



MINUTES

Mankato Planning Commission
April 22, 2026 - 6:00 p.m.
IGC - Council Chambers

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, Ms. Bigham.

Staff Present: Mark Konz-Director of Planning and Development Services, Travis Johnson-Permit Technician, Brittany Mitchell-Planning Coordinator, Bennett Hanson-Planner, Molly Westman-Planning Coordinator.

2. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Wilke made a motion to approve the minutes from March 25th, 2026. Mr. Filipovitch seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

1. **March 25, 2026 Draft Meeting minutes**

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

1.

CY16-26

Request of APX Construction, on behalf of 1531 Johnson, LLC., for a planned unit development for the installation of 3 new buildings, that contain a total of 84 residential units, in the R-2, one- and two-family dwelling zoning district. The subject properties are described as Lot 1, Block 2, Campus Cottages, and Outlot A, Campus Cottages subdivision (Blue Earth County PIDs R010920479029 and R010920479030).

Ms. Mitchell reports that staff submits the following findings:

1. The request conforms to the requirements set forth in Chapter 10 of the Mankato City Code for the R2 Residential District.
2. The request conforms to the requirements set forth in Chapter 10 of the Mankato City Code for granting a planned unit development.
3. It is in keeping with the comprehensive planning policies of the City.
4. It does not interfere with or diminish the use of property in the immediate vicinity.
5. It can be adequately served by public facilities and services.
6. It does not cause undue traffic congestion.

Ms. Mitchell reports that staff recommends approval of the Planned Unit Development with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall continue to work with City Engineering staff to ensure all conditions are met from the Construction Services Site Plan Review letter dated April 10, 2026.
2. Signage for the development shall conform to Mankato City Code standards and a sign permit shall be obtained for any proposed signage prior to fabrication and installation.
3. All lighting shall conform to the Mankato City Code, including full-cut, fully shielded light fixtures and a photometric plan demonstrating a lighting level of no more than 1/2 foot candle at the property line.
4. All mechanical equipment shall be screened according to Mankato City Code Chapter 10.
5. A City of Mankato rental license for the premise shall be secured prior to occupancy.
6. The landscaping plan shall be submitted and reviewed to ensure code compliance with Mankato City Code Chapter 10.
7. The applicant shall provide a snow removal plan.
8. The applicant shall provide common open space amenities for tenants.
9. Dumpster enclosures shall be fully screened.

Ryan Evenson. Mr. Evenson was present at the meeting as part of the development group for this proposal. He provided an overview of the project to the Planning Commission members and was available to answer any questions they had.

Ms. Surdy questioned the pricing of the proposed rental units, noting that their location near campus may attract college students.

Mr. Evenson stated that the rental rates would be consistent with both average market rates and student housing rates, noting that the two are very comparable in Mankato.

Mr. Wilke highlighted a term used by Mr. Evenson during his presentation— “young professionals” and requested clarification, specifically whether the development to the west (College Town) represents a different style of housing than what is being proposed for this project.

Mr. Evenson indicated that this proposal differs from the development across the street, noting that it is designed with direct access, limited to only two units, and includes minimal common space.

Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment.

Sara Nett-Torgrimson, 20401 Pohl Rd. Ms. Nett-Torgrimson was present at the meeting to express concerns regarding traffic control at the access point. She thanked the Planning Commission for considering the item, emphasizing the need for housing in the Mankato community and expressing appreciation for each new unit constructed.

She referenced the College Town development located across the street from the proposed project, noting near accidents and one incident that resulted in damage to her vehicle at the turning point. She requested consideration of a stop sign at the driveway to help make potential residents more aware of the families living in the area.

Silas Born, 108 Priscilla Ct. Mr. Born was present at the meeting to express concerns regarding the proposed project. He questioned whether the wetland on the site had been thoroughly investigated and raised concerns about the project's potential impact, particularly related to water runoff.

Mr. Born also asked for clarification regarding the term "young professionals" and what that designation specifically means. In addition, he questioned whether the stated rental range of \$1,200–\$2,000 was an established figure or an estimate.

He further addressed traffic concerns, noting that his home is located near the intersection of Tanager and Pohl Road. He referenced multiple near-accident incidents in the area and expressed that traffic safety should be further evaluated. He also questioned the project's assertion of no traffic impact, stating that approximately 280 residents across three buildings would likely create an impact on traffic along Pohl Road.

Brian Maciej, 209 Tanager Rd. Mr. Maciej was present at the Planning Commission meeting as an adjacent property owner. He stated that he supports the need for additional housing; however, his comments focused on whether the proposal meets the standards required for approval as a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

Mr. Maciej expressed concern that the project does not adequately preserve existing wetlands, noting the removal of mature trees and the existing stormwater retention pond, which would be replaced with smaller plantings. He added that the proposed stormwater management system would be located within the wetlands but would function primarily as infrastructure rather than serving the purpose of natural preservation.

He also addressed the compatibility of the project with the surrounding neighborhood. He noted that the area is an established R-2 neighborhood consisting of single-family homes, twin homes, and town homes, and that there are no three-story structures in the immediate vicinity. He stated that adding another high-density project could have a negative impact on neighboring properties. While he acknowledged that the project was well-designed, he felt it does not fit within the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Maciej further stated that the proposal is not consistent with the City of Mankato's adopted land use plan. He explained that the area is designated for medium-density residential use, while high-density development is intended to be limited to the College Town area across Pohl Road. He expressed concern that approval of the project would raise questions about consistency with the adopted plan.

Additionally, Mr. Maciej referenced past impacts following the development of College Town, including overflow parking, the implementation of residential parking permits, and increased police activity. He noted that Council Members Laven and Hatanpa, City Manager Arntz, and Director of Public Safety Jeremy Clifton have all previously expressed concerns regarding high-density rental development in this area.

He concluded by stating that while Planned Unit Developments allow for flexibility, they also require a clear demonstration that a project will not be detrimental to existing uses and that it provides a tangible public benefit. Mr. Maciej requested that the Commission deny the proposal as submitted or require additional conditions to ensure compliance with applicable ordinances and consistency with the city's adopted plans.

Rich Shermock, 221 Tanager Rd. Mr. Shermock addressed the Planning Commission and referenced the comments previously made by Mr. Maciej, stating that they reflect many of the concerns shared by the neighborhood.

Mr. Shermock raised several questions regarding infrastructure and site impacts. He asked whether Pohl Road would be paved, noting that it currently transitions to gravel near the College Town area. He also inquired about the potential addition of sidewalks in the area.

He questioned whether the proposed increase in population would create a need for additional park space for children. He also expressed concerns about traffic flow, stating that traffic in the area would likely increase because of the development. He asked whether the intersection of Pohl Road and Tanager Road could be converted into a roundabout or if similar traffic control measures had been considered.

Mr. Shermock noted that the proposed site was previously used by the city for snow storage and asked whether that prior use had been considered. He further stated that there appears to be a lack of public support for the project and questioned whether the location was chosen primarily to maximize the contractor's profit.

He also referenced other nearby apartment developments, noting that while they are in the general area, they are not located within established neighborhoods in the same manner as the proposed project.

Elaine Lilly, 321 Tanager Rd. Ms. Lilly addressed the Planning Commission to express concerns regarding traffic patterns in the area. She stated that she frequently travels by bicycle and has experienced several near-miss incidents, which have led her to alter her usual routes through the neighborhood.

Ms. Lilly expressed hope that a detailed traffic study has been completed to evaluate current conditions and the potential impacts of the proposed development.

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

Chair Zehnder inquired whether the City of Mankato has investigated traffic safety issues along this corridor.

Mr. Konz stated that several improvements have been made along the Pohl Road corridor, some of which predate the College Town development. He noted that Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) modifications have been implemented further along Pohl Road near Rosa Parks Elementary School.

Mr. Konz further stated that, to his knowledge, the City of Mankato has not conducted a formal traffic study at the intersection of Pohl Road and Tanager Road. However, he referenced a memorandum included with the current proposal, which City engineering staff are continuing to review for potential modifications, if necessary. He emphasized that any future improvements would be based on overall area conditions rather than being specific to this project alone.

Chair Zehnder asked whether the process is ongoing and if there may be opportunities for modifications in the future.

Mr. Konz stated that it would be appropriate for the Planning Commission to recommend that staff review traffic conditions in the area and determine whether additional improvements are necessary.

Ms. Surdy acknowledged the need for additional housing in Mankato. However, she expressed concern that many recent projects are priced beyond what is generally affordable, noting that rental rates of \$1,200 to \$2,000 for a two-bedroom unit are excessive.

She also raised concerns about the proposed location, stating that while the development may be marketed toward young professionals, it would more likely attract college students, which could lead to increased noise and disruption within the neighborhood.

Ms. Surdy further commented that development appears to be expanding outward rather than focusing on higher-density growth in more appropriate areas. She expressed concern about the loss of green space, stating that projects such as this reduce natural areas without providing sufficient park space in return. She concluded by expressing her disappointment with the proposal.

Chair Zehnder asked whether it would be appropriate to propose a condition at this time recommending that City staff review traffic conditions in the area in the future.

Mr. Konz stated that if the concern is specific to the application and its impact on traffic in the area, it could be included as a condition of approval. However, he noted that if the concern extends beyond this proposal, it would need to be addressed separately outside the current item. In summary, he indicated that it depends on whether the concern is application-specific or related to broader neighborhood conditions.

Mr. Wilke stated that he views the issue as a culmination of several projects in the area and does not believe this proposal alone would be the sole cause of increased traffic. He indicated that he would feel comfortable moving the item forward and addressing the traffic concerns as a separate matter.

Ms. Bigham stated that she agreed with Mr. Wilke's comments. She added that a possible condition could include requiring the applicant to participate in 25% of the cost of any future improvements if a safety issue arises.

Mr. Konz stated that the only aspect he was not comfortable with was the proposed percentage, noting that it is difficult to determine the appropriate share given uncertainty about how much traffic would be attributable to the development.

Ms. Bigham clarified that she was only suggesting a figure for discussion purposes.

Mr. Konz added that the city has previously tailored improvement contributions to specific developments but emphasized that applying a percentage can be challenging and should be based on the actual traffic generated by the project.

Ms. Surdy stated that the concern appears to be more of a neighborhood-wide issue rather than being directly related to the current item. She felt it would be more appropriate for the city to conduct a study outside of placing a condition on this proposal.

Mr. Konz noted that one of the neighborhood's recommendations included the potential installation of a stop sign at the driveway, adding that this would be project-specific and located on the property.

Chair Zehnder asked for clarification on whether the proposed stop sign would be an additional stop sign along Pohl Road or a stop sign at the development's driveway entrance.

Mr. Konz stated that his understanding from the individual who spoke was that the concern related to traffic pulling out of the driveway.

Mr. Wilke clarified that the discussion was regarding a single stop sign on the parcel to control traffic exiting the site.

Mr. Konz stated that the individual who had spoken was no longer present at the meeting but believed that this was the intent of their comment.

Mr. Wilke added that he felt the addition of a stop sign would be reasonable.

Chair Zehnder asked whether a separate recommendation from the Planning Commission would need to wait until after the item was concluded and be addressed as a miscellaneous item.

Mr. Konz stated that the Commission could suspend the regular order of business and act at that time so that any residents present could hear the proposed condition. However, he noted that such actions are typically addressed under miscellaneous items.

Chair Zehnder proposed amending the conditions to include a stop sign at the property's driveway for

exiting traffic.

Mr. Wilke asked for clarification on whether Chair Zehnder was making a motion to add the condition and approve the agenda item.

Chair Zehnder confirmed that this was correct.

Mr. Wilke seconded the motion.

Mr. Filipovitch questioned why the proposal to place multifamily dwellings on land zoned R-2 was not presented as a rezoning request. He added that he understands the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process is being used as a mechanism to allow the proposed use but questioned why a rezoning request was not included.

Mr. Konz stated that the property is approximately 11 acres and that the PUD process allows for flexibility in design and development. He explained that, when evaluating the site, medium-density residential is generally defined as 7–10 units per acre, low-density residential as 1–6 units per acre, and high-density residential as more than 10 units per acre. He noted that the proposed development remains below the threshold for high-density classification, thereby falling within the medium-density designation.

Chair Zehnder made a motion to approve CY16-26 with the amended condition. Mr. Wilke seconded the motion. The motion passed on a vote of 6–1, with Ms. Surdy voting in opposition.

The anticipated date of Council action is May 11, 2026.

2.

CY17-26

Request of Bolton and Menk, on behalf of the owner, Tripoint Development, LLC., for a certificate of design compliance for the construction of two new structures in the Highway Gateway Overlay District. The subject properties are described as Lot 2 and Lot 3, Block 1, River Hills Mall Addition No. 3, (Blue Earth County PID's R010909426050 and R010909426049).

Ms. Mitchell reports that staff submits the following findings:

1. The proposed development, including the implementation of the recommended conditions, conforms to the standards of the Highway Gateway Overlay District, as noted under the Mankato City Code

Ms. Mitchell reports that staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Design Compliance with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall continue to work with City Engineering staff to ensure all conditions are met according to the Construction Services Site Plan Review letter dated April 10, 2026.
2. Submitted finishes shall not be changed without requiring an amendment to the Certificate of Design Compliance.
3. All mechanical equipment shall be screened according to Mankato City Code Chapter 10.
4. Signage for the development shall conform to Mankato City Code standards and a sign permit shall be obtained for any proposed signage prior to fabrication and installation.
5. A loading and unloading plan shall be provided that contemplates deliveries that do not impede parking stalls, drive aisle, egress, ingress or other site conditions.
6. The applicant shall provide a snow removal plan.
7. Dumpster enclosures shall be fully screened.

Nate Myhra, Project Manager with Bolton & Menk. Mr. Myhra was present at the meeting to answer any questions from the Planning Commission.

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 CY17-26. The motion was seconded by Mr. Filipovitch and passed unanimously.

The anticipated date of Council action is May 11, 2026.

3.

CY18-26

Request of Bolton and Menk, Inc., on behalf of the owner, M & J Property Holdings, LLC., for a planned unit development for a residential development containing 122 residential slab-on-grade dwellings. The subject properties are described as Lot 1, Block 2, and Lot 1, Block 3, Mesenbrink Subdivision (Blue Earth County PID R010915400007 and R010915400006).

Mr. Hanson reports that staff respectfully submits the following findings of fact for the requested Planned Unit Development:

1. The City of Mankato determined that the proposed project change to the EAW is not a substantial change and will not affect the potential for significant adverse environmental effects that were not addressed in the existing EAW.
2. The development identifies public benefits, which allows for flexibility from the 25% rental density ordinance.
3. The applicant was required to make a \$176,193 payment-in-lieu of parkland dedication with platting of Mesenbrink Subdivision. The Parks & Open Space Plan shows the area near the public water as open space, which will be maintained as such. The area will be served by a community park to be located in the Groh Farm Subdivision, which falls in the area delineated by the Parks & Open Space Plan in need of a park.
4. Active deferred assessments apply to parcels R01.09.15.400.007, in the amount of \$85,880.23, and R01.09.15.400.006, in the amount of \$43,248.29. The aforementioned amounts are exclusive of any accrued interest.
5. The proposal seeks to preserve the unnamed lake wetland basin located on the northerly side of the subject property.
6. To the extent known, the development, when considered with the recommended conditions, conforms with all other applicable regulations of the district, and other applicable ordinances.
7. The planned unit development satisfies the intent of the City of Mankato ordinance and does not jeopardize public health, safety, or welfare.
8. The development for the planned unit development will conform to the approved development plan; including all proposed covenants, easements, conditions of approval, and other provisions relating onto the bulk, location, and density of permitted structures, accessory structures, parking, and other public facilities.
9. A condition is included with the approval that requires that all land shown on the approved development plan as common open space must be conveyed to trustees provided in the indenture establishing the association or similar organization for the maintenance of the planned unit development.
10. A condition of approval is included for the development of the open space for use of the residents, and no common open space may be put to any use not specified in the approved development plan.

Mr. Hanson reports that staff recommends approval of the Planned Unit Development with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall coordinate with Kurt Klinder, of the City of Mankato, to adjust and determine proposed street names and unit addressing.

2. Applicant shall provide planting details with submittal of building permit application.
3. Wetland signage shall be installed along the entire duration of the wetland setback. Wetland signage shall be in place prior to work beginning. No impacts shall occur to the wetlands.
4. Applicant shall provide updated geometry for the proposed cul-de-sac to ensure successful emergency vehicle turning movements throughout the PUD.
5. All proposed private roadways, including cul-de-sac and looped areas, shall be clearly identified as a fire accessway only and shall be clearly designated as no-parking areas.
6. Applicant shall be aware that the development's rental licenses will be limited occupancy; occupancy will be limited to a family or no more than 2 unrelated adults. Prior to occupancy, the applicant shall obtain rental licenses for each unit intended for rental purposes.
7. The applicant shall install private roadway signage to the specifications of the City of Mankato, and the signage shall be installed prior to the issuance of a building permit and shall remain in place and be verified on the final certificate of occupancy.
8. All land shown on the approved development plan as common open space must be conveyed to trustees provided in the indenture establishing an association or similar organization for the maintenance of the planned unit development. Applicant shall submit documentation of said association to the City at the time of request for the first building permit for the development.
9. Applicant shall fully install all proposed infrastructure, including utilities and roadways, as well as proposed landscaping within the PUD, prior to allowing any unit occupancy.
10. Applicant shall clarify their reasoning for the post shown near the rear patio area of the proposed twin home units and provide updated plans with building permit submittal.
11. All proposed improvements shall be subject to the Mesenbrink Subdivision Agreement.
 - a. The applicant shall delineate and sign wetland and public water setback areas. The city will provide the sign template and signs should be located a maximum of every 50' along the boundary between the private development lots and the wetland.
 - b. The Subdivider agrees to petition for the full access improvement of the intersection of CSAH 12 and Hoffman Road. The Subdivider shall be responsible for the intersection improvement. The Subdivider and City shall determine if the improvement is specially assessed to the lots within the Subdivision or paid by the Subdivider.
12. All conditions of approval from the previous reviews and approvals shall continue to apply and remain in place with any future approval. The following conditions are of particular importance:
 - a. The applicant shall provide a complete draft copy of the proposed property owners association documents and deed restrictions, covenants, and permanent easements or other instruments. The documents shall address, but are not limited to, private streets, private utilities, current and future building envelopes, future additions, and how this will be privately managed. Membership in the property owner's association shall be mandatory and in accordance with all applicable shoreland standards. The deed restriction shall properly address future vegetative and topographic alterations, construction of additional buildings, and shall ensure the long-term preservation and maintenance of open space in accordance with the shoreland and DNR criteria.
 - b. The applicant will be responsible for all required permitting and authorization for the proposed improvements associated with the natural gas easement. Written authorization from the easement holder acknowledging the proposed development, and providing consent for the proposed improvements.
 - c. The applicant shall have applied for and obtained all necessary Public Waters Work Permit(s) from the Department of Natural Resources, DNR, for the proposed project.
 - d. All wetland banking credits, for the wetlands approved for replacement, shall be purchased prior to any work occurring in the subdivision.
 - e. Applicant shall be subject to utility connection fees.
 - f. The applicant shall be a willing petitioner for any future roadway or intersection improvements to the adjacent portions of 211th Lane.
 - g. Applicant shall provide and preserve a minimum of a 20' access way around the ponds. The access way shall have a maximum 2% grade slope.
13. Remaining portions of Mesenbrink Subdivision not included within the scope of this Planned Unit Development shall still be required to submit for individual Planned Unit Developments prior to

development occurring.

14. The applicant shall maintain a complete record of current and future impervious surface coverage and ensure that at no point in the future, the PUDs impervious surface coverage exceeds 25%, per the Shoreland Ordinance.
15. The applicant shall address all Construction Services site plan comments prior to building permit application submittal.

Chair Zehnder asked whether these neighborhoods are exempt from sidewalk requirements due to the streets being private.

Mr. Konz stated that there is no requirement to construct sidewalks in private areas, noting that the City's sidewalk and trail map only require sidewalks within public right-of-way. He added that the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process is required in this case because the site is adjacent to an unnamed lake and therefore subject to shoreland regulations.

Nate Myhra, Project Manager with Bolton & Menk. Mr. Myhra was present at the meeting to answer any questions from the Planning Commission.

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

Mr. Dieken made a motion to approve CY18-26. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bigham and passed by a vote of 6-1, with Ms. Surdy voting in opposition.

The anticipated date of Council action is May 11, 2026.

4.

CY19-26

Request of Brett Skilbred for an amended preliminary plat and final plat review of Quarry View Addition. The subject properties are described as Lots 1-6, Block 24, Germania Park Addition; Lots 1-8, Block 8 & Lots 1-2, Block 9, Columbia Park Addition; and the vacated portion of Lind Street.

Mr. Hanson reports that staff respectfully submits the following findings of fact for the requested Amended Preliminary Plat and Final Plat:

1. General Requirements

1. The site is designed in conformance with the location and width of streets, the general drainage situation, lot sizes and arrangement.
2. A grading and drainage plan has been submitted for review by the public works staff.
3. Modifications to the stormwater pond south of the subject property are required and will be coordinated with City Public Works Staff.
4. Proposed plans show individual, per unit, utility services. Because of this condition, the proposed structures are to be reviewed as two-unit townhomes and will be subject to the associated Minnesota Building Code standards.

2. Streets

1. The applicant will not construct any new public streets; rather, multiple private driveways will provide access to the development from the completed 8th Avenue.
2. Property is served by Cleveland Street, 8th Avenue, Lind Street, and Harper Street.

3. Easements

1. The plat provides the standard easements required in Chapter 10 of the Mankato City Code.
2. Standard easements on lots 7, 8, 9A, 9B, 10, 11, & 12, terminate at the bluff line, labeled as "Top of Pit Wall" on the preliminary plat.
3. An access easement for the Cleveland Street quarry access road shall be recorded in

conjunction with the proposed plat.

4. Block Standards

1. The blocks within the subdivision were designed for the intended end use as residential blocks.

5. Lot Standards

1. The lots within the subdivision are intended for residential use. The lots are designed in conformance with the standards set forth in Chapter 10.
2. The concept plans submitted for the development depict areas for off-street parking within private residential garages and atop residential driveways.
3. The subject property contains two corner lots that have been proposed with extra width/depth to meet code standards.
4. The proposed lot depicts a development that achieves a front yard setback of 25', per the R-3 Zoning District Standards.
5. The proposed project area has multiple lots that contain or abut Environmentally Sensitive Slope Areas. The proposed plat depicts the bluff line as the quarry wall and provides the required setback for structures.

6. Public Sites and Open Spaces

1. The proposed subdivision was previously platted as part of Germania Park Addition and Columbia Park Addition. As a result, Parkland Dedication or payment-in-lieu of Parkland Dedication is not required.
2. The proposed subdivision does not create or convey any public sites or permanent open space.
3. The applicant has provided a preliminary plat overlayed with the proposed residential development. This development presents a singular lot of open space, Lot 4, which may be developed as a residential lot, as shown.

Mr. Hanson reports that staff recommends approval of the amended preliminary plat with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall verify, at the time of building permit application, that the sanitary lift station located at 2002 8th Avenue has sufficient capacity to accommodate the increased sewage flow from the proposed development.
2. The applicant shall incorporate into the civil plans an increase in capacity for the existing drainage basin located south of the intersection of 8th Avenue and Harper Street. This requirement shall be addressed at the time of building permit application.
3. Applicant shall coordinate with the City Engineer for proposed drainage improvements within the Public ROW.
4. Applicant shall provide an updated Preliminary Plat that displays the labeled bluff line across the preliminary plat in a consistent manner. Future site plans shall depict the bluff line and required setbacks.
5. Applicant shall be aware that the proposed open space, if intended to remain as open space, shall be designated as an Outlot.
6. The applicant shall be aware that a sealed well is located on the site, and any future development should take care not to significantly disturb the well during construction. If improvements are proposed for the sealed well area, the applicant must work with Blue Earth County to determine the steps that must be taken.
7. Safety fencing shall be installed along the property boundary with the quarry. Applicant shall provide a plan demonstrating the proposed fence installation prior to building permit submittal. Safety fencing shall be installed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
8. The applicant shall provide an access easement agreement to be recorded on the property in conjunction with the plat for the portion of the Cleveland Street quarry access road that encroaches into the proposed Lot 1, Block 1.
9. The applicant shall submit an updated grading and drainage plan for review by the Public Works Staff prior to building permit submittal.
10. The applicant shall enter into a subdivider's agreement for any public improvements or improvements located in the public right of way.
11. Water and sewer connection fees shall be charged based on the City of Mankato assessment policy and fee schedule.

12. The applicant will be required to obtain a conditional use permit for any impacts to environmentally sensitive areas.
13. The applicant shall provide supporting hydraulic modeling for the stormwater BMP at the end of 8th Avenue and Harper Street with the building permit application.
14. The development's rental licenses will be limited occupancy; occupancy will be limited to a family or no more than 2 unrelated adults. Prior to occupancy, the applicant shall obtain rental licenses for each unit intended for rental purposes.
15. The applicant shall be a willing petitioner to any adjacent future roadway or sidewalk improvements.
16. The applicant shall record the approved Lind Street Vacation with Blue Earth County prior to Council Approval of the requested Final Plat review.
17. Applicant shall address Blue Earth County's comments on the proposed plat prior to submittal of the preliminary and final plat to Blue Earth County Records for review and recording.
18. The proposed Amended Preliminary Plat shall remain subject to the conditions associated with the preliminary plat and the Vacation of Lind Street, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. The final plat submission shall reflect easements around the subject site in conformance with the Mankato City Code.
 - b. The applicant shall enter into a subdivider's agreement for any public improvements or improvements located in the public right of way.
 - c. The applicant shall provide updated drainage and utility plans conforming to engineering standards and other applicable standards.
 - d. The applicant will be required to obtain a conditional use permit for any impacts to environmentally sensitive areas.
 - e. Water and sewer connection fees shall be charged based on the City of Mankato assessment policy and fee schedule.
 - f. The applicant shall provide supporting hydraulic modeling for the stormwater BMP at the end of 8th Avenue and Harper Street with the building permit application.
 - g. The applicant/property owner shall be responsible for any and all costs associated with re-routing the existing infrastructure to a location that is acceptable to the utility company.
19. Proposed project shall remain fully subject to the previously approved conditions of approval associated with previous requests.
 - a. The applicant is responsible for coordination of utility relocation and is responsible for all costs associated with any said relocations. The applicant is responsible for coordination and granting of any new easements, if deemed necessary, for preservation or relocation of the subject infrastructure.
 - b. The applicant/property owner shall be responsible for any and all costs associated with re-routing the existing infrastructure to a location that is acceptable to the utility company.

Mr. Hanson reports that based on conformance with the recommended conditions of the preliminary plat, staff recommends approval of the Quarry View Addition final plat.

Ms. Surdy wanted clarification that the application included a request to adjust the 25% rental density requirement.

Mr. Hanson confirmed that this was correct.

Brett Skilbred, Applicant & Nate Myhra, Bolton & Menk. Mr. Skilbred and Mr. Myhra were present at the meeting to answer any questions from the Planning Commission.

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 CY19-26 as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Filipovitch

Ms. Surdy moved to add a condition to not include the 25% rental density amendment as proposed. She added that allowing more rentals in that area would not be appropriate.

Mr. Wilke asked whether the purpose of the 25% rental density amendment was to provide flexibility in the event the applicant is unable to sell the properties.

Mr. Konz confirmed that this was correct.

Ms. Surdy stated she does not believe rental housing is appropriate in this area and opposed allowing for the 25% rental density amendment. She referenced prior complaints about the project and expressed that it should be removed from the agenda item.

The motion passed by a 5–2 vote, with Ms. Surdy and Mr. Dieken voting in opposition.

The anticipated date of Council action is May 11, 2026.

5.

CY20-26

Request of Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership for a preliminary and final plat review of Good Counsel Hill subdivision, for a conditional use permit to accommodate more than one building on a single lot on a property zoned O-R, Office Residential, a planned unit development to establish and allow mixed uses within the subject development, and to amend the Institutional Overlay District to allow for an updated campus development plan to include the addition of parking and re-use of existing spaces located within the current structures on the existing campus. The subject property is described as Outlot B, School Sisters of Notre Dame Subdivision, according to the plat thereof on file at the County Records Office, Blue Earth County, Minnesota (170 Good Counsel Drive, BE County PID's R010905379005, R010908201007).

Ms. Westman reports that staff respectfully submits the following findings for consideration:

Preliminary and Final Plat

1. General Requirements

1. The site is designed in conformance with the existing location and widths of streets, the general drainage situation, lot sizes and arrangement.
2. A drainage study/stormwater management plan was submitted and a condition of approval includes that, with future phasing and infrastructure additions, the applicant will be required to submit plans demonstrating conformance for that phase.

2. Streets

1. The street right-of-way widths for the existing local street conform to the standards listed in Chapter 10 of Mankato City Code. An additional right of way area shall be dedicated at the cul-de-sac area that will accommodate a future build-out of this area. A condition is included herein.

3. Easements

1. The preliminary plat provides standard easements required in Chapter 10 of the Mankato City Code.

4. Block Standards

1. The block within the subdivision is designed around the existing condition, and around the current Outlot B area.

5. Lot Standards

1. The lot is designed in conformance with the standards set forth in Chapter 10.

6. Public Sites and Open Spaces

1. The applicant will be required to make a payment in lieu of parkland dedication. The amount of this will be in conformance with Mankato City Code standards.

Ms. Westman reports that staff respectfully submits the following findings for the Conditional Use

Permit:

1. The request is in keeping with the comprehensive planning policies of the City as the underlying land use plan identifies this parcel as "Office-Residential."
2. The property contained in the request is part of an existing campus, utilizing shared components with the adjacent campus users. The Phase 1 proposal, providing similar residential and office uses to the previous use, does not interfere with or diminish the use of property in the immediate vicinity to a degree greater than the property has historically been utilized.
3. The proposal is currently served by public facilities in a manner consistent with what has historically served the campus. A recommended condition of approval is provided that the applicant continue efforts on utilization of public services as they become available and future phasing is proposed.
4. The proposal does not cause undue traffic congestion as the submission, when considering the conditions of approval, conforms to Mankato City Code criteria for off-street parking and driving areas. The applicant has provided a traffic analysis, which provides full-build conditions. A condition is included herein that addresses agreements for implementation of full-build scenario improvements to address undue traffic congestion with respect to trip generation, site operations and overall traffic impact to the area.
5. The site is not presently a locally designated heritage landmark. However, the applicant has submitted a National Register Questionnaire that outlines historical context and details of the subject site.
6. The site contains wetlands, and they are depicted on the plat. The site contains bluffs and ravine areas, and impacts are not proposed with Phase 1, and future impacts will be regulated by the City of Mankato code. The site contains woodlands, and woodland impacts are not proposed with Phase 1, and future impacts, while not proposed, will be regulated by the City of Mankato Code.
7. It will not cause a negative cumulative effect and effect on the City as a whole. The redevelopment of a currently vacant property, when done with sensitivity to current codes and regulations, will provide a positive cumulative effect on the City as a whole.
8. The proposal will not jeopardize the public's health, safety, or general welfare.

Ms. Westman reports that staff respectfully submits the following findings for the Planned Unit Development:

1. The planned unit development satisfies the intent of the City's ordinance, when approved with the recommended conditions, and does not jeopardize the public health, safety or welfare.
2. The development of the planned unit development conforms to an approved development plan which includes Phase 1 which includes only the utilization of the existing building, and the existing parking areas.
3. All land shown on the approved development plan as open area will be held by the applicant.
4. Phase 1 is not proposed to impact common open spaces. Future phasing that proposed impacts will be required to submit updated plans for review and approval.
5. The public benefits provided in conjunction with the Planned Unit Development are:
 1. Preservation and enhancement of desirable site characteristics and open space. Phase 1 site plans do not impact and of the current open spaces. Future phases will be reviewed separately.
 2. A pattern of development which preserves natural vegetation, topographic and geologic features. The proposed Phase 1 does not impact any natural vegetation, topography or geologic features as it utilized the existing campus footprint.
 3. Preservation and enhancement of historic and natural resources that significantly contribute to the character of the city. Phase 1 of the proposal preserves structures and a campus that may provide historical significance and no physical building improvements are planned with the project.
 4. Use of design, landscape, or architectural features to create a pleasing environment or other special development features. Phase 1 does not make any changes to the current exterior features at the site beyond restriping of existing asphalt areas.
 5. Provision of a variety of housing types in accordance with the city's housing goals. Phase 1 of plan does provide a variety of housing types, including workforce housing for moderate-income individuals.

6. Elimination of blighted structures or incompatible uses through redevelopment or rehabilitation. Phase 1 provides an adaptive reuse of a currently vacant space.
7. Business and commercial development to enhance the local economy and strengthen the tax base. Phase 1 does not include business and commercial development. Rather office uses are included to allow for a mixed approach to re-use that is similar to the historic use of the property.
8. The efficient use of land resulting in more economic networks of utilities, streets, schools, public grounds, buildings, and other facilities. Phase 1 utilizes existing utilities, streets, schools, public grounds, and other facilities.

Ms. Westman reports that staff recommends approval of the preliminary plat with the following conditions of approval:

1. The applicant shall dedicate, on the final plat, the right of way area, according to the size standards as reviewed and approved by the City's engineer, for a cul-de-sac at the terminus of Good Counsel Drive.
2. The applicant shall execute a development agreement with the City, prior to affixing signature to the final plat, that outlines the terms of the agreement for future utility and infrastructure services, including, but not limited to, connection to the city's water service at such future time as a connection may be available.
3. The applicant shall provide and record a woodland conservation easement, or other preservation mechanism allowed by code, on the woodland areas on the subject site. This shall be provided prior to affixing signature to the final plat, and shall be recorded on the property in conjunction with the final plat.
4. The applicant shall pay a payment in lieu of parkland dedication fee for Outlot B in accordance with Mankato City Code. Payment shall be provided in conjunction with affixing signatures on the final plat.
5. The applicant shall provide documentation ensuring the required minimum fire flow is achieved for sprinklered and non-sprinklered/partially sprinklered buildings in accordance with Minnesota Fire Code section 507.3. This shall be provided at the time of building permit submission for review and approval of the fire Marshall, and shall be provided for the current Phase 1, along with any future phasing of the project.
6. Issuance of future building permits will be considered after recording of the official, approved plat.

Ms. Westman reports that based on conformance with the recommended conditions of the preliminary plat, staff recommends approval of the Good Counsel subdivision.

Ms. Westman reports that staff recommends approval of the planned unit development and the conditional use permit with the following conditions:

1. As future phases are planned and submitted that include campus site improvements, building additions or uses associated with the Institutional Overlay District, a request for an update to the IO campus master plan shall be requested and obtained prior to implementation of any improvements.
2. This approval is for Phase 1 only, which includes Isidore Hall West and East, Theresa Hall and the Chapel and existing parking and infrastructure only. Future phases, site improvements, and building occupancy will require a future submission and approval by way of an amended PUD, CUP and IO master plan prior to building permit submission, usage and/or implementation.
3. Phase 1 approval, limited to the Isidore Hall West and East, Theresa Hall and the Chapel, shall only include areas that the site is able to provide code-compliant parking and emergency vehicle access for and those areas that have a verified off-site parking plan. Based on this submission, a reduction will be required in the proposed usage in Phase 1 to reflect the available code-compliant stalls.
4. Phase 1 approval is limited to the existing code-compliant parking available on the campus, and will be located in Isidore East and West, Theresa Hall and the Chapel areas only. Site improvements, including parking lot or space expansion, addition, or modification is prohibited with Phase 1. Additional site improvements, such as parking lot expansions, may be included in future zoning phasing requests for approval.

5. Parking shall be provided for all proposed Phase 1 uses, and this shall include any guest/visitor units proposed.
6. Phase 1 residential and office uses will be limited to the available, existing onsite, Code-compliant parking. Based on staff's review, this is 113 parking stalls. This will require a reduction in the currently submitted proposed usage for Phase 1. At the time of building permit submission, Phase 1 shall reflect a code-compliant parking plan that shows a proposed Phase 1, and that includes only code-compliant, currently installed parking stalls, and with usage and demand not to exceed the existing code-compliant parking.
7. Scheid Hall and Florian Hall residential uses are not included in the Phase 1 approval. Future phasing requests may include these structures/uses and, at such time, a formalized floor plan and use shall be provided for review and consideration.
8. Prior to occupancy of the structure, the applicant shall obtain a certificate of occupancy from the City of Mankato Building Official for each of the spaces. Certificate of Occupancies will only be issued for areas included in Phase 1, where sufficient off-street, code compliant parking is provided. Occupancy in all other areas and phases of the campus shall receive zoning approval prior to submission of a building permit.
9. Usage of areas not included in Phase 1 which cannot be served with the current off-street parking stalls is prohibited.
10. Phase 1 approval includes the usage of the chapel space only, and excludes the gym space and the conference room space usage. Based on the findings of the traffic study, the usage associated with the chapel will be limited to 10, daily events per year, and the events shall occur outside of peak operational hours as identified in the traffic study. To track and memorialize compliance with the allowable annual events, the applicant will be responsible for submitting verification of events to the City by way of an annual report, submitted to the Planning and Zoning Department, no later than December 31 of each year.
11. All parking stalls shall be striped in accordance with the Mankato City Code prior to occupancy.
12. The applicant shall fully address the traffic comments on the April 15 Construction Services letter provided to the applicant and, at the time of submission for any future phasing consideration, have a plan that is approved by Construction Services and ready to be implemented for modification of the intersection at North Riverfront Drive and Good Counsel Drive. All future implementation plans shall contemplate improvements prior to commencement of any future phasing.
13. The applicant shall address all comments outlined in an April 15, 2026, from the Construction Services/Engineering Division, letter in a manner satisfactory to the City Engineer/Construction Services Division prior to the submission for future phases. This shall include, but is not limited to, letter "M" that involves bringing stormwater outfalls into compliance.
14. The applicant shall provide an open space plan that contemplates the installation of a playground system sized appropriately for the proposed development. The plan shall be provided at the time of building permit submission for review and approval prior to issuance of the building permit, and the implementation of the system/open space plan with a playground area shall occur prior to or in conjunction with any requested occupancy of Phase 1.
15. The applicant shall provide documentation ensuring the required minimum fire flow is achieved for sprinklered and non-sprinklered/partially sprinklered buildings in accordance with Minnesota Fire Code section 507.3. This shall be provided at the time of building permit submission for review and approval of the fire Marshall, and shall be provided for the current Phase 1, along with any future phasing of the project.
16. Prior to any residential occupancy at the facility, a rental license will be required for residential units.
17. The applicant shall coordinate with City of Mankato staff regarding water meters and sanitary sewer billing. The city recommends that water meters for all proposed phases be purchased at the start of the project and that each building has its own meter. Upon installation of individual meters for each building, sanitary sewer flat-rate fees will be discontinued and replaced with usage-based billing.
18. The applicant shall provide a plan that outlines how mail delivery will be conducted. The City of Mankato will coordinate with the post office regarding the addressing and building identification.
19. The applicant shall provide a refuse plan for Phase 1. The refuse plan shall provide refuse service that complies with Mankato City standards, including either refuse storage within an existing

structure, or the construction of dumpster enclosures that meet the Mankato City Code.

20. If additional exterior lighting is proposed for this phase of the project, a lighting plan shall be provided at the time of building permit submission for review and approval. All lighting shall comply with Mankato City Code including, but not limited to full-cut, fully shielded fixtures and a photometric plan that demonstrates no more than 1/2 foot candle at the property line.

Mr. Iddings asked whether Loyola Catholic School had submitted any comments regarding the proposed additions.

Ms. Westman indicated that the school had provided comments, including two letters included in the Planning Commission packet. She explained that the first letter was submitted after the initial application, when the project scope was larger. The second letter, dated April 21, supports the staff findings and recommends that the Phase 1 build-out occur only if it complies with Mankato City Code parking standards.

Mr. Iddings also asked whether Phase 1 includes the chapel and, if so, whether a shuttle arrangement with the Kato Ballroom is also included.

Ms. Westman confirmed that these items were included in phase 1.

Mr. Iddings asked whether this would require the Kato Ballroom to pave and stripe its parking lot.

Ms. Westman stated that this would be a consideration if there was a conflicting use within that parking lot.

Mr. Iddings stated that if a shuttle service uses the parking lot ten times per year, it could raise concerns for the neighborhood. He asked whether a condition could be added requiring the lot to meet the City Code if it is used.

Ms. Westman responded that, if the Planning Commission finds it appropriate, a condition could be added requiring the parking lot to be paved.

Mr. Iddings moved to add a condition indicating that if they do use a shuttle system, the parking lot use meet the city standards.

Mr. Wilke stated that he was not in favor of encumbering a separate parcel not associated with the project and imposing improvement requirements on its owners. He added that the Kato Ballroom is not requesting any action but is instead working cooperatively with the applicant.

Mr. Iddings inquired whether, if a shuttle service were implemented and issues arise in the future, those concerns could be brought to the city for resolution.

Mr. Wilke indicated that this is typically how the process works, adding that when a property undergoes an alteration and a building permit is submitted, the city reviews any noncompliance with the City Code and identifies what is needed to bring the property into compliance.

Mr. Iddings withdrew his proposed condition, stating that he was confident the city could address any future concerns that may arise.

Ms. Surdy questioned whether the shuttle service would continue in the future or if planned parking lot expansions would accommodate additional parking needs.

Ms. Westman indicated that she believes the intent is that, in the future, as the project evolves and additional parking is added, the city will evaluate potential arrangements—such as additional onsite parking or agreements with other parties—between now and the time a future submission is made.

Mr. Wilke noted that the preliminary plat shows expanded parking and asked whether this reflects the applicant's proposed vision for future parking expansion.

Ms. Westman confirmed that it does.

Mr. Wilke stated that he did not see a parking stall count indicated on the preliminary plat.

Ms. Westman indicated that she believes the future buildout includes 358 parking stalls, adding that this would be considered in future phases and may involve potential agreements with adjacent property owners.

Chair Zehner questioned the parking calculations for Phase 1. He noted that the 88 stalls for the chapel are already being accommodated by the Kato Ballroom through the shuttle service, reducing the total to 170 stalls. He asked what accounts for the further reduction to 113 stalls and whether it relates to a portion of the office space being excluded.

Ms. Westman confirmed that it does. She explained that the applicant proposes 53 residential units at 1.5 stalls per unit, plus five guest stalls, and would limit office use to a square footage consistent with the number of parking stalls available onsite.

Mr. Dieken questioned if the fire flow currently meets standards and, if it does not, he questioned if the next phase would then be to connect to city water services.

Ms. Westman indicated that a plan included in the Planning Commission packet shows the existing sprinkler coverage within the subdivision, which includes several buildings. She added that, based on discussions with the Fire Marshal, it is unclear whether the current system will be sufficient. Therefore, the conditions are included to ensure adequate fire flow for the proposed structures and to confirm that existing buildings will continue to be properly served in the future.

Breanne Kennedy, Consulting Community Engagement and Project Support, Thrive, and Craig Britton, Civil Engineer, Widseth. Ms. Kennedy and Mr. Britton were present at the meeting to answer questions and provide a brief presentation to the Planning Commission.

The presentation introduced the Southwest Housing Partnership and its mission, including continuing the legacy of SSND. It also outlined the goals of the project, such as historic rehabilitation and housing, and what it aims to achieve in the future. Lastly, the presenters reviewed the project schedule and provided an overview of the various areas of the property, including plans for individual buildings and potential parking.

Ms. Bigham asked whether the stairs connecting the bottom of the hill (N. 4th Street) to the top would remain open to the public. She also inquired about any plans to make portions of the site's green space accessible to the public or to add a trail.

Ms. Kennedy indicated that City staff recommended a fee in lieu of parkland. She added that it is her understanding the stairs are intended to remain open for public use and, although located on private property, are expected to continue being accessible to the public at this time.

Jen Theneman, Campus Director of Good Counsel. Ms. Theneman stated that the stairs will remain open. She noted that a "Private Property" sign is currently posted and that an "Enter at Your Own Risk" sign will also be added. She indicated that handrails will be maintained; however, snow and ice removal will not be done.

Ms. Theneman added that the stairs are currently in use, along with the broader campus. She explained that maintaining public access is viewed as a safety measure, given that the building is vacant, and that the organization is community-minded and intends to continue offering access. She also noted that the community gardens will continue to operate.

Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment.

Mark Sands, 670 Thompson Ravine Rd. Mr. Sands was present at the meeting and asked whether the back road leading to the property would be designated as an emergency access route, noting that it had been closed several years ago. He also questioned who would be responsible for the cost if the road were reconstructed or maintained, adding that it is currently in poor condition.

Mr. Sands stated that Loyola School students and members of the public use the road as a walking route and asked whether a walking path would be included if the road is improved. He also inquired whether access to the property could be connected to Highway 14 rather than routing traffic down the hill to Riverfront Drive.

Reggie Reed, Board of Governors for Crusaders Holdings LLC. Mr. Reed was present at the meeting and spoke on behalf of the owners of Loyola Catholic School. He thanked City staff for their efforts and transparency, particularly given the many changes to the project.

Mr. Reed stated that they are not opposed to development of the property but have concerns that require careful consideration. He indicated that the current proposal does not meet City parking requirements and is short by 57 stalls in Phase 1. He added that on-street parking is not available, and that transit options are limited, meaning any overflow parking would likely impact the school. He also noted that there is currently no shared parking agreement between the school and the developer.

Mr. Reed stated that the proposal could disrupt daily operations, place enforcement burdens on the school, and create safety risks. He explained that Loyola's parking and traffic patterns are carefully managed to protect students, and that even minor disruptions could compromise safety—particularly given inexperienced drivers and winter road conditions. He further noted that the proposal is not limited to off-peak events but reflects ongoing residential and office needs, which could increase liability and challenge existing safety protocols.

He added that they support City staff's recommendation to limit development to code-compliant parking and strongly oppose any deviation or reduction in required parking standards for both the current phase and future phases. He asked the Planning Commission to consider the operational and safety impacts associated with the application.

Della Schmidt, President/CEO of Greater Mankato Growth. Ms. Schmidt stated that employers continue to emphasize the need for workforce, which is directly tied to housing availability. She noted that Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership has a strong reputation and a history of successful collaborations addressing regional housing needs.

Ms. Schmidt expressed appreciation that the community has the opportunity to partner with such an organization. She added that the reuse of a unique property like this would be highly attractive to both professionals and retirees. Referring to an earlier comment about building out rather than building up, she described this project as an example of creative reuse and posed the question: if not this, then what—and if not now, then when? She emphasized that the property is an asset that should not remain underutilized. She concluded by thanking the Planning Commission on behalf of Greater Mankato Growth for their efforts and stated that the project aligns with the "Transforming Tomorrow Together" initiative. Greater Mankato Growth supports the project.

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

Chair Zehnder asked for clarification regarding the road previously mentioned by Mr. Sands, noting his understanding that it would be privately maintained.

Mr. Konz confirmed this, stating there is no intention of reopening the road except for emergency access if

needed. He added that if the road were ever reopened, it would be at the property owner's expense, as it is a private road, and no costs would be borne by the public.

Mr. Konz also addressed the question raised by Mr. Sands regarding access to Highway 14. He indicated that, due to the proximity of the interchange, access would likely be limited to the existing interchanges. He further noted that, based on typical highway corridor studies and standards, access along highways is generally restricted and drainage is carefully controlled. As such, he would not anticipate direct access to Highway 14 being a viable option for this request.

Ms. Surdy inquired about the comments made by Mr. Reed and asked whether there is a requirement for the property owners to implement a security or safety plan to address concerns raised by Loyola Catholic School.

Mr. Konz responded that his understanding is that the property owners intend to monitor events held on-site to ensure that parking does not extend onto Loyola Catholic School property.

Ms. Surdy stated that she felt it would be beneficial to coordinate with Loyola Catholic School to ensure they are comfortable with the proposed expansion.

Ms. Theneman addressed the Planning Commission again and stated that she agreed with the comments made by Ms. Surdy. She noted that discussions between the parties began more than a year and a half ago. Ms. Theneman acknowledged that both parties have experienced security concerns and expressed a shared desire to work collaboratively to address those concerns.

Ms. Theneman stated that the parties had previously utilized shared overnight security, which they had hoped to continue; however, the other parties involved elected not to proceed with that arrangement. She added that security cameras are installed on the property and that regular discussions regarding security matters have continued.

Regarding parking and driveway safety, Ms. Theneman explained that, as part of the easement agreement, Loyola Catholic School utilizes the streets to facilitate a one-way pickup and drop-off system in front of the school. She expressed uncertainty as to how additional parking would improve the situation, noting that the current arrangement has functioned well and is considered safe so long as the easement allowing one-way traffic remains in place.

Chair Zehnder added that it was his understanding that Condition 10, pertaining to the Planned Unit Development and Conditional Use Permit, would address some of the concerns raised by the parties involved.

Mr. Filipovitch made a motion to approve CY20-26. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wilke and passed unanimously.

The anticipated date of Council action is May 11, 2026.

6.

CY21-26

Request of the Planning Agency to amend Chapter 10 of Mankato City Code related to parkland dedication fees.

Mr. Konz addressed the members of the Planning Commission and stated that the purpose of this item is to review how the City of Mankato administers parkland dedication fees. He explained that Minnesota state statutes allow cities to require either parkland dedication or payment in lieu of dedication through the platting process. Currently, within the community, the fee is based exclusively on the value of the property, with no flexibility for staff to make adjustments.

He referenced discussions from a previous agenda item regarding the potential for an easement or park dedication for a trail area, noting that there is very limited flexibility under the current ordinance to accommodate such arrangements. He stated that the purpose of the proposed amendment is to modify the City's process for handling payments in lieu of parkland dedication.

Mr. Konz indicated that there are several reasons for the proposed changes, including guidance from the City Attorney and the League of Minnesota Cities. He noted that properties often contain unique characteristics, such as bluff areas or wetlands, which may be unbuildable, and that additional flexibility would allow staff to better account for these conditions.

In addition, Mr. Konz explained that current Mankato ordinances only allow the use of parkland dedication fees for land acquisition. However, staff have found that other communities structure their ordinances to allow funds to be used for acquisition, maintenance, or construction. He referenced the Mesenbrink subdivision, which was discussed earlier in the meeting, noting that it would generate a substantial park dedication fee based on its acreage. He added that an argument could be made that such fees are not always used in a way that directly benefits nearby property owners, whereas, under the proposed changes, using a portion of the funds for park construction could provide a more direct community benefit.

Staff have attached a proposed amendment to the ordinance, which removes the existing language and replaces it with provisions allowing greater flexibility. These provisions include the ability to modify fees based on property conditions, reduce fees when appropriate, and expand the allowable uses of the funds beyond what is currently permitted.

Mr. Wilke asked whether the City Council establishes the fee schedule for parkland dedication annually.

Mr. Konz confirmed that this is correct and noted that the fee schedule is adopted by ordinance.

Ms. Bigham stated that she appreciated the added flexibility included in the proposed changes. However, she expressed interest in allowing additional flexibility beyond fee adjustments, including consideration of alternative park-related improvements or concepts on properties.

Mr. Konz indicated that a variety of approaches have been used in the past. On occasion, through the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process, applicants have been required to provide recreational space on-site. Additionally, when the City of Mankato identifies a property suitable for park dedication, staff may pursue an amendment to the Parks Plan to allow for its acquisition.

He added that one of the most recent examples of this approach is what is now Riverfront Park, noting that access to the river has consistently ranked as a high priority during public engagement efforts. Chair Zehnder opened the public hearing for comment. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed.

Ms. Surdy made a motion to approve the request to amend Chapter 10 of the Mankato City Code related to parkland dedication fees. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dieken and passed unanimously.

6. **MISCELLANEOUS**

1. **Request of the Planning Agency to review Chapter 10 of Mankato City Code related to temporary signage ordinances.**

Ms. Westman reports that staff reviewed ordinances and spoke with staff of other Minnesota cities with the following results:

1. None of the cities reviewed allow the transfer of sign permits between tenants in a multi-tenant development.
2. Temporary signage is typically restricted in quantity in other jurisdictions. It is common that at any time, no more than 1 temporary sign is allowed per business.
3. Sandwich board ordinances guiding the usage of temporary signage in central business districts were utilized to allow signage on public sidewalks in downtown areas where buildings are placed at, or near, the property lines.
4. Temporary signage durations typically ranged from a total allowable number of days of between 14–90 days and in no case were temporary signs allowed for more than 90 days.

Ms. Westman reports that staff recommend that the Planning Agency review the current issues and provide recommendations on the implementation of the following temporary sign ordinance amendments. Based on the feedback of the Planning Agency, a hearing will be conducted at an upcoming Planning Commission meeting.

Ms. Surdy questioned whether it would be appropriate to allow one sign per frontage. She added that another option could be to base allowance on square footage of the lot, which would result in more signs being permitted on larger lots and fewer signs on smaller lots.

Ms. Westman indicated that, during their research, some jurisdictions—such as St. Cloud—use an acreage-based system, where the amount of temporary signage allowed increases with lot size.

Ms. Surdy asked whether there had been any discussion regarding lighting on signage, noting that LED strip lighting is sometimes used around signs, and questioned whether regulations should address illuminated signage.

Ms. Westman responded that the City’s permanent sign ordinance includes provisions related to lighting; however, similar standards are not currently included for temporary signs.

Mr. Wilke asked whether a business placing a sandwich board sign while maintaining five feet of sidewalk clearance would require a temporary sign permit.

Ms. Westman stated that there is currently no formal process for those types of signs, and they have generally been allowed to exist without regulation. She noted that the proposed changes would formalize the practice and establish parameters for such signage.

Mr. Wilke encouraged the City of Mankato to continue allowing sandwich board signs, noting that they can be critical for businesses. He emphasized the importance of minimizing administrative barriers and avoiding unnecessary permitting requirements that could burden staff or businesses.

Ms. Surdy added that local businesses do use sandwich board signs to provide information about daily specials. She stated that regulations should be in place to ensure the signs are not placed in the middle of sidewalks and that distracting lighting is not used.

Chair Zehnder questioned whether it would be possible to establish standards that businesses are required to follow without requiring a permit, so that if a sign becomes a safety issue, the City will still have enforcement options.

Mr. Konz sought clarification on whether the question was specific to the downtown area of Mankato or the entire city.

Mr. Wilke added that he was primarily referring to downtown, including Front Street and other highly walkable areas, noting that such signage may be less appropriate in areas that are not as pedestrian oriented.

Mr. Dieken expressed concern with the proposed limit of eight uses per 12-month period and a duration of

eight days per use. He stated that he did not believe there should be a restriction on how long the sign can be displayed, noting that signage may change based on what is being promoted. He added that signs should always be maintained in good condition, but that time limitations on display should be reconsidered.

Ms. Surdy stated that she believed the duration limits could be appropriate depending on the size of the sign. She noted that larger signs, such as letterboard-style signs, should have a limited display period, while smaller signs could potentially be exempt from such restrictions.

Mr. Dieken indicated that this was a good point and stated that he agreed with Ms. Surdy's comments, while reiterating that signage should always be maintained in a presentable condition.

Mr. Wilke added that one of the challenges is determining whether a temporary sign that remains in place indefinitely is still considered temporary. He noted that guidance is needed regarding an appropriate timeframe, and that if a sign exceeds that timeframe it may effectively become a permanent sign subject to different requirements.

Mr. Dieken responded that he did not disagree but reiterated his concern that the current restriction of eight uses per year may not be beneficial.

Mr. Iddings added that the ordinance should include a requirement that signage be maintained, operational, and actively used, noting that without a time limit, signs may be neglected or left on property indefinitely.

Ms. Surdy added that she believed a defined timeframe is necessary; otherwise, the sign would effectively become permanent and subject to permanent sign regulations. She also asked whether the proposal would impact political campaign signs.

Ms. Westman clarified that political campaign signs would not be affected by this ordinance, as they are regulated under Minnesota Statutes and a separate section of the City of Mankato code. She added that certain temporary signage, such as for nonprofit events, is allowed for limited durations and is exempt from these regulations.

Chair Zehnder asked for clarification regarding the requirement that sandwich board signs maintain five feet of clear sidewalk space, noting that this would generally require a sidewalk at least six feet wide to accommodate placement.

Ms. Westman confirmed this interpretation, adding that most locations along Riverfront Drive provide sufficient sidewalk width to meet this requirement.

Chair Zehnder asked whether staff were seeking a formal motion or simply feedback at this stage.

Ms. Westman responded that she was seeking feedback to assist in drafting an ordinance for consideration at the next meeting, which would include a public hearing.

Ms. Surdy asked whether the proposal would include banner signs attached to buildings.

Ms. Westman confirmed that it would include banners as well as freestanding signs.

Mr. Konz stated that historically the regulations have included all non-permanent signage, such as balloons and similar temporary advertising devices.

A request was made for the City of Mankato to examine traffic patterns in the Tanager and Pohl neighborhoods.

Ms. Surdy indicated that she believed it would be beneficial to evaluate conditions in the area, noting that concerns appear to be ongoing and related not only to the proposed development discussed, but also to potential future development in the vicinity.

Chair Zehnder asked for clarification on appropriate wording for a recommendation of this type. Mr. Wilke asked whether a formal motion was required.

Mr. Konz stated that a motion would be appropriate and suggested language such as conducting a traffic analysis that includes Tanager, Timberwolf, and Pohl Road.

Ms. Surdy asked whether the study area could be described as the Tanager and Pohl corridor.

Mr. Konz responded that he would recommend limiting the study area to avoid expectation of a broader corridor analysis, suggesting a boundary within approximately 500 to 1,000 feet of the Tanager and Pohl Road intersection. He added that staff could deploy traffic counters; however, collected data may not meet warrant thresholds. He noted that while warrant criteria may not be met, that does not preclude identifying potential operational or safety concerns. He further stated that engineering staff should evaluate the results and determine appropriate responses based on the findings.

Ms. Bigham asked whether additional development was anticipated to the south.

Mr. Konz clarified that city limits do not extend beyond the property discussed, noting that the roadway is paved up to the city boundary and transitions to gravel within Mankato Township. He emphasized that the study should be limited to the City of Mankato jurisdiction.

Mr. Wilke made a motion to approve a traffic analysis of the intersection of Tanager, Timberwolf, and Pohl Road, and to report back any findings or recommendations as appropriate.

Chair Zehnder questioned whether the study area should include a defined buffer, such as within 500 feet, or whether the intersection alone was sufficient.

Mr. Konz recommended including at least a 500-foot radius and extending the study to the city limits to ensure coverage of relevant access points, including nearby driveways, discussed during the meeting. He also suggested considering nearby intersecting streets to the north and east, as well as the area near the elementary school.

Mr. Iddings noted that new developments often generate concerns and that a defined study area can be helpful in addressing them.

Mr. Konz added that timing may be affected by the academic calendar, noting that Minnesota State University, Mankato would soon be on summer break, which could impact traffic patterns and the timing of data collection.

Ms. Surdy stated that she supported conducting the study when the university is in session, adding that with the elementary school schedule, September may be an ideal timeframe.

Mr. Konz stated that staff would attempt to conduct the study as soon as feasible but would continue to monitor conditions if timing is delayed.

Mr. Wilke made a motion to approve a traffic analysis in the area as determined appropriate by City staff. Ms. Surdy seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Housing Questions

Mr. Wilke questioned whether it would be appropriate for the Planning Commission to review the latest housing study and referenced the possibility of having Nancy Bolkema attend a meeting to provide additional insight.

Mr. Konz indicated that this would be possible; however, he suggested scheduling it during a meeting with a lighter agenda to allow for focused discussion. He noted that, according to the study, the goal is the construction of approximately 600 housing units per year over the next ten years. He added that approximately 250 units were approved during the current meeting and, although several items were approved, the city is not yet halfway to the annual target.

Mr. Wilke asked about two projects that involved flexibility within the rental density ordinance. He stated that he would like to better understand the process and considerations involved in granting such flexibility to ensure alignment on when and why those accommodations are made.

Mr. Konz explained that the original intent of the rental density ordinance was to protect existing low-density neighborhoods and prevent excessive rental concentrations in both established areas and new development areas. He referenced the Lincoln Park, Highland Park, and Tourtellotte Park neighborhoods, noting that these areas had previously expressed concerns regarding rental density.

He further stated that when an application requests flexibility outside the rental ordinance, it should be reviewed by the Planning Commission as a land use issue and then forwarded to the City Council for final consideration. Mr. Konz added that, in the case of the Quarry View site, the applicant is seeking additional flexibility to support housing targeted toward low to moderate-income populations, ensuring the site can be effectively developed for that intended use.

Updates

Mr. Konz reported to the Planning Commission that the Melvin family (located at 2015 5th Ave) had commented at the previous month's meeting on several improvements that still needed to be completed in the Germania Park area. He stated that City of Mankato Construction and Engineering Services staff have been working to monitor those concerns, including areas where pooling has occurred, as well as reviewing nearby alleys for potential improvements.

He noted that staff had not been able to complete significant corrective work due to weather conditions; however, staff were on site that morning and have been working with both contractors involved in the project to identify and address any issues.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Wilke moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Surdy with all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

MINUTES APPROVED.

Chair, Mankato Planning Commission