

**MINUTES
OF THE EDINA CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
COMMUNITY ROOM, CITY HALL
TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 2026
5:30 P.M.**

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hovland called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

2.0 ROLL CALL

Answering roll call were Members Agnew, Jackson, Risser, and Mayor Hovland. Pierce arrived at 5:36 p.m.

Staff in attendance: Scott Neal, City Manager; Ari Lenz, Assistant City Manager; Addison Lewis, Community Development Coordinator; Cary Teague, Community Development Director; Chad Millner, Public Works Director/City Engineer; Stephanie Hawkinson, Affordable Housing Manager; Jesse Meyer-Ruude, I.T. Supervisor; and Sharon Allison, City Clerk.

Also present: Michael Stein, ZoneCo, City's consulting partner (virtual), David Alkire, Chair of Planning Commission to give PC's feedback.

3.0 MEETING TOPICS

3.1 ZONING AND SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE UPDATE – R-1 ANALYSIS

Manager Neal introduced the topic and shared that it was presented to the Planning Commission (PC) and Chair Alkire was present to share the PC's feedback. Neal said staff were asking for feedback, no decision.

Planning Coordinator Lewis shared the current zoning ordinance was adopted in 1970 and that the vision, housing market and development in the R-1 zoning districts were different today. He said in the last 5-10 years, the issue was amplified and an audit was done in 2024 in preparation for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. Key findings were the need for approval for simple development projects, overly specific allowed uses and standards, and front yard setback standards that created barriers and are burdensome. In addition to aligning with the Comp Plan, he said this was an opportune or an ordinance that was simply and efficient as possible, easy to understand, administer and amend, and uses plain language that reduces the potential for erroneous or controversial interpretations. In addition to simplifying, other goals are updating or creating new zoning districts, add development incentives, update permitted, conditional and accessory uses, definitions, etc.

Council asked about timing, and staff indicated recommendations are anticipated later this year or early next year. Council expressed interest in establishing clear guiding principles to inform zoning decisions, including considerations such as sustainability, tree canopy, and neighborhood character. Council noted that shared principles would provide consistency and help guide decision-making when disagreements arise. There was also discussion about differences across neighborhoods, including lot configurations, sidewalk presence, and tree canopy, and the need to apply standards equitably while recognizing these variations. Council asked about impervious

surfaces and environmental impacts, with staff noting that additional analysis may be addressed in future phases of the work.

Consultant Michael Stein introduced a proposal to create R-I subareas based on existing neighborhood characteristics such as lot size, width, and depth. The intent is to better align standards with existing conditions, simplify administration, and improve predictability for residents. Front yard setbacks and nonconformities were identified as key issues, with significant variation across neighborhoods often resulting in the need for variances. Examples were discussed illustrating the current cost and complexity of subdivision and variance processes, with staff noting that the proposed changes aim to reduce financial burdens and increase predictability for property owners. Staff described proposed adjustments to reduce setback creep and minimize the frequency of variances while maintaining neighborhood character.

Feedback from the Planning Commission was noted as positive, particularly regarding improved clarity and reduced costs for residents navigating the zoning process. Questions were raised about infrastructure capacity, such as sewer systems, with staff confirming these factors are evaluated during subdivision review. Council expressed general support for the direction of the work.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Hovland adjourned the meeting at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Allison, City Clerk

James B. Hovland, Mayor

Minutes approved by Edina City Council, April 21, 2026. Audio copy of the work session available.