



## MINUTES

**Mankato Planning Commission  
October 22, 2025 - 6:00 p.m.  
IGC - Mankato Room**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Zehnder called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioner's Present: Chair Zehnder, Ms. Surdy, Mr. Filipovitch, Mr. Dieken, Mr. Iddings, Mr. Wilke.

Staff Present: Molly Westman-Planning and Zoning Administrator, Mark Konz-Director of Planning and Development Services, Bennett Hanson-Planner, Travis Johnson-Permit Technician, Brittany Mitchell-Planning Coordinator, Nick Peterson-Sr. Management Analyst.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Ms. Surdy made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Iddings seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Filipovitch made a motion to approve the minutes from September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Mr. Dieken seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

1. **September 24, 2025 Planning Commission minutes**

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

No old business

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

1. 

|         |
|---------|
| CY56-25 |
|---------|

**Request of the Planning Agency to review the proposed 2026-2030 Capital Infrastructure Plan.**

Mr. Peterson reports that the Community Investment Program (CIP) is a multi-year plan that helps identify, prioritize, budget, and plan for needed improvements to streets, parks, utilities,

including water and wastewater facilities, major projects and purchases, such as airport improvements, park upgrades and city vehicles.

Part of the review and approval process for the CIP requires that the Planning Commission reviews the document and confirms the plan conforms to the goals of the Land Use Plan.

Mr. Konz reports that staff submitted the following findings:

1. The plan conforms to the goals of the Mankato Land Use Plan.
2. The plan conforms to the goals of the Mankato Parks and Open Spaces Plan.
3. The plan conforms to the goals of the Mankato Strategic Plan.

Mr. Konz reports that staff recommend approval of the Community Investment Plan.

Mr. Wilke inquired whether the pickleball court replacement proposed in the CIP would be constructed to meet the standards required to host regional tournaments. He recommended that the courts be built to those standards if they are not currently planned to do so.

Mr. Peterson indicated that for projects of this size, a feasibility study or public engagement process is typically conducted to ensure that the proposed facilities meet user needs. He noted that he will take this into consideration for this project.

Chair Zehnder questioned whether the airport tower construction would still be able to proceed despite delays in federal funding.

Mr. Konz stated that the City of Mankato originally had a five-year window, which is now nearing its end. During that period, the timeframe was extended to seven years, providing the city with additional time to complete the process. He noted that this extension has been very beneficial and expressed appreciation for the extra time granted without the need for a formal request.

Ms. Surdy inquired about the intentions for the airport upgrades, including the construction of the new tower.

Mr. Peterson indicated that in 2018, the FAA conducted an official count and found that the Mankato Airport was the second busiest in Minnesota, behind Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport. He noted that some aviators have expressed reluctance to fly into Mankato due to the high volume of traffic and safety concerns. Mr. Peterson also stated that the FAA assigns airports a score to determine the need for a control tower; any score above 1 qualifies for a tower, and the Mankato Airport received a score of approximately 2.3.

Mr. Wilke added that the aviation program at Minnesota State University, Mankato, is large and continuing to grow, which further contributes to the need for a new control tower.

Chair Zehnder questioned what examples of stormwater best management practices would be implemented and whether these would be intended to assist homeowners with stabilization efforts.

Mr. Peterson explained that if a private residential property is experiencing stormwater issues and the owner wishes to make improvements, these efforts can also benefit the city. He stated that the fund would likely allow for a cost-sharing arrangement with the resident, enabling improvements that assist both the property owner and the city's infrastructure.

Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Wilke made a motion to approve the 2026-2030 Community Investment Plan. Mr. Dieken seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

*The anticipated date of Council action is December 1, 2025.*

2.

CY53-25

**Request of APX Construction Group, with permission of the owner, for a preliminary plat review of Evenson Subdivision; for annexation; and for the rezoning of the subject parcel from T, Transition, to B-3, Highway Business. The subject property is generally described as being in the east ½ of the northwest ¼, Section 21, Township 108 N, Range 26 W lying south of Highway 83 and east of Highway 22 excluding Stanley Subdivision, Blue Earth County (Blue Earth County PID R430921177001).**

Mr. Konz reports that staff respectfully submit the following findings regarding the proposed rezone from T, Transition, to B-3, Highway Commercial.

1. The rezoning from T, Transition, to B-3, Highway Commercial, is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive land use plan, as adopted and amended from time to time by the City Council.
2. The rezoning is compatible with the overall character of existing development in the immediate vicinity of the affected property.
3. The proposed B-3 zoning classification is consistent with adjacent properties in the immediate vicinity.
4. The proposed rezoning will not interfere with or diminish the use of property in the immediate vicinity.
5. The properties will be served by public utilities.

Mr. Konz reports that staff respectfully submit the following findings of fact regarding the proposed preliminary plat of Evenson Subdivision.

1. General Requirements
  1. The subdivided site will be used for purposes permitted or conditionally permitted as a multiple family dwelling site.
  2. Drainage and storm water management for Lot One, Block 1 of the development, will be required to conform to City drainage requirements. Concept plans for the future site development show a private stormwater pond in the northwest corner of Lot 1, Block 1.
  3. The site provides storm connections.
  4. On-site wetlands are shown on the plat.
2. Streets
  1. New streets are not being dedicated with the subject plat. The street right-of-way widths from the previously approved Right of Way plat are in line with the existing street right-of-way widths.
3. Easements
  1. The plat will be required to provide standard drainage and utility easements around the subject site, and a recommended condition is included herein.
4. Block Standards
  1. The blocks within the subdivision were designed for the intended end use as commercial property. The proposed Lot 1, Block 1 achieves the Block standard as it is approximately 550 feet, which is less than the maximum block length of 1,200 feet.
5. Lot Standards
  1. The lot within the subdivision is intended for commercial use and provides an

adequate size to allow off-street parking, loading and other facilities for the intended end use.

6. Public Sites and Open Spaces

1. The applicant will be required to pay a payment-in-lieu of parkland dedication fee as the subject parcel has not previously been platted.

Mr. Konz reports that staff recommend approval of the preliminary plat of Evenson Subdivision with the following conditions:

1. The final plat submission shall reflect easements around the subject site in conformance with the Mankato City Code.
2. The applicant shall enter into a subdividers agreement for any public improvements or improvements located in the public right of way.
3. The applicant shall provide a payment in lieu of a parkland dedication fee based on the 2025 commercial assessed market rates.
4. In conjunction with the submission of the final plat, the applicant shall provide updated drainage and utility plans conforming to engineering standards and other applicable standards.
5. In conjunction with the submission of the final plat, the applicant shall address the wetlands on the site and obtain a no loss finding or the applicable wetland impact approvals.
6. The applicant will be required to obtain a conditional use permit and a certificate of design compliance for the use shown on the proposed concept plan.
7. The applicant shall review and evaluate the design of the sidewalk located on the north side of the property. This review shall be conducted in coordination with the City of Mankato Department of Public Works and the Blue Earth County Department of Public Works to address any grading concerns and to ensure appropriate separation between the sidewalk and the adjacent ditch.

Mr. Konz reports that staff recommends approval of the rezoning of the subject parcel from T, Transition, to B-3, Highway Commercial.

**Shawn Meschke (APX Construction).** Mr. Meschke attended the meeting on behalf of Ryan Evenson (landowner). He stated his agreement with the seven conditions presented during the meeting and would be working towards addressing them over the coming weeks. Mr. Meschke thanked the commission for their review of the project and indicated that he was available to answer any questions from the commission members.

Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Ms. Surdy expressed her desire to encourage the City of Mankato to prioritize the development of actual park land rather than accepting payment in lieu of park dedication. She added that green space promotes healthy living and provides significant benefits to the neighborhood, particularly in areas such as this.

Mr. Dieken made a motion to approve the preliminary plat of Evenson Subdivision with conditions and for the rezoning of the subject parcel from T to B-3. Mr. Iddings seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

*The anticipated date of Council action is November 10, 2025.*

**Request of Ryan Evenson, with permission of the property owner, for a conditional use permit to allow an indoor playground and sport center in the B-3, Highway Business, zoning district, and for a certificate of design compliance for the construction of a new structure in the Highway Gateway Overlay District. The subject property is described as Lot 5, Block 2, Venstar Subdivision (1740 Premier Drive).**

Ms. Mitchell reports that staff respectfully submits the following findings:

1. The request is in keeping with the comprehensive planning policies of the City as the underlying land use plan identifies this parcel as "commercial."
2. The proposal does not interfere with or diminish the use of property in the immediate vicinity.
3. The proposal is currently served by public facilities and services and will continue to be.
4. The proposal does not cause undue traffic congestion as the submission conforms to Mankato City Code criteria for off-street parking and driving areas. It was determined that no additional turn lanes are warranted at the proposed site driveway location. Additional intersection analysis is being completed at Augusta Drive and N. Victory Drive. The applicant will continue to work with City Staff.
5. There are no known historical or architectural resources on the site.
6. There are no known natural or environmental features on the site.
7. It will not cause a negative cumulative effect and effect on the City as a whole.
8. The proposal will not jeopardize the public's health, safety, or general welfare.
9. The property is located in the Highway Gateway Overlay District and the proposed value of the project exceeds \$500,000, which, by Mankato City Code Chapter 10, requires a review of the Planning Commission and City Council.
10. The building elevations conform to the guidelines of the Highway Gateway Overlay District. The proposed addition has exterior finishes including brick and metal. All sides of the building visible to the public will be treated consistently with quality materials and finishes.

Ms. Mitchell reports that staff recommends approval of the requested Conditional Use Permit and Certificate of Design Compliance with the following conditions:

1. The exterior finishes as shown and approved by the City Council shall be implemented. No corrugated metal or exposed fasteners shall be allowed.
2. A plan conforming to MS4 requirements per the City of Mankato will need to be submitted at the time of building permit submission. If it is determined that a storm water facility is needed to accommodate onsite stormwater, the applicant will be required to conform to the standards.
3. A final traffic memo should be submitted to reflect the analysis of the adjacent intersections at the time of building permit submittal.
4. At the time of building permit submission for the proposed expansion, the applicant shall provide a photometric plan and light fixture cut sheets in accordance with City Code Chapter 10.
5. There shall be no outside storage of materials.
6. All mechanical equipment shall be screened from the street and the adjacent residential properties.
7. Dumpsters shall be screened according to City Code Chapter 10.
8. A snow storage and removal plan shall be provided at the time of building permit submittal.
9. A bike rack shall be provided.
10. Prior to fabrication or installation of any signage, a sign permit shall be required. All signage shall achieve the sign standards in City Code Chapter 10.

Mr. Wilke questioned recommendation number 3 relating to the traffic memo. He asked

whether other projects in the area also had traffic memos and what factors trigger the need for a traffic memo for a project such as this.

Mr. Konz explained that, generally, a conditional use permit will trigger the need for a traffic memo. One requirement of the submittal is to provide documentation of the expected traffic circulation and patterns resulting from the project. He referenced the Kuepers development, noting that they were required to complete a traffic study and made modifications to lanes in that area to address impacts identified in the study. The current study for this project builds on the Kuepers study, incorporating that information into the project's design. He also noted the difficulty of conducting traffic counts with Highway 22 being closed, which required some assumptions in the current traffic study, supplemented by previously collected data.

Ms. Surdy questioned whether the new building would require a new turn lane.

Ms. Mitchell stated that, according to the traffic study received by Bolton & Menk, there is no need for an additional traffic lane on Premier Drive.

Ms. Surdy stated that she felt the traffic study was inaccurate. She expressed concern that the potential for significantly increased traffic could lead to traffic issues and that the impact might be underestimated. She suggested that a condition be added requiring the owner to be financially responsible for any future traffic improvements that may become necessary.

Mr. Konz referenced the Circle-K project at 1510 Adams Street and the Kuepers development on Victory Drive. He noted that in those cases, a condition was included stating that if traffic improvements were required, the property owner would participate in the costs. He added that such conditions typically have a sunset provision and recommended including a similar approach for any new conditions.

**Shawn Meschke (APX Construction), Josh and Christian Brooks.** Mr. Meschke attended the meeting on behalf of Ryan Evenson (owner). He thanked the commission for reviewing the project and introduced Mr. and Ms. Brooks as the prospective operators of the business. Ms. Brooks stated that they have lived in the area for some time and are looking forward to starting this project.

Ms. Surdy questioned whether the intention was to include a soft play area or what type of setup was being planned for the facility.

Ms. Brooks explained that the facility will include three separate play areas designed for different age groups: one for children ages 0–2, another for ages 2–5, and a third for ages 7–12. Each area will feature equipment and activities tailored to the specific developmental needs of that age group. She also noted the time and effort invested in the project and emphasized their goal of creating a space designed to meet those needs—a place where children and families can connect, play, and learn.

Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment.

**Jayne Wolle (561 Grayhawk Drive).** Ms. Wolle indicated that she lives directly behind the proposed facility. She indicated the intersection at Augusta and Premier Drive has seen an increase in traffic over the past few years. She indicated that they were supportive of the facility but felt as though if more children were going to be present in the area, then further examination of the traffic patterns would be needed.

**Kent Waletski (144 Torrey Pines Ct).** Mr. Waletski stated that he thought it was a great project but questioned the height of the berm being put in place.

Chair Zehnder indicated that he believed the berm was six feet high.

Mr. Konz asked Mr. Meschke whether the berm was four or six feet high.

Mr. Meschke indicated that the height of the berm varies within that range but noted that they could construct one that is six feet high.

Mr. Waletski stated that he was unsure of the standard. He referenced the berm at Home Depot as being quite large and the one at the fire station as being small but expressed that he felt six feet would be ideal.

Mr. Meschke indicated that they would commit to a six-foot berm at this location.

With no one wishing to speak further, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Konz asked whether the commission wanted to add a condition addressing potential traffic issues.

Ms. Surdy stated that she wanted to add a condition requiring the applicant to be responsible for any traffic improvements if congestion occurs. She added that she was not aware of the typical sunset provision associated with such conditions.

Mr. Konz indicated that, historically, the sunset provision for such conditions has been three years.

Mr. Wilke commented that he does not believe this project will be the sole contributor to traffic patterns in the area, noting that traffic impacts are likely cumulative from multiple properties. He stated that he is not comfortable placing the responsibility solely on this project and felt that others, including the City of Mankato, should also share in addressing any traffic concerns.

Mr. Konz indicated that the City of Mankato typically evaluates the traffic volume generated by a specific project and allocates the cost share for improvements accordingly.

Ms. Surdy made a motion to approve the Conditional Use Permit and Certificate of Design Compliance with the added condition. Mr. Iddings seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

*The anticipated date of Council action is November 10, 2025.*

4.

CY55-25

**Request of the Planning Agency to review Chapter 10 of Mankato City Code related to variances.**

Mr. Hanson indicated that the City of Mankato is requesting to amend multiple sections pertaining to variances within Chapter 10 of the Mankato City Code.

He indicated that in order to act in accordance with the amended 2011 State Statute, the City of Mankato has applied their Variance review through the lens of the three practical difficulties for some time now. Despite this, he indicated that our current City Code still reflects pre-2011 variance standards. The goal of this amendment pertaining to variances is to bring the City Code into alignment with current practice and the State Statute as it exists today.

Mr. Hanson stated that these amendments would replace the existing terminology with the terminology used within the State Statute. The improved continuity between the State Statute and the City Code, as well as the improved uniformity of terminology, serve to provide greater clarity of the standards that must be met for Variances from the Mankato City Code.

Ms. Surdy asked whether the proposed changes were like Blue Earth County's variance procedures.

Mr. Hanson indicated this was correct.

Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Filipovitch made a motion to approve the proposed amendments pertaining to variances within Chapter 10 of the Mankato City Code. Ms. Surdy seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

*The anticipated date of City Council action is December 8, 2025.*

6. **MISCELLANEOUS**

No Miscellaneous items

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Ms. Surdy moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dieken with all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:58 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED.

---

Chair, Mankato Planning Commission