personalized, easy-to-understand materials
Use peer examples and community champions to demonstrate real-life savings and comfort improvements
- Offer small-scale pilot programs (e.g., home energy checkups or rebates) to activate the “curious middle”
- Pair cost-saving messaging with broader resilience goals to increase relevance
- Monitor shifts in interest over time, especially during seasonal utility cost spikes

Would you like to learn about reducing heating/cooling/electricity costs?

90 Responses



Q8: Do you support the following in Vergas? (Scale 1-5: 1 = Not supportive, 5 = Strongly supportive)

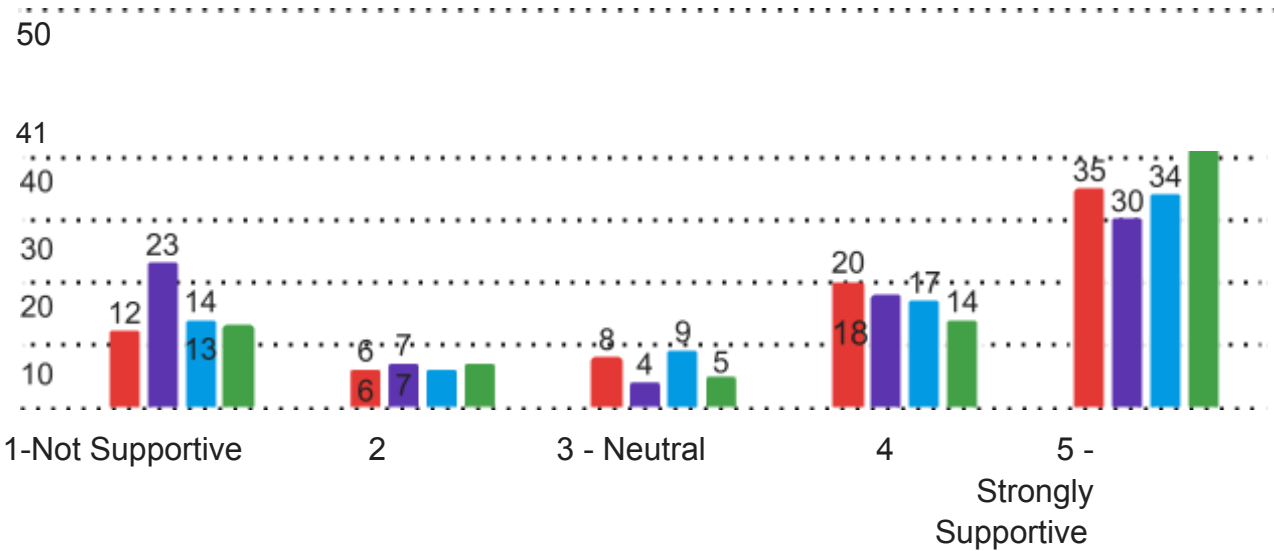
The majority of survey participants reported being in favor of ordinances that protect the natural environment (e.g., water conservation, green space, pollution control), streamlining permits for renewable energy & efficiency upgrades, and energy efficiency & environment protection initiatives.

Key Planning Points:

- Tie ordinances to local priorities: water quality, flooding, tree loss, energy costs, reliability, or public health.
- Be explicit about what issues the City is trying to solve (e.g., runoff into a local lake, high winter heating bills).
- Avoid abstract language if it risks resistance; focus on stewardship, resilience, and cost savings.
- Align environmental protections with existing comprehensive plans and state requirements.
- Provide plain-language guidance for developers, contractors, and homeowners.
- Offer templates, checklists, or example projects.

Do you support the following in Vergas? (Scale 1-5: 1=Not Supportive, 5=Strongly Supportive)

82 Responses



■ Energy efficiency & Environment protection initiatives: ■ Solar energy installations:

■ Streamlining permits for renewable energy & efficiency upgrades:

■ Ordinances that protect the natural environment (e.g., water conservation, green space, pollution control (fertilizers))

APPENDIX G



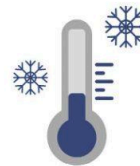
Minnesota Solar Energy Industries Association We Move Minnesota Solar + Storage Forward

Does Solar Energy Work in Minnesota?

When you think of solar energy, you may first think of sunny places like California. But did you know that Minnesota ranks 16th in the nation for installed solar capacity? Despite our infamous winters, the Land of 10,000 Lakes is a great place for solar and produces plenty of it.

Q: Does Solar Work in Cold Weather and Climates?

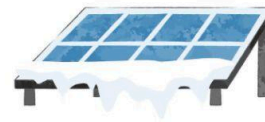
A: Yes! Minnesota's cold and snowy weather does not prevent solar panels from using the sun's rays to produce energy. In fact, colder temperatures actually help improve the solar system's efficiency. Hot temperatures can overheat the systems, lowering their efficiency and capturing less energy. Solar exists in cold climates around the world - from Canada and Alaska to Norway and Germany!



Q: Will Snowfall Prevent Solar Production?

A: No! In general, snowfall will not stop solar energy production. When a light snowfall occurs, sun rays can penetrate through the snow onto the panels. During cold clear days, the extra layer of snow on the panels actually acts as a mirror. It reflects sunlight onto the panels and leads to increased energy production.

The tilted angle of most panels allows snow to easily slide off and requires little maintenance. When a heavy snowfall occurs, gently brushing off the panels is helpful to keep producing energy.



Q: What Happens to Solar Production on Short Winter Days?

A: During winter, Minnesota experiences reduced hours of sunlight a day. Although this does decrease the amount of time a solar panel is working at full efficiency, the amount of sunlight available in Minnesota is more than enough to make it worth the while. Adding energy storage will make the solar array even more efficient. Batteries store excess energy from when it's sunny to deploy later at night or when it's cloudy.

Q: Why is This Important?

A: Solar is an important industry in Minnesota and misconceptions hurt local businesses and workers. There's plenty of sunshine in Minnesota to provide clean energy across the state; creating family-sustaining jobs, making our grid more resilient to winter storms, and more.



5,000 jobs
Solar installer is the fastest growing job in the U.S.



1.7 GWs
Of solar - Enough to power over 230k homes!



\$2.5 BN
Solar investment in the state



#16 in the U.S
For installed solar capacity

APPENDIX H

City of Vergas Building and Solar
Analysis Griffin Peck, West
Central Initiative

Building Analysis

City of Vergas Community and Event Center: 23,200 kWh/ year

City of Vergas Community and Event Center: Cost: \$3,662 (\$1,700 Energy KWH charges)

Rate Analysis

City of Vergas Community and Event Center Rate

Schedule: General Service: Summer: \$0.04644

Winter: \$0.05272 Average rate with monthly

energy adjustments: \$0.07619 **Solar Analysis**

24 kWDC / 19 kWAC Nameplate

Capacity Total Cost: \$66,000

Incentives

 Otter Tail Power POP

 Rebate: \$33,250 IRS

 30% ITC Base credit:

 \$19,800

 IRS 10% ITC Made in America Adder: \$6,600

 (Planned) WCI Gap

Grant: \$4,146 Total Incentives:

\$63,796

Balance after incentives: **(\$2,204)**

Annual Energy Savings:

\$2,200 Cashflow Positive:

12 months.

Vergas Community Event Center Solar Array Cashflow									
Year	Energy		Tax Savings (Elective Pay IRA)			Finance	Cash Flow	Benefit	
	Export Payment	Electric Bill Savings	Ottertail Incentive	Federal Tax Credit (30%)	10% Made in America Adder				Gap Funding
2025			33,250	19,800	6,600	\$ 4,146	\$ (66,000)	\$ (2,204)	
2026	\$ 1,369	\$ 835						\$ 2,204	\$ (0)
2027	\$ 1,362	\$ 830						\$ 2,192	\$ 2,191
2028	\$ 1,374	\$ 838						\$ 2,212	\$ 4,404
2029	\$ 1,387	\$ 846						\$ 2,233	\$ 6,636
2030	\$ 1,400	\$ 854						\$ 2,253	\$ 8,890
2031	\$ 1,413	\$ 861						\$ 2,274	\$ 11,164
2032	\$ 1,426	\$ 869						\$ 2,295	\$ 13,459
2033	\$ 1,439	\$ 877						\$ 2,316	\$ 15,775
2034	\$ 1,452	\$ 885						\$ 2,337	\$ 18,112
2035	\$ 1,465	\$ 893						\$ 2,358	\$ 20,470
2036	\$ 1,478	\$ 901						\$ 2,380	\$ 22,850
2037	\$ 1,492	\$ 909						\$ 2,401	\$ 25,251
2038	\$ 1,505	\$ 918						\$ 2,422	\$ 27,673
2039	\$ 1,518	\$ 926						\$ 2,444	\$ 30,117
2040	\$ 1,532	\$ 934						\$ 2,466	\$ 32,583
2041	\$ 1,545	\$ 942						\$ 2,488	\$ 35,071
2042	\$ 1,559	\$ 951						\$ 2,510	\$ 37,580
2043	\$ 1,573	\$ 959						\$ 2,532	\$ 40,112
2044	\$ 1,586	\$ 967						\$ 2,554	\$ 42,666
2045	\$ 1,600	\$ 976						\$ 2,576	\$ 45,242
2046	\$ 1,614	\$ 984						\$ 2,598	\$ 47,840
2047	\$ 1,628	\$ 993						\$ 2,621	\$ 50,461
2048	\$ 1,642	\$ 1,001						\$ 2,643	\$ 53,104
2049	\$ 1,656	\$ 1,010						\$ 2,666	\$ 55,770
2050	\$ 1,670	\$ 1,018						\$ 2,688	\$ 58,459
2051	\$ 1,684	\$ 1,027						\$ 2,711	\$ 61,170
2052	\$ 1,698	\$ 1,036						\$ 2,734	\$ 63,904
2053	\$ 1,713	\$ 1,044						\$ 2,757	\$ 66,661
2054	\$ 1,727	\$ 1,053						\$ 2,780	\$ 69,441
2055	\$ 1,741	\$ 1,062						\$ 2,803	\$ 72,244

On Site Energy Value Composition				
Year	Module Rating	Energy Production	kWh Cost	Energy Value
1	100%	10,955	0.07619	\$ 835
2	98%	10,736	0.07733	\$ 830
3	97.45%	10,676	0.07849	\$ 838
4	96.90%	10,615	0.07967	\$ 846
5	96.35%	10,555	0.08087	\$ 854
6	95.80%	10,495	0.08208	\$ 861
7	95.25%	10,435	0.08331	\$ 869
8	94.70%	10,374	0.08456	\$ 877
9	94.15%	10,314	0.08583	\$ 885
10	93.60%	10,254	0.08711	\$ 893
11	93.05%	10,194	0.08842	\$ 901
12	92.50%	10,133	0.08975	\$ 909
13	91.95%	10,073	0.09109	\$ 918
14	91.40%	10,013	0.09246	\$ 926
15	90.85%	9,953	0.09385	\$ 934
16	90.30%	9,892	0.09526	\$ 942
17	89.75%	9,832	0.09668	\$ 951
18	89.20%	9,772	0.09813	\$ 959
19	88.65%	9,712	0.09961	\$ 967
20	88.10%	9,651	0.10110	\$ 976
21	87.55%	9,591	0.10262	\$ 984
22	87%	9,531	0.10416	\$ 993
23	86.45%	9,471	0.10572	\$ 1,001
24	85.90%	9,410	0.10730	\$ 1,010
25	85.35%	9,350	0.10891	\$ 1,018
26	84.80%	9,290	0.11055	\$ 1,027
27	84.25%	9,230	0.11221	\$ 1,036
28	83.70%	9,169	0.11389	\$ 1,044
29	83.15%	9,109	0.11560	\$ 1,053
30	82.60%	9,049	0.11733	\$ 1,062

Export Energy Value Composition				
Year	Module Rating	Energy Production	kWh Cost	Energy Value
1	100%	16,433	0.08330	\$ 1,369
2	98%	16,104	0.08455	\$ 1,362
3	97.45%	16,014	0.08582	\$ 1,374
4	96.90%	15,924	0.08711	\$ 1,387
5	96.35%	15,833	0.08841	\$ 1,400
6	95.80%	15,743	0.08974	\$ 1,413
7	95.25%	15,652	0.09108	\$ 1,426
8	94.70%	15,562	0.09245	\$ 1,439
9	94.15%	15,472	0.09384	\$ 1,452
10	93.60%	15,381	0.09524	\$ 1,465
11	93.05%	15,291	0.09667	\$ 1,478
12	92.50%	15,201	0.09812	\$ 1,492
13	91.95%	15,110	0.09959	\$ 1,505
14	91.40%	15,020	0.10109	\$ 1,518
15	90.85%	14,929	0.10261	\$ 1,532
16	90.30%	14,839	0.10414	\$ 1,545
17	89.75%	14,749	0.10571	\$ 1,559
18	89.20%	14,658	0.10729	\$ 1,573
19	88.65%	14,568	0.10890	\$ 1,586
20	88.10%	14,477	0.11053	\$ 1,600
21	87.55%	14,387	0.11219	\$ 1,614
22	87%	14,297	0.11388	\$ 1,628
23	86.45%	14,206	0.11558	\$ 1,642
24	85.90%	14,116	0.11732	\$ 1,656
25	85.35%	14,026	0.11908	\$ 1,670
26	84.80%	13,935	0.12086	\$ 1,684
27	84.25%	13,845	0.12268	\$ 1,698
28	83.70%	13,754	0.12452	\$ 1,713
29	83.15%	13,664	0.12638	\$ 1,727
30	82.60%	13,574	0.12828	\$ 1,741

APPENDIX I

Using the Vergas Energy & Resilience Plan to Write Grants

This Energy & Resilience Plan can help Vergas' government, citizens, and businesses secure funding for projects. Use data and insights from plans (CIP, Housing study, and Comprehensive Plan) and stories (e.g., [Event]) to craft compelling applications for (Local/State/Federal) grants.

Using an existing city plan is one of the most effective ways to research, justify, and build strong grant applications. Funders want to see that projects are not one-off ideas—they're grounded in community priorities, data, and long-term strategy.

Use the Vergas Energy & Resilience Plan to serve as the primary evidence base to:

- Demonstrate community need and alignment
- Show stakeholder engagement and legitimacy
- Identify ready-to-implement projects
- Provide data, maps, and policy language for proposals
- Connect funding requests to measurable outcomes

The goal is to translate plan priorities into fundable projects with clear scope, partners, budgets, and impact.

Key Grant Development Steps:

- 1) Identify relevant priority areas
- 2) Match plan priorities to funding opportunities
- 3) Extract supporting evidence from the plan
- 4) Define a grant-ready project
- 5) Identify partners named in the plan
- 6) Translate goals into measurable outcomes
- 7) Use plan alignment as the core narrative
- 8) Build a reusable grant framework

City Council
2026 April Council Meeting
Vergas Event Center & Zoom Id number 267-094-2170 password 56587
6:30 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2026

6. Vergas Community Club - Shops and Hops

1. Street closure on May 30th from 3pm -8pm. The top half of the street will not be used.
2. VCC Beer garden and are asking for a waiver of the fee.

City Council
2026 April Council Meeting
Vergas Event Center & Zoom Id number 267-094-2170 password 56587
6:30 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2026

7. Otter Coffee - Live Music and Food Trucks

1. June 4-August 13, 2026 (Thursday's)
2. City employees remove trash from cans both Thursday and Friday mornings.
3. Street Parking Spaces closed in front of business from 2 pm to 7 pm.

City Council
2026 April Council Meeting
Vergas Event Center & Zoom Id number 267-094-2170 password 56587
6:30 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2026

8. Committee Reports

- A. Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee
- B. Event Center
- C. Planning Commission

Files Attached

- 3.17.26 Street and Yard Waste Meeting.pdf
- 3.31.26 Street and Yard Waste Meeting.pdf
- 2026 YW letter Albright.pdf
- Event Center Minutes 4.8.26.pdf
- Proposal to Dissolve the Vergas Event Advisory Board and Reassign Responsibilities.pdf
- Resolution 2026-0004 Vergas_Resolution_Event_Board_Dissolution.pdf
- Planning Commission Minutes 3.30.26.pdf
- Draft RESOLUTION 2026-005- for Prosecuting Attorney only cities.pdf

Street/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee Meeting Minutes
 Government Services Center
 March 17th, 2026 at 1:00 PM.

2025	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bruce Albright, Council Liaison	N/A	N/A	P									
Paul Pinke, Council Liaison	N/A	N/A	P									
Mike DuFrane, Utilities Superintendent	N/A	N/A	A									
Julie Lammers, Clerk Treasurer	N/A	N/A	P									

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

A Yard Waste meeting of the Vergas Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste (SSYW) Committee was held on Tuesday, March 17th, 2026 at 1:00 PM at the Vergas Government Services Center and Zoom.

Present via Zoom: Engineer Blaine Green of Widseth.

Lammers called the meeting to order at 1:09 PM.

Agenda Additions or Deletions

Albright suggested adding an update on the extension of Sharp Avenue to the agenda to discuss where the project currently stands.

Minutes

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to approve the minutes from October 14, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Extension of Scharf Avenue

The committee discussed the status of the Scharf Avenue extension project. Albright inquired about the current situation with the project. Green reported that he had not received any information from the project engineer and that the ball was entirely in the developer's court. He had reached out to them requesting information but had not received a response, nor had he heard from Bunkowski regarding what they knew about the project. Albright expressed satisfaction that the responsibility was with the developers, noting that the city had asked for information regarding the stormwater pond and was waiting for their response. He recalled that Bunkowski had previously attended a council meeting requesting road plowing for fishing access, and while snow removal didn't become an issue due to the mild winter, concerns had been raised about the size of the stormwater pond. Bunkowski had indicated they redirected some water to a different location, but the requested documentation had not been provided.

Extension of Dianne Ave

The committee then shifted focus to a related issue involving the EDA's eight lots, with two lots remaining to be sold. One lot was problematic because it lacked connection to a public street, which violated subdivision control requirements that mandate lots must be situated with principal frontage on a public street. The city had right-of-way for the public street, but when the Dianne street project was completed in 2019, the road construction stopped at the steep hill rather than continuing as originally planned. This decision appeared to have been made during the project without returning to council for approval. Lammers explained that multiple people were interested in purchasing the problematic lot and presented options for extending the road either 65 feet or 100 feet, with costs that would typically be assessed 100 percent to property owners for new road construction. The two affected property owners would be the EDA and Otter Tail County, though the county had previously requested assessment forgiveness.

Albright visited the site and expressed concerns about spending significant money on a road extension that would literally go nowhere, ending at a 20-foot vertical drop-off. He suggested that instead of the city building the road extension, the lot sale could include a contingency requiring the buyer to extend their driveway to connect with the existing road. He noted that the lot would require substantial reshaping and dirt work to make it buildable anyway, so the driveway extension could be completed as part of the overall site preparation. Albright mentioned that the neighboring landowner had expressed interest in

acquiring the lot to add to his property but noted that other potential buyers were also interested in purchasing it for home construction.

The discussion centered on whether to make an exception to city rules given the unique circumstances. Albright advocated for using common sense, suggesting the lot could be sold with buyer awareness that they would be responsible for connecting to Dianne Avenue. He proposed this approach would be more cost-effective than the city investing \$25,000-\$29,000 in a lot that might not sell. Green confirmed that contractors could likely balance the dirt on-site without hauling material in or out, though his estimate assumed bringing in about 600 yards of fill. He noted that the actual cost could be much lower with the right contractor.

The committee discussed that with the lot's challenging topography, buyers would need to bring in significant fill regardless, making the driveway connection a logical part of the overall site work. Albright suggested the buyer could extend their driveway across the corner of the city's right-of-way to reach Dianne Avenue without major grading. Green confirmed that this approach wouldn't preclude future road development if the city ever acquired adjacent property, as any future road construction could accommodate the existing driveway with proper planning for elevations and drainage. The committee agreed to recommend that the EDA maintain the road right-of-way while allowing the lot sale to proceed with a contingency requiring the buyer to provide road access. Albright suggested selling the lot at a break-even price of approximately \$18,000 and making the buyer responsible for road connection, including installation of required culverts.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to recommend that the EDA sell the lot at a break-even price with a contingency requiring the new buyer to be responsible for connecting the driveway to Dianne Avenue, including installation of required culverts. The motion passed unanimously.

Yard Waste

The committee addressed yard waste operations following a recent fire at the disposal site. The fire had cost the city approximately \$1,200 from the Vergas fire department, while other departments provided mutual aid at no charge. The waste container company replaced damaged equipment at no cost to the city. The discussion revealed ongoing challenges with the brush disposal portion of the yard waste program. Albright noted that the city regularly received complaints about smoke from burning operations regardless of wind direction and expressed concern about liability risks. He observed that people could follow trucks carrying brush loads directly from Highway 108 to the city's site, indicating the program was attracting users from well beyond the city limits. The committee discussed that people had been misusing the site by bringing prohibited materials like stumps, despite clear signage. Some users had been observed dragging stumps off their trailers one by one, clearly ignoring the restrictions.

Pinke noted that while some customers believed the yard waste site brought people to town, those visitors weren't likely to make purchases while dumping waste, though they might return later. The committee considered several alternatives, including restricting brush disposal to city residents only, but recognized enforcement challenges without staffing the site. They noted that other communities like Frazee, Detroit Lakes, New York Mills, and Pelican Rapids continued to accept brush but at higher prices than Vergas charged.

Albright reported that he had contacted MPCA regarding regulations and learned that ash is not currently classified as a pollutant, though the city needed to obtain a general permit for their yard waste compost facility. This would involve registering the site online at no cost to maintain MPCA records of yard waste facilities. The discussion also covered safety and liability concerns, including instances where people had started unauthorized fires, either from hot ashes dumped from burning barrels or, in one case captured on camera, someone on a four-wheeler starting fires around midnight.

Neighbors north of town had reportedly expressed support for closing the brush disposal operation and called to thank the city when burning was temporarily suspended.

After extensive discussion about the challenges and risks associated with brush disposal, the committee concluded that continuing to accept grass clippings and other non-woody yard waste would provide valuable service while eliminating fire risks. This would give city employees more space and ability to properly manage and turn compost piles.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, for the 2026 season, no woody debris would be allowed to be deposited at the yard waste site. Permit fees would remain the same, and permits would be updated to reflect that no brush or woody debris is allowed. The motion passed unanimously.

Budget- goal setting

5-Year Budget

Lammers indicated that no materials had been prepared for five-year budget discussions, as they were waiting to learn whether the city would receive a grant for street improvements. The outcome of the grant application would significantly affect budget planning priorities.

Albright noted that if the grant is received, the budget would need to be adjusted accordingly, but if not received, street projects would remain on the back burner for next year.

Albright noted that in the spring, the committee would need to assess the street maintenance plan and determine if any crack sealing or other maintenance was needed for the year, beyond the ongoing issue with the alligator cracking on the hill on 1st Avenue.

Adjournment

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Council Recommendations

- Recommend to City Council for the 2026 season, no woody debris would be allowed to be deposited at the yard waste site. Permit fees would remain the same, and permits would be updated to reflect that no brush or woody debris is allowed and to accept grass clippings and other non-woody yard waste would provide valuable service while eliminating fire risks. This would give city employees more space and ability to properly manage and turn compost piles.

Follow Up Actions

- Lammers: Inform interested buyer of Dianne Avenue lot that purchase will be contingent on buyer extending driveway to connect with Dianne Avenue and installing required 12-inch culvert and communicate committee's decision to EDA/HRA.
- Lammers: Bring committee's recommendation to EDA/HRA to sell the lot at a break-even price with the condition that the new owner is responsible for connecting the driveway to Dianne Avenue.
- Lammers: Register the yard waste compost facility with MPCA by completing the required online general permit form.
- Committee: Recommend to Council that for the 2024 season, no woody debris (brush) be deposited at the yard waste site, permit fees remain the same, and update permits to note the brush restriction.

Street/Sidewalks/Yard Waste Committee Meeting Minutes
 Government Services Center
 March 31st, 2026 at 4:00 PM.

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bruce Albright, Council Liaison	N/A	N/A	P/P									
Paul Pinke, Council Liaison	N/A	N/A	P/P									
Mike DuFrane, Utilities Superintendent	N/A	N/A	A/A									
Julie Lammers, Clerk Treasurer	N/A	N/A	P/P									

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

A Yard Waste meeting of the Vergas Streets/Sidewalks/Yard Waste (SSYW) Committee was held on Tuesday, March 31st, 2026 at 4:00 PM at the Vergas Government Services Center and Zoom.

Lammers called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

Agenda Additions or Deletions

Albright requested adding the extension of Dianne Avenue to the agenda.

Minutes

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to approve the minutes from March 17, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

West Lake Street

Lammers reported that the city applied for a Local Road Improvement Program grant but did not receive it. Out of 233 applications, only 42 grants were awarded. This was the city's second attempt at securing this funding. Lammers noted she has a meeting scheduled with the county regarding the trail project, as they sometimes receive more detailed information about grant decisions. Committee members discussed alternative approaches for West Lake Street improvements. Albright suggested consulting with local contractors about what could be accomplished with a budget of \$15,000-\$20,000, such as lowering hills, removing trees, and general safety improvements. The main issues identified were trees encroaching on the right-of-way and creating a closed canopy that makes passage difficult, especially during heavy snow conditions. The committee agreed that the primary problems are the encroaching trees and the need for brush removal. Some tree work was completed last fall, but more extensive work would be needed. The discussion included consideration of the 50/50 cost-sharing structure for gravel road improvements versus the 80/20 split for paved roads. The committee decided to approach contractors first for cost estimates before consulting with the city engineer, as contractor consultations would be free. The goal would be to identify what improvements could be made within a reasonable budget to enhance safety and accessibility, particularly as more homes are built around Lawrence Lake.

Alley Graveling 110 W Elm St

Lammers provided background on this issue, explaining that the property owners had previously been told by the council to apply for vacation of the alley if they wanted it improved, but they declined to do so. Lammers contacted the county to clarify whether this was an alley or an easement and learned that the city maintains an easement for storm drainage, which Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane maintains with gravel around the storm drain, but the city does not maintain the alley itself - it exists only on paper. Albright visited the site and took photographs, observing that the area has challenging topography with steep slopes that would cause any gravel to wash out during rain. Albright noted that proper gravel installation would require excavation and proper preparation, turning it into a much more expensive project estimated at \$20,000. The discussion revealed that neighboring property owner appears to have already encroached approximately four feet into the alley with his fence. The committee also noted a wet spot near the fire hydrant on West Elm Street that needs attention with a small amount of gravel. Lammers explained that vacating the alley would require a public hearing, which would cost the city approximately \$400. However, if conducted as part of a regular meeting rather than a special hearing, the only cost would be for mailing notices. The committee discussed the practical challenges of maintaining this paper alley, noting the steep terrain and drainage issues. They concluded that vacation would be the most sensible solution, with the property being returned 50/50 to the respective landowners (10 feet each).

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to recommend to council to vacate the alley at city expense, with the right-of-way to return 50/50 to the respective landowners. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to recommend to council that the city add gravel near the fire hydrant on West Elm Street, though this work cannot be completed until road restrictions are lifted. The motion passed unanimously.

Yard Waste

This agenda item generated extensive discussion as the committee reviewed three main options for the yard waste facility going forward.

Financial Overview: Lammers reported that the yard waste operation took in \$18,971 in permits last year and cost \$13,933 to operate, resulting in a profit of \$5,038. The city sets aside \$7,000 annually for loader replacement, and the costs include 2% of Lammers' wages and 5% of Deputy Clerk Rachel Nustad's wages to cover permit issuance.

Option 1: Keep Current System Open This option would maintain the current system allowing both residents and non-resident permit holders to use the facility. Benefits include providing a valued community service, addressing regional dumping problems, and meeting public demand. Recent feedback from residents, emphasized strong community support and willingness to pay increased fees if necessary. Concerns with this option include managing large volumes of material, ongoing violations, fire and smoke complaints during burning, and potential fire hazards if burns spread to neighboring properties. Committee members discussed the need for stricter burning policies, including more frequent burns of smaller piles and mandatory start times before 10 AM.

Option 2: Close Woody Debris Disposal This option would eliminate brush and tree waste acceptance while maintaining leaf and grass composting. Benefits would include eliminating fire hazards, smoke complaints, and creating more space for composting operations. However, this would disappoint many users who specifically value the woody debris disposal service.

Option 3: Residents Only This option would restrict the facility to city residents only, similar to Perham's site. Perham operates their facility with gates, specific hours (Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10 AM to 7 PM, April through October).

Gate and Staffing Considerations: The committee discussed gating options, with Dakota Fence providing a quote of \$28,565 for 310 feet of 6-foot high fencing with a gate. However, committee members suggested a simpler gate covering just the driveway might be sufficient. Staffing costs were calculated at approximately \$5,000 annually based on Perham's operating schedule, though the committee noted that city maintenance staff already work weekend hours and could potentially open/close gates as part of their existing duties.

Seasonal Operations: The committee discussed limiting operations to April through October, noting that this would align with when most yard waste is generated and avoid winter burning.

Enforcement and Violations: Discussion included ongoing challenges with permit compliance, illegal dumping, and inappropriate materials. The committee noted improvements in contractor compliance and the effectiveness of requiring license plate numbers on permits for enforcement purposes. Members shared experiences with polite enforcement approaches that generally resulted in compliance. The committee expressed particular concern about one recent violation involving tree stumps, noting that while violations occur, they don't want to penalize the majority of compliant users for the actions of a few violators.

Committee Preference: After extensive discussion, the committee leaned toward maintaining the current system (Option 1) with modifications including seasonal operation from April through October, more frequent burning of smaller piles, and clear communication to users that continued violations could result in further restrictions or closure. The committee agreed to present all three options to the full council for discussion and decision, emphasizing that they would recommend a one-year trial period with reevaluation in November 2026. They also suggested posting clear warnings that continued violations could result in restrictions or closure of the facility.

Budget- goal setting

5-Year Budget

The committee discussed the need for comprehensive budget planning in the near future. Priority topics include reviewing seal

coating plans, examining long-term funds and potential transfers between funds, and assessing remaining bond obligations. Lammers reported that the streets survey is nearly complete, with all streets documented except for some newer sections where she is still researching construction dates and details. The committee identified several streets needing attention, particularly the area near Crossroads where the pavement is "alligatoring" and breaking into chunks. Lammers explained that this indicates base problems that would require reclaiming or complete reconstruction rather than simple resurfacing. Discussion included emerging asphalt technologies, with one member noting that some contractors now incorporate recycled shingles into asphalt mixes, which reportedly improves durability and provides an environmentally beneficial use for waste shingles. The committee also discussed the beneficial timing for potential tax increases, noting that significant new construction will be added to the tax rolls in 2027. This growth in the tax base would allow for modest increases (3-4%) without noticeable impact on individual taxpayers while building necessary reserves for infrastructure improvements.

Extension of Dianne Avenue

Albright reported that a property owner who purchased a lot is finding his excavated area insufficient for house construction and needs to remove additional material from the back hill. He inquired about using this fill material to extend Dianne Avenue past the current barricades. Albright took photographs of the area and identified several conditions that would need to be met: the existing stormwater outlet rocks cannot be disturbed; any mature tree removal would be at the property owner's expense; he would be responsible for relocating and replacing signage; and any fill must be properly graded to avoid creating dangerous slopes. Lammers suggested running the proposal by city engineer Blaine Green of Widseth before proceeding, particularly given previous water drainage issues in the area that required significant work to resolve. The committee agreed this would require a graded fill permit and council approval, but felt the conditions mentioned would address their primary concerns.

Adjournment

Motion by Albright, seconded by Pinke, to adjourn the meeting at 5:04 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorded by
Deputy Clerk
Rachel Nustad (assisted by ClerkMinutes)

Julie Lammers, CMC
Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

Council Recommendations

- Recommend to City Council to vacate the alley at city expense, with the right-of-way to return 50/50 to the respective landowners.
- Recommend to City Council that the city add gravel near the fire hydrant on West Elm Street, though this work cannot be completed until road restrictions are lifted.
- Recommend to Council that City place a small amount of gravel by the fire hydrant on West Elm Street (after road restrictions are lifted).
- Committee: Present yard waste site options to Council at the next meeting for decision, including recommendation to limit site operation to April 1–October 31, and to re-evaluate in November.

Follow Up Actions

- Utilities Superintendent Mike DuFrane and Maintenance Operator Matt Engebretson: Burn smaller piles at the yard waste site, with burns to be started by 10 AM, especially on Mondays, to reduce smoke and fire hazards.
- Lammers: Post notice on city website regarding possible future restrictions on yard waste site use if violations continue.
- Lammers: Schedule meeting with Superintendent Mike DuFrane to review seal coating plans, budget, long-term funds, and bond status.
- Lammers: Send proposed Diane Avenue fill/extension plan and conditions to Engineer Blaine Green of Widseth for review before Council decision.
- Committee: Make recommendation to Council by April 21 regarding allowing fill on Diane Avenue, pending engineer review.

DATE: Thursday, April 9, 2026

RE: Vergas Yard Waste Facility

TO: Vergas Area Community
Yard Waste Facility Permit Holders

FROM: Bruce E. Albright, Councilman and Streets, Sidewalks, and Yard Waste (SSYW)
Committee Member

For close to a decade, the City of Vergas has operated a recycling site (with the County) and a yard waste disposal site, north of town along County Road No. 17. Last December, we had a large fire at the woody debris site, involving a number of fire departments and loss of a county dumpster. This prompted an immediate closure of the site, and still remains closed today. Since then, the City Council and SSYW Committee has had numerous discussions, including with our attorney, on continued operation of the site. We considered a number of options, the benefits and concerns with each option, and possible corrective actions associated with each. The options included: keeping the site open as is; closing the woody debris disposal for all; or keeping the site open for only Vergas property owners.

At the April special Council meeting, a motion was approved to keep the yard waste site open for another season, with the following modifications:

- Hours for dumping yard waste will be daily between 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM.
- The City reserves the right to close the woody debris disposal should we enter into burning ban restriction placed by the DNR or if the volume of material creates an unsafe situation.
- Disposal of woody debris should adhere to the posted regulations, nothing greater than 6" diameter or 4' in length.
- No commercial dumping.
- The yard waste facility is only open for permit holders. Permits for City landowners are free and for non-residents, the cost will remain at \$65. All permits should be displayed when using the facility.
- No transfer of permits to other users.
- Cameras are in use at the site.
- Violators will be prosecuted.

The City Council and SSYW Committee will review operations of the site this November, and if problems continue at the site, we'll need to again consider other options. These could include gating/fencing of the site, staffing operational hours, and/or increased security. All of which will increase seasonal operational costs.

We truly appreciate your involvement with our recycling program, and we realize the **majority** of people will do the right thing and follow the rules. As always, if you should have questions or comments, or want to report violations, please feel to contact our City Office at 218-302-5996.

CITY OF VERGAS
 Event Center Advisory Minutes
 Vergas Event Center & Zoom Teleconference
 3:00 PM on Wednesday, April 8, 2026

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
James Stenger, Council Appointment	P	P	P	P								
Vanessa Perry, Member	A	P	P	P								
Rachel Nustad, Member	P	P	P	P								
Robert Jacoby, Member	P	P	P	A								
Jay Norby, Member	A	P	A	P								

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No meeting

Present in person: Deb Jacoby

Present via zoom: City Clerk-Treasurer Julie Lammers

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Stenger at 3:00 PM.

Additions and Deletions

None.

Minutes

Motion by Norby, seconded by Perry, to approve the minutes from March 11, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Recommendations to City Council

Stenger reported that they had sent no recommendations to city council from the last meeting. He noted that the only recommendation they had made was regarding the "SAIL" program (Stay Active and Independent for Life). The program instructor, Cynthia McDonough, went to council and it was approved for 12 weeks, meeting twice a week. Perry inquired about advertising the SAIL Program as free of cost, explaining she had messaged about putting this information on Facebook advertisements to incentive participation, especially for older people on fixed incomes. She noted that Cynthia had declined to include that it was free, which Perry found strange. Nustad explained that it had to do with grant requirements - Cynthia said she wasn't allowed to advertise it as free due to grant policies, though Nustad could tell people directly that it was free. The board discussed attendance, with reports that the first class had 13-14 people, and a more recent class had over 20 participants. Word-of-mouth promotion was helping spread awareness of the program.

Income and Expense

Nustad reported that Lammers' report was included in the materials. Nustad noted scheduling several more graduation parties, which was positive timing as people were beginning to think about them. She also mentioned booking many children's birthday parties and indicated her calendar was full with more activity than she had previously experienced. Stenger inquired about utility services listed in the report. Lammers, explained these were costs for Otter Tail Power and Great Plains utilities. Stenger noted concerns that they were already approaching half of their budgeted amount for utilities, which had been budgeted lower than the previous year's actual expenses. Lammers clarified that the budget had been reduced because they anticipated having solar power installed, which had not yet been implemented, explaining the higher-than-expected costs.

Building Review

Tables

Norby provided an update on table replacement, asking whether they preferred rectangular or round tables. He mentioned they had originally discussed rectangular tables but had switched their preference. Lammers confirmed they wanted round tables, explaining that weddings and receptions frequently request round tables because people prefer the conversational arrangement they provide.

There was discussion about replacing the heavy, fake wood particleboard tables with new round plastic tables. Norby clarified they would need to purchase a new cart for round tables and confirmed they would dispose of the old brown tables. Various disposal options were discussed, including selling them at a community rummage sale, or advertising them on Facebook. The board confirmed their preference for round tables to replace the existing problematic ones.

Policy

Current Policy

Stenger noted they had discussed event center policy at the previous meeting and tabled it pending additional information. He had

spoken with Lammers about security requirements, noting the policy had been in place for a considerable time, predating Lammers tenure.

Proposed Policy

The board engaged in extensive discussion about security requirements. Norby questioned whether security was truly necessary and asked about the certification status of their current security company. Nustad confirmed the security personnel were first aid and CPR certified. There was confusion about which security company they currently used, with Stenger believing they had switched companies in recent years. Lammers clarified they had used the same company since she started, though they had previously employed a city employee for security but were unable to find someone willing to work only eight nights per year. Perry questioned the actual authority of private security personnel, noting they legally cannot take physical action unless weapons are involved and essentially can only call police. Norby shared experience from working at Zorbaz, explaining that hiring employees as doormen actually provided more authority than hiring outside security companies. Lammers explained that security personnel can shut down events if they become disorderly, turn lights on and off, direct people to leave, and call the sheriff's department. She described an incident where she had to intervene when security wanted to shut down a wedding dance, successfully de-escalating the situation by speaking with the disruptive individuals. The board discussed alternatives, including having bar staff take on security responsibilities since city employees would have similar authority to security personnel. They also considered requiring larger events to provide their own security. Perry expressed concern that requiring bar staff to arrange their own security would complicate bookings and potentially deter business, noting the limited profitability of events after paying for staffing and security. The discussion was tabled, with Perry suggesting that whoever ultimately takes responsibility for the event center should make these policy decisions.

Future of the Board

Stenger presented a proposal to dissolve the Event Center Advisory Board. He explained that with the Event Center Coordinator now handling much of the event center operations, there was duplication of oversight. The board had originally been created when there was no dedicated staff person and fewer rentals. Now that the facility had dedicated management and strong rental activity, the board's original purpose had been fulfilled. Stenger noted ongoing challenges with filling board positions and scheduling meetings that worked for all members. He proposed reassigning the board's responsibilities to the Event Center Coordinator position and having oversight fall under the municipal building committee. Lammers acknowledged the board's contributions, noting it was originally started by a few Vergas locals to increase building usage and improve the facility. She presented members with a formal proposal explaining the transition and resolutions to present to city council on April 21st.

Motion by Norby, seconded by Nustad, to recommend to City Council dissolution of the Event Center Advisory Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Julie Lammers asked about timing for the dissolution. Perry explained that with ongoing projects needing funding but no one having time to organize fundraising events, continuing to meet without the ability to move forward served little purpose. Norby confirmed they recommended immediate dissolution following city council approval on April 21st.

The board discussed fundraising limitations, with Lammers explaining that cities cannot fundraise directly due to state statute - they raise funds through taxes and liquor store profits. Any fundraising activities would need to be conducted through partner organizations like the Community Fund, Lions Club, or other local groups. Nustad expressed willingness to work with these organizations for future fundraising needs.

Adjournment

Motion by Perry, seconded by Norby, to adjourn the meeting at 3:30 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachel Nustad, Deputy Clerk
Event Center Coordinator
(Assisted by ClerkMinutes)

Council Recommendations

- Recommend to City Council immediate dissolution of the Event Center Advisory Board following City Council approval on April 21st.

Follow Up Actions

- Nustad: Email Cynthia to ask why the sale program cannot be advertised as free and report back to the group.

Proposal to Dissolve the Vergas Event Advisory Board and Reassign Responsibilities

Purpose

This proposal outlines a plan to eliminate the Vergas Event Advisory Board and reassign its primary responsibilities to the **Municipal Building Committee** and the **Event Center Coordinator**. The goal is to streamline operations, reduce redundancy, improve communication, and simplify the administrative process for event-related matters.

Background

The Vergas Event Advisory Board was originally formed to assist with the planning, coordination, and oversight of events within the City of Vergas, particularly those involving the Event Center. As operations have evolved, staff involvement—especially from the Event Center Coordinator—has increased, and many duties previously completed by the Board have transitioned naturally to staff or facilities committees.

This structural change presents an opportunity to consolidate responsibilities and improve organizational efficiency.

Rationale for Dissolution

- 1. Reduced Need for an Independent Advisory Board**

The Event Center Coordinator already manages scheduling, operational logistics, and communication with event organizers. Maintaining a separate advisory board creates duplicate processes.
 - 2. Operational Efficiency**

The Municipal Building Committee already oversees facility maintenance, capital needs, and building-related policies. Event Center matters often overlap with this committee's scope.
 - 3. Improved Communication Channels**

Consolidating responsibilities under staff and a single committee reduces communication gaps and shortens response times for event requests, building needs, and policy updates.
 - 4. Greater Accountability**

Assigning duties to staff and a standing committee ensures consistent oversight, clear responsibility, and improved continuity.
-

Proposed Reassignment of Duties

A. Duties to be Assumed by the Event Center Coordinator

- Scheduling and management of all Event Center bookings
- Coordination with event organizers regarding logistics, contracts, and facility rules
- Oversight of day-to-day facility operations during events
- Implementation of policies approved by the Council and Building Committee
- Collection and reporting of event data, revenue, and usage trends
- Direct communication with the Clerk-Treasurer regarding billing, deposits, and insurance requirements

B. Duties to be Assumed by the Municipal Building Committee

- Review and recommendation of Event Center policy updates
 - Oversight of facility improvements, maintenance, and long-term planning
 - Recommendation of rental rates, damage deposit policies, and usage rules
 - Collaboration with the Event Center Coordinator on operational needs
 - Annual review of Event Center performance and budget considerations
-

Proposed Process for Dissolution

1. **Adopt a council resolution** formally dissolving the Vergas Event Advisory Board.
 2. **Update City policy manuals** to reflect new roles and responsibilities.
 3. **Notify board members** and express appreciation for their service.
 4. **Reassign any ongoing projects** to the Municipal Building Committee and Event Center Coordinator.
 5. **Publish updated public information** regarding Event Center contacts and procedures.
-

Expected Benefits

- More efficient and streamlined event management
 - Clearer lines of communication and accountability
 - Reduced administrative burden on staff and volunteers
 - Better alignment of facility responsibilities under existing committees
 - Enhanced ability to respond quickly to requests and operational needs
-

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Council approve the dissolution of the Vergas Event Advisory Board and formally transfer its responsibilities to the Municipal Building Committee and the Event Center Coordinator effective immediately (or on a council-determined date).

CITY OF VERGAS
COUNTY OF OTTER TAIL
STATE OF MINNESOTA
RESOLUTION NO. 2026-004

A RESOLUTION DISSOLVING THE VERGAS EVENT ADVISORY BOARD AND REASSIGNING DUTIES TO THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING COMMITTEE AND THE EVENT CENTER COORDINATOR

WHEREAS, the City of Vergas (“City”) previously established the Vergas Event Advisory Board (“Board”) to advise on matters related to the planning, coordination, and oversight of events involving City facilities, including the Event Center; and

WHEREAS, the City has since expanded staff capacity and operational practices such that the Event Center Coordinator manages scheduling, logistics, and implementation of policies, and the Municipal Building Committee provides oversight of facility operations, maintenance, and long-term planning; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the functions of the Board substantially overlap existing staff and committee responsibilities, resulting in duplicative processes and unnecessary administrative burden; and

WHEREAS, consolidating duties under staff and the Municipal Building Committee will streamline decision-making, improve accountability, and enhance service to the public; and

WHEREAS, the City Council desires to formally dissolve the Board and reassign its responsibilities as set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Vergas, Minnesota, as follows:

1. DISSOLUTION. The Vergas Event Advisory Board is hereby dissolved effective , 20__.
2. REASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES. The responsibilities formerly assigned to the Board are hereby transferred to (a) the Municipal Building Committee and (b) the Event Center Coordinator, as detailed in Exhibit A.
3. POLICY & MANUAL UPDATES. City staff are directed to update all applicable policies, fee schedules, organizational charts, website content, and public-facing materials to reflect the dissolution of the Board and the reassignment of duties described herein.
4. TRANSITION OF ONGOING ITEMS. Any pending projects, recommendations, applications, or requests before the Board as of the effective date shall be forwarded to the Municipal

Building Committee and/or the Event Center Coordinator for action consistent with Exhibit A and applicable City policies.

5. APPRECIATION. The City Council hereby extends its sincere appreciation to all members of the Vergas Event Advisory Board for their service and contributions to the community.

6. REPEALER. To the extent any prior resolutions, motions, policies, or directives are inconsistent with this Resolution, they are hereby repealed or superseded.

7. SEVERABILITY. If any portion of this Resolution is found to be invalid or unenforceable, such finding shall not affect the remaining provisions, which shall continue in full force and effect.

8. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Resolution shall be effective upon passage and adoption by the City Council and upon the date specified in Section 1.

Adopted on ___ day of _____, 2026 by the City Council of the City of Vergas, Minnesota.

CITY OF VERGAS

By: Julie Bruhn, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: Julie Lammers, City Clerk-Treasurer

EXHIBIT A

DUTIES REASSIGNMENT: VERGAS EVENT ADVISORY BOARD

A. Duties Assigned to the Event Center Coordinator

1. Scheduling and management of Event Center bookings, calendars, and conflicts.
2. Coordination with event organizers regarding logistics, contracts, insurance, security, and facility rules.
3. Day-of operational oversight, including staff/volunteer coordination and vendor access.
4. Implementation and enforcement of City Council–approved and Municipal Building Committee–recommended policies.
5. Collection and reporting of event metrics (usage, revenue, deposits, damages), including quarterly and annual summaries to the Clerk-Treasurer and Municipal Building Committee.
6. Coordination with the Clerk-Treasurer on billing, deposits, refunds, and documentation.
7. Coordinate with organizations; Lions, Community Club, etc. during fundraisers promoting the event center.

B. Duties Assigned to the Municipal Building Committee

1. Review and recommendation of Event Center policies, rental rates, deposit schedules, and usage rules to the City Council.
2. Oversight of facility maintenance, capital improvements, and long-term planning, in collaboration with City staff.
3. Annual performance review of Event Center operations (budget, utilization, fees, and policy effectiveness) with recommendations to the City Council.
4. Collaboration with the Event Center Coordinator to identify operational needs and resource requirements.

C. Clarifications

1. Financial authority, contracting authority, and policy adoption remain with the City Council unless otherwise delegated by ordinance, resolution, or policy.
2. Nothing herein alters data practices obligations, insurance requirements, or applicable state or local laws governing public facilities and public meetings.

City of Vergas Planning Commission Minutes
Monday, March 30, 2026 at 6:00 PM
Government Services Building and Zoom

The City of Vergas Planning Commission held a regular hybrid meeting on Monday, March 30, 2026, on Zoom and at the Vergas Government Services Building.

2026	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Alex Ohman, Chair	A	P	P									
Bruce Albright, Liaison	P	P	P									
Dave Johnston, Member	P	P	P									
Rebecca Hasse, Member	P	P	P									
Jim Courneya, Member	P	A	P									
Julie Lammers, Clerk-Treasurer	P	P	P									
Mike Dufrane, Utilities Superintendent	P	A	A									

P: Present. A: Absent N/A: No Meeting

Call to Order

Chair Ohman called the planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Agenda Additions or Deletions

Lammers noted the addition of an interim use permit under new business. Motion by Albright, seconded by Hasse, to approve the agenda with the noted addition. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes

Motion by Ohman, seconded by Albright, to approve the minutes from February 23, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

Status of Council Recommendations

None.

Construction Permits

Active Construction Permits

Lammers reported that the commission had a list of active permits in their packet. She noted that one permit holder had contacted her to report their project was completed.

Approved by Clerk-Treasurer Permit

106 Main Street East-roof system

Lammers reported that 106 E Main St is getting a new roof system, which she approved as Clerk-Treasurer.

Old Business

City Ordinance Update

Lammers provided an extensive update on ordinance revisions. She explained that the city attorney had reviewed the commission's previous request regarding inoperable vehicles and concluded that the only remedy would be to change the violations' structure. The attorney provided a copy of Detroit Lakes' nuisance ordinance violations as an example. Lammers detailed several technical corrections needed in the ordinances, including fixing references from 92.99 to 91.99 for penalties. She explained that the new structure would include three categories of enforcement: monetary fines for each day of violation, misdemeanor charges, or petty misdemeanor charges. Lammers presented a significant proposal for adding abatement provisions to the city's ordinances. She explained that currently, the city can only impose fines or jail time through court proceedings, which doesn't solve the underlying problem. For example, if someone has an inoperable vehicle and is sentenced to jail time, the vehicle remains in violation after their release. Under the proposed abatement authority, the city could authorize employees or contractors to remove violations (such as taking down a problematic garage) and then assess the costs to the property owner. Lammers noted this would require a joint powers agreement with the state of Minnesota for the city attorney to pursue such actions. She presented Resolution 2026-05, which would authorize the attorney to work with the state of Minnesota on enforcement matters. The resolution and abatement provisions would need to go through a formal adoption process: first reading by city council in May, public hearing and final approval

in June, with an effective date in July. Johnston questioned how costs would be recovered, and Lammers explained that the fine would equal the city's costs to abate the violation. She also described a new "tax refund intercept" program through the Minnesota Department of Revenue, where unpaid city assessments could be collected from taxpayers' income tax refunds. Albright emphasized that such enforcement actions should be reserved for serious violations and used on a case-by-case basis, while still providing the city with necessary enforcement tools for worst-case scenarios.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Courneya, to recommend to the City Council that they enter into the joint powers agreement with the city attorney and adopt the abatement language into the ordinances, with the understanding that such enforcement would be used on a case-by-case basis when needed. The motion passed unanimously.

Nuisance Properties

Unlicensed Vehicles

This item was covered during the city ordinance update discussion.

Garbage bags on porch and back yard

Lammers reported complaints about a property on Elm Street where residents allegedly accumulate large amounts of garbage on their porch, in a shed, and throughout their yard, then periodically have it all removed before accumulating it again. Neighbors complained they cannot enjoy sitting outside due to concerns about odors and potential rodent problems. The commission reviewed current ordinance language regarding refuse storage and nuisance parking. Ohman read from section 92.19 of the current ordinances, which addresses materials not customarily used for residential purposes and requires that refuse containers be rodent-proof and fly-tight or properly maintained to avoid health hazards. The commission determined that without evidence of actual rodent problems or offensive odors, the current situation may not clearly violate existing ordinances. Hasse noted that she observed general clutter but not necessarily garbage. The commission decided that if future complaints specify rodent sightings or odor issues, those would provide clearer grounds for enforcement action. Albright noted that the city's ordinances don't require residents to have garbage service, and some residents legitimately accumulate refuse before transporting it themselves to disposal sites.

Garage Removal

This item was addressed as part of the ordinance update discussion regarding abatement authority.

New Business

Variance Process

Ohman reported online training he attended from the League of Minnesota Cities regarding variance procedures. He explained that all five criteria for variance approval must be met: the variance must allow reasonable use of the property, be due to unique circumstances not created by the landowner, be based on physical characteristics that differ from other properties, maintain the locality's essential character, and be consistent with city ordinances and comprehensive plans. Ohman presented a worksheet he developed to help the commission systematically evaluate these five criteria for each variance request, ensuring proper documentation for the required record-keeping. Albright emphasized the importance of thorough documentation, noting that attorneys challenging municipal decisions will scrutinize whether all procedural requirements were met. The commission agreed to begin using the variance evaluation worksheet for future applications, with Lammers indicating she would include it in planning commission materials.

Interim Use Permit

Lammers announced that Mark's Sand and Gravel had submitted an interim use permit application. The commission scheduled a public hearing for April 27, 2026, at 6:00 PM, prior to their regular meeting. Albright noted that they could conduct the hearing and take public testimony separately from the actual permit issuance decision.

Adjournment

Motion by Albright, seconded by Ohman, to schedule the interim use permit hearing for April 27, 2026, at 6:00 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Albright, seconded by Johnston, to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 PM. The motion passed unanimously.

Recorded by Rachel Nustad (assisted by ClerkMinutes)

Secretary,
Julie Lammers, CMC
Vergas City Clerk-Treasurer

Council Recommendations

- Recommend to the City Council that they enter into the joint powers agreement with the city attorney and adopt the abatement language into the ordinances, with the understanding that such enforcement would be used on a case-by-case basis when needed.

Follow Up Actions

- Lammers: Update all ordinance references from 92.99 to 91.99 in the penalty sections and review with attorney before making changes.
- Lammers: Send current abatement/emergency procedure language to the attorney for review before updating ordinances.
- Julie: Schedule the interim use public hearing for the gravel pit immediately prior to the next Planning Commission meeting on April 27, and notify relevant parties.
- Lammers: Contact Blaine (Widseth) to request completion of the annual review/report for the gravel pit by the time of the permit hearing, if possible.
- Planning Commission: Begin using the new variance worksheet for all variance applications to ensure all required criteria are documented and justified.
- Lammers: Place the variance worksheet under Planning Commission documentation for easy access by commission members.
- Lammers: Inform neighbors who complain about garbage/nuisance properties that if they observe rodents or foul odors, they should report it for possible enforcement action.

DRAFT

CITY OF VERGAS
COUNTY OF OTTER TAIL
STATE OF MINNESOTA

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-005

**RESOLUTION APPROVING STATE OF MINNESOTA JOINT POWERS AGREEMENTS
WITH THE CITY OF VERGAS ON BEHALF OF ITS CITY ATTORNEY**

WHEREAS, the City of Vergas on behalf of its Prosecuting Attorney desires to enter into Joint Powers Agreements with the State of Minnesota, Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to use systems and tools available over the State's criminal justice data communications network for which the City is eligible. The Joint Powers Agreements further provide the City with the ability to add, modify and delete connectivity, systems and tools over the five-year life of the agreement and obligates the City to pay the costs for the network connection.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of Vergas, Minnesota as follows:

1. That the State of Minnesota Joint Powers Agreements by and between the State of Minnesota acting through its Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and the City of Vergas on behalf of its Prosecuting Attorney, are hereby approved.
2. That the Clerk-Treasurer, Julie Lammers, or his or her successor, is designated the Authorized Representative for the Prosecuting Attorney. The Authorized Representative is also authorized to sign any subsequent amendment or agreement that may be required by the State of Minnesota to maintain the City's connection to the systems and tools offered by the State.
3. That Julie Bruhn, the Mayor for the City of Vergas, and Julie Lammers, the City Clerk-Treasurer, are authorized to sign the State of Minnesota Joint Powers Agreements.

Adopted on ___ day of _____, 2026 by the City Council of the City of Vergas, Minnesota.

CITY OF VERGAS

By: Julie Bruhn, Mayor

ATTEST:

By: Julie Lammers, City Clerk-Treasurer

City Council
2026 April Council Meeting
Vergas Event Center & Zoom Id number 267-094-2170 password 56587
6:30 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2026

9. Staff Reports

- A. Engineering Report
- B. Clerk Treasurer Report
- C. Utilities Report
- D. Liquor Store Manager Report

Files Attached

- 26 April Vergas Engineering Report.pdf
- 04.26 Clerk_Treasurer_Report.pdf
- 03.26 Utility Department Report.pdf
- Liquor Store Manager Report.pdf
- Liquor Store Manager Report graph.pdf
- Pelican Rapids EMS PSA Memo 03-30-2026 & Attachment.pdf

Engineering Update – April 2026

Blaine Green, PE, VP

Spring is here!

Ongoing Items:

- Parking lot:
 - Punchlist items (concrete walk) to be completed in spring
 - Completed Certificate of Survey for Bruhn Property
 - Project closeout to follow
- Keilley Shores development
 - Developer's engineer confirmed that the pond is undersized, and will require additional storage to meet requirements. I will continue to work with all parties to help get the project finished.
- Lead Service Lines
 - Staff is sending me the last handful of services, and I've been entering them into the City GIS website.
- LRIP Grant
 - Unfortunately, Vergas was not awarded the grant. The City could pursue basic upgrades to the street, and early cost estimate would put the street costs around \$105,000 to improve safety from Glenn Street to Hwy 17
- Gravel Pit permitting
 - Flight scheduled for April
 - Report to follow in early May

Upcoming Items: NA

On the radar:

- Project Priority List & Intended Use Plans (utilities)
 - Discuss at upcoming utility committee meeting
 - Identify system needs with staff
 - Develop a preliminary engineering report (PER)
- Street projects
 - Work with staff to identify needs

If you have any questions, you can give me a call at 320-335-5057, or email me at blaine.green@widseth.com

Thank you!

Clerk-Treasurer Council Report

Date: April 2026

Training

MN Loss Control Workshop

Attended the following workshops: Election Security, Better Work Comp Results, Zoning Procedures, Don't click on that, Open meeting law, and Can we do this; Common Issues with Public Purpose Expenditure.

MCFOA Conference

Attended the following workshops: Website Accessibility, Cannabis Update, AI for City Clerks, MN Paid Family & Medical Leave and Communications.

Grants

WCI Solar Grant-Received

Total Grant Approved: \$75,384.00 Received Funds:

Battery Backup Grant: \$28,896.23 (covers full cost)

Installation scheduled.

Otter Tail County rebate received for \$36,000. Giraffe Financial tax credits account created.

MDH Implementation Grant-Submitted

Wellhead Protection Plan is for a fence around the water plant.

\$15,000 grant with no match

Signed Grant Agreement. Utilities Superintendent will get quotes for fence in May and work will be completed by fall. Will install \$15,000 worth of fence this year and apply for another grant if needed to complete the fence.

Current Projects

- EMS
 - County meeting to be held on Thursday, April 23 at 6 pm.
- Streets/Yard Waste
 - Extension of Diane Ave
 - Dust Control
- EDA/HRA: Daycare initiative
 - Name: Growing Up Vergas
 - Grants are being applied for
 - EDA/HRA Annual Meeting – Wednesday, April 29
- Park: City Sales Tax
 - Resolutions provided to House and Senate
 - Testified at Senate tax hearing on April 9
 - Testifying at House committee on April 22
- Trail
 - Hobart Township trail meeting
 - Following up with Otter Tail County and Partnership for Health
- Planning Commission:
 - Ordinance book update for review and recommendation to Council
 - Nuisance Properties
- MN Department of Health Lead/Copper/Galvanized Service Line Reports (11 left)
 - This is now a part of the Consumer Confidence Report filed annually
 - 2025 report on web site and filed in May (Due July 1)
- 2025 Audit Information to Auditor
- Cannabis Permit with the State of MN
- Street- Right of Way Easements for Lake Street E
- Event Center
 - Resolution and proposal to dissolve committee

Utility Department Report

Reporting Period: February 1-April 15, 20026

Prepared by: Julie Lammers, Clerk-Treasurer/Matt Engebretson Maintenance Operator

Parks

Routine maintenance activities were conducted throughout the reporting period. Park staff completed skating rink upkeep and helping with the installation of a new camera at the ballfield. Playground and park equipment were inspected for safety, with no significant issues noted. Bathhouse at the ballfield needs some minor repairs and will be addressed as staffing and weather permit. Seasonal preparations and planning continue as appropriate. Fence toppers, paint marker and paint have been ordered for the baseball diamond and is scheduled to arrive May 5, 2026.

Beach had some vandalism with beer cans and signs put out on the ice on March 30; employee was able to clean up. Docks and swimming buoys are tentatively scheduled for placement during the first two weeks of May. LMC safety committee is scheduled to meet at Long Lake Beach Park on May 26, 2026.

Streets

Street maintenance during this period included routine inspections and minor repairs. Staff monitored street conditions for winter damage and potholes and addressed issues as time and resources allowed. Street sweeping and cleanup activities were initiated/continued as weather conditions permitted. No major street concerns were reported at this time.

Snow plowing proceeded without any major issues and employees appreciated the new plow on the pickup, helping to save time and work more efficiently. Parking lot fence was damaged, and 3 boards have been replaced. City gravel roads have been graveled.

Yard Waste

The yard waste site has been opened and is accessible to permit holders. Usage is increasing with seasonal cleanup activities. Staff monitored the site for compliance and cleanliness. No operational issues were reported during this period.

Water

The municipal water system operated within normal parameters during the reporting period. Routine checks and monitoring were completed, including system pressures and water quality observations. No service interruptions or water main breaks were reported. Any routine maintenance activities were completed as scheduled. The system remains compliant with applicable regulations.

Hydrant flushing is scheduled to take place April 27–29.

Sewer

The sanitary sewer system functioned normally during the reporting period. Lift stations and sewer infrastructure were monitored and maintained as required. No backups, overflows, or major maintenance issues were reported. Preventative maintenance continues to ensure reliable system operations. Lift station on Scharf froze and was thawed in March.

Summary

Overall, utility operations across all departments remained stable and within expected operating conditions during this reporting period. Staff will continue routine maintenance, monitoring, and seasonal preparations to ensure continued service reliability.

Liquor Store Manager Report

Financials:

The following has been transferred to the general fund:

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
\$30,000	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$20,000

Employees:

Currently at 2 full-time employees and 3 part-time employees.

- Kyle – Nov 2021
- Tammy – Aug 2015
- Jezmae – June 2020
- Paul – Oct 2020
- Alyssa – March 2026

Misc:

- **The sewer project was completed in February.**
 - Hanson’s Plumbing discovered there was no dirt under the concrete floor in the back storage room, and under the building’s south foundation. They packed dirt into this large void as best as they could, but they assumed it is more than likely larger than we could see. The floor drainpipe was also completely rusted away – nothing connecting it to the main sewer pipe.
- **Local THC update**
 - The City converted to a low dose THC license late October 2025. We were permitted to sell while the application was in review status.
 - The State denied the license application due to application discrepancies... (Julie L. can better explain) on March 30, 2026
 - We had to stop selling THC on April 1st. A new application was submitted on April 1st. However, we cannot sell while this one is in review. All THC products were pulled from the shelf and put into back storage.
 - Current THC inventory – 727 units. Cost - \$3,404. Retail value - \$5,211
- **Nationwide THC update**
 - November 2025 Congress passed a law with stricter THC rules. This will go into effect November 12, 2026
 - Congress did not “ban” low-dose THC. They put a cap of .4 mg per container, compared to the current 10-50 mg per container.
- We did a cooler reset, where I worked with beer distributors to rearrange coolers better, remove slow moving, and expand the top growing categories (non-alcoholic and ready-to-drinks).
- Starting to see more seasonal customers return = starting to see sales increasing on the weekends.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1		2023	2024	2025	2026	Difference
2	Q1	\$ 135,547	\$ 144,004	\$ 148,766	\$ 156,541	105.2%
3	Q2	\$ 254,728	\$ 273,230	\$ 280,758		0.0%
4	Q3	\$ 378,169	\$ 396,437	\$ 379,933		0.0%
5	Q4	\$ 185,125	\$ 200,942	\$ 204,392		0.0%
6	Total	\$ 953,526	\$ 1,016,637	\$ 1,015,874	\$ 158,567	15.6%

Sales	J	F	M	A	M	J	J
2023	\$ 46,164	\$ 44,182	\$ 45,201	\$ 50,198	\$ 89,656	\$ 114,874	\$ 114,874
2024	\$ 44,733	\$ 45,764	\$ 53,507	\$ 57,202	\$ 98,648	\$ 117,380	\$ 117,380
2024	\$ 50,372	\$ 42,529	\$ 55,865	\$ 57,586	\$ 109,953	\$ 113,218	\$ 113,218
2026	\$53,782	\$47,058	\$55,700				

Expense	J	F	M	A	M	J	J
2023	\$ 48,898	\$ 51,272	\$ 64,292	\$ 40,394	\$ 69,113	\$ 121,228	\$ 121,228
2024	\$ 46,777	\$ 57,835	\$ 67,651	\$ 66,063	\$ 101,509	\$ 105,587	\$ 105,587
2025	\$ 82,914	\$ 59,987	\$ 56,668	\$ 61,260	\$ 91,915	\$ 135,138	\$ 135,138
2026	\$78,353.00	\$53,274.00	\$85,429.00				

☰ Sales Valuation +

Workbook Statistics

100% +

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2025

Q1	Cost	Retail Value
Liquor	\$128,242	\$166,715
Beer	\$39,308	\$51,100
Wine	\$29,870	\$38,831
THC	\$4,104	\$5,958

Q2	Cost	Retail Value
Liquor	\$131,772.00	\$189,728.00
Beer	\$46,163.00	\$63,040.00
Wine	\$29,892.00	\$48,475.00
THC	\$3,795.00	\$5,834.00

Q3	Cost	Retail Value
Liquor	\$113,088.00	\$163,410.00
Beer	\$39,049.00	\$52,865.00
Wine	\$25,282.00	\$40,785.00
THC	\$4,035.00	\$6,017.00

Q4	Cost	Retail Value
Liquor	\$98,857.00	\$143,954.00
Beer	\$26,791.00	\$36,457.00
Wine	\$22,055.00	\$35,747.00
THC	\$2,427.00	\$3,852.00

2026

Q1	Cost	Retail Value
Liquor	\$110,910	\$160,375
Beer	\$37,749	\$50,695
Wine	\$24,851	\$39,941
Everything	\$17,774	\$256,401

Q2	Cost	Retail Value
Liquor		
Beer		
Wine		
Everything		

Q3	Cost	Retail Value
Liquor		
Beer		
Wine		
Everything		

Q4	Cost	Retail Value
Liquor		
Beer		
Wine		
Everything		

Product Cost

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2018	\$154,391	\$168,148	\$181,370	\$171,230
2019	\$175,352	\$209,013	\$207,617	\$212,844
2020	\$236,937	\$249,378	\$239,382	\$235,576
2021	\$245,710	\$253,106	\$230,930	\$221,536
2022	\$219,817	\$220,182	\$214,990	\$203,765
2023	\$222,100	\$219,813	\$181,440	\$183,787
2024	\$206,108	\$227,608	\$184,327	\$165,446
2025	\$204,774	\$217,061.00	\$185,733.00	154563
2026	\$177,374			

Product Retail

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2018	\$227,657	\$252,276	\$267,408	\$253,600
2019	\$255,930	\$294,667	\$300,920	\$314,531
2020	\$548,755	\$362,236	\$351,689	\$351,376
2021	\$367,773	\$373,261	\$336,659	\$327,818
2022	\$322,928	\$321,025	\$310,109	\$302,596
2023	\$324,199	\$318,728	\$265,023	\$268,540
2024	\$302,857	\$330,529	\$267,668	\$239,817
2025	\$297,239	\$314,797	\$269,105	\$226,232
2026	\$256,401			

To: City and Township Officials in the
Pelican Rapids EMS Primary Service Areas

From: Nicole Hansen
County Administrator

Date: March 30, 2026

Re: Pelican Rapids EMS Primary Service Area

On or about March 1, 2026, Ken Krupich, General Manager of Ringdahl EMS, distributed the attached communication to townships and cities that are within the Pelican Rapids EMS Primary Service Area outlining operational financial losses affecting its current business model. Mr. Krupich also requested an opportunity to meet with city and township leaders to develop a sustainable path forward.

This information was presented again at the 2026 WOTTA Spring Meeting held at Lida Township Hall on March 19. At that meeting, Commissioner Wayne Johnson suggested that the County propose three potential dates for a work session to further discuss this issue. The work session will be held at the Government Services Center in Fergus Falls.

The proposed dates are:

- Thursday, April 23 at 6:00 pm
- Monday, April 27 at 6:00 pm
- Monday, May 4 at 6:00 pm

Please indicate your availability by contacting Glaucia Shern directly at gshern@ottertailcounty.gov or 218-998-8063. When responding, please indicate how many will attend from your city or township to assist with planning. Kindly respond as soon as possible, and no later than April 10, 2026.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Nicole Hansen

To: Patrick Waletzko
Subject: RE: Pelican Rapids Ambulance Service Area

From: Ken Krupich <kkrupich@ringdahlems.com>

Sent: Sunday, March 1, 2026 4:38 PM

To: scamblertwp@loretel.net; dunntown@loretel.net; clerk@candortownship.org; knorrjane@gmail.com; lloyd@pelicanottertailmn.gov; lida@loretel.net; clerk@doratownship.org; trondhjemtownship@outlook.com; ourenbsj@prtrel.com; Jim.maplewood@prtrel.com; clerk@starlaketownship.org; Brent Frazier Pelican Rapids <Citypr@loretel.net>; Lafay Thompson <erhardcity@prtrel.com>; Lisa Zimmerman <city@rothsay.org>; Julie Lammers <jlammers@cityofvergas.com>; 3prcouncil3@gmail.com; mmetzger@mdf.coop; dianabriese@rocketmail.com; fribergtownship@gmail.com; bwicklund@fergusotters.org; 1prcouncil1@gmail.com; brentefrazier@gmail.com; 2prcouncil2@gmail.com

Cc: Wayne Johnson <wjohnson@ottertailcounty.gov>; Robert Lahman <rlahman@ottertailcounty.gov>; Dan Bucholz <dbucholz@ottertailcounty.gov>; Kurt Mortenson <kmortenson@ottertailcounty.gov>; Sean Sullivan <ssullivan@ottertailcounty.gov>; Patrick Waletzko <pwaletzko@ottertailcounty.gov>

Subject: Pelican Rapids Ambulance Service Area

March 01, 2026

Dear City and Township Officials of the Pelican Rapids Ambulance service area,

We are writing to you today regarding the serious and urgent financial situation facing the Pelican Rapids Ambulance Service and the sustainability of ambulance coverage within your communities.

Over the past two years, we have repeatedly communicated the funding challenges that threaten the sustainability of this essential service. Unfortunately, those concerns have now reached a critical point. At the same time, the subsidy from the Pelican Rapids service area has actually decreased.

The Pelican Rapids service area currently operates with an annual deficit exceeding \$600,000. This level of loss is simply not sustainable and cannot continue without significant change or financial support. While the State of Minnesota has provided temporary funding relief, amounting to \$113,255 for the Fergus Falls and Pelican Rapids service areas, this assistance is short-term in nature and does not resolve the ongoing funding gap. There may be an additional small financial assistance program for patients that are not transported however, we do not have the details on those monies yet.

Without a sustained and reliable subsidy, the ambulance service will not be able to continue operating in its current model. If corrective action is not taken, a decrease of service to your community is inevitable and will result in increased response times.

As EMS providers, our mission has always been clear: to care for the community and the patients we serve. Our commitment to that mission has not changed. However, continuing to operate under the current financial structure without meaningful intervention is not viable. Inaction from cities and townships within the licensed service area is not an option if we are to preserve local ambulance services.

To maintain the current level of ambulance coverage and response capability, a stable and predictable public funding mechanism is required. Given the structural nature of the deficit, a tax-based subsidy or similar service-area funding model is not merely an option, but a necessity for long-term sustainability. Without such funding, continuation of the current service model will not be financially viable.

We are prepared to provide full detailed financial information to support informed decision-making.

We sincerely thank those cities and townships that have continuously supported the ambulance service and recognize the importance of funding this critical public safety function. Your partnership and leadership are essential as we navigate this challenge.

We respectfully request the opportunity to meet with city and township leaders in the near future to collaboratively develop a sustainable path forward. We stand ready to work together to identify solutions that preserve high-quality emergency medical services for the residents of our shared communities.

Sincerely,

Ken Krupich

General Manager, Ringdahl EMS

Cell: 701-306-5055

City Council
2026 April Council Meeting
Vergas Event Center & Zoom Id number 267-094-2170 password 56587
6:30 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2026

10. Information & Announcements

Meetings and Events:

A. Household Hazardous Waste Day, Thursday, June 25, 2026, 10:00 - 2:00 Vergas Event Center Parking Lot

Employee 2026 Trainings:

A. League of MN Cities Annual Conference June 24-26, 2026, in Rochester (Bruhn, Albright and Stenger)

B. 16th Annual Operator Expo, (MN Rural Water) August 25, 2026, (Utilities Superintendent and Maintenance Operator)

C. Clerk's Advanced Academy- September 10-11, 2026, in Otsego, MN (Clerk-Treasurer)