ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA

The City of Ramsey Economic Development Authority (EDA) conducted a regular meeting on Thursday, June 11, 2026, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:	Chairperson Scott Wiyninger Member Cheryal Hills (virtual) Member Rachal Johnson (virtual) Member Brittany Lindahl Member Chris Riley Member Shanna Stewart
Members Absent:	Member Nichole Bauer
Also Present:	Sean Sullivan, Economic Development Manager

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Wiyninger called the Economic Development Authority meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Motion by Member Lindahl, seconded by Member Riley, to approve the agenda.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Hills	aye
Member Johnson	aye
Member Lindahl	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Chairperson Wiyninger	aye

Motion carried.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.01: Approve Meeting Minutes Dated May 14, 2026

Motion by Member Lindahl, seconded by Member Stewart, to approve the May 14, 2026, minutes as presented.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Stewart	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Lindahl	aye
Member Johnson	aye
Member Hills	aye
Chairperson Wiyninger	aye

Motion carried.

4. EDA BUSINESS

4.01: Consider Purchase Agreement and Sale of Part of Outlot A, Java Auto Parts to Harlow Beckett Enterprises LLC (Scooters Coffee) (Portions may be closed to the public)

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Chairperson Wiyninger invited the applicant to provide more information about the project.

Natalie and Dan Dewey, applicants, introduced themselves, noting that they both graduated from Anoka High School and are rooted in the Ramsey community. He stated that this will be their first Scooters Coffee location and explained that they found this location attractive because of the growing population and quality of development.

Chairperson Wiyninger asked if the applicants would be running the facility.

Mr. Dewey explained that they will be required to hire a full-time manager, but they also plan to be at the business daily to ensure it gets up and running. He commented that they do plan to open other locations in the future once this location is established.

Motion by Member Lindahl, seconded by Member Johnson, to recommend to City Council to approve Purchase Agreement, Right of Re-Entry Agreement, and Sale of Part of Outlot A, Java Auto Parts to Harlow Beckett Enterprises LLC (Scooters Coffee) as presented, subject to City Attorney review.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Hills	aye
Member Johnson	aye
Member Lindahl	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Chairperson Wiyninger	aye

Motion carried.

4.02: Consider Purchase Agreement, Right of Re-Entry Agreement, LAHA (250k), and Sale of City Land to Elevate Hope House for Mixed-Use Project

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Melinda McDermott, Elevate Hope House, introduced herself and provided information on the organization, which was established in 2016 with the purpose of helping young moms and their children who are experiencing homelessness. She stated that to date, they have served 18 moms and provided information on the services they provide. She commented on the funding they have received and how they have partnered to continue their mission. She commented that they have shifted their mindset from providing services for two years to providing a bridge from the initial programming to long-term housing. She was excited to continue their dream in offering affordable housing and services to those in need and to provide a gathering space for the community. She was thankful to Ramsey for considering their request.

Member Stewart asked for more information on the number of apartments being promised if this is approved.

Ms. McDermott explained that they are going to commit to one unit being built by the end of the construction period. She stated that they may be able to construct all three units within that timeframe, but did not want to overpromise and underdeliver. She stated that the remaining units would be constructed within one year.

Chairperson Wiyninger asked for more information on the financials, as this seems like a big stretch.

Ms. McDermott stated that the last two projects have been amazing, partnering with several trade partners, and that is what they would plan to do for this project, noting Lennar as one of the partners. She stated that they fundraise to get to a certain number, and the trade partners donate products and labor. She provided information on the estimated value of the last project and the actual cash funds that were contributed.

Chairperson Wiyninger stated that it looks like this project would have an estimated value of $3,000,000 that would require about $1,000,000 of fundraising, and asked for more information. He asked about the feasibility of raising $1,000,000.

Ms. McDermott stated that the LAHA funds would be part of that. She commented that they have begun to work with community partners, noting that in one weekend with Northgate Church, they were able to raise $25,000. She felt confident that their trade partners, grants, and independent funding would be successful. She commented on the fundraising they would do to reach that goal before the end of the year.

Nate Ruppert, Lennar, introduced himself and stated that he is also a Board member for Elevate Hope House and has been directly involved in the last two builds. He stated that it has been awesome to see the excitement and involvement of trade partners and spoke about the commitments they received for products and labor in those last two projects. He estimated that $200,000 to $250,000 in donations were received for the project currently being built, and believed that those types of donations would carry over towards this project. He stated that the Lennar Foundation has also committed to continuing a partnership with Elevate Hope House, noting that the donation for the last project was $200,000. He stated that there is a commitment towards this project, but he cannot disclose the amount being discussed at this time.

Member Hills asked if there is any idea of how much the Lennar Foundation provides in charitable donations annually.

Mr. Ruppert stated that for every home Lennar builds, $1,000 is contributed to the foundation, and those funds are spread across each division. He stated that in recent years, locally, about $500,000 has been allocated each year.

Member Stewart understood that Lennar has residential experience and asked about the company's experience in commercial builds.

Mr. Ruppert stated that locally, the division mostly builds residential units and commented on the similarities between this type of build and townhomes. He stated that they also have a commercial/mixed-use division, and they have constructed apartment buildings in the metro area. He stated that they have also built amenity centers, which are a similar product.

John Heinrich, Anoka County Commissioner, introduced himself and provided his perspective as a County Commissioner. He stated that the County has provided LAHA funding to Elevate Hope House in the past and can speak to the good work the organization has done with that funding. He commented on how the organization has brought together the community, not just for those they serve, but also those who donate and assist with the projects. He spoke about his experience working with the organization on a project in 2019. He stated that more people have become aware of the mission and want to be involved. He stated that he will be golfing at a tournament in July that is focused on fundraising for this project.

Julie Braastad, Anoka County Commissioner, introduced herself and stated that, as a previous member of the Ham Lake City Council, she has more extensive experience with the organization and its mission. She stated that Elevate Hope House has been a great partner, not just to the cities they belong to, but to those they serve. She stated that in her role at the County, they have been able to assist the organization in its mission for funding through CDBG. She commented that the organization invests in the communities they build in and helps to address the issue of affordable housing. She believed this would be a good use of Ramsey's LAHA dollars. She commented that the organization not only provides housing but also teaches the skills needed to be successful going forward. She thanked the City for considering this request.

Olivia Sprosty, project architect, stated that she has been working with Ms. McDermott on the project's feasibility and has contributed her time to develop the concepts shown and work with

City staff to ensure zoning requirements are met. She stated that they hope to move forward to schematic design and construction within the project timeline identified.

Member Riley asked for more information on the different phases mentioned.

Ms. Sprosty stated that they would consider completing the first-floor commercial space as part of phase one to allow community interaction immediately upon completion of construction. She stated that the goal would be to include one apartment in phase one, ready to be leased within that timeline. She commented that the other two apartments would be completed and ready as part of phase two. She reiterated that they do not want to overpromise and underdeliver within the specified timeline.

Matt Davage, land surveyor, stated that he assisted with platting the home in Ham Lake and spoke about the positive experience and ability of Ms. McDermott to accomplish her goals within the specified timeline. He believed that this project would be an amenity for the community with the additional benefit of affordable housing units. He commented that he also worked on the Storyteller Café project and has experience and knowledge of the site and platting process.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan commented on the architectural feasibility provided in the packet and noted that the Building Official has reviewed this to confirm that the applicant is on the right path and that this would be a feasible project. He commented that this project is very well thought out and that the right people are involved to set it up for success.

Chairperson Wiyninger recognized that there are two things to consider in terms of getting the project built, as well as operational consistency. He wanted to ensure that they were not building a beautiful space that would not be sustainable. He asked for more information about the sustainability of the coffee shop and the gathering space.

Ms. McDermott stated that the clients of the program would also work within the facility, which would assist with some of the staffing. She stated that she believes in cross-training, and some of her staff would work in the building and assist with the coffee shop during peak times. She did not plan to run the coffee shop, although she would be there often as their office is three blocks from this location. She stated that she has also run two coffee shops throughout her career and has spoken with Anoka County to partner with their workforce program. She stated that the County partnership would allow for their clients and the 55 plus community to work at the coffee shop, but be paid through Anoka County rather than the business. She stated that they desire to be a place for members of the community to partner as well, noting that they would have space available for small businesses to rent and showcase their products for sale. She stated that some of those partnerships would allow cottage bakers to host pop-ups in the mornings to sell their products, donating 10 percent of sales back to the organization, and also alleviating the need for a full kitchen build-out.

Member Stewart stated that the previous applicant, Scooters, stated that they would be required to have a manager on-site per their franchise agreement and asked if this business would have a manager.

Ms. McDermott stated that she has not yet identified that person, but commented on a member of their team who may transition from their current position to the manager for this business. She commented that there will also be shift supervisors to ensure there is always a point person available on staffing. She commented that she also carries a food manager and serve safe license and could legally be the manager.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan provided additional information on LAHA and how those funds can be used.

Member Stewart asked for a guarantee that these funds would continue to be received annually.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that this program was created in 2023, with the first allocation provided in 2024. He stated that the funding source is still in place, and an act of the legislature would be needed to stop the program. He stated that it is a proven program, and if it were to stop, they would probably be given notice to allow them to recalibrate.

Chairperson Wiyninger asked Members Stewart and Riley for their input on the work session discussion the Council had on LAHA and whether this project would align with those goals.

Member Riley stated that, as discussed, this is a new program, and the Council was creating the policy. He stated that the Council discussed how it best envisioned using the funds and decided the funds would be best used fixing up individual homes to assist in the goal of affordable housing. He commented that there was consensus not to contribute these funds towards apartment complexes. He stated that the EDA has a good project in front of it and stated that while there was direction from the Council not going in this way, that could also be reconsidered.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that he believes that this is a good use of a challenging site and fits the vision of The COR. He commented that this is a nonprofit, so likely a majority of the property would not generate taxes. He stated that this would provide affordable housing options in The COR and would be an eligible use of LAHA funds. He recognized the discussion of the Council and believed that decision was made on a broader scale, not to support large apartment complexes. He stated that the developer has experience in single-family projects, and this would be a new venture, but Lennar is a national company with experience that is a partner of the applicant. He noted that if the necessary funds are not raised, the project would not move forward, but the site would be off the market for the remainder of the year while that is determined. He commented that while there would be jobs created, it would be a minimal number. He stated that, from his perspective, he believes that there is room to support this request and accomplish the goals of the Council using LAHA, and recommended approval.

Member Hills thanked the applicant and her team for their presentation and the work they do, noting a well-thought-out approach and plan. She recognized that LAHA is new, and so there are still discussions and uncertainty. She asked if there would be a demand for the funds to be used for the home improvement items discussed by the City Council. She asked what would happen if the fundraising goals exceeded the goal and whether the LAHA funds could then not be used or repaid.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that the City Council just discussed LAHA one month ago, so the programs and applications have not yet been developed. He stated that perhaps those could be developed and ready to go by the end of the year to make those available at the beginning of 2027. He stated that the demand is not yet known, but there are a number of homes in older areas of the community that need improvement. He stated that the homeowners would also need to qualify by meeting AMI requirements in order to be eligible for the program. He stated that it will be difficult to determine the viability of demand. He commented that the City has typically not engaged in claw-back provisions for this type of funding. He stated that the first allocation of $55,000 would come in at closing, and the $195,000 would likely come in as work is done through reimbursement/work contracts. He believed that a framework of a contract would be developed at the time of the purchase of the land. He commented that if desired, they could negotiate on whether the LAHA funds would be paid back or not used, if fundraising exceeded expectations.

Member Hills appreciated the desire to under promise and over deliver, but was concerned that the two units could be vacant for a period of time, and the property would not be used to its full extent. She asked if a specified timeline could be included to ensure the development of the other two units, suggesting perhaps within 24 months, to ensure the vision/mission would be fulfilled.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that at this time, the developer is willing to commit to one unit. He stated that if desired, benchmarks could be included in the Development Agreement related to the other two units, but at that point, the City would have lost the ability to claw back on the land itself. He stated that a $50,000 penalty could be incurred if the other units were not developed within that timeline, but was unsure how that would feel to exercise that remedy against a nonprofit.

Member Riley stated that the LAHA funds would be used for low-income housing, not a coffee shop, so the housing units are the desired goal. He asked if the applicant would be willing to commit to one unit within phase one and the two additional units within a specified timeline.

Ms. McDermott stated that she would commit to an extended timeline. She stated that they originally heard about the LAHA funds from the County and are aware of the necessary reporting. She hoped they could be an asset to the community, reducing the administrative burden on City Staff.

Member Stewart asked if there is a probability that the funds could be split up to align with the phasing of the housing units, along with the funds specified for closing.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that they could structure the agreement in that way, noting that $50,000 would be spent at the time of closing. He stated that there are expenses that will occur initially, such as parking, that will benefit all phases. He commented that the $195,000 could be allocated in the beginning to get the project going and the first unit constructed, but it could also be split between phasing if desired. He stated that he was unsure of the cash flow of the applicant and believed that having more cash flow in the beginning would assist in gaining partnerships. He stated that if the group wants to make changes, he would need those details in order to build those into the agreements.

Motion by Member Lindahl, seconded by Member Johnnson, to recommend to City Council to approve Purchase Agreement, Right of Re-Entry Agreement, LAHA (250k) and Sale of City Land to Elevate Hope House for Mixed-Use Project, with the contingency that the first floor and one unit will be constructed within 12 months of the closing, and the additional two units would be constructed within 24 months of the closing, subject to City Attorney review.

Further discussion: Member Stewart commented that the City is provided with limited resources, and LAHA is brand new. She commented that the City Council put a lot of thought into how those funds could be given to residents to reinvest in property. She commented that as an EDA member, she agrees that this is a good project and will support the motion today, but as a Councilmember, she is unsure if she will support the request when it goes to the City Council.

Member Riley echoed the comments of Member Stewart.

Member Lindahl commented that this is a great project that she is excited about, which also includes affordable housing units.

Chairperson Wiyninger stated that he believes in the mission and the project, but cannot support the project as he has hesitation about locking up the land without more information about financing and the feasibility of moving forward.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Hills	nay
Member Johnson	aye
Member Lindahl	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Stewart	aye
Chairperson Wiyninger	nay

Motion carried.

Commissioner Johnson left the Meeting at 8:40

4.03: Receive 2026 Business Expo Recap and Select 2027 Venue, Date, and Approve Budget

Economic Development Manager Sullivan presented the staff report.

Chairperson Wiyninger commented that it was a fantastic event with positive feedback from the vendors. He stated that perhaps the bingo card is an option for business sponsorship, with vendors contributing $20 to be included on the card, as that could help to close the funding gap. He also suggested having a large red star or other identifier to help shoppers identify Ramsey business vendors.

Member Riley commented that perhaps a gold star could be used to identify products made in Ramsey as well.

Member Stewart stated that perhaps the slogan on the star is “we love Ramsey businesses”.

Member Lindahl stated that she also supports the made in Ramsey concept and to identify Ramsey businesses.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan agreed that it would be great to differentiate and identify Ramsey businesses. He stated that he is not a fan of charging $20 to be on the bingo card. He stated that they try to include all vendors on the card, and those businesses already pay for registration. He did not feel comfortable asking businesses to pay more, as this is an event to highlight businesses, and they are already being included on the card for no charge.

Chairperson Wiyninger stated that he participates in trade shows a lot, and sponsorships are a way to close the funding gap. He stated that perhaps a sponsor is allowed to put their name on goodie bags or other sponsorship opportunities.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan stated that charging for the bingo card could mean there are not enough businesses to have a bingo card. He stated that his solution to close the funding gap was to raise the EDA allocation, but they could also solve for that gap by charging non-Ramsey businesses more to participate and a lesser increase for Ramsey businesses.

Chairperson Wiyninger stated that he would trust staff to identify how that additional $600 gap could be filled, whether that is done through sponsorship or increasing the cost for participating businesses.

Member Hills asked if there are requests for specific locations and whether there is a higher charge for preferred locations.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan replied that he was unsure how you would determine a preferred location because there are multiple entrances and things that a business would consider helpful or preferred for them. He stated that he proposes an additional allocation of $500, which would solve the funding gap.

Chairperson Wiyninger stated that the actual costs for 2026 were $1,000 more than the budget, and the budget is only being increased by $500. He did not anticipate that costs would go down.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan provided additional information on the budget overages for 2026 and the costs that can vary. He believed that the proposed budget would be sufficient and stated that prices could be slightly raised for non-Ramsey businesses, as that might cover additional expenses or costs that may fluctuate.

Member Stewart stated that Ramsey businesses could be charged $55, and non-Ramsey businesses could be charged $80.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan confirmed that staff could determine increases for participation.

Member Riley commented that the feedback that he received was related to parking and traffic flow, which seemed better than previous years, when it was difficult to find parking. He wanted to ensure that parking and traffic flow remain a focus.

Economic Development Manager Sullivan provided information on what they have learned from previous events, moving vendor parking to the adjacent property to clear space for shoppers and alerting customers that parking is available in both the front and back. He noted that they have also moved the location of food trucks to free up desired parking in front of the building.

Motion by Member Lindahl, seconded by Member Hills, to select Adrenaline Sports Center as the venue, reserve April 27, 2027, and approve a $6,000 allocation from the EDA budget for the 2027 Business Expo.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Stewart	aye
Member Riley	aye
Member Lindahl	aye
Member Johnson	absent
Member Hills	aye
Chairperson Wiyninger	aye

Motion carried.

5. MEMBER / STAFF UPDATE

Economic Development Manager Sullivan provided an update on development interest and activity, and other items of interest to the EDA. He stated that Kwik Trip is coordinating with the City to align its opening with the completion of the Bunker Lake Blvd road project.

Member Hills stated that if staff need assistance developing the details for the LAHA program, she would volunteer to assist.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Member Lindahl, seconded by Member Riley, to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was performed:

Member Hills	aye
Member Johnson	absent
Member Lindahl	aye
Member Riley	aye

Member Stewart	aye
Chairperson Wiyninger	aye

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Economic Development Authority adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean Sullivan
Economic Development Manager

ATTEST:

Wendy Schlueter
Economic Development Administrative Assistant

Draft by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.