



NORTH BRANCH

—Minnesota—

Charles Klopp
Chair

Bob Bernier
Commissioner

Farfum Ladroma
Commissioner

Lynn Wilson
Commissioner

Wendy Chelberg
Commissioner

**PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE
COMMISSION
REGULAR AGENDA
MONDAY, MAY 4, 2026 @ 7:00 PM
CITY HALL, 6408 ELM STREET, NORTH
BRANCH, MN 55056**

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH BRANCH IN THE COUNTY OF CHISAGO AND IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

REGULAR MEETING

Monday, May 4, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Charles Klopp called the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Commission to order at 7 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Charles Klopp led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner Charles Klopp, Commissioner Bob Bernier,
Commissioner Farfum Ladroma, Commissioner Wendy Chelberg

Absent: Commissioner Lynn Wilson

Remote:

Others

Present:

Notes:

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Provides an opportunity for the public to address the Council on items that are not on the Agenda. Please raise your hand to be recognized. Please state your name and address for the record. This section is for the express purpose of addressing concerns of City services and operations. It shall not be used to clarify individual's views for political purposes.

Dan Goldbloom provided Public Comment requesting the commission consider keeping acknowledgement signage apolitical in public parks, to address maintenance of the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail and to install markings/signage for a crosswalk at Maple St and Co Rd 30.

5. AGENDA APPROVAL

- a. Approve Agenda ACTION
RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Bob Bernier
SECONDER: Farfum Ladroma
AYES: Charles Klopp, Bob Bernier, Farfum Ladroma, Wendy Chelberg
ABSENT: Lynn Wilson
NOTES:

6. CONSENT AGENDA

All matters listed under Consent Agenda are considered routine and/or non-controversial and will be approved by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a Councilmember or citizen so requests, in which case the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered in its normal sequence on the Agenda.

- a. Approval of April 6, 2026 PTOS Commission Meeting minutes ACTION
RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Bob Bernier
SECONDER: Farfum Ladroma
AYES: Charles Klopp, Bob Bernier, Farfum Ladroma, Wendy Chelberg
ABSENT: Lynn Wilson
NOTES:

7. REPORTS

- a. Park Fund Balances ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol gave the Park Fund Balances.

Below are the fund balances as of 4/2/26

Fund	Balance
Park Dedication Fund (486) (Outstanding state grant reimbursements - CSAH 30 Trail) (Commitments)	\$309,740.56
Park Improvement Fund (\$20,000 - ECRAC Summer Concerts)	\$123,748.44
Community Center Fund	\$184,806.19

- b. Project Updates ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol presented the Project Updates. Lights will be installed this Spring/Summer at Roger Johnson Park. The Veterans Memorial beautification group has been working very diligently on fundraising for the Circle of Honor Veterans Memorial. They submitted a funding request to the State, and they're hoping to hear something this month, to hopefully assist with their efforts. It's likely that the project will start this Fall. The Safe Route to School plan, a lot of activities are going on this week, Wednesday at 7 am is Walk and Roll to School Day, starting at St. Gregory's Catholic Church. The City was notified that it was awarded funding to complete its Safe Routes to School Plan. There will be engagement activities taking place, including May 7th SRTS Walk/Bike Observation and Rapid Planning Workshop on June 17th. An update regarding the Malmquist property. There is some discussion about a larger area of development for the outdoor

archery range and having a walking course. The walking course will not be able to take place on this site, but the archery range will. The Beautification Association is doing its flower basket drive. The baskets will go along 95 about a week before Memorial Day.

c. Westside Commons 3rd Addition Preliminary Plat

ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol presented Westside Commons 3rd Addition Preliminary Plat. AIM Holdings LLC(Developer) has submitted a preliminary plat and site plan application for a development named Westside Commons 3rd Addition, North Branch Independent Living. The property is located along the south side of 386th Street, west of Falcon Avenue. The proposed development would create an Independent Senior Living Community that caters to active seniors. The development would include a 3-story apartment with 105 units, a clubhouse, and an outdoor recreational area. The existing land cover consists of open, undeveloped land with predominantly fine-sandy soils.

There is an existing trail located along Falcon Avenue; However, there is no existing sidewalk along 386th Street connecting to the trail.

State statute allows cities the ability to require that a reasonable portion of the buildable land of any proposed subdivision be dedicated to the public to address infrastructure needs created by the development, including parks, recreational facilities, playgrounds, trails, sidewalks, wetlands, and open space.

In lieu of land dedication for parks, recreational facilities, playgrounds, trails, wetlands, or open space, cities may require a developer to pay cash or “park dedication fees.” Park dedication fees excuse the developer from a local land dedication for park and recreation purposes, but still allow the city to purchase and acquire new, off-site facilities to serve the recreation needs created by the subdivision.

Sec. 54-465. Conditions for contributions.

It shall be deemed to be in the public interest to require land dedication, cash contribution, or any combination thereof when the city council, after review and recommendation, makes one or more of the following findings of fact:

- (1) All or part of the proposed subdivision has been designated as a park, playground, public open space, storm sewer holding areas, or ponds in the adopted city plan;
- (2) Such a contribution is necessary in order to protect adjacent land uses from potential conflicting land uses that could exist on the land subdivided.
- (3) The increased number of residents to reside or be employed within the subdivision will increase the recreational demands upon the city.
- (4) The land proposed to be subdivided contains or borders upon existing unique topographical features, including but not limited to ponds, lakes, streams, timber stands, water holding areas, hills, steep slopes, drainage areas, or bluffs which should be preserved to prevent foreseeable safety, pollution, or erosion hazards or to provide unique recreational and aesthetic qualities and enjoyment to the city; Such contribution is necessary to comply with or fulfill the goals, policies, and programs of the city.

Based on the North Branch City Code and the current fee schedule, below are some options available for park dedication for the proposed development.

Cash Option 105 Lots @ \$1,800 per lot = \$189,000

Land Option 5 acres @ 10% = 0.5 acres

Cash/Land Option: Various Combinations of the above

The development is located within the Wildridge Park service area.

The PTOS Commission reviewed a concept plan for the development in October 2024 and recommended the acceptance of cash-in-lieu of land for park dedication for the Westside Commons 3rd Addition based on the additional demands placed on the city's parks, trails, and open space system from the development.

The requested action is for the Commission to make a recommendation on deeming if there is a public interest to require a land dedication, cash contribution, or any combination thereof for parks, trails, and open space of the proposed plat. City staff would recommend approval of the acceptance of cash-in-lieu of land for park dedication for the Westside Commons 3rd Addition, based on the additional demands placed on the city's parks, trails, and open space system from the development.

Motion to accept the cash option.

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Charles Klopp
SECONDER: Bob Bernier
AYES: Charles Klopp, Bob Bernier, Farfum Ladroma, Wendy Chelberg
ABSENT: Lynn Wilson
NOTES:

d. Special Event Permit - North Branch American Legion Midsummer Days ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol presented the Special Event Permit - North Branch American Legion Midsummer Days. The North Branch American Legion Post 85 is requesting approval of a special event permit for their annual Midsummer Days celebration. The Midsummer Days event is scheduled to take place on June 17-21, 2026, and will include 3 street dances, 2 parades, the carnival, and Kids Olympics. The carnival is proposed to be located in Central Park, with setup beginning on Monday, June 15, 2026, and clean up on Monday, June 22, 2026. The Kid Olympics will take place in Riverwalk Park on Saturday, June 20, 2026. This will be the 100th Anniversary of the Midsummer Days event. This is a recurring event with little to no changes.

City staff recommends approval of the conditions that the applicant provide all of the missing information and provide for staff approval.

Motion to approve the Special Event Permit - North Branch American Legion Midsummer Days.

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Bob Bernier
SECONDER: Wendy Chelberg
AYES: Charles Klopp, Bob Bernier, Farfum Ladroma, Wendy Chelberg
ABSENT: Lynn Wilson
NOTES:

e. Comprehensive Plan Update INFO

City Administrator Matthew Hill gave the Comprehensive Plan Update. Through a couple of meetings this winter, we have highlighted areas where we wanted to make some changes. The Comprehensive Plan Committee met on 2/18 and 3/18,4/15 2026, and discussed the following: Introduction needs to add 'connectivity'. Trails need to connect new development, parks, and neighborhoods. Is adding a community 'splash pad' still a priority that needs to be added? Do the trends need to be updated? Adult league popularity has decreased, as has soccer. Lacrosse and

pickleball have increased in popularity. Softball and Baseball remain the same. Regionally, the trend seems to include an indoor facility for sports like pickleball, soccer, and lacrosse. Pools and indoor hockey

rinks are expensive and difficult to maintain and operate. A new revenue source has been opened up via council approval at the first meeting in February, allowing 10% collection of gambling revenue to go toward park and trail building and maintenance. Are there other opportunities for additional revenue? Accessibility - needs to be addressed in a couple of parks in our community. Discussion on adding a full-time parks and rec director to lead the development and maintenance of the parks, ice rinks, and gardens. City Administrator Hill asked the commission to take a look at the addition and how that's been highlighted on page 107 in the Comprehensive Plan and see if there are any changes that they might be interested in adding for discussion.

f. 10 Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) 2026-2035

ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol gave the 10 Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) 2026-2035. The City Council will be beginning the process of updating its 10-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2026-2035. The purpose of the CIP is to help identify future capital projects and equipment purchases. It also provides a planning schedule and identifies options for financing the plan. The City Council and staff are looking for the PTOS Commission to review the parks, trails, and recreation portion of the CIP.

The City Council will begin reviewing this in May 2026. The City Council discussed establishing a scoring matrix to assist with prioritizing how improvements are identified.

There are several projects that need adjustments to the required funding amounts or that will have been completed. City staff will be working on these adjustments and providing updates at the meeting.

Staff is recommending the Commission provide feedback establishing a scoring matrix for identifying and prioritizing parks, trails, and open space improvement projects for the 2026-2035 CIP.

g. Harder Park Disc Golf Course

ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol presented the Harder Park Disc Golf Course discussion. Jeremy Kollmann

Jerry Kollmann with the North Branch Disc Golf Association presented the plan to put in a shed at Harder Park. The City entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Harder Park Disc Golf Association (HPDGA) to allow for enhancements and maintenance of the disc golf course at Harder Park. The shed was included in the original agreement with the city when the course was upgraded. The current plan is for an 8-by-12-foot shed with one large access door and one standard entry door. Between materials already acquired and fundraising efforts, HPDGA can fully cover the cost of constructing the shed. HPDGA is requesting approval from the city for the proposed location within the park. The preferred location would be just north of the corner at the end of the driveway leading down into the lower section of the park. This area would keep the shed out of the way of other park uses while still allowing city staff vehicle access around it when needed.

Beyond approval of the location, the only assistance that HPDGA is requesting from the city is help preparing the site. Specifically, HPDGA would ask city staff to bring in fill material—sand, gravel, or whatever they feel is most appropriate—to level and stabilize the area, so the shed can be installed properly.

The shed itself would be built on a treated wood joist floor system rather than a concrete slab. This approach would allow the structure to be moved in the future if necessary, instead of being permanently fixed to a concrete base.

HPDGA anticipates needing a prepared gravel or sand pad of approximately 16 by 20 feet. This larger stabilized area would help prevent erosion and provide a solid surface around the shed, especially since runoff and drainage from the baseball fields flow through that section of the park.

The city approved the installation of a small storage building to allow for the HPDGA to store materials related to course maintenance. The HPDGA has supplied a framing plan for the proposed building to be installed at the park.

Motion to approve the proposed building and the placement of the structure.

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Bob Bernier
SECONDER: Wendy Chelberg
AYES: Charles Klopp, Bob Bernier, Farfum Ladroma, Wendy Chelberg
ABSENT: Lynn Wilson
NOTES:

The Chisago County Master Gardeners are also proposing to expand the existing dense forest to provide additional safety measures for one of the tee boxes on the course. The CCMG has been working in conjunction with the HPDGA on the placement and installation of the dense forest.

The estimated cost for planting and supplies is around \$600, based on the following:

Qty (1) River Birch or Pin Cherry \$100-150 depending on size.

Qty (1) Arborvitae \$50

Qty (3-5?) shrubs. Native varieties: Red Twig Dogwood, Isanti Dogwood, Common Ninebark, Silver Buffalo berry, and Western Sand Cherry. All \$40-50

\$100 for hose, sprinkler line, and zip ties ECT...

To provide discussion and recommendations on the placement of the shed and landscaping/screening improvements at the Harder Park Disc Golf Course

Motion to approve up to \$600 for the planting and supplies for the improvements.

RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Bob Bernier
SECONDER: Farfum Ladroma
AYES: Charles Klopp, Bob Bernier, Farfum Ladroma, Wendy Chelberg
ABSENT: Lynn Wilson
NOTES:

h. Park Tour

ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol presented the Park Tour Discussion. The PTOS Commission annually conducts a bus tour of all the city parks and trails. Staff is requesting the Commission to provide dates/times to hold the tour in 2026.

Monday, June 8th, 6 PM was chosen for the Park Tour.

8. NEXT MEETING - June 1, 2026 - 7PM

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Parks, Trails, and Open Space Commission Meeting adjourned at 7:53 pm.

RESULT: Passed

MOVER: Farfum Ladroma

SECONDER: Bob Bernier

AYES: Charles Klopp, Bob Bernier, Farfum Ladroma, Wendy Chelberg

ABSENT: Lynn Wilson

NOTES: