



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, FEBRUARY 2, 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, February 2, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Charles Klopp called the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Charles Klopp led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. OATH OF OFFICE

a. Oath of Office - Klopp

INFO

The oath of office was administered to Charlie Klopp to the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Commission by Community Development Director Nate Sondrol.

4. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner Charles Klopp, Commissioner Farfum Ladroma, Commissioner Wendy Chelberg, Commissioner Lynn Wilson

Absent: Commissioner Bob Bernier

Remote:

Others Present:

Notes:

5. 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.

6. AGENDA APPROVAL

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

7. 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 January 5, 2026 PTOS Meeting minutes ACTION
RESULT: Passed
MOVER: Wendy Chelberg
SECONDER: Farfum Ladroma
AYES: Charles Klopp, Farfum Ladroma, Wendy Chelberg, Lynn Wilson
ABSENT: Bob Bernier
NOTES:

8. REPORTS

- a. Election of Officers - Parks, Trails and Open Space Commission ACTION

Commissioner Lynn Wilson nominated Charles Klopp for Chair of the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Commission.

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

Chair Charles Klopp nominated Lynn Wilson as the Vice Chair for the Parks, Trails, and Open Space Commission.

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

b. Park Dedication Fund

INFO

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol gave the Park Dedication Fund Update

c. Project Updates

INFO

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol gave Project Updates

- The City Council moved its meetings to the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month, starting at 6 PM.
- The County is doing some work at Checkerboard Park by adding some new fencing to allow an area for smaller dogs and a spot for larger dogs.
- The Northwoods Park project is completed.
- We have been notified that there'll be some work in Clayton Anderson Park, Branch Acres Park, and the Woodduck Pond Preserve. There are gas transmission lines that run through those parks, so they'll be clearing trees until the end of March. Any brush that is hanging over the lines will be trimmed.
- An update from the Harder Park Disc Golf Course, statistics from the UDisk App, which people have to log into, there have been almost 3,600 rounds from 705 unique players from 20 states, walking over 13.3 million steps over 6,000 hours recorded in 2025.
- Safe Route to School, will eventually get a website that will allow people to interact, so people can identify areas that need improvement.
- The East Central Arts Grants, the contracts are getting signed with the bands, and all things are moving forward.
- Community Director Nate Sondrol showed a map of the proposed improvements to the Malmquist Property.

d. Hemingway Meadows Minor Subdivision

ACTION

Reliable Land Trust has submitted a minor subdivision application for a plat named Hemingway Meadows. The proposed plat is located on the east side of Hemingway Meadows on the south side of 372nd Street and adjacent to the Janet Johnson Wildlife Management Area. The proposed plat would create 4 lots on 40 acres and is located within the conceptual open space/wildlife corridor. The landcover consists of open cultivated land with a temporarily flooded aspen forest on the southeast corner that the DNR has identified as part of a regionally significant ecological area. The soils are predominantly loamy sand or fine sand, with areas of muck on the southeast corner. The developer is not proposing any impacts to the existing tree cover.

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 to be created by the subdivision.

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 park, playground, public open space, storm sewer holding areas or ponds on an adopted city plan;

(2) Such a contribution is necessary in order to protect adjacent land uses from potential conflicting land uses which could exist on the land subdivided;

(3) The increased number of residents residing or being 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.

The Developer is proposing to subdivide the 40-acre property into 4 lots. The nearest park would be Janet Johnson Wildlife Management Area and Wood Duck Preserve nature areas.

Cash Option 4 Lots @ \$1,800 per lot = \$7,200

Land Option 10% of land = 4 acres

Cash/Land Option Various Combinations of the above

Motion to take the cash contribution.

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

e. Regional Trail — Speed Limit Discussion ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol presented the Regional Trail - Speed Limit Discussion. He noted Chisago County recently adopted a policy to implement a 20 miles per hour (MPH) speed limit on designated regional trails in the county. This designation includes the portions of the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail in North Branch that are north of 410th Street and south TH95/ Main St.

The Chisago County Regional Trail Policy establishes design and operational standards intended to promote safe, accessible, and enjoyable multi-use trail experiences. Among these standards is a recommended maximum speed limit of 20 MPH for trail users.

Currently, the City of North Branch trails do not have a formally adopted or consistently posted speed limit. Increased trail use by pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-motorized users has

heightened the importance of establishing clear operational guidelines that reduce conflicts and enhance safety.

Adopting a 20 MPH speed limit directly supports the Chisago County Regional Trail Policy by:

- Promoting uniform trail regulations across jurisdictions
- Reducing potential conflicts between fast-moving and vulnerable users
- Supporting predictable and enforceable trail behavior standards
- Demonstrating regional cooperation and policy consistency

This action will ensure city trails meet regional expectations and best practices.

If approved, staff recommends the following steps:

1. Draft/Adopt Ordinance: Formal approval of a 20 MPH trail speed limit
2. Signage Installation: Coordinate with Chisago Co to install standardized speed limit signs
3. Public Communication: Update park maps, websites
4. Coordination: Coordinate with Chisago County and local enforcement partners as appropriate

Move to approve the 20 MPH trail speed limit.

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

f. Flink Ave Trail Phase II - DNR Local Trail Grant Application Authorization ACTION

Community Development Director Nate Sondrol presented the Flink Ave Trail Phase II - DNR Local Trail Grant Application Authorization. The Minnesota DNR is soliciting applications for the Local Trail Connections Program with an application deadline of February 2, 2024. This program provides grants to local units of government to promote a relatively short trail. Connections between where people live and desirable locations, not to develop significant new trails. Funding for this grant program is from "In Lieu Of" lottery proceeds.

The City Council approved Resolution R-5-2024 in February 2024, authorizing City staff to submit an application to the MnDOT Active Transportation (AT) Grant Program for the Flink Ave Trail Phase II Improvement Project. The Flink Ave Phase II Improvement project consists of the construction of a 10' wide trail located on the west side of Flink Ave from 392nd Street to the existing pedestrian network is located on the north side of the entrance to the North Branch Marketplace development.

The City was notified in May 2024 that the proposed project was selected for MnDOT Active Transportation Program Funds in the amount of \$574,332 for infrastructure improvements for the project.

The City Council approved a resolution authorizing WSB to provide engineering and construction inspection services for the project on January 28, 2025, and approved Resolution R-195-2025 on May 27, 2025, to approve the plans and specs and authorize city staff to advertise for bids. The City received 6 bids for the project, all exceeding the budgeted grant award amount. City staff have been working with MnDot on the ability to extend the construction of the trail to start by June 2027 to allow for seeking future grant funding solicitations to assist in completing the project. The DNR has a current local trail connection grant program solicitation that provides up to

\$250,000 with a non-state cash match of at least 25 percent. The grant applications are due March 31, 2026, and will be announced in the summer of 2026.

Motion to recommend approval of submitting a grant application for the Flink Avenue Trail Phase II project to the DNR Local Trail connections grant program.

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

g. Comprehensive Plan Update

INFO

Sondrol informed the commission of the work session on Wednesday, February 18th, at 6 PM. Chair Klopp requested that the comprehensive plan be made simple, with ordinary words, and also make the plan flexible, more of an outline. Klopp also mentioned he would like to see all the parks in the City of North Branch have a pathway to each park location and a usable park within a mile of each residence in the City.

Other things that were brought up were more streetlights and sidewalks throughout the center of town.

9. NEXT MEETING - March 2, 2026 - 7PM

10. ADJOURNMENT

The Parks, Trails and Open Spaces Commission Meeting adjourned at 7:52 PM.

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