

October 27, 2025 — 6:00 PM  
Council Chambers

## PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

The public may watch the meeting remotely on cable channel 16 or streaming on CCXmedia.org. The public can make statements in this meeting during the planned public comment sections. Individuals may also provide public hearing testimony remotely by emailing [planning@goldenvalleymn.gov](mailto:planning@goldenvalleymn.gov) by 3 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

### 1. Call to Order of Regular Meeting, Land Acknowledgement, and Attendance

Attendance by presence, not roll call

### 2. Consent Agenda

All matters listed under Item 2 are considered routine in nature and will be enacted by one motion. Individual discussion of these items is not planned. A member, however, may remove any item to discuss as an item for separate consideration under New Business.

2.A. Approval of Agenda

2.B. October 13, 2025, Meeting Minutes

### 3. Oath of Office for Youth Commissioner

### 4. Public Hearings

4.A. [Ordinance Amending Section 113-27 Board of Zoning Appeals and Section 113-32 Variances](#)

4.B. [Ordinance Amending Chapter 109 Subdivisions](#)

4.C. [Ordinance Amending Section 113-1 Definitions, 113-30 Conditional Uses, and Section 113-87 Summary Use Tables](#)

### 5. Staff and Commissioner Updates

### 6. Adjourn Regular Meeting

### 7. Call to Order of Joint Work Session: Environmental Commission and Planning Commission

Work Sessions have an informal, discussion-style format and are designed for the Commissions to obtain background information, consider policy alternatives, and provide general directions to staff. No formal actions are taken at work sessions. The public is invited to attend Work Sessions and listen to the discussion.

7.A. [Missing Middle Housing Study](#)

7.B. [Climate Equity Plan](#)

7.C. [Staff Updates on Outdoor Lighting Code, Brookview Solar, Staffing, and Recent Events](#)



This document is available in alternate formats upon a 72-hour request. Please call 763-593-8006 (TTY: 763-593-3968) to make a request. Examples of alternate formats may include large print, electronic, Braille, audiocassette, etc.





## CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY

### PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday, October 13, 2025 – 6:30 p.m. | City Hall Council Chamber  
7800 Golden Valley Road Golden Valley, MN 55427

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#### 1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- Chair Ruby called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. and read the Land Acknowledgement
  - Regular Members Present: Amy Barnstorff, Gary Cohen, Mike Ruby, Chuck Segelbaum, Martin Sicotte, David Hill, Eric Van Oss
  - Regular Members Absent: None
  - Student Member, Status: None
  - Staff Members Present: Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner  
Steven Okey, Associate Planner  
Chloe McGuire, Deputy Community Development Director
  - Council Member Present: None

#### 2. CONSENT AGENDA:

2.A. Approval of agenda

2.B. Approval of September 8, 2025, meeting minutes

- **Ruby** asked for a motion to approve
- **Cohen** moved.
- **Barnstorff** seconded.
- **All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

#### 3. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

3.A. Administrative Zoning Permit Code Amendment

- **Kramer** gave an overview of zoning text amendments and then presented the Administrative Zoning Permit Code Amendment.
- **Ruby** asked if there were questions for the Staff.
- **Segelbaum** asked to contrast this with a building permit.
- **Kramer** noted that a building permit is done through the Inspections Division, and the building code gives the codes for construction detail, which is governed by State and International building codes, and City Inspectors do this for life and safety, along with the Fire Department as well. She stated that a zoning permit looks at structures that are too small or do not need a building permit, such as a fence or doghouse, but there are zoning rules that need to be enforced still through the administrative process. She added that the forms needed are simple to fill out, a fee is then paid, and the planning staff reviews them to ensure they follow the rules.
- **Ruby** asked if the process that is shown is the current process and if the City is staffed appropriately to handle the new process.
- **Kramer** stated that the draft ordinance is the current process; the Staff needs to update it because there was no process in place before, so it is being created by the current Staff.
- **McGuire** noted the change was in restricted use.
- **Kramer** stated that in future code amendments, they will be updating the Conditional Use Permit, CUP, requirements, so some uses will move from needing a CUP to just being restricted or conditional use. She added that there are conditions in the code, but if you meet the conditions, then you are approved. She noted that the Administrative Zoning Permit will be used for the above uses and confirmed that people are aware of the requirements and have acknowledged that they agree to something allowed by code.
- **Cohen** asked if what is being proposed codifies what is going on today.
- **Kramer** agreed that this amendment is codifying what the Staff is doing.

- **Segelbaum** asked about the 60-day turnaround and if it is common in other jurisdictions.
- **Kramer** stated that it is common, but that most zoning permits will be processed a lot faster than that, and it brings consistency to all applications. She gave an example that the 60-day rules are required for land use applications, so it would help to show people that applications would be reviewed promptly.
- **Ruby** opened up the public hearing and noted there wasn't anyone from the public in attendance. He closed the public hearing and opened the item for discussion.
- **Van Oss** stated that he is all for it.
- **Barnstorff** agreed that there are no issues.
- **Segelbaum** noted that if the amendment could state that the application would be handled in fewer than 60 days, because some owners may not want to wait that long, it could cause the homeowner to just do it without the permit.
- **Van Oss** asked if the 60 days timeframe needs to be changed.
- **Segelbaum** explained that the amendment could retain the 60 days in place, and that the City will make its best effort to try and accommodate applicants faster.
- **Kramer** noted that a clause could easily be added to note that 60 days would be the max, but it could be done much sooner. She added that if it were taking 60 days, the City would be very understaffed.
- **Van Oss** asked about the legal side of the 60 days and if it needed to be in there to show that something would have to get done within that time period.
- **Kramer** stated that because it is a self-imposed 60-day rule, it is not the same 60 days that go along with the public hearings, the extension, and such.
- **Ruby** asked if an amendment was needed to vote on this change to add wording about the 60 days.
- **Kramer** stated that it was not needed because the code is not being approved, but she was going to email Commissioner Segelbaum for the language to use.
- **Ruby** asked for a motion.
- **Van Oss** moved to recommend approval of the zoning text amendment to add to section 113-35.
- **Hill** seconded the motion.
- **All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

### 3.B. Temporary Use Permit Zoning Code Amendment.

- **Kramer** presented the Temporary Use Permit Zoning Code Amendment.
- **Ruby** asked if there were any questions for the Staff.
- **Barnstorff** asked if the mobile food vending is food trucks.
- **Kramer** stated that it is mostly food trucks, and there are other kinds, but in Brooklyn Center is just food trucks.
- **Barnstorff** asked if food trucks are still being allowed.
- **McGuire** stated that it is still allowed, but when they come in for permits, then they don't really need to be licensed as well.
- **Kramer** stated that they had to apply for multiple permits for the same truck, and there was no value added to the zoning temporary use permit in that case.
- **Okey** noted that the Fire Department has a desire to do fire inspections on the food trucks, which they are willing to take on, so yearly, a fire inspection will be done, which will allow the food trucks to operate within the City. He added that if the food truck is on City property, then they need to get a rider on their insurance to cover them.
- **Segelbaum** noted that he submitted some words that do not have to do with policy, but he thinks the changes look good.

- **Hill** asked about the outdoor portion and the insurance that goes along with that, if it is part of this process.
- **Kramer** clarified that the question was when the City would require more insurance.
- **Hill** stated that it was correct.
- **Kramer** noted that if the food truck is on City property, then additional insurance is required; otherwise, the City is staying out of the licensing and registering portion of the food trucks.
- **Ruby** asked about the code that is being removed in terms of the food trucks.
- **Kramer** noted that it removes it from the zoning code, but is now being moved to registering and licensing, mostly through the fire department, so there is still oversight on it.
- **McGuire** added that there is still a special event permit that is needed.
- **Ruby** stated that the rules for the when and where are separate from this code.
- **Van Oss** noted that food trucks are also regulated through the State Department of Health for operations.
- **Kramer** added that the special events permit is not through zoning, but it has been updated to cover pop-up events.
- **McGuire** clarified that the Fire Department doesn't have to inspect the food trucks under the fire code, so they could decide they don't want to do a local inspection, and it would not come through the Commission.
- **Kramer** noted that all food trucks will still have to have County Health licenses.
- **Barnstorff** asked if food trucks are allowed to operate in any zoning district.
- **Kramer** stated that they can operate anywhere, but they must have permission from the property owner.
- **Okey** added that it will be on the website to let food truck vendors know the rules and what they need to go to the City for.
- **Ruby** opened up the public hearing and noted there wasn't anyone from the public in attendance. He closed the public hearing and opened the item for discussion.
- **Segelbaum** stated that he provided his comments in writing that were not policy-related, and that it looks very good.
- **Cohen** noted that it is helping to streamline the process to make it easier for people to do business.
- **Ruby** asked for a motion.
- **Barnstorff** moved to recommend approval of the zoning text amendment to update section 113-31.
- **Van Oss** seconded the motion.
- **All voted in favor, and the motion passed.**

**4. NEW BUSINESS: -None****5. STAFF UPDATES:**

- **Kramer** shared an updated schedule for the BZA rotation and the upcoming Planning Commission meetings.
- **Van Oss** stated that he would not be at the November 10 meeting.
- **Barnstorff** asked about the December 22 meeting being cancelled.
- **Kramer** noted that she was going to try to push it to January, but it would depend on whether there are any applications or not.
- **Ruby** explained that the goal is to spread things out so that the meetings are not super long.
- **Van Oss** asked when a Request for Proposals, RFP, would go out and the comprehensive plan update would begin.



- **McGuire** stated that the RFP would be released in early 2026 to hire a consultant, but the Staff is determining what would be most helpful to hire out for.
- **Van Oss** asked if part was being hired and part was being done in-house.
- **McGuire** noted that it was correct, and she sent information in an email that day.
- **Ruby** asked if there were questions about the email when would be a good time to ask.
- **McGuire** stated that now would be a good time.
- **Ruby** asked about the housing element of affordable housing, and it seems like a very high number, given the state of the housing and the space there is in the City. He added that if there were negotiations, that could be done.
- **McGuire** explained that they can go back to them and ask for certain things. She added that the affordable housing number is aggressive and seems high; it ensures that there is land guided for affordable housing or high-density housing. She noted that she does not believe that the number will be reduced, but that it will not be difficult to guide land appropriately to meet it without a lot of trouble.
- **Van Oss** noted that the City is not penalized if the development does not occur, just as long as the land is guided. He stated that it just has to be shown that the City can accommodate it.
- **Barnstorff** asked that the allocation just means guided, not that the City gives land to them.
- **Kramer** stated that it is correct, it is just a future land use map, which when then lead to an updated zoning map afterwards.
- **McGuire** noted that market-rate apartments can sometimes go towards your affordable housing allocation because apartments are typically more affordable.
- **Van Oss** asked about numbers for naturally occurring affordable housing.
- **McGuire** stated that she does not know the numbers right now.
- **Ruby** noted that it seems more doable with that information and that it would need to be done by 2050.
- **McGuire** explained that they would bring some updates on the 2040 plan, and look at those goals and see what can be brought into the 2050 plan as well.
- **McGuire** noted that there is a work session with the City Council where they will go through some strategies to be a supportive redevelopment partner, which will bring some things before the Planning Commission to implement. She added they will bring it before the Council to get rid of the BZA and make it part of the Planning Commission, and then to also give the Planning Commission some more scope, with the Planning Commission being the final decider on CUPs.
- **Van Oss** asked if it would be a site plan review with no deviations.
- **McGuire** stated that it was correct. She added they would also like to give the Planning Commission final plats.
- **Ruby** asked about the expectation on time with what was going to BZA and what is already at the Planning Commission, and if it could be covered.
- **McGuire** noted that the Staff thinks it can be covered, but many of the BZA meetings have been cancelled. She added that they are also trying to reduce the number of variance requests by making the code better at handling them. She noted that variances can also be on the consent agenda because there is no public hearing requirement.
- **Kramer** stated that with the CUP update, this will also remove many of the CUPs because they will not be required to go before the Commission.
- **Sicotte** asked about some of the items that were considered in the past that felt more administrative, and if any of those were considered to not have to come before the Commission.
- **McGuire** noted that the code has been drafted for some, and is now in legal review. She added that many things are hard to say no to from the Commission standpoint, and the Staff is



## CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY

### PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

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working to not bring things like that before the Commission anymore.

- **McGuire** explained that if variances do come to the Planning Commission, the Staff is requesting that there be a minor variance process, where if there is any deviation under 25 percent, it can be approved at an administrative level if they feel it meets the variance threshold.
- **Ruby** noted that an example would be 13 feet, and if the applicant is within 25 percent of that, then the Staff can handle that administratively.
- **McGuire** noted that if the Staff does not think it meets the statutory requirements, then it would still come before the Commission.
- **Ruby** asked about the notification of the neighborhood, and if it would still apply.
- **Kramer** explained that for variances, only adjacent neighbors need to be notified, and that would still apply.
- **Van Oss** asked if the applicant is required to do their own outreach.
- **Kramer** noted that there is still the neighborhood notification policy, which requires an additional letter from the applicant for certain applications.
- **Van Oss** asked if that could be done away with for residential neighborhoods.
- **McGuire** stated that they are hoping to codify it and do away with the policy because it is difficult to find and know when it needs to be done.
- **Ruby** noted that he likes the idea of the minor variances; however, he was curious as to why not just change the code then to change the setbacks.
- **McGuire** noted that it is a fair question and could be looked at.
- **Ruby** stated that with the City trying to increase density, it might be a way to do so.
- **Cohen** asked about a 6:00 p.m. start time for the October 27 meeting.
- **Kramer** noted that the things that are planned for the meeting may take a little longer, so she suggested starting earlier. She stated that there would be a quorum with the four who can attend at that time, so they would start early.

#### 6. COMMISSIONER UPDATES: -None

#### 7. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Ruby adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Community Development

763-512-2345 / 763-512-2344 (fax)

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### Golden Valley Planning Commission Meeting

October 27, 2025

#### Agenda Item

**4.A.** Ordinance Amending Section 113-27 Board of Zoning Appeals and Section 113-32 Variances

#### Prepared By

Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner

#### Summary

Periodically, Planning Division staff update sections of the zoning code to reflect current administrative processes and industry best practices. Staff propose an ordinance updating the City Code sections that govern variance applications. These updates clarify parts of the variance application process that were not described in City Code and reformat the sections of the Code that govern the Board of Zoning Appeals and variance applications to be consistent with other similar sections in City Code. The overall goal of this update is to make the code easier to understand for all users, including applicants, staff, Planning Commission, and City Council.

#### Recommended Motion Language

"I move to recommend approval of the ordinance amending Section 113-27 and Section 113-32, as described in the October 27, 2025 staff report."

#### Recommended Action

Recommend approval of the ordinance to amend Section 113-27 and add Section 113-32.

#### Supporting Documents

- [Staff Report](#)
- [Draft Ordinance - Section 113-27 and Section 113-32](#)



# MEMORANDUM

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Planning & Sustainability Division

763-593-8095

**Date:** October 27, 2025

**To:** Golden Valley Planning Commission

**From:** Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner

**Subject:** Ordinance Amending Section 113-27 and Section 113-32

#### **Planning Analysis**

City Code Section 113-29 governs the process for amending the zoning code. Zoning text amendments may be initiated by the City or by an outside applicant. Planning Commission holds a public hearing, reviews the application, and makes a recommendation to City Council.

#### ***Level of Discretion in Decision Making***

The City has a high level of discretion when considering changes to the zoning code. Zoning text amendments are considered a legislative action, which gives City Council broad authority to amend the zoning code in the interest of the general health, safety, and welfare of the community.

#### ***Proposed Ordinance***

Staff propose moving the code language that describes the variance application process out of Section 113-27 Board of Zoning Appeals, and into a new Section 113-32. This aligns the format of Section 113-27 with the other sections of City Code that describe other boards and commissions in the city. Staff propose minor formatting changes in Section 113-27 that would not change the content of the section.

As part of creating a standalone variance application section, staff propose the following changes and additions in Section 113-32:

1. A new purpose statement that describes the timeline for reviewing variance applications. This addition codifies current city process.
2. Increasing the radius of properties receiving the public meeting notice to 500 feet to be consistent with other planning applications.
3. A subsection describing the Board of Zoning Appeals' ability to impose conditions when granting a variance. This addition codifies current city process.

4. Shortens the length of time an applicant may appeal a decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals from 30 days to 10 days.

**Public Notification**

To comply with State law and the City's public hearing notice requirements, the City published a public hearing notice in the Sun Post Newspaper. At the time of this report staff has received no comments on the proposed ordinance.

**Next Steps**

City Council will take action on the proposed code amendments on November 18, 2025

**Staff Contact**

Jacquelyn Kramer  
Senior Planner  
[jkramer@goldenvalleymn.gov](mailto:jkramer@goldenvalleymn.gov)

**ORDINANCE NO. XXX**  
**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY CODE CHAPTER 113**  
**AMENDING SECTION 113-27 BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS AND**  
**ADDING SECTION 113-32 VARIANCES**

The City Council for the City of Golden Valley hereby ordains as follows:

Section 1. City Code Section 113-27 is amended to read as follows:

**Sec. 113-27. Board of Zoning Appeals.**

- (a) *Membership.* The Board of Zoning Appeals shall consist of four at large members, one non-voting youth member, and one voting member of the Planning Commission. Each member shall have one vote. At large members shall serve three-year staggered terms and the youth member shall serve a one-year term, and the Planning Commission member shall rotate among Planning Commissioners at the discretion of the Planning Commission. The City Council shall appoint all at large members at its last meeting in April, effective May 1, and all youth members at its last meeting in September, effective October 1. The term limits and definitions in City Code, section 2-125 shall also apply to members of the Board of Zoning Appeals.
- (b) *Planning Commission Members.* All the voting members of the Planning Commission are alternates to the Board of Zoning Appeals. In the absence of any voting member of the Board of Zoning Appeals, any voting member of the Planning Commission may serve as an alternate. At least one voting member of the Planning Commission shall be present at each meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals. ~~The Board of Zoning Appeals shall meet at least once a month if there are any variance applications pending for action.~~
- (c) *Duties and Responsibilities.* The Board of Zoning Appeals shall meet at least once a month if there are any variance applications pending for action. It is the duty of the Board of Zoning Appeals to evaluate and decide certain requests to the City regarding zoning and the requirements of this chapter. Specifically, it shall:
  - (1) Decide appeals where it is alleged that an error has been made in any order, requirement, decision or determination, and/or interpretation made by the City Manager or other City administrative official in enforcement and administration of this chapter.
  - (2) Hear requests for variances from the requirements of this chapter, including restrictions placed on nonconformities.
- (d) ~~*Variances.* Variances shall only be permitted when they are in harmony with the general purposes and intent of this chapter and when the variances are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.~~
  - (1) ~~A variance may be granted when the petitioner for the variance establishes that there are practical difficulties in complying with this chapter. The term "practical difficulties," as used in connection with the granting of a variance, means:~~
    - ~~a. The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by this chapter~~
    - ~~b. The plight of the property owner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the property owner; and~~



- ~~c. The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.~~
- ~~a. Economic considerations alone do not constitute practical difficulties. Practical difficulties include but are not limited to, inadequate access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems. Notwithstanding the foregoing, variances shall be granted for earth-sheltered construction as defined in Minn. Stats. § 216C.06, subd. 14, when in harmony with this chapter.~~
- ~~b. The Board of Zoning Appeals may not grant a variance that would allow any use that is not allowed under this chapter for property in the zone where the affected person's land is located. The Board of Zoning Appeals may impose conditions in the granting of variances. A condition must be directly related and bear a rough proportionality to the impact created by the variance.~~
- ~~c. Where the City, County, or the State creates or worsens a nonconforming setback or prevents or worsens compliance with the applicable parking requirements by acquiring a portion of a lot for a public improvement, the lot owner shall be entitled as a matter of right to obtain a variance for the nonconforming setback or parking condition so created or worsened. This subsection shall apply only to acquisitions taking place after June 1, 1992, and shall not apply to acquisitions taking place in the normal course of the land subdivision (platting) process. Nothing contained in this subsection shall be interpreted to lessen the requirement for a traffic management plan contained in this chapter.~~

(e) *Procedures.*

- ~~a. Appeals to the Board of Zoning Appeals may be taken by an affected person by filing a petition form with the City. Such petitions shall be heard at the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals, provided that such petitions must be received by the City Manager or his/her designee no later than 15 working days prior to the meeting date for which a hearing could be scheduled. Failure to follow this procedure shall result in a delay of the hearing until the next regular meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals.~~
- ~~b. The Board of Zoning Appeals shall give at least 10 days' written notice of the time, place, and nature of the appeal hearing to the petitioner and to all adjacent property owners. Any party may appear at such hearing, whether in person or by agent or attorney.~~
- ~~c. The Board of Zoning Appeals shall make its order with respect to said appeal within 60 days of submission of the petition.~~
- ~~d. Within 30 days of the final order of the Board of Zoning Appeals, any petitioner feeling aggrieved by the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals may file a written appeal with the designated staff liaison, thereby appealing the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals to the City Council. The City Council shall, within 30 days from the date of such appeal, make its findings and determination with respect to the appeal and serve a written report thereof upon the appellant by United States mail. If no appeal is taken by the petitioner from the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals in the manner provided above, then the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals shall be final.~~
- ~~e. In those cases where the effect of the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals is to grant a variance, the permission or license to perform the action authorized~~

~~thereby shall lapse one year after the order granting the variance is served by mail, unless construction has commenced or a valid building permit for the work described in the variance has been issued and work is proceeding in an orderly way within said one year period in accordance with the plans for which such variance was approved, or unless otherwise specified in the order granting the variance. The City Council, in its sole discretion, may grant an extension of up to one additional year upon request of the applicant. Any modification of the plans prior to or during construction shall be cause for the issuance of a stop order and the filing of a new petition for variance if such modification adversely affects any aspect of the plans directly involved in the consideration and approval of the earlier variance petition.~~

- ~~f. A variance shall be effective only to the extent of the exact circumstances contained in the approved petition. Any subsequent property alteration that would impact the extent of an existing variance, either through additional horizontal or vertical expansion or through such other form of change as may be applicable shall require a new petition for variance. A proposed, fully conforming alteration to a property for which a past variance was granted shall also require a new petition for variance if the official records of the Board of Zoning Appeals indicate that the current proposal adversely affects an aspect of the property that served as full or partial grounds for the earlier variance.~~

Section 2. City Code Section 113-32 is added, and subsequent sections of Article II are renumbered.

### **Sec. 113-32. Variances.**

- (a) *Purpose.* The purpose of this Section is to provide for deviations from the requirements of this Chapter, including restrictions placed on non-conformities. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 15.99, an application for a variance shall be approved or denied within 60 days from the date of its official and complete submission unless extended pursuant to Statute or a time waiver is granted by the applicant. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 15.99, City staff may extend the 60-day time limit by a time period not to exceed 60 additional days, provided written notice of such extension is provided to the applicant before the end of the initial 60-day period.
- (b) *Review Criteria.* Variances shall only be permitted when all the following criteria, when applicable, are met:
- (1) The variance, and its resulting construction or project, is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of this chapter and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
  - (2) An applicant establishes that there are practical difficulties in complying with this chapter. The term "practical difficulties," as used in connection with the granting of a variance, means:
    - a. The property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by this chapter; and
    - b. The plight of the property owner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the property owner; and

- c. The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.
- (3) The variance request is not based exclusively on economic considerations.
  - (4) The variance, and its resulting construction or project, would not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent properties, nor would it substantially increase traffic congestion in public streets, increase the danger of fire, or endanger the public safety.
  - (5) Notwithstanding the foregoing, variances shall be granted for: earth-sheltered construction as defined in Minn. Stats. § 216C.06, subd. 14, and for inadequate access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems, when in harmony with this chapter.
  - (6) No variance may be granted for any use that is not allowed under this chapter for property in the zone where the affected property is located.
  - (7) Where the City, County, or the State creates or worsens a nonconforming setback or prevents or worsens compliance with the applicable parking requirements by acquiring a portion of a lot for a public improvement, the lot owner shall be entitled as a matter of right to obtain a variance for the nonconforming setback or parking condition so created or worsened. This subsection shall apply only to acquisitions taking place after June 1, 1992, and shall not apply to acquisitions taking place in the normal course of the land subdivision (platting) process. Nothing contained in this subsection shall be interpreted to lessen the requirement for a traffic management plan contained in this chapter.

*(c) Procedures.*

- (1) Appeals to the Board of Zoning Appeals may be taken by an affected person by filing a variance application with the City. Such applications shall be heard at the next regular monthly meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals, provided that such applications must be received by the Planning Division no later than 15 working days prior to the meeting date for which a hearing could be scheduled. Failure to follow this procedure shall result in a delay of the hearing until the next regular meeting of the Board of Zoning Appeals.
- (2) The Board of Zoning Appeals shall give at least 10 days' written notice of the time, place, and nature of the appeal hearing to the applicant and all property owners within 500 feet of the subject site. Any party may appear at such hearing, whether in person or by agent or attorney.
- (3) The Board of Zoning Appeals shall make its order with respect to said appeal within 60 days of submission of the application. The Board of Zoning Appeals may impose conditions in the granting of variances. A condition must be directly related and bear a rough proportionality to the impact created by the variance.
- (4) Within 10 days of the final order of the Board of Zoning Appeals, any applicant feeling aggrieved by the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals may file a written appeal with the designated staff liaison, thereby appealing the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals to the City Council. The City Council shall, within 30 days from the date of such appeal, make its findings and determination with respect to the appeal and produce a written report thereof upon the appellant. If no appeal is taken by the applicant from the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals in the manner provided above, then the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals shall be final.

- (5) In those cases where the effect of the decision of the Board of Zoning Appeals is to grant a variance, the permission or license to perform the action authorized thereby shall lapse one year after the order granting the variance is approved, unless construction has commenced or a valid building permit for the work described in the variance has been issued and work is proceeding in an orderly way within said one-year period in accordance with the plans for which such variance was approved, or unless otherwise specified in the order granting the variance. The City Council, in its sole discretion, may grant an extension of up to one additional year upon request of the applicant. Any modification of the plans prior to or during construction shall be cause for the issuance of a stop order and the filing of a new application for a variance if such modification adversely affects any aspect of the plans directly involved in the consideration and approval of the earlier variance application.
- (6) A variance shall be effective only to the extent of the exact circumstances contained in the approval. Any subsequent property alteration that would impact the extent of an existing variance, either through additional horizontal or vertical expansion or through such other form of change as may be applicable shall require a new variance application. A proposed, fully conforming alteration to a property for which a past variance was granted shall also require a new variance application if the official records of the Board of Zoning Appeals indicate that the current proposal adversely affects an aspect of the property that served as full or partial grounds for the earlier variance.

Section 3. This ordinance shall take effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law.

Adopted by the City Council on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2025.

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Roslyn Harmon, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Theresa J. Schyma, City Clerk



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Community Development

763-512-2345 / 763-512-2344 (fax)

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### Golden Valley Planning Commission Meeting

October 27, 2025

#### Agenda Item

#### 4.B. Ordinance Amending Chapter 109 Subdivisions

#### Prepared By

Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner

#### Summary

Periodically, Planning Division staff update sections of the zoning code to reflect current administrative processes and industry best practices. Staff propose an ordinance amending City Code Chapter 109 to allow certain minor subdivision applications to be approved administratively. The overall goal of this ordinance is to simplify and clarify the City's subdivision application process.

#### Recommended Motion Language

"I move to recommend approval of the ordinance amending Chapter 109, as described in the October 27, 2025 staff report."

#### Recommended Action

Recommend approval of the ordinance amending Chapter 109.

#### Supporting Documents

- [Staff Report](#)
- [Draft Ordinance - Chapter 109](#)



# MEMORANDUM

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Planning & Sustainability Division

763-593-8095

**Date:** October 27, 2025

**To:** Golden Valley Planning Commission

**From:** Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner

**Subject:** Ordinance Amending Chapter 109 - Subdivisions

#### **Planning Analysis**

City Code Section 113-29 governs the process for amending the zoning code. Zoning text amendments may be initiated by the City or by an outside applicant. Planning Commission holds a public hearing, reviews the application, and makes a recommendation to City Council.

#### ***Level of Discretion in Decision Making***

The City has a high level of discretion when considering changes to the zoning code. Zoning text amendments are considered a legislative action, which gives City Council broad authority to amend the zoning code in the interest of the general health, safety, and welfare of the community.

#### ***Proposed Ordinance***

Staff proposes amending Division 4, which governs Minor Subdivisions and Consolidations, by allowing these applications to be approved administratively rather than by City Council. State statute strictly defines the criteria cities must use when considering these applications. These actions are considered quasi-judicial and cities have very little discretion when considering these applications. Staff proposes an administrative review process that uses the same criteria as the current code and state statute. Section 109-122 would be amended to describe the administrative review and approval process.

Staff also proposes adding Section 109-124 which would allow lot line adjustments to be approved administratively. Currently, City Code does not have a process for property owners to adjust interior property lines between two lots, which has created confusion and additional cost for residents who would like to buy or sell a small piece of land to their neighbor. Lot line adjustments would have additional approval standards and this process could not be used to create a nonconforming or unbuildable lot.



Staff recommend the following minor changes as part of this code update:

1. Adding a new definition “lot line adjustment” to Section 109-1 Definitions.
2. Adding Section 109-93(c) which would allow preliminary and final plats to be filed, processed, and approved concurrently.
3. Extending the deadline to record approved final plats from 60 days to 120 days.
4. Miscellaneous formatting corrections.

### **Public Notification**

To comply with State law and the City’s public hearing notice requirements, the City published a public hearing notice in the Sun Post Newspaper. At the time of this report staff has received no comments on the proposed ordinance.

### **Next Steps**

City Council will take action on the proposed code amendments on November 18, 2025

### **Staff Contact**

Jacquelyn Kramer  
Senior Planner  
jkramer@goldenvalleymn.gov

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**ORDINANCE NO. XXX**  
**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CITY CODE CHAPTER 109 SUBDIVISIONS**

The City Council for the City of Golden Valley hereby ordains as follows:

Section 1. City Code Chapter 109 is amended to read as follows. “\*\*\*” denotes a section break.

**Sec. 109-1. Definitions.**

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

\*\*\*

*Lot Line Adjustment:* An administrative subdivision process by which two or more contiguous existing lots or parcels move one or more boundary lines so as to reconfigure their shapes or sizes, without creating additional lots or altering the number of parcels.

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*DIVISION 3. FINAL PLAT*

**Sec. 109-93. Application; Approval; Filing.**

- (a) *Application.* After the preliminary plat has been approved by the Council, the subdivider must apply for approval of the final plat. The application must be made within 180 days of the approval by the Council of the preliminary plat unless an extension is made by the Council. The subdivider shall submit copies of the final plat (in conformance with the approved preliminary plat). The subdivider shall also provide one copy of the final plat to each utility company (telecommunications, electric, gas, and cable TV). The subdivider shall also furnish the City with the abstract of title or registered property abstract.
- (b) *Approval of Final Plat.* The Council shall grant approval of the final plat, refer the final plat to the Planning Commission for additional study, or disapprove the final plat stating the reasons for such action which shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. Action to approve the plat shall be by resolution of the Council and shall be taken within 60 days of the preliminary approval if the subdivider so requests and has complied with all the conditions, requirements, and provisions of this chapter.
  - (1) Before the Council gives approval to the final plat, a review of the certified abstract of title or the registered property abstract by the City Attorney showing

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title or control of the property being subdivided by the subdivider may be required. The applicant shall pay all costs of such review by the City Attorney.

(2) The final plat may include only that portion of the preliminary plat which the owner or subdivider proposes to record or develop, provided that such portion conforms with all of the requirements of this chapter.

(3) If the plat is approved, the subdivider shall submit two reproducible copies of the final plat for signing by the proper City officials, one of which will be retained by the City for their records.

(c) Combination Preliminary/Final Plat Applications. An applicant may submit preliminary and final plat applications at the same time for City Council to consider both applications at the same meeting.

(d) Filing/Recording.

(1) Filing/Recording. After the Council approves the final plat, the subdivider shall file it for recording with the County Recorder or the Registrar of Titles within ~~60~~ 120 days of the date of the resolution approving the final plat. If the subdivider does not file the final plat within ~~60~~ 120 days, the final plat shall become null and void unless the Council grants an extension. The subdivider must request extensions in writing within the 120-day period.

(2) Proof of Filing/Recording. The subdivider shall immediately upon recording furnish the City with a print of the final plat with recording or filing data shown on the plat. No building permits shall be issued on any of the platted property until the City has received the above copy of the plat.

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#### *DIVISION 4. MINOR SUBDIVISIONS, CONSOLIDATIONS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE LOT LINE ADJUSTMENTS*

##### **Sec. 109-119. Eligibility for Application.**

In keeping with Minn. Stats. § 462.358, subd. 1a, which allows for the establishment of more than one class of subdivision and more than one set of regulations, certain proposed land subdivisions and consolidations may qualify for application under this division. For such applications, the standards, requirements, and procedures cited herein shall supersede their subdivision counterparts of this chapter. Each of the following conditions must be met to establish eligibility:

(1) The land to be subdivided or consolidated must be part of a recorded plat or a recorded registered land survey (RLS)

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- (2) Consolidations may involve any number of parcels, but subdivisions shall be limited to the creation of four or fewer lots from one or more original parcels
  - (3) The subdivision or consolidation shall not necessitate any additional public investment in new roads or utilities to serve the lots.

(4) For lot line adjustments, all affected parcels are contiguous and no additional lots or parcels are created.

(Code 1988, § 12.50(1))

### **Sec. 109-120. Components of Application.**

Application for a minor subdivision consolidation, or lot line adjustment shall be made on forms furnished by the City. A filing fee set by Council resolution shall accompany the application. The applicant shall also furnish copies of a sketch showing the following:

- ~~(1) North arrow and scale (no smaller than one inch equals 100 feet).~~
- ~~(2) Overall dimensions of the property and of each internal property division.~~
- (3) An existing conditions survey. The survey must include: lot dimensions, all platted and recorded easements, all existing structures with dimensions to show size and location, structure setbacks from all property lines, and the location of existing driveways and utility lines.
- (4) A proposed conditions survey. The survey must include: the proposed lot lines, all platted, recorded, and proposed easements, all existing structures with dimensions to show size and location, structure setbacks from all property lines, and the location of existing driveways and utility lines.
- (5) Square footage of the overall property and of each internal property division.
- ~~(6) (4) ——— Location of all public utilities, streets, driveways, and easements, adjacent to or on the property.~~
- ~~(7) Location and dimensions of any existing buildings and distances to nearest existing or proposed lot lines on all sides.~~
- (8) Size, species, and location of all existing significant trees, specimen trees, and significant woodlands, as defined by the City Code, located within the project limits. These significant trees, specimen trees, and significant woodlands should be identified in both graphic and tabular form. This existing tree survey must be prepared by a certified tree inspector or landscape architect retained by the applicant.
- (9) A grading plan establishing yards or site elevations, with sufficient proposed elevations indicated thereon to provide proper control of the development to

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ensure proper building grades, site drainage, and conformance to established street grades.

- (10) Evidence of the current condition of title to the land affected by the lot line adjustment, in a form reasonably acceptable to the city attorney, which may include an abstract of title or registered property abstract or a commitment for an owner's policy of title insurance. The City Attorney may require the applicant to also provide copies of recorded instruments that are referenced in the submitted title evidence.
- (11) Any other information specific to the particular site and required for the complete evaluation of the application. Such information shall be supplied at the expense of the applicant.

**Sec. 109-121. Conditions for Approval or Denial.**

- (a) Minor subdivisions, consolidations, and administrative lot line adjustments shall be denied if the proposed lots fail to meet the following requirements:
  - (1) All lots shall meet the minimum area requirements of the zoning district in which they are located, except that lots in the Single-family Residential (R-1) District created through minor subdivision after November 4, 2015, must be at least 15,000 square feet if the average of the R-1 single-family lots within 250 feet of the subject parcel have an average lot area of 18,000 square feet or greater, excluding from the calculation the subject parcel and lots less than 4,001 square feet.
  - (2) All lots shall meet the minimum dimension requirements of the zoning district in which they are located, except that lots in the R-1 and Moderate Density Residential (R-2) Districts created through minor subdivision after November 4, 2015, must meet the minimum lot width at the minimum front yard setback line and maintain that lot width to a point 70 feet back from the front lot line.
  - (3) The entire front of each lot shall abut on a street right-of-way and there shall be vehicular access to and from each lot via an improved street on which the lot abuts and/or via an improved public alleyway on which the lot abuts.
  - (4) Corner lots shall be platted at least 20 feet wider than the required minimum lot width as required by Chapter 113, pertaining to zoning.
  - (5) For lot line adjustments, the lots must be part of a recorded plat, and the adjustment shall not create or delete any existing lots.
- (b) Minor subdivisions may be denied upon the City's determination that the buildable portion of a resulting new lot is encumbered by steep slopes or excessive wetness. Alternatively, approval of the minor subdivision may be conditioned on the applicant's submittal of a certified engineer's study showing how the lot may be so reconditioned as to allow development without adversely affecting adjacent sites.

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- (c) Minor subdivisions may be denied if public sewer and water connections are not directly accessible by each proposed lot. Alternatively, approval of the minor subdivision may be conditioned on the applicant's obtaining the necessary easements across adjacent properties to the nearest reasonable point of public sewer and water connection.
  - (d) Approval of minor subdivisions shall be conditioned on the applicant's granting of easements for necessary public purposes, as determined by the City.
  - (e) Where public agencies, other than the City, have some form of jurisdiction over an area including or directly affected by a proposed minor subdivision, approval of that minor subdivision may be conditioned on the requirements of the outside agency. Such agencies shall include, but not be limited to, the County, the State Department of Transportation, the State Department of Natural Resources, and the Bassett Creek Watershed Management Commission.
  - (f) If applicant is required to submit to a review of the property's title pursuant to this division, then approval of the minor subdivision shall be conditioned on the applicant's resolution of any title issues raised by the City Attorney.
  - (g) Minor subdivisions of nonresidential parcels may be denied upon the City Engineer's determination that new development on the resulting lot will cause undue strain on adjacent roads or on public utilities or will adversely affect adjacent residential, institutional, or public land uses. Alternatively, approval of the minor subdivision may be conditioned on the applicant's agreeing to take specific action to mitigate the strain or adverse effect.
  - (h) Approval of residential minor subdivisions shall be conditioned on the payment of a park dedication fee, sewer and water access charges, and pending or levied deferred assessments in the amounts established by Council resolution.
  - (i) The conditions spelled out in this section shall provide the only basis for denial of a minor subdivision or consolidation except for the additional conditions imposed on residential zero lot line homes and administrative lot line adjustments later in this division. Approval will be granted to any application that meets the established conditions. Additionally, an applicant may request a waiver from specific conditions imposed in this section by applying for a variance in accordance with this chapter.

(Code 1988, § 12.50(3); Ord. No. 582, 2nd Series, 11-12-2015; Ord. No. 603, 2nd Series, 6-21-2016)

#### **Sec. 109-122. Application Review Process.**

- (a) The completed application shall be received by the Planning Division. Staff shall review the application for conformance with the conditions stated above. If the application meets all conditions for a minor subdivision, consolidation, or administrative lot line adjustment, City staff shall administratively approve the application and mail a



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notification to all property owners within 250 feet of the subject property indicating that the application has been approved.

- (b) Upon approval of the minor subdivision, consolidation, or administrative lot line adjustment, the applicant shall cause the approval to be recording or filed with the County Recorder or Registrar of Titles within 120 days of the date of the approval. If the applicant does not file the approval within 120 days of the date of approval, the approval shall be null and void. The City shall not issue any permits on the affected properties until the applicant submits proof that the approval was filed with the County.

**~~Sec. 109-122. Final Plat Application Review Process.~~**

- ~~(a) The completed application shall be received by the staff of the Community Development Department. An official public hearing by the Planning Commission shall be scheduled following application acceptance. At least 10 days prior to the hearing date, legal notice shall be published in the official newspaper of the City, and notice of the hearing shall be mailed to the owners of all property within 500 feet of the subject property. The Planning Commission shall consider the conditions established in [Section 109-121](#) and shall make a recommendation to the City Council on whether to approve or deny the proposed minor subdivision or consolidation.~~
- ~~(b) After review and recommendation by the Planning Commission, the application shall be formally heard by the City Council.~~
- ~~(c) If preliminary Council approval is granted, the applicant shall have a final plat prepared in accordance with this chapter and in conformance with the sketch approved by the Council. At this time, the applicant may be required to submit, for review by the City Attorney, a current certified abstract of title or a current registered property abstract for the property. The cost of this review shall be borne by the applicant. Unless an extension is requested by the applicant and granted by the Council, the plat and evidence of clear title shall be completed and submitted to the City within 180 days of Council approval. After the Council passes a resolution approving the plat, two hard copies of the plat shall be furnished by the applicant for signing. Except as otherwise authorized by the Council, all conditions placed on the approval shall be fulfilled before the signed plat copies are released by the City.~~
- ~~(d) A certified copy of the resolution approving the final plat, together with one copy of the final plat, shall be recorded with the County. The filing of the plat must be done by the applicant within 60 days of the approval of the resolution. The other hard copy shall be filed with the City. Proof of filing of the final plat shall be submitted to the City prior to issuance of any building permits on the properties.~~

**Sec. 109-123. Minor Subdivision for a Residential Zero Lot Line Home.**

- (a) If the conditions for eligibility above are met, then a lot occupied or proposed to be occupied by a residential zero lot line structure may be split along the party line to provide individual ownership of each unit. The components of application shall be as specified above. The application review process shall be as outlined above, except that the conditions for approval shall also include Subsection (b) of this section.
- (b) All of the following conditions shall be met before a minor subdivision for a residential zero lot line home shall be approved:
  - (1) Each newly created lot shall individually be exempt from the minimum lot size and width requirements found in the R-2 Zoning District provisions of Chapter 113, but in combination the lots shall meet said requirements. Other requirements of this division shall be met as stated.
  - (2) The property and structure must be able to be split into substantially equal sections, except as necessary to meet the wider corner lot requirement, and except that developmentally unsuitable portions of a lot may be discounted. Rowhouses may be allowed wider lots for end units.
  - (3) The structure must meet current building code standards for firewall separation, which may be created by new construction or an addition to existing construction.
  - (4) Separate utility services must be provided.
  - (5) The owner of the property to be subdivided shall execute and record at owner's expense a "Declaration of Covenants, Restrictions and Conditions." Said document shall be used to protect the rights of the individual owners sharing the single structure as to maintenance and repair and reconstruction in case of damage to the original structure. Specifically, it shall provide protection to the property owners and the City on the following:
    - a. Building and use restriction.
    - b. Party walls and other necessary common easements, including utilities and access.
    - c. Submission to binding arbitration of disputes between owners.
  - (6) The City shall be a beneficiary to these "Declarations of Covenants, Restrictions and Conditions." They shall be submitted for review by the Planning Commission and the Council at the time the proposed subdivision is reviewed. The City Attorney shall also review the "Declarations of Covenants, Restrictions and Conditions." Changes to the document shall be made if so recommended by the City Attorney. The cost of such review shall be paid by the applicant.
  - (7) No building permit shall be issued on any of the property until proof of recording the "Declarations of Covenants, Restrictions and Conditions" has been submitted to the City.
  - (8) Any other conditions shall be imposed that the City deems necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding structures or to ensure a reasonable division of property.

### **109-124 Minor Subdivision for a Lot Line Adjustment**

- (a) If the conditions for eligibility above are met, then contiguous lots wishing to adjust boundary lines to reconfigure their shapes or sizes may apply for a lot line adjustment. The components of application shall be as specified above. The application review process shall be as outlined above, except that the conditions for approval shall also include Subsection (b) of this section.
- (b) All of the following conditions shall be met before a lot line adjustment may be approved:
  - a. The adjustment does not result in the creation of a new lot;
  - b. The adjustment does not impair existing public or private easement rights;
  - c. The resulting parcels meet all applicable ordinance requirements, except that if any of the parcels were previously non-conforming, they become more conforming as a result of the lot line adjustment.

Section 2. This ordinance shall take effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law.

Adopted by the City Council on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Roslyn Harmon, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Theresa J. Schyma, City Clerk



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Community Development

763-512-2345 / 763-512-2344 (fax)

### Golden Valley Planning Commission Meeting

October 27, 2025

#### Agenda Item

**4.C.** Ordinance Amending Section 113-1 Definitions, 113-30 Conditional Uses, and Section 113-87 Summary Use Tables

#### Prepared By

Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner

#### Summary

Periodically, Planning Division staff update sections of the zoning code to reflect current administrative processes and industry best practices. Staff propose an ordinance updating Section 113-30 Conditional Uses. This amendment clarifies parts of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application process that were not described in City Code, updates CUP review criteria to remove subjectivity, and creates two categories of CUP amendments: major and minor. If Council approves the ordinance, minor CUP amendments would be approved administratively by the Planning Division.

Staff also propose updates to Section 113-1 Definitions and Section 113-87 Summary Use Tables. This amendment allows some uses that currently require CUPs in particular zoning districts to be approved through the administrative zoning permit process, and updates the corresponding land use definitions.

Finally, City Council and community members have expressed interest in the City prohibiting the retail sale of pets. Staff propose language prohibiting retail pet stores, while maintaining current animal shelter and animal rescue organization uses, in Section 113-1 and Section 113-87.

#### Recommended Motion Language

"I move to recommend approval of the ordinance amending Section 113-1, Section 113-30, and Section 113-87, as described in the October 27, 2025 staff report."

#### Recommended Action

Recommend approval of the ordinance amending Section 113-1, Section 113-30, and Section 113-87.

#### Supporting Documents

- [Staff Report](#)
- [Draft Ordinance - Conditional Uses](#)



# MEMORANDUM

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Planning & Sustainability Division

763-593-8095

**Date:** October 27, 2025

**To:** Golden Valley Planning Commission

**From:** Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner

**Subject:** Ordinance Amending Section 113-1, 113-30, and 113-87

### **Planning Analysis**

City Code Section 113-29 governs the process for amending the zoning code. Zoning text amendments may be initiated by the City or by an outside applicant. Planning Commission holds a public hearing, reviews the application, and makes a recommendation to City Council.

### ***Level of Discretion in Decision Making***

The City has a high level of discretion when considering changes to the zoning code. Zoning text amendments are considered a legislative action, which gives City Council broad authority to amend the zoning code in the interest of the general health, safety, and welfare of the community.

### ***Section 113-30 Conditional Uses***

Staff proposes amending the City Code sections that governs Conditional Use Permit (CUP) applications. Section 113-30 describes Conditional Uses, the review criteria the City uses to approve CUPs, and the process CUP applications take. This section is out of date with the City's current process and this section is missing significant information related to review timelines, application requirements, recording requirements, and the process for extending CUP approval expiration dates. The review criteria in Section 113-30(g) has not been updated in at least 20 years and uses subjective performance standards that are difficult to incorporate into the findings of fact necessary for City Council approval.

To improve the code language regarding the CUP application process, staff propose the following changes:

1. 113-30(a): An updated purpose statement.
2. 113-30(b): A new section explaining when a CUP application is required.

3. 113-30(c): A new section explaining the time for review with reference to Minnesota Statute 15.99 – the “60-day rule.”
4. 113-30(d): A new requirement for a pre-application meeting for all CUP applications.
5. 113-30(i): An expanded section that explains extensions and expirations of CUP permits.
6. Minor revisions and formatting corrections to other subsections under 113-30 to provide greater clarity of the CUP application process.

To improve the CUP performance standards and provide more objective review criteria for applicants, staff propose the following changes to Section 113-30(g):

1. Eliminating standards that reference: demonstrating need for a particular use, property values, increases in population and density without an associated nuisance or negative impact, increase in noise levels, pests or vermin, and visual appearance of any proposed structure or use.
2. Adding standards for evaluating applications based on the potential impediments to improving surrounding property, potential traffic volumes, impacts to pedestrian travel, impacts of loading docks and drive-up facilities, potential for causing blight, and impacts of hours of operation.
3. Adding standards based on the City Engineer’s review of the application, including evaluating the impacts to the Capital Improvement Plan and site drainage systems.
4. Rewording existing standards to ensure objective findings of fact and clear requirements for applicants.

Staff propose amending Section 113-30(j) to create two types of CUP amendments: major and minor. Major amendments would follow the same application and approval process as new CUP applications. Minor amendments would only be allowed for small changes to existing CUPs and could be approved administratively by the Planning Division. The type of changes that would necessitate a major or minor amendment are described in the revised Section 113-30(j).

### ***Section 113-87 Summary Use Table***

One of the overall goals of updating these process-focused areas of the zoning code is to streamline application approval when possible. Staff studied the current use tables in Section 113-87 to determine which uses that currently require a CUP could be approved through the administrative zoning permit process.

Additionally, staff has received City Council and City Manager direction to amend the zoning code to prohibit the retail sales of pets in the city. Humane pet store policies seek to limit inhumane puppy mills that often supply pet stores with animals. Currently, there are no puppy-selling pet stores in the city, and the proposed code update would prevent these businesses from operating in Golden Valley in the future. Animal shelters and animal rescue organizations would still be allowed.

Staff propose the following changes to Section 113-87:

1. Table 87-1 Residential Land Uses

- a. Consolidating and updating the Multifamily and Senior and Disability housing uses to better align with the future land use density requirements in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.
- b. Mobile Food Vending changed from a restricted to permitted use, with additional requirements in the table. This updates aligns with the changes proposed in Section 113-31 Temporary Uses, which Planning Commission reviewed on October 13, 2025.
- c. In-Home Child Care added as a permitted use in the R-2, R-3 and R-4 residential zoning districts.
- d. Child Care Center added as a restricted use in the R-3 and R-4 zoning districts.

2. Table 87-2 Economic and Business Land Uses

- a. Breweries and Distilleries combined and allowed in the same districts.
- b. Class II and Class III Restaurants changed from a conditional use to a restricted use.
- c. Indoor Entertainment and Amusement and Private Clubs changed from conditional use to restricted use in the Light Industrial zoning district.
- d. Mobile Food Vending changed from a restricted to permitted use, with additional requirements in the table. This updates aligns with the changes proposed in Section 113-31 Temporary Uses, which Planning Commission reviewed on October 13, 2025.
- e. Recreational uses changed from a conditional use to a restricted use in the Light Industrial zoning district.
- f. Adding Pet Stores as a prohibited use in all districts.
- g. Adding Animal Rescue Organizations and Animal Shelters as a restricted use in the Light Industrial district and a permitted use in the Industrial district.
- h. Revising Daytime Activity Centers for disabled people to specify these facilities are for adults.
- i. Consolidating Drive-Through uses in their own row and allowing as a restricted use in the Commercial and Office zoning districts, with the additional condition that these facilities maintain a 500 foot buffer from residential uses.
- j. Changing Bakeries from a conditional use to a restricted use in the Light Industrial and Industrial districts.
- k. Adding Data Centers as a prohibited use in all districts.
- l. Changing Accessory Retail services and/or sales from a conditional use to the restricted use in the Light Industrial and Industrial districts.
- m. Places of Worship revised to Places of Assembly.

3. Table 87-3 Institutional Land Uses

- a. Changed Adult Day Care Centers and Child Care Centers from conditional uses to restricted uses in the Institutional Assembly zoning district.
- b. Mobile Food Vending changed from a restricted to permitted use, with additional requirements in the table. This updates aligns with the changes proposed in Section 113-31 Temporary Uses, which Planning Commission reviewed on October 13, 2025.
- c. Places of Worship revised to Places of Assembly.

4. Table 87-4 Mixed Use Land Uses

- a. Single Family Dwellings remains a prohibited use and removed from the table.
- b. Manufactured Home Parks removed from the table and now a prohibited use.
- c. Breweries and Micro-distilleries combined.
- d. Taprooms and Cocktail Rooms combined.
- e. Mobile Food Vending changed from a restricted to permitted use, with additional requirements in the table. This updates aligns with the changes proposed in Section 113-31 Temporary Uses, which Planning Commission reviewed on October 13, 2025.
- f. Outdoor Service Areas revised to Outdoor Dining Areas
- g. Financial Institution Drive-Throughs removed from table and now a prohibited use.

***Section 113-1 Definitions***

Staff recommend adding new land use definitions and revising certain existing land use definitions in tandem with the proposed changes to the Summary Use Tables in Section 113-87.

- 1. New definitions: Animal Rescue Organization, Animal Shelter, Dwelling – Senior and Disability Housing, Outdoor Dining Area, Pet Store, Temporary Retail and Produce Sales
- 2. Revised definitions: Cosmetology Services, Places of Assembly

**Public Notification**

To comply with State law and the City’s public hearing notice requirements, the City published a public hearing notice in the Sun Post Newspaper. At the time of this report staff has received no comments on the proposed ordinance.

**Next Steps**

City Council will take action on the proposed code amendments on November 18, 2025

**Staff Contact**

Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner  
jkramer@goldenvalleymn.gov



**ORDINANCE NO. XXX**  
**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE CITY CODE CHAPTER 113**  
**AMENDING SECTIONS 113-1 DEFINITIONS, 113-30 CONDITIONAL USES,**  
**AND SECTION 113-87 SUMMARY USE TABLES**

The City Council for the City of Golden Valley hereby ordains as follows:

Section 1. City Code Section 113-1 is amended to add the following definitions:

**Sec. 113-1 Definitions**

*Animal Rescue Organization:* a non-profit organization incorporated under the law of any state and exempt from federal taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the federal Internal Revenue Code, as amended, whose principal activity is to rescue sick, injured, abused, neglected, unwanted, abandoned, orphaned, lost or displaced animals and adopt them to good homes. "Animal rescue organization" does not include any entity that breeds animals or that (1) is located on the same premises as; (2) has any personnel in common with; (3) obtains, in exchange for payment or any other form of compensation, dogs or cats from; or (4) facilitates the sale of dogs or cats obtained from a person that breeds animals.

*Animal Shelter:* a facility, whether located in or outside the State, that is operated by or under contract with any state, county, or municipality for the purpose of impounding or caring for seized, stray, homeless, abandoned, unwanted, or surrendered animals.

*Cosmetology Services:* Any facility providing retail goods or services related to personal care and beauty products. This includes but is not limited to barbershops, hair and nail salons, estheticians, massage therapy, tanning facilities and tattoo parlors.

*Dwelling - Senior and Disability Housing:* A multifamily dwelling with open occupancy limited to disabled persons and/or persons over 55 years of age requiring services, except that no more than 10 percent of the occupants (excluding disabled persons) may be persons under 55 years of age (spouse of a person over 55 years of age or caretakers, etc.).

*Outdoor Dining Area:* sale and serving of food and beverages outside of an enclosed building where it is offered in conjunction with an established restaurant use.

*Place of Assembly* ~~Worship~~: A building or portion thereof, together with its accessory buildings and uses, of which the principal use is the regular assembly of a group of individuals for religious worship, ceremonies, or events.

*Pet Store:* retail establishment where animals are sold, exchanged, bartered or offered for sale to the general public at retail. Such definition shall not include an animal care facility or animal rescue organization, as defined.

*Temporary Retail and Produce Sales:* Sales of goods for a limited time period, including but not limited to outdoor tree sales, sidewalk sales, retail displays in front of commercial buildings near front entrances, farmer's markets, garden centers, firework sales.

Section 2. City Code Section 113-30 is amended to read as follows:

**Sec. 113-30. Conditional Uses.**

- (a) *Purpose.* The purpose and intent of this section is to regulate uses which may be beneficial in a specific instance to the general welfare of the community, and to provide the City with a reasonable degree of discretion to determine that such uses are not detrimental to the surrounding community, do not adversely affect the general public health, welfare, or safety of the community, and are consistent with the stated purpose of the zoning district in which such uses are located. ~~the suitability of certain uses with characteristics which may be appropriate within a given zoning district but which might have an unusual impact upon surrounding properties or which might otherwise adversely affect the future development of the City or the general public health, welfare, or safety of the property or residents therein. A conditional use permit shall be required for those occupations, vocations, skills, businesses, or other uses specifically designated in each zoning district as requiring such a permit.~~
- (b) *Conditional Use Permit Required.* A conditional use permit shall be required for those land uses specifically designated in each zoning district as requiring such a permit.
- (c) *Time for Review.* Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 15.99, an application for a conditional use permit shall be approved or denied within 60 days from the date of its official and complete submission unless extended pursuant to Statute or a time waiver is granted by the applicant. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 15.99, the City staff is hereby authorized to extend the 60 day time limit by a time period not to exceed 60 additional days, provided written notice of such extension is provided to the applicant before the end of the initial 60 day period.
- (d) *Pre-Application Meeting.* Before submitting a CUP application, all applicants shall schedule a Pre-Application meeting with City staff, per the requirements in Section 113-34.
- (e) An application for a conditional use permit shall be filed with the Planning Division on a form provided by the City and may be made by any governmental body, department, board, or commission, or by any person, individual or corporate, having a legal interest in the property described in the application. Each legal parcel ~~property site~~ shall require its own application. Single applications may not be made for noncontiguous or scattered sites. The applicant shall submit a current title commitment, certified abstract of title, or certificate of title with the application.
- (f) ~~The City Manager or their designee~~ Planning Division shall refer the application to the Planning Commission to hold the official public hearing. Notice of the official public hearing shall be published in the official newspaper of the City not less than 10 days prior to the date of the hearing. Such notice shall include the date, time, and place of the hearing and shall reasonably identify the subject site. The applicant and all property owners within 500 feet of the subject site shall be notified of the official public hearing, not less than 10 days prior to the date of such official public hearing. Such notice shall include the date, time, and place of the hearing and shall identify the subject site.
- (g) The Planning Commission shall make findings and recommendations to the City Council in writing. The findings and recommendations of any proposed conditional use permit request shall be based upon the following general performance standards and criteria, as applicable: ~~based upon any or all of the following factors (which need not be weighed equally) and shall present its findings and recommendations to the City Council in writing:~~

- ~~(1) Demonstrated need for the proposed use.~~
- (2) Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan of the City and Capital Improvement Plan.
- (3) ~~Effect upon property values in the neighboring area.~~ Whether the conditional use will impede the development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district. The conditional use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located.
- (4) ~~Effect of any anticipated traffic generation upon the current traffic flow and congestion in the area.~~ Whether the conditional use generates traffic volumes or patterns that will unreasonably impact the safety, access, or quality of life of neighboring properties, and the extent to which any adverse impacts are minimized or mitigated. The site design for access and parking shall minimize internal as well as external traffic conflicts and shall be in compliance with this Code.
- ~~(5) Effect of any increases in population and density upon surrounding land uses.~~
- (6) Compliance with the City's Mixed-Income Housing Policy (if applicable to the proposed use).
- ~~(7) Increase in noise levels to be caused by the proposed use.~~
- (8) Whether the conditional use causes any odors, dust, smoke, gas, or vibration and the extent to which any such impacts are minimized or mitigated. ~~Any odors, dust, smoke, gas, or vibration to be caused by the proposed use.~~
- ~~(9) Any increase in pests, including flies, rats, or other animals or vermin in the area to be caused by the proposed use.~~
- ~~(10) Visual appearance of any proposed structure or use.~~
- (11) Whether the conditional use impacts pedestrian travel. If applicable, a pedestrian circulation system shall be clearly defined and appropriate conditions imposed to protect such areas from encroachment by parked or moving vehicles.
- (12) The impact of loading docks and drive-up facilities. Loading docks and drive-up facilities shall be positioned so as to minimize internal site access problems and maneuvering conflicts, to avoid visual or noise impacts on any "adjacent" residential use or district.
- (13) Whether the site drainage system shall, in the opinion of the City Engineer, be constructed in compliance with this Code.
- (14) Whether the appearance causes a blighting influence on surrounding properties. The architectural appearance and functional design of the building and site shall not be so dissimilar to the existing or potential buildings so as to cause a blighting influence. Provisions shall be made for an interior location for recycling, compost, and trash area or an outdoor, enclosed receptacle area shall be provided.
- (15) The use and site shall be in compliance with all local, federal and state laws or regulations which are applicable and any related permits are obtained and documented to the City.

(16) Whether the hours of operation of the use impact surrounding residential uses or districts. The hours of operation may be restricted when there is potential negative impact upon a residential use or district.

(h) The City Council shall take no action on the application until it receives the Planning Commission's recommendation, or until 60 days after such application has been submitted to the Planning Commission. Upon receiving the findings and recommendations of the Planning Commission, or the elapse of said 60-day period, the City Council shall call and conduct an official public hearing to consider the application.

~~(i) Reserved.~~

(j) The City Council shall make findings and shall grant or deny a permit based upon any or all of the factors above. The City Council may impose conditions in the granting of conditional use permits. A condition must relate to the performance standards indicated in paragraph (f) above, and be directly related and bear a rough proportionality to the impact created by the conditional use. ~~The City Council may make its approval of the permit contingent upon such conditions as it determines necessary to prevent or minimize injurious effects upon the neighborhood. The City Council may also require that sufficient performance bonding by an acceptable surety be supplied by the property owner to ensure satisfactory compliance with the conditions imposed by the conditional use permit.~~

(g) The City Council shall make findings in writing indicating its decision for approval or denial, following the official public hearing and the applicable conditions and the specific reasons for such decisions. A certified copy of the conditional use permit shall be recorded against the Subject Property with the county recorder or registrar of titles. The conditional use permit shall include the legal description of the property included. ~~The applicant shall be notified in writing of the City Council's decision. If the application is denied in whole or in part or conditions are imposed, the reasons for such denial or for the imposition of conditions, shall accompany this notification.~~

(h) No application which has been denied wholly or in part shall be resubmitted for a period of six months from the date of said denial, except on the grounds of new evidence or upon proof of changed conditions. Each resubmission shall constitute a new application and fee shall be required.

(i) Extensions and Expiration. Unless the City Council specifically approves a different time period, the approval of a conditional use permit shall expire one year from the date it was approved, unless the applicant has commenced the authorized use; or, unless before expiration of the one-year period, the applicant submits a written request for an extension. Such request shall include the following:

- 1) An explanation for why the authorized use has not commenced
- 2) What, if any, good faith efforts have been made to commence the authorized use,
- 3) The anticipated commencement date for the authorized use, and
- 4) The signature of the applicant and property owner.

A request for an extension not exceeding one year shall be reviewed and either approved or denied by the Planning Division. If the applicant requests a second extension or an extension

longer than one year, it shall be presented to the City Council for consideration. The City Council may approve or deny the extension request and, if the request is approved, shall specify the expiration date.

In considering whether to approve or deny an extension request, the Planning Division or City Council shall consider the reason for the delay, whether the applicant has submitted an application for a building permit and whether construction of any improvements has commenced. A memo indicating the expired status of the conditional use permit shall be provided in writing to the permit holder and evidence of the termination will be recorded in the county records.

~~Unless extended by the City Council in its sole discretion for an additional period of up to 12 months, construction and all other pertinent implementation relating to an approved conditional use permit must begin within 12 months of the date that the conditional use permit is approved or the conditional use permit shall be deemed null and void. If the approved conditional use should cease for a period of more than 12 consecutive months, the conditional use permit shall be deemed to have expired.~~

- (j) ~~Changes to an approved conditional use permit affecting uses, parking and loading, or components other than minor changes shall require amendment to the conditional use permit by the City. The requirements for application and approval of a conditional use permit amendment shall be the same as the requirements for original application and approval.~~ Amendments. Holders of a conditional use permit may propose amendments to the permit at any time, following the procedures for a new conditional use permit as set forth in this section. Amendments shall fall into the following two categories:
- (1) Major Conditional Use Permit Amendments. Any significant changes, as determined by the Planning Division, shall be considered a major amendment. These include, but are not limited to: use, hours of operation, number of employees, expansion of structures and/or premises, additional signage, and changes to parking, loading and drive-throughs. The requirements for application and approval of major conditional use permit amendments shall be the same as the requirements for original application and approval.
  - (2) Minor Conditional Use Permit Amendments. Amendments not meeting the definition of a major amendment as defined in paragraph (j)(1) above, shall be considered minor and processed administratively. Such approval shall be in the form of an approval letter signed by the Planning Division and kept on file at City Hall.
  - (3) Any change to an existing conditional use permit, including increasing intensity of use, that is now identified as restricted may be processed via Administrative Zoning Permit. These Administrative Zoning Permits, once approved, shall be recorded against the Subject Property.
- (k) Revocations. The Planning Commission may recommend, and the City Council shall have the right to revoke or suspend any conditional use permit whenever the terms or conditions of such permit have been violated or broken or is in violation of this Chapter, City Codes, or any other applicable regulations. The Planning Division shall notify the Conditional Use Permit holder and initiate revocation to the City Council. All such action by the City Council to revoke or suspend a conditional use permit shall be by means of a majority affirmative vote of City Council Members.

The Planning Division shall provide the applicant and property owner a copy of the proceedings and findings of the City Council. The revocation shall be recorded against the Subject Property.

Section 3. City Code Section 113-87 is amended to read as follows. “\*\*\*\*” denote section breaks.

### Sec. 113-87. Summary use tables.

**Table 87-1 Residential Land Uses**

Land Use Description	R-1	R-2	R-3	R-4
<b>Low to Moderate Density Housing</b>				
Single-family dwellings*	P	P	X	X
Two-family dwellings	X	P	P	X
Rowhouses with up to four attached units	X	P	X	X
Townhouses	X	X	P	X
*Accessory dwelling units are allowed as an accessory use to a single-family dwelling in the R-1 and R-2 zoning districts. These units are subject to either administrative or conditional review, as regulated in Sec. 113-151 of City Code.				
<b>Multifamily Housing</b>				
Multifamily dwellings of up to <del>2012</del> units per acre	X	X	<del>P</del> <u>R</u>	<del>P</del> <u>R</u>
<del>Multifamily dwellings to a density of 17 units per acre</del>	<del>X</del>	<del>X</del>	<del>C</del>	<del>P</del>
Multifamily dwellings to a density of 50 units per acre	X	X	X	<del>P</del> <u>R</u>
Multifamily dwellings to a density of 100 units per acre	X	X	X	C
<del>Senior and disability housing to a density of 20 units per acre</del>	<del>X</del>	<del>X</del>	<del>P</del>	<del>P</del>
Senior and disability housing to a density of <del>25</del> <u>30</u> units per acre	X	X	C	<del>P</del> <u>R</u>
Senior and disability housing to a density of 70 units per acre	X	X	X	<del>P</del> <u>R</u>
Senior and disability housing to a density of 100 units per acre	X	X	X	C
<b>Multifamily Conditional Allowances</b>				
Senior and disability housing up to five stories or 60 feet in height	X	X	C	C
Principal structures in excess of five stories or 60 feet in height	X	X	X	C
Retail sales, Class I and II restaurants, and professional offices*	X	X	<del>C</del> <u>P</u>	<del>C</del> <u>P</u>
Manufactured home parks	X	C	C	C
* These uses must be within principal structures containing at least 20 dwelling units when located upon any minor arterial or major collector street. Any such sales, restaurant, or office shall be located only on the ground floor and have direct access to the street.				
<b>Residential Facilities, Foster Homes, and Essential Services</b>				
Residential facilities serving six or fewer persons	P	P	P	P
Residential facilities serving up to 25 persons	C	C	P	P
Foster family homes	P	P	P	P
Group foster family homes	C	C	P	P
Essential services, Class I	P	P	P	P
Mobile food vending*	<del>R</del> <u>P</u>	<del>R</del> <u>P</u>	<del>R</del> <u>P</u>	<del>R</del> <u>P</u>
<del>Outdoor services areas</del>	<del>R</del>	<del>R</del>	<del>R</del>	<del>R</del>
<del>In-home child care</del>	<del>P</del>	<del>P</del>	<del>P</del>	<del>X</del>
<del>Child care center</del>	<del>X</del>	<del>X</del>	<del>R</del>	<del>R</del>
* Overnight parking and storage is prohibited. The vehicle must be on impervious surface and may not impede sidewalks, drive aisles, pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or public safety. The property owner must approve the use.				

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**Table 87-2 Economic and Business Land Uses**

Land Use Description	C	LI	I	O
General retail services and/or sales that are consistent with the purpose of the Commercial Zoning District and not otherwise listed	P	X	X	X
<b>Food, Entertainment, and Retail</b>				
Adult-oriented services that require City licensing	P	P	P	X
<u>Breweries and Distilleries</u>	X	P	P	X
Brewpubs	€ P	X	X	X
Catering establishments	P	X	X	X
Class I restaurants	P	X	X	X
Class II restaurants	€ R	X	X	X
Class III restaurants	€ R	X	X	X
Cocktail rooms that occupy up to 50 percent of the gross floor area of the microdistillery	X	P	P	X
Cocktail rooms that occupy 50 percent or more of the gross floor area of the microdistillery	X	C	C	X
<u>Distilleries</u>	X	X	P	X
Drive-through retail establishments	C	X	X	X
Hotels/motels	P	X	X	X
Indoor entertainment and amusement	P	€ R	X	X
Private clubs	X	€ R	X	X
Micro-distilleries (limited and associated retail use such as merchandise related to the micro-distillery may be sold)	X	P	P	X
<u>Mobile food vending *</u>	R P	R P	R P	R P
Outdoor services areas	R	X	X	X
Recreational uses (public and private), including gyms, skating rinks, etc.	P	€ R	X	X
Retail establishments that sell tobacco	R	X	X	X
<u>Retail sales of dogs and cats Pet Stores</u>	X	X	X	X
Sale or repair of firearms	X	R	R	X
Seasonal farm produce sales	R	X	X	X
Taprooms that occupy up to 50 percent of the gross floor area of the brewery	X	P	P	X
Taprooms that occupy 50 percent or more of the gross floor area of the brewery	X	C	C	X
Temporary retail sales	R	R	R	X
<u>* Overnight parking and storage is prohibited. The vehicle must be on impervious surface and may not impede sidewalks, drive aisles, pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or public safety. The property owner must approve the use.</u>				
<b>Care Services</b>				
Adult day care center	€ R	C	C	€ R
Animal hospitals, veterinary clinics, and/or pet grooming facilities	R	C	C	X
<u>Animal kennels, animal rescue organizations, and/or animal shelters</u>	X	X R	P	X
Child care centers	€ R	C	C	€ R
Clinics (medical and dental)	X	C	C	P
Cosmetology services	P	X	X	X R
<u>Daytime activity centers or other facilities providing school and/or training for disabled people adults</u>	X	X	X	C
Mortuaries	C	X	C	X
Trade schools or training centers	C	C	C	X
<b>Offices and Financial Institutions</b>				
Consumer small loan lender	R	X	X	X
Currency exchange	R	X	X	X
<u>Financial institutions, with drive-through facilities</u>	€	€	€	€
Financial institutions, without drive-through facilities	P	X	X	P
Laboratories (medical, dental, or research and development)	X	C	C	C

Medical and dental offices	P	X	X	P
Offices, excluding medical and dental	P	P	P	P
<b>Automotive</b>				
Automobile repair shops, auto body repair and/or painting, and auto cleaning and reconditioning	X	X	C	X
Automobile repair shops, including tire, battery, and auto accessory repair and installation	C	X	P	X
Building materials yards, including inside and outside storage	X	C	P	X
Bulk storage of gas, fuel oil, chemicals, and other liquid or solid materials which may be considered hazardous or toxic	X	X	C	X
Car washes	C	X	C	X
Sales or show rooms (auto, machinery, boats, etc.)	C	X	C	X
Service stations	C	X	C	X
Surface lot storage of automobile sales inventory	X	C	C	X
<b>Manufacturing</b>				
Assembly and/or fabricating, foundries, and similar uses	X	P	P	X
Bakeries (commercial/wholesale)	X	R €	€ R	X
Blacksmith, repair, machine, or tin shops	X	X	P	X
Electronics manufacturing	X	P	P	X
Food packaging and processing that does not involve cooking, heating, smoking, soaking, or marinating procedures	X	P	P	X
Food packaging and processing that involves cooking, heating, smoking, soaking, or marinating procedures	X	C	C	X
General manufacturing uses, including the compounding, assembly, or treatment of articles or materials	X	X	P	X
Metal fabrication and assembly	X	X	P	X
Other light manufacturing uses that would not constitute a nuisance or health hazard to surrounding or adjacent residential or commercial districts	X	P	P	X
Packaging and/or bottling of soft drinks or dairy products	X	C	C	X
<b>Data Centers</b>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>
<b>Warehousing and Wholesale</b>				
Greenhouses	X	P	P	X
Bulk storage of gas, fuel oil, chemicals, and other liquid or solid materials which may be considered hazardous or toxic	X	X	C	X
Outdoor sales, including car lots, nurseries, and equipment rentals	C	X	C	X
Outdoor storage for vehicles and equipment	X	X	R	X
Recycling drop-off facilities	X	C	P	X
Recycling facilities	X	C	C	X
Laundries and dry-cleaning plants	X	C	C	X
Lumber yards, including outside storage	X	X	P	X
Warehouses	X	P	P	X
Wholesale-retail distribution centers	X	P	P	X
<b>Transportation and Parking</b>				
Heliports	X	C	C	X
Off-street parking for adjacent commercial or industrial uses	C	X	C	X
Public garages	P	C	C	X
Railroad infrastructure outside of railroad right-of-way	X	X	C	X
Truck/van terminals	X	C	C	X
<b>Drive-through uses not otherwise listed **</b>	<u>R</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>R</u>
<b>** 500 buffer from residential uses (measured from lot line to residential building)</b>				
<b>Other Allowances</b>				



Accessory retail services and/or sales incidental to a permitted use, conducted in an area less than 10 percent of the building's gross floor area	X	C-R	C-R	X
Buildings greater than three stories in height	C	X	X	C
Buildings greater than four stories in height	X	C	C	X
Essential services, Class I	P	P	P	P
Essential services, Class III, except for peaking stations and substations	C	P	P	X
Firing ranges	X	X	X	X
Places of worship assembly	X	C	X	X
Temporary structures such as tents or air-supported structures	X	X	C	X

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Table 87-3 Institutional Land Uses

Land Use Description	I-A	I-M	I-C	I-P
Adult day care centers	C-R	X	X	X
Cemeteries	C	X	X	X
Child care centers	C-R	X	X	X
City offices, County and State facilities, fire stations, and other lands incidental to governmental operations	X	X	P	X
Congregate housing	X	P	X	X
Convalescent homes, nursing homes, clinics, and other buildings incidental to the operation thereof	X	P	X	X
Golf courses, country clubs, and other recreational facilities	X	X	X	P
Hospitals and out-patient surgical facilities	X	C	X	X
Libraries	P	X	X	X
Mobile food vending *	R-P	R-P	R-P	R-P
Museums	P	X	X	X
Parks and playgrounds	X	X	X	P
Places of worship assembly	P	X	X	X
Post offices	X	X	P	X
Private clubs	P	X	X	X
Public and private schools	P	X	X	X
Residential facilities	X	C	X	X
Seasonal farm produce sales	R	X	R	X
Senior and disability housing	X	C	X	X
Essential services, Class I	P	P	P	P
* Overnight parking and storage is prohibited. The vehicle must be on impervious surface and may not impede sidewalks, drive aisles, pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or public safety. The property owner must approve the use.				

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Table 87-4 Mixed Use Land Uses

Land Use Description	MU-N	MU-C	MU-E
<b>Residential</b>			
Units within a mixed use building	P	P	X
Multifamily dwellings (three or more units)	P	P	X
Senior and disability housing	P	P	X
Home occupations	R	R	X
Single family dwellings	X	X	X
Manufactured home parks	C	C	C
<b>Commercial</b>			
Medical clinics	P	P	P

Hotels	X	P	P
Restaurants, brewpubs	P	P	P
General retail/service	R	R	R
<u>Breweries and Micro-distilleries</u>	P	P	P
<u>Taprooms and Cocktail rooms</u>	C	C	C
<u>Micro-distilleries</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>
<u>Mobile food vending *</u>	<u>PR</u>	<u>PR</u>	<u>PR</u>
<u>Cocktail rooms</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>C</u>
Parking	R	R	R
Child care	<u>C R</u>	<u>C R</u>	<u>C R</u>
Drive-thru facilities	C	C	C
Gasoline sales and automotive repair	X	X	X
Self storage	X	X	X
Outdoor storage	X	X	X
Sale or repair of firearms	X	X	X
Firing range	X	X	X
<u>Outdoor dining service areas</u>	R	R	R
<u>* Overnight parking and storage is prohibited. The vehicle must be on impervious surface and may not impede sidewalks, drive aisles, pedestrian or vehicular traffic, or public safety. The property owner must approve the use.</u>			
<b>Office</b>			
Financial institutions without drive-thru facilities	P	P	P
<u>Financial institutions with drive thru facilities</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>C</u>
Offices up to 5,000 gross square feet per floor	P	P	P
Offices more than 5,000 gross square feet per floor	C	C	C
<b>Institutional</b>			
Civic	R	R	R
Medical	R	R	R
Assembly	R	R	R
<b>Light Industrial</b>			
Light manufacturing, R&D, or collaborative work spaces that do not constitute a nuisance or health hazard to adjacent properties	X	X	P
Warehouses	X	X	C

Section 4. This ordinance shall take effect from and after its passage and publication as required by law.

Adopted by the City Council on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2025.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Roslyn Harmon, Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Theresa J. Schyma, City Clerk



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Community Development

763-512-2345 / 763-512-2344 (fax)

### Golden Valley Planning Commission Meeting

October 27, 2025

#### Agenda Item

##### 7.A. Missing Middle Housing Study

#### Prepared By

Jacquelyn Kramer, Senior Planner

#### Summary

Golden Valley, like many first-ring suburbs in the Twin Cities region, is facing growing pressure to expand housing options in response to shifting demographics, rising housing costs, and changing household needs. While the city has long been characterized by its predominantly single-family neighborhoods, there is growing recognition that this limited housing mix no longer meets the diverse needs of current and future residents. Younger households, aging residents looking to downsize, and workers seeking to live closer to employment centers all require more varied, flexible, and affordable housing options than what is currently available. "Missing middle housing" refers to a range of multi-unit or clustered housing types—such as duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, and courtyard apartments—that are compatible in scale with single-family neighborhoods but offer greater affordability and choice. These housing types have historically existed in Golden Valley and surrounding communities but have become increasingly rare due to zoning restrictions and development trends. This project explores strategies to reintroduce missing middle housing into Golden Valley's fabric in a way that supports the city's goals of strategic redevelopment, local control, and inclusivity.

Staff from Bolton & Menk will present the study and highlight the correlation of housing density and environmental sustainability. They will then lead a high-level discussion on strategies to promote environmentally friendly housing density. For further information on housing density and sustainability, please see the resources linked below.

<https://www.sierraclub.org/minnesota/blog/2025/01/environmental-case-urban-density>

<https://www.unsustainablemagazine.com/benefits-of-high-density-housing/>

<https://besjournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/pan3.10423>

#### Recommended Action

Listen to the presentation from staff, hold a joint discussion between the Environmental Commission and Planning Commission on the Missing Middle Housing Study and provide feedback on next steps.

#### Supporting Documents

- [Draft Presentation](#)



# MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING STUDY

CITY OF GOLDEN VALLEY  
JOINT COMMISSION | OCT 27TH, 2025





# Agenda

1. Study Recap
2. Density and Sustainability
3. City's Powers and Process to Guide Desired Development
4. Example Zoning Tools and Discussion

## A Missing Middle Housing Sampler



1. COTTAGE COURT

2. SIDE-BY-SIDE DUPLEX

3. STACKED DUPLEX

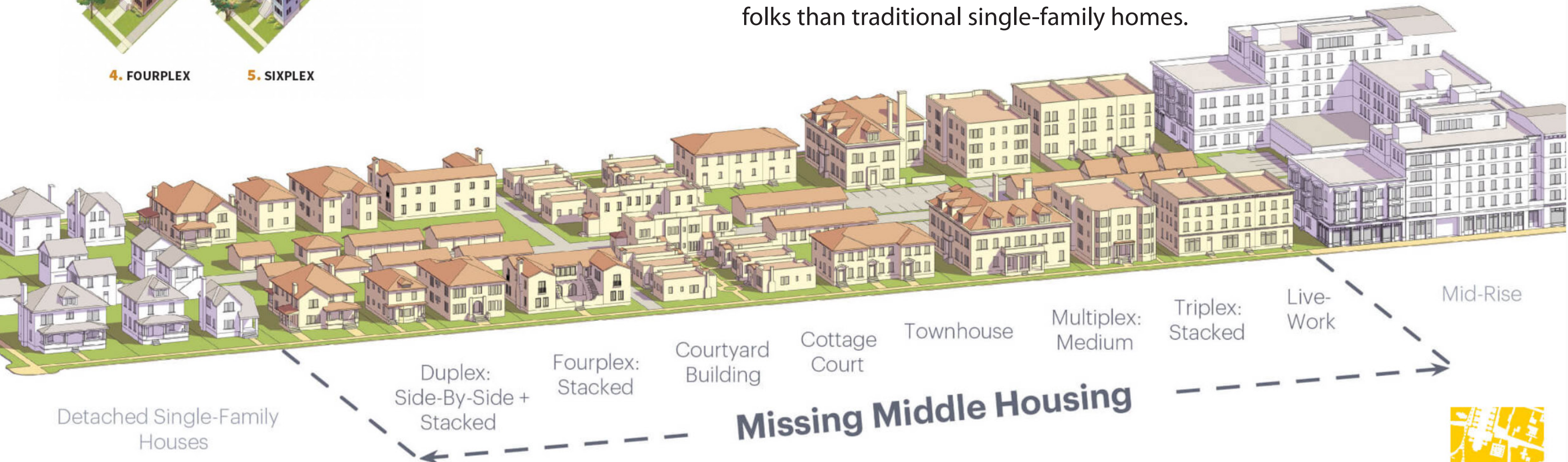


4. FOURPLEX

5. SIXPLEX

## Key Characteristics:

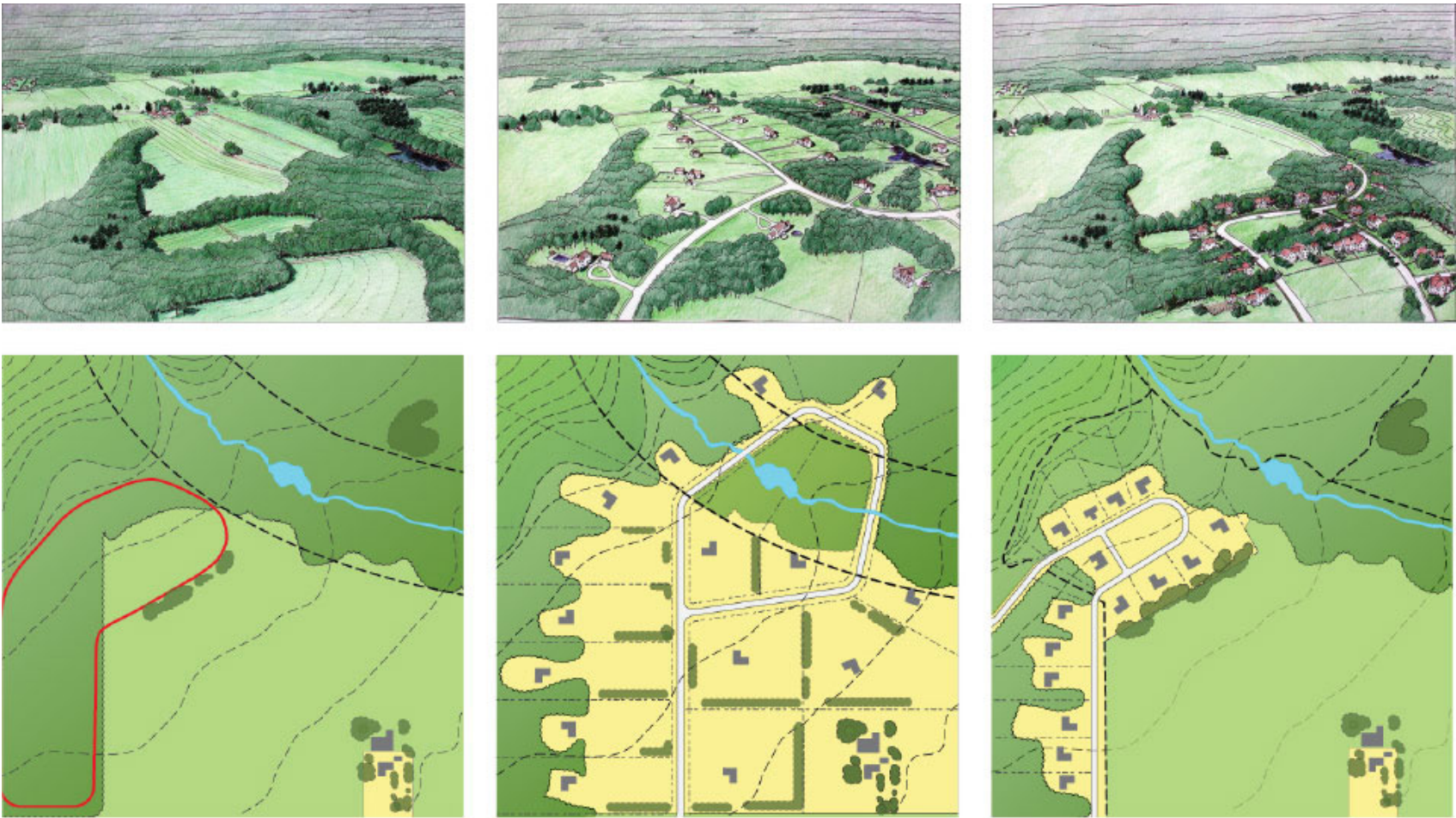
- **Medium density** - between single family homes and large apartment buildings
- **House-scale** - retains the scale and character of single-family neighborhoods
- **Diversity of housing types** - ADU's, duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, cluster developments, and small apartments.
- **Walkability** - works best in walkable neighborhoods with some access to transit
- **Affordability** - often more attainable to a broader swath of middle-income folks than traditional single-family homes.



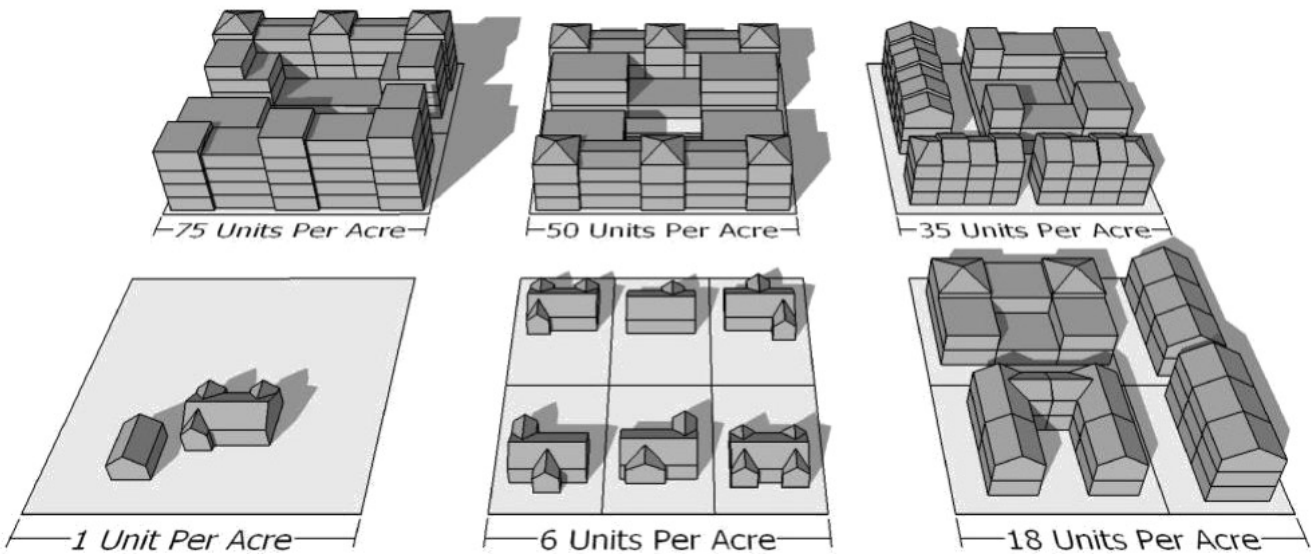


# Housing Density and Environmental Sustainability

Different ways to achieve the same housing outcome // Different environmental impacts



Conservation Development  
source: better town toolkit



Land Use Efficiency



# Housing Density and Environmental Sustainability



Mixed neighborhood housing densities

40		80	
120	160	200	240
280	320	360	400

1:36 ratio



**Town-house**

**Small Plex**

**Small Plex**

**Courtyard**

**Town-house**

**ADU**



*Density across a neighborhood*

**Duplex**

**Medium Plex**

**Medium Plex**



# Housing Density and Environmental Sustainability

## Environmental Benefits

### Natural Environmental

- **Sprawl** - Higher housing density can reduce sprawl and preserve natural resources, lowering land 'consumption' and preserve natural areas and habitats.
- **GHG** - Concentrating and mixing people and uses can promote shorter travel distances and multimodal trips, thereby lowering vehicle emissions and increasing walkability and transit usage.





# Housing Density and Environmental Sustainability

## Environmental Benefits

### Resource Consumption

- **Infrastructure** - Supports efficient infrastructure systems through reduced needs, materials, and costs.
- **Resource Efficiency** - Multi-unity residential development enables efficient energy usage and water distribution, decreasing resource needs per person.
- **Construction Materials:** Lowers development costs and materials consumption on a per person basis.
- **Supply Chain and Deliveries:** Density can create shorter delivery and supply chain travel demands, reducing resource needs, improves timelines, and can reduce costs.





# Housing Density and Environmental Sustainability

## Livability Benefits

### Development Efficiency

- **Attractor** - Necessary to draw and support jobs, stores, entertainment, and other destinations to be viable.
- **Housing Options** - Generally offers more housing options at more price points for more people - promotes inclusivity, housing security, and stronger social networks.



# Housing Density and Environmental Sustainability

## Livability Benefits

### Quality of Place

- **Connectivity** - Allows for more people and uses to be located in nearer proximity, promoting social interactions and shorter travel distances between destinations
- **Tax Base** - Generates a more effective tax base when measured on a per acre basis.
- **Community Character** - Often results in a stronger and more inviting built form and character - density can result in a built environment that invites people to explore, spend more time, and make connections with each other and the world around them.





# Housing Density and Environmental Sustainability

## (some) City Tools

- **Zoning** - land use allowances, site and building design standards, density allowances, site improvement incentives
- **Approval Processes** - streamlining approval processes for desired outcomes, adjusting fees
- **Incentives and Financing** - financial subsidies, grant applications, land ownership, EDA/HRA driven developments, grant and loan programs,
- **Programming and Training** - City-lead or supported programming, technical trainings, resource guides for desirable development and site outcomes

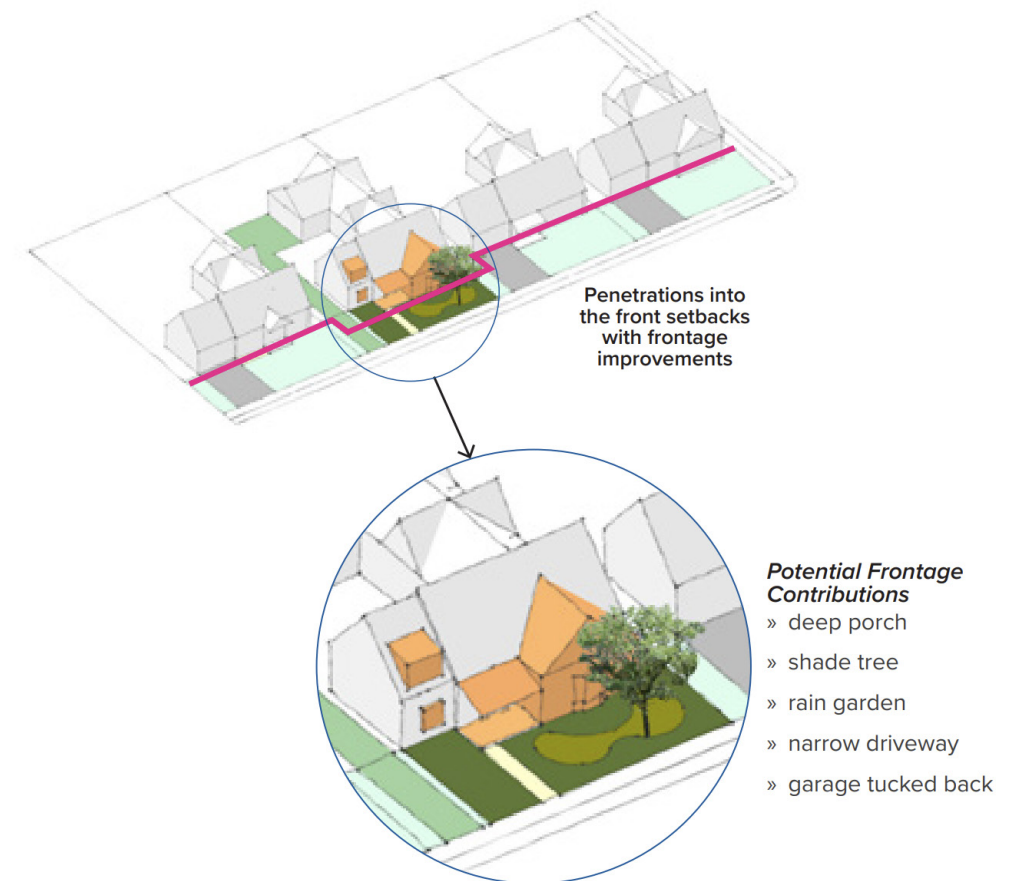




# Housing Density and Environmental Sustainability

## (some) Strategies to Connect Density Allowances with Environmental Benefits

- Large mature front yard trees
- Native plant preferences
- Useable yard requirements
- Sidewalk requirements
- Increase allowable height
- Reduced parking requirements
- Solar panels or utility reuse



### **Flexibility with Front Yard Setbacks**

In order to create additional development flexibility and a greater diversity of housing types, the strict 30' front yard setback requirement can be loosened in return for frontage enhancements such as deep and wide porches, high quality front facade materials, enhanced landscaping, and side loaded garages that do not face the street.

**Question - what excites you about this?**





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Community Development

763-512-2345 / 763-512-2344 (fax)

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### Golden Valley Planning Commission Meeting

October 27, 2025

#### Agenda Item

##### 7.B. Climate Equity Plan

#### Prepared By

Chloe McGuire, Deputy Community Development Director

Ethan Kehrberg

#### Summary

The Climate Equity Plan is well underway, with a 3 month update attached to this case. Also attached is a draft presentation with facilitated questions. At this meeting, city staff will provide a presentation (which may be amended slightly from the draft attached) and request that the Planning Commission and Environmental Commission work together on providing feedback.

#### Recommended Action

Listen to the presentation from staff, engage the Planning Commission on the Climate Equity Plan and provide feedback on next steps.

#### Supporting Documents

- [Draft Presentation](#)
- [Climate Equity Plan - 3 Month Update](#)

# Golden Valley Climate Equity Plan

October 27, 2025

# Climate Equity

- Climate change disproportionately impacts vulnerable communities
- There is a long history of discrimination in land use, housing, infrastructure investment, transportation, exposure to air and water pollution, and other factors that interact with and are exacerbated by climate change
- Creating an equitable future requires equitable implementation of sustainability, resilience, and adaptation strategies to support underserved and climate-vulnerable communities



# The Climate Equity Plan will:

- Set a clear vision for Golden Valley's role in climate action with a key focus on equity and ensuring a healthy environment for future generations.
- Identify practical, impactful, and clear climate adaptation and mitigation goals and strategies for both City operations and the community at-large, prioritizing meaningful and timely implementation.
- Address the social and environmental inequities related to resilience and climate change.
- Address the anticipated requirements for the City's 2050 Comprehensive Plan, as required by the Metropolitan Council. The Plan shall include any data provided in the Metropolitan Council's Systems Statements.
- Meet the City Council's vision for a more equitable and resilient future.

# Broad Goals of the Plan



Reduce greenhouse gas emissions



Prepare for weather changes



Understand climate concerns from the community, including those most vulnerable to the impacts



Work together to find solutions



Create action steps to benefit all who live, work, and play in Golden Valley



Satisfy climate requirements of Metropolitan Council's upcoming Comprehensive Planning process



# Draft Topic Areas



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A winding river flows through the center of the image, surrounded by lush green fields and patches of brown earth. Several small houses and buildings are scattered throughout the landscape, particularly along the riverbanks. The overall scene depicts a harmonious relationship between nature and human habitation.

# Natural Systems and Water

Promote equitable access to nature through responsible management of the natural and built environment, advancing practices that protect water quality and strengthen environmental resilience.



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A river flows through the center, surrounded by lush green fields and patches of brown earth. A small village with several buildings is visible on the left side. The overall scene is a mix of natural and human-made elements.

# Community Cohesion and Public Health

A connected, safe, and inclusive community that promotes wellbeing and public health by addressing the social, environmental, and economic factors that shape quality of life for all residents.



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A river flows through the center, surrounded by green fields and some buildings. The text is overlaid on the image.

# Energy and the Built Environment

Use (or design and adapt) the built environment in our community to advance energy efficiency and climate resilient municipal buildings, facilities, and infrastructure powered increasingly by renewable energy and electrification.



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A winding river flows through the center of the image. On the left, a road runs diagonally, with several buildings and a small cluster of houses. The landscape is divided into numerous green and brown agricultural fields. A small boat is visible on the river in the lower left. The overall scene is a mix of natural and human-made elements.

# Transportation

Sustainable and resilient transportation systems that provide safe, connected, accessible, and affordable mobility options for all while supporting electrification, green infrastructure, and green spaces that are climate resilient.



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A wide, muddy river flows through the center of the image. On the left bank, a road runs diagonally, with several small buildings and a few vehicles. The surrounding land is divided into numerous green and brown agricultural fields. A small boat is visible in the river near the bottom left.

# Waste and Materials

Expand opportunities for waste prevention, reuse, and diversion, and strengthen education and engagement to reduce environmental impacts and foster a community culture of resource conservation.



# Timeline

- **June** - Released RFP for consultant to support development of plan
- **July** - Selected WSB as consultant
- **July - October** - Conducted community engagement, research, data analysis
- **November 13** - Arts Event at Brookview to inspire action related to the CEP
- **November-December** - Draft the full plan
- **February - March 2026** - Present plan to City Council for adoption
- **Spring 2026** - Begin implementation



# Initial Survey Findings

# Initial findings and key themes

Initial findings and key themes:

1. Green space as community identity
2. Safety and stability as priorities
3. Intergenerational community concerns
4. Transportation options
5. Emerging support for proactive climate action



# We need your help gathering input

Survey is open through **October 31, 2025**

- [Surveymonkey.com/r/ClimateEquityPlan](https://surveymonkey.com/r/ClimateEquityPlan)
- Leveraging your relationships:
  - Community Partnerships
  - Who can you meet with, talk to?
  - Activating engaged public
  - Activating disengaged public
- Climate Equity Arts Event on November 13



# Initial Climate Findings



**414,908**

Total 2022 Emissions MT  
CO<sub>2</sub>e

=



**6,860,539**

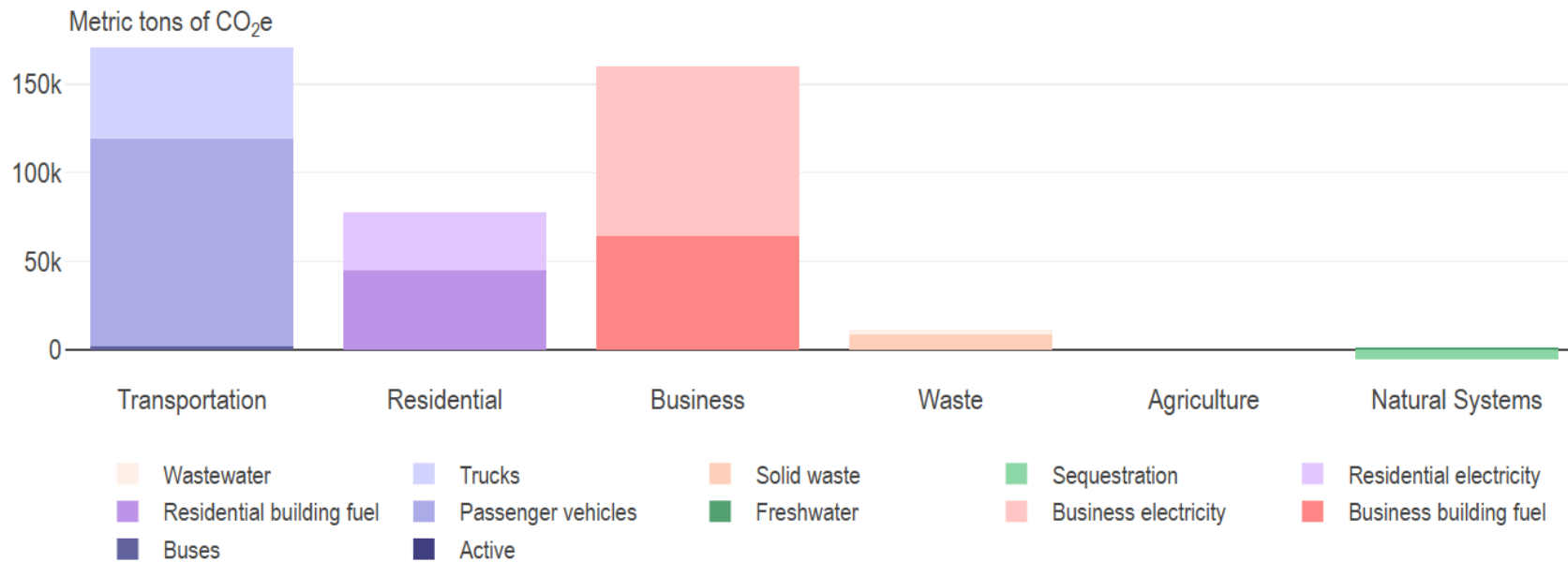
Tree seedlings grown for  
10 years



**124**

Wind turbines  
running for a year

### Golden Valley greenhouse gas emissions inventory, 2022





### Increased Flood Risk

High precipitation events increase risk of flooding exacerbated by impermeable surfaces in urban spaces. Critical infrastructure disruptions.



### Prolonged Dry Spells

Summertime precipitation is projected to decrease with longer dry spells. Water demand in urban communities may outpace supply causing water stress.



### Public Health Risks

Heat exposure risk for those most vulnerable increases and habitat for vector-borne disease carriers spreads. Wildfire smoke and air quality impacts.



### Natural Resource Degradation

Warmer surface waters increase likelihood of algal blooms. Increased spring precipitation results in greater pest and disease transmission for flora and fauna. EAB impacts.



### Air Quality

Increased ground-level ozone and particulate matter from windblown dust or wildfire smoke.

## Discussion Questions:

How do you see zoning and land use fitting in with the Climate Equity Plan?

How can we make planning more sustainable and resilient?

Any other feedback?

# Thank You.



Ethan Kehrberg, Sustainability Specialist



763-593-8083



[ekehrberg@goldenvalleymn.gov](mailto:ekehrberg@goldenvalleymn.gov)



[www.goldenvalleymn.gov](http://www.goldenvalleymn.gov)

## **Three Month Update: Climate Equity Plan**

The Golden Valley Climate Equity Plan effort is well underway, thanks to the support and engagement of staff, elected officials, other City leaders, and community members. We have been working with consultants at WSB to develop the plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, address climate vulnerabilities in our community, and build equitable resilience and adaptation. The Climate Equity Plan (CEP) will meet the Metropolitan Council's climate requirements of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and will be a guide for continued sustainability work in the city. You can find the webpage for the CEP here:

<https://www.goldenvalleymn.gov/816/Climate-Equity-Plan>

We are excited to share this update for the first three months of the project.

### **Community Engagement**

The CEP survey opened on July 25 and can be found at [Surveymonkey.com/r/ClimateEquityPlan](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ClimateEquityPlan). We have over 300 responses so far, and we have been promoting the survey online and at 8 local events. We have also completed “intercept” pop-ups at Metro Transit Route 755 bus stops. We have proactively reached out to multifamily property owners, businesses, community organizations, and email lists. The survey will be open until October 31, and any additional support in reaching underserved or vulnerable communities is appreciated.

The top themes heard so far are:

- Green space as community identity
- Safety and stability as priorities
- Intergenerational community concerns
- Transportation options
- Emerging support for proactive climate action

### **Data Collection**

WSB has completed an existing conditions scan, including environmental and climate data, as well as a peer city review. We are currently working on:

- Analysis of recently received community greenhouse gas data (2022) from Metropolitan Council
- Analysis of significant City operational data, gathered by staff.
- Drafting climate conditions analysis



### **Environmental Commission**

The Environmental Commission has met twice on this topic. WSB facilitated a meeting in August to walk through project timeline, align on objectives, and provide survey information for the commissioners to share. In September, they talked through the draft table of contents, the GHG data, survey data (to date) and narrowing down plan topics. The Environmental Commission has identified a point person, Commissioner Ellen Brenna, to attend Steering Committee meetings and work closely with staff outside of group meetings.

### **Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee was launched and consists of department heads, other key City staff, and Commission and Council liaisons. They have also met twice, with another meeting planned later this year. In August, they talked through project timeline, project team roles and plan goals, public engagement, and how to best share the survey. They met in September to review the draft plan sections, table of contents, an outline of sample topics, the initial greenhouse gas (GHG) findings, and survey data (to date). They also provided WSB feedback on the draft vision statements for each topic area.

### **Save the Date**

An arts event is planned for Thursday, November 13 at Brookview from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm. Perpich will be joining us and students will be attending to help engage residents and show off their art skills! Please attend if you are able. We are excited to engage the community on their vision for what climate equity looks like in a new way. More details to come.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Community Development

763-512-2345 / 763-512-2344 (fax)

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### Golden Valley Planning Commission Meeting

October 27, 2025

#### Agenda Item

**7.C.** Staff Updates on Outdoor Lighting Code, Brookview Solar, Staffing, and Recent Events

#### Prepared By

Chloe McGuire, Deputy Community Development Director

Ethan Kehrberg

#### Summary

Please review the attached staff updates.

#### Recommended Action

Receive staff updates and provide feedback.

#### Supporting Documents

- [Staff Updates \(EC\)](#)



# MEMORANDUM

## Community Development

763-593-8090 / 763-593-8109 (fax)

**Date:** October 27, 2025

**To:** Environmental Commission

**From:** Ethan Kehrberg, Sustainability Specialist and Chloe McGuire, Deputy Community Development Director

**Subject:** Staff Updates

### **Staff Update on Process Required to Amend Outdoor Lighting Code**

Staff wanted to provide a run-down on the required actions related to the Environmental Commission's item related to updating the outdoor lighting code. Outdoor Lighting is currently [Section 113 –153](#) of the City's Zoning Code.

Updating the City's Outdoor Lighting has not been indicated as a high priority City Code amendment in the past. While this project appears relatively simple on the face, as staff have continued to dig into this project, additional questions pop up. If this is a priority, staff would advise that this would likely take over a year or year-and-a-half to complete based on the scope. Staff would recommend the City engage a consultant to help advise on this work based on the numerous moving pieces and unique scope. Based on recent consulting prices for code amendments, staff would anticipate approximately \$60,000+ for this work. The numbers would be higher if staff requested additional code sections (e.g. site plan, site plan amendment) sections of code are updated in tandem or if additional engagement (e.g. lighting contractors, internal engagement) is completed by the consultant.

Because this is a joint work session with the Planning Commission, staff felt it prudent to provide both commissions an update and receive any high-level feedback on the below information.

### **Background**

DarkSky, or more commonly typed as "Dark Skies" is an organization that focuses on reducing light pollution. Their website is: <https://darksky.org/>. DarkSky focuses largely on outdoor lighting as the key means to reducing light pollution but also has information

on satellites and other users. As it relates to outdoor lighting, DarkSky focuses on the following five principles for lighting

1. Useful – Does the lighting have a specific purpose? If not, you should not put it in.
2. Targeted – You should shield all lighting and ‘target’ it towards the area you want to light. Dark skies compliant lighting requires fixtures provide their backlight, up light, and glare (BUG) ratings. In many situations, their recommendation for this lighting is that there is zero or minimal backlight, up light, or glare.
3. Low Level – Lights should be as dim as possible.
4. Controlled – Lights should have timers and motion detectors, dimmed when possible, and turned off when not needed.
5. Warm-colored – Warmer lights should be used whenever possible.

### Internal Process

Below are the processes that staff have identified that would need to take place in order to present a code for public consumption.

1. Planning Process
  - a. Background Research and Code Drafting – Staff would need to research our peer communities and learn from their processes. Staff is familiar with enforcing a Dark Skies compliant ordinance, and would want to talk to a few other communities about how the project works in practice. Few of our peer communities have true Dark Skies compliant lighting ordinances. Staff’s research indicates that few communities within the Twin Cities have Dark Skies compliant lighting, except the cities of Richfield, Plymouth, and Lakeville, which require new lighting to be dark skies compliant. After researching, staff would need to draft an updated lighting section that includes permit processes. Planning staff does not currently process lighting permits other than through the limited oversight during a site plan review process. Any code changes would also likely affect the current resident-requested streetlight process that is directed by the Engineering Department in collaboration with Xcel Energy. This process could also change under direction of Council.
  - b. Lighting Permit – Initial review of the ordinance changes, staff has flagged that the city does not have a lighting permit or a lighting permit fee. This process would need to be created, code amended, and fee schedule



- updated. This would need to run in tandem with this process, and would also require legal and equity review (steps 2 – 3).
- c. Site Plan Process – Initial review of this project has also indicated that the City’s site plan review process does not sufficiently require lighting and has other items staff would like to update. As this section of code touches every built project, staff would like to update this section of code regardless of the lighting amendment.
  - d. Site Plan Amendment Process – In addition to the above, staff has flagged that the City should update the site plan amendment process. These changes are required regardless of this code but should take place first.
  - e. Staff Training – As noted above, two staff members are familiar with enforcing these types of ordinances in another community. Other staff should attend trainings or webinars on enforcing and understanding these requirements based on the complexity and uniqueness of these requirements. It would be ideal if these trainings could happen prior to code being drafted or finalized, so that the knowledge gained can be incorporated into the draft code.
2. Legal Review – All code amendments require legal review, which can take a few months to finalize. Since this type of code is so unique in the Twin Cities, we anticipate legal review requiring additional research on allowable code requirements.
  3. Equity Review – All code requirements require internal equity review, which typically takes about 45 days.
  4. Internal Engagement
    - a. Parks – One of the largest lighting users is the Parks and Recreation Department. Planning staff is familiar with how dark skies compliant lighting regulations have impacted parks users in previous communities. In previous communities, staff had to issue CUPs for parks lighting as dark skies compliant lighting does not typically provide sufficient lighting for large-scale parks, ballfields, and stadium lighting. Parks and Recreation Department staff would likely want to engage the Open Space and Recreation Commission (OSRC) and receive training on the impact of the lighting changes prior to any code presented to the public.
    - b. Public Works – The Public Works Department installs lighting in the City. Staff needs to complete additional engagement with Public Works to see what lighting options exist that are Dark Skies compliant, where we order

our lights, and the costs associated with the compliant fixtures and how those will be funded.

- c. Police – The Police Department speaks with residents, business owners, and property owners often about safety and lighting. We had an initial conversation with the Police Department if Dark Sky Lighting would be an option for the City and how this might affect public safety. The Police Department noted interest in learning more, but staff would need to engage the patrol division in order to ensure that lighting changes would not make their jobs more difficult day-to-day. In addition, cities generally recommend *more* lighting as it relates to crime, so staff would want to fully vet these regulations from a crime perspective in order to ensure that residents would still feel safe and that public safety is kept at the forefront.
- d. Lighting Audit – Staff would want to have a full understanding of what lighting other jurisdictions use along their roadways (Hennepin County, MnDOT) and if these regulations would apply to those lights. Initial research indicates that these types of lights are typically more impactful than City lighting, but exempt from City lighting regulations. Staff would want a full understanding of what lights this Code could impact, and if this Code requirement would make a difference in the City.

### 5. External Engagement

- a. Lighting Contractors – One of the largest challenges as it relates to these types of lighting ordinances is implementing the code. Lighting contractors, especially in the Midwest and Twin Cities, are not trained or used to providing the required data on lighting specs and lighting permits that these types of codes require. Prior to a significant code change, staff would want to engage these contractors and typical users so we can make the code functional for them. This type of code, in practice, requires *significant* contractor training, back-and-forth on permits, cheat-sheets, handouts, and FAQs. Staff would want to understand the needs of our local contractors prior to implementation so that permits were as efficient and seamless as possible.
- b. Commercial Users – Staff would like to engage commercial users, who often utilize large-scale lighting, to understand their needs and if these types of regulations would work for their sites. Staff want to understand the business perspective on lighting. We would want to understand what type of lighting they have, why they chose that, and what the impact of

these regulations would be in practice. This may affect signage lighting as well and will require updates to the sign code. Additionally, we would need to engage these users directly, so they understood the 'triggers' within the code that required lighting change to dark skies compliant lighting. (Does switching out lightbulbs trigger it? Do only new pole lights require it? Does a parking lot retrofit require it? Or is it only for tear-down and rebuilds?) Commercial users certainly can comply with these regulations, but we would want to understand the impact.

- c. Multifamily Users – Apartment users also tend to utilize lighting in a more significant manner and tend to struggle more to comply with these types of lighting regulations than single-family homes. Staff would want to speak to the property managers or owners of apartment buildings to understand if their residents have requested additional lighting once the buildings have been put in, if the lighting has deterred any crime, and what their preferences are. Similar to the above, apartment buildings certainly can comply with these types of regulations, but we would want to understand the impact.
- d. Lighting District Users – The City implements many streetlights via lighting district agreements with private property owners. There are over 225 individual street lighting districts in the City. Staff have not been able to fully engage internally on this item to understand the entire process, but staff would want to understand each of those agreements and the impact that a code amendment would have on the existing agreements and new agreements.

### External Process

1. Planning Commission – The Zoning Code is under the purview of the Planning Commission. They hold all public hearings and make recommendations on all changes to the Zoning Code, which is then moved to the City Council for final decision. This would be the first step in the formal, external process.
2. Community Engagement – Staff would want to complete thorough community engagement where we engaged residents on lighting regulations. We would want to notify apartment users, single family homeowners, block club leaders, and others not notified in the Internal Process noted above. Staff would want to understand:
  - How do residents feel about current lighting regulations?
  - Do residents want more or less lighting?



# MEMORANDUM

## Community Development

763-593-8090 / 763-593-8109 (fax)

- Do residents relate lighting to their personal sense of security?  
Through this community engagement process, staff would want to fully understand the street lighting district requirements and City Council direction on lighting in general.
- 3. City Council – City Council is the ultimate decision-maker for code amendments and would need to approve/deny at a regular meeting. They would likely want at least one work session on this amendment prior, due to the unique scope.

### **GreenCorps Service Term**

David Smith began his 11-month Minnesota GreenCorps service term with the City of Golden Valley on October 13, 2025. David will be helping with a variety of projects throughout the year, including implementation of environmental plans, engagement at multifamily properties, zero waste and recycling efforts, green infrastructure, GreenStep Cities, and other sustainability initiatives.

### **Brookview Solar Update**

Apadana, LLC is under contract to complete the solar panel project on Brookview. Staff are still working towards a goal of finalizing the project in 2025, but are currently running into delays with Xcel Energy, who must permit the project via interconnection agreements. The City Council recently approved two interconnection agreements to continue the project moving forward. Staff will continue to provide updates on the project.

### **EV & Electrification Event**

On Tuesday, September 30, 2025, the City hosted its third electric vehicle and electrification-focused event. Numerous residents attended to show off their electric vehicles, and our Public Works Department attended to highlight electric tool options.

### **Environmental Manager Hiring Update**

Emma Rakestraw, PE, will start on October 27, 2025. Emma has been working at Jacobs as a Resilience and Water Resources Engineer for the past 8 years, where she has worked on local and national-level projects. She has over a decade of experience managing complex projects.