

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Ryan Heineman  
Councilmember Kirsten Buscher  
Councilmember Michael Olson  
Councilmember Eric Peters  
Councilmember Chris Riley  
Councilmember Dan Specht  
Councilmember Shanna Stewart

Also Present: City Administrator Brian Hagen  
Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Mark Riverblood  
Planning Manager Todd Larson  
Economic Development Manager Sean Sullivan  
Zoning Code Enforcement Officer Craig Swalchick  
City Attorney Amanda Johnson

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Heineman called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:30 p.m.

**2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

**2.01: Improve the Image of Ramsey Along the Highway 10 Corridor Discussion**

Planning Manager Larson discussed the state's \$138 million investment and the need to improve the area's cleanliness and tidiness. He listed various issues, including shipping containers, tires, and unauthorized storage yards, and outlined a plan to work with different departments to address these issues. The plan used a systematic approach, starting at one end of the city and working toward the other, to ensure thorough enforcement.

Councilmember Riley questioned the efficiency of starting at one end, citing perceived selectivity.

Planning Manager Larson explained the benefits of a systematic approach, noting that it will be more efficient and fairer.

Councilmember Stewart inquired about notifications to businesses.

Planning Manager Larson confirmed that letters would be sent informing businesses about the council's goals and the need for compliance.

Councilmember Buscher supported the systematic approach, emphasizing fairness and the need to give businesses time to address issues before enforcement.

Councilmember Stewart asked about repercussions for non-compliance.

Planning Manager Larson outlined the path to compliance, including obtaining building permits and navigating the planning commission process.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan discussed the importance of communication and proactive enforcement, noting that businesses appreciated knowing what to expect.

Mayor Heineman emphasized the need to focus on aesthetics and avoid expanding the scope of enforcement to unrelated issues.

Planning Manager Larson assured the council that the focus would be on visible issues from the highway and not on interior inspections.

Mayor Heineman expressed concerns about the perception of selective enforcement and the importance of articulating the policy clearly.

City Attorney Johnson explained the legal justification for the policy and the importance of articulating the public purpose.

Planning Manager Larson clarified that the goal was to bring businesses into compliance and that the policy would be communicated clearly to avoid misunderstandings.

Councilmember Specht supported the proactive enforcement but emphasized the need to avoid scope creep and ensure fairness.

## **2.02: Local Affordable Housing Aid (LAHA) Policy Discussion and Direction**

Planner Manager Larson opened the discussion on local affordable housing aid, outlining eligibility criteria and the types of projects that can be funded.

Councilmember Riley suggested focusing on exterior improvements and forgivable loans to prevent properties from flipping.

Councilmember Buscher supported matching funds and income verification for recipients.

Mayor Heineman and the council discussed the potential for targeting specific demographics, such as seniors, and the importance of prioritizing structural improvements.

Planning Manager Larson outlined the available funding and the need for a balanced approach to ensure the program's impact.

The council discussed the potential for multiple programs to address different needs, such as exterior improvements and utility connections. The importance of verifying income and ensuring that funds were used effectively was emphasized.

Planning Manager Larson agreed to draft a detailed policy based on the council's direction and return with further recommendations.

### **2.03: Mississippi Skyway Pedestrian Bridge**

City Administrator Hagen provided an update on the Mississippi Skyway Pedestrian Bridge Project, noting the need for additional funding to secure the North Star Rail stop. The project has been in development for several years, and recent efforts have focused on securing funding and addressing the potential impact on the rail stop.

Councilmembers discussed the potential benefits of the project, including improved connectivity and economic development. The council agreed to explore fully funded options and, if necessary, consider a local contribution of up to \$1 million.

## **3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION**

### **3.01: Review Future Topics/ Calendar**

Noted.

## **4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT**

None.

## **5. ADJOURNMENT**

The Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian S. Hagen  
City Administrator

ATTEST:

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Katie M. Schmidt  
City Clerk

Drafted by Sue Osbeck  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*