

**ROSEVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES FOR
AUGUST 7, 2025 6:30 p.m.**

PRESENT: Arneson, Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.
ABSENT: Boulton, Her.
STAFF: Johnson.

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call Commissioners: Arneson, Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Botzek moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Penny seconded.

Roll Call

Ayes: Arneson, Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

3. RECEIVE PUBLIC COMMENT

No members of the public chose to speak, as all were present in relation to items on the agenda.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Donaldson moved to approve the June 3, 2025 minutes. Commissioner Harris seconded.

Roll Call

Ayes: Arneson, Beckman, Botzek, Donaldson, Harris, Kooistra, Matts-Benson, Penny.

Nays: None.

Abstain: None.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a) INITIAL DISCUSSION OF ALDINE STREET RIGHT OF WAY

Staff reviewed maps with the Commission to show the location of the Aldine right-of-way. Staff explained that a right-of-way is a legal designation for City-owned property that allows the public or utilities to access land for public use, typically for transportation or utilities. The City owns and manages numerous acres of right-of-way throughout Roseville.

Staff noted that the Public Works Department occasionally identifies right-of-way segments that are no longer needed for future roadway purposes and may propose vacating them to adjacent property owners. This process includes a public hearing to gather community feedback.

Staff highlighted that this right-of-way was not identified as a priority route in the City's Pathway Master Plan, which guides future pathway projects. However, the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan does identify this segment as a potential "constellation link" which is a conceptual connector that would support system-wide recreation access.

Staff reviewed Goals 4.1, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 of the Parks and Recreation System Master Plan with the Commission. These goals provide guidance for the future development and management of pathways.

On April 21, 2025, Public Works presented a proposal to vacate a one-block segment of Aldine Street between Ryan Avenue and Roselawn Avenue. During the public hearing, several residents provided feedback to the City Council, with opinions both in support of and in opposition to the vacation. Following the hearing, the City Council directed Public Works to explore the feasibility of establishing a formal pathway within the right-of-way and requested that the Parks and Recreation Commission consider whether a non-traditional pathway could be feasible for this location.

The issue was further discussed at the June 16 and July 21 City Council meetings. Concerns were raised regarding the impact a traditional pathway might have on existing vegetation, including the removal of mature trees and the need for significant grading.

Staff reported that the Aldine right-of-way is 30 feet wide. The current informal pathway extends beyond the right-of-way and onto private property. Staff noted that multiple neighboring properties have encroached into the right-of-way, resulting in deviations from a direct route. While challenging conditions exist within the right-of-way, staff indicated that these challenges do not appear to be insurmountable.

Staff outlined potential pathway options within the right-of-way. A traditional bituminous pathway could be constructed; however, this option would likely require the removal of a

number of established trees. Alternatively, a non-traditional pathway may be feasible and less impactful on existing vegetation, though it would still need to meet ADA requirements, including a minimum width of four feet, slope adjustments, and appropriate curb cuts.

To date, community feedback has reflected a range of perspectives. Many neighbors have asked the City Council to preserve some form of access from Roselawn Avenue to Aldine Street. Adjacent property owners have petitioned the City Council to vacate the right-of-way. Additional themes from community input include a desire to preserve as many existing trees as possible, interest in finding a harmonious solution, and a willingness from residents to participate in developing potential options.

As part of its exploration of the Aldine right-of-way, the City Council requested the Commission's input on the following questions:

- Would a non-traditional pathway or park in this location be valuable to the Parks and Recreation system?
- Is a non-traditional pathway viable in this location?
- What impact would this have on existing trees and vegetation?
- What are the estimated installation costs?
- How would such a pathway be maintained?

Staff reiterated that the Parks and Recreation Commission is not the final governing body and will not make the ultimate decision regarding the Aldine right-of-way. The Commission has been tasked with providing input to the City Council on the questions outlined above. Staff also noted that Commissioners will not be asked to weigh in on matters beyond the scope of these questions.

Staff outlined the following planned actions:

- Conduct a topographical survey including tree locations
- Analyze grades and potential impacts on vegetation
- Evaluate the usefulness of the right-of-way for the Parks and Recreation system
- Return to the City Council with findings for a decision

Commissioner Harris acknowledged that she lives near the property in question. She stated that she did not feel it was necessary to recuse herself, as she believes she can respond to the questions posed to the Commission without personal bias.

Vice-Chair Beckmann asked how existing encroachments within the right-of-way would be addressed. Staff responded that, at this time, they anticipate any encroachments would be removed.

M. Erickson, 93 Mid Oaks Ln.

Erickson, an adjacent property owner, asked the Commission to apply the “but-for test” when evaluating the Aldine right-of-way in relation to Roseville Parks. She explained that in legal applications, the test is used to determine whether one action is the direct cause of another, and suggested it is also useful in evaluating the reasoning for City action. She made the following points:

- **New Park Question:** Asked whether the City would create a new 30' x 590' (.4 acre) park absent pressure from some City Council members and residents to formalize an unimproved shortcut while avoiding ADA requirements.
- **Neighborhood Context:** Cited City Council meeting minutes that she felt supported her claim and questioned whether a 30' x 520' single-purpose park, with zero buffer between eight 60+ year-old homes, would otherwise be pursued.
- **Community Support:** Asked if there is professional, inclusive, and impartial evidence of widespread neighborhood support for diverting limited park resources to create a limited-access shortcut.
- **Precedent:** Questioned whether there is precedent for a park of this size, purpose, and proximity to existing homes.

She concluded by asking Commission members to consider the broader context motivating the City Council’s request for input regarding the Aldine St. right-of-way.

J. Reinert, 1667 Ridgewood Ln. S.

Reinert relayed that the neighborhood has a strong pedestrian character, which he considers an asset. He enjoys meeting new neighbors and greeting familiar ones along the connecting paths that contribute to the area’s pedestrian-friendly environment. He emphasized the following points:

- **Neighborhood Asset:** The Aldine Street right-of-way is a critical feature for both the neighborhood and the City.
- **Community Impact:** Without the path, many neighbors are unhappy, while its removal would benefit only a few adjacent property owners.
- **Personal Use:** He uses the path daily for medical reasons, as it reduces walking time.
- **Overall Value:** He believes removing the path would not benefit Roseville or the neighborhood.

P. Veach, 1661 Ridgewood Ln. N.

Veach stated that she used the Aldine St. right of way weekly and considers it a special feature of the neighborhood. She values the right of way for its wooded and serene atmosphere and noted that wildlife also uses the corridor. She emphasized that she does not view it as a shortcut, but rather as a pathway she relies on regularly, and she advocated for the continued use of the land as a pathway.

S. Aschenbrenner, 2016 Herschel St.

Aschenbrenner noted that she enjoyed using the Alding St. right of way and appreciated the extensive tree cover, emphasizing the importance of preserving the trees. She shared that short walks have become much longer and more difficult since she has not been able to use the pathway. She expressed excitement about the possibility of a parks solution and stated that she believes many neighbors would be willing to come together to create a solution that, while it may not satisfy everyone, would provide an important opportunity for community.

C. Gallaher, 2009 Herschel St.

Gallaher stated that she has used the Aldine St. right-of-way for 36 years and finds it to be a safer alternative to walking along Snelling Avenue, where she feels the sidewalk is not wide enough for pedestrian safety. She expressed gratitude for the path that was added along Fairview Avenue and asked the Commission to consider the potential benefits of maintaining a connecting path, including supporting property values and fostering a stronger sense of community.

D. Gault, 2021 Herschel St.

Gault shared that he has lived in Roseville for 32 years and has walked on the path more than 3,300 times. He stated that the Aldine St. right of way has become a divisive issue within the neighborhood and expressed his belief that now is the time for healing. He noted that he would not use the Aldine St. right of way unless all neighbors could come to a mutual agreement and emphasized the importance of finding common solutions together. He explained that he stopped walking the Aldine St. right of way after realizing that adjacent property owners were unhappy with its use and concluded that his relationships with neighbors are more important to him than continued access to the path.

A. Lottie, 90 Mid Oaks Ln.

Spoke on behalf of her three school-age children, noting that the Aldine St. right of way provides them with a safe route to friends' houses and as a walking route to school. She emphasized that in a world with limited independence for children, the Aldine St. right of way offers them an important opportunity for independence, as their family feels comfortable allowing the children to walk alone on the path because they are familiar with the neighbors along the route. She expressed hope that a creative solution can be found to preserve the path.

T. Brown, 93 Mid Oaks Ln.

Is a civil engineer and adjacent property owner, he stated that the Aldine St. right of way provides valuable privacy for his home and open space for wildlife. Additionally, he raised several concerns in response to the City Council's questions for the Parks and Recreation Commission:

- **Value/Connectivity:** Asked what parks or neighborhoods the proposed trail would connect.

- **Viability/Drainage:** Noted that a storm sewer with beehive catch basins runs through the corridor to prevent basement flooding in nearby homes. He expressed concern that grading for a trail could disrupt drainage, introduce sediment into the receiving lake, raise the water table, and potentially cause basement flooding to return.
- **ADA Compliance:** Questioned how the steep grade could be maintained, to support the existing irrigation system, while also meeting ADA pathway requirements.
- **Access/Safety:** Expressed concern about pedestrian access from Roselawn Avenue, citing high traffic volumes (approximately 3,000 trips per day per MnDOT). He stated that children walking in the parking lane during rush hour poses safety risks and may require special crossing treatments.

Brown concluded by noting he has additional concerns and hopes adjacent property owners will have the opportunity to share them.

D. Wiswell, 1731 Shryer Ave. W.

Has lived in the neighborhood since 2016, stated that she frequently used the path to walk her dog and expressed concern about the loss of safe access for children in and out of the Mid Oaks neighborhood. She shared the following points:

- **Neighborhood Access:** Stated it is disheartening that children can no longer easily reach friends' houses, Evergreen Park, or schools using the path.
- **Community Transition:** Noted that the neighborhood is transitioning to younger families and that she values accessibility for children to move safely between neighborhoods.
- **Established Feature:** Emphasized that the Aldine St. right of way path has been a longstanding feature of the neighborhood and should be preserved.
- **Equity for Children:** Felt that discontinuing the path would be a disservice to children who rely on it to reach friends and schools safely.
- **Safety:** Stated that use of the Aldine St. right of way along Roselawn is safer than requiring children to walk farther along Roselawn to access other neighborhoods.

She concluded by expressing a desire to find a collaborative solution that would preserve the established path while fostering cooperation among neighbors.

Commissioner Donaldson asked staff to explain the difference between parks and trails. Staff relayed that the Pathway- Master Plan is managed by Public Works. The Master Plan is driven by Public Works, with input from the Parks and Recreation Department to determine the creation of pathways. The Parks and Recreation Department handles any trail within a park as well as providing maintenance to any trail within Roseville.

The Commission discussed how existing pathways in the City were originally established and considered the precedent for creating new pathways.

Staff asked what materials they could provide at the next meeting to assist the Commission in making a recommendation. The Commission requested the following additional information:

- Existing and planned sidewalks in the area
- Information on trees and vegetation within the right-of-way
- Potential drainage concerns
- Guidelines to help ensure the recommendation remains objective
- A City Attorney letter regarding the legality of using the Aldine right-of-way as a park

The Commission also discussed whether the City of Falcon Heights should be consulted. Staff relayed that Falcon Heights has not yet been included in the discussion but noted that this could be part of the Commission's recommendation to the City Council.

Commissioner Harris inquired about the possibility of a site visit. Staff responded that Open Meeting Law requirements would need to be followed but agreed to look into arranging a tour of the site.

b) MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS CENTER UPDATE (STANDING ITEM)

Staff reported that on June 16, 2025, the City Council reviewed options for the Maintenance Operations Center (MOC) and License and Passport Center/City Dance Studio (LPCDS). The Council indicated support for Concept C, which would relocate daily maintenance operations to a renovated facility south of Woodhill Drive and place yard and storage functions north of Woodhill Drive. Concept C also calls for construction of a two-story LPCDS on the southwest corner of the Veterans Park parcel, with expanded shared parking alongside the VFW. This approach reduces yard space and operational efficiency compared to the full Campus Master Plan but preserves much of Veterans Park and allows the VFW to remain in place.

At its July 7 meeting, the City Council considered whether LPCDS operations should be moved off-campus but voted 3–2 to construct the facility on the City Campus. On July 21, the Council approved release of a Request for Proposals for architectural services and a Request for Qualifications for construction management at-risk services to move the project forward.

Chair Matts-Benson stated that she feels Concept C represents a potentially great outcome to a complex problem. The Commission discussed how the new concept would affect Veteran's Park. Staff noted that little work has been done in the park in recent years due to uncertainty about the property's future and indicated that the park would likely be approached as a blank concept plan when planning begins.

c) **QUARTERLY REVIEW OF PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION GOALS**

The Commission discussed the updates that need to be made to the goals and agreed to add the updates to their goal list, including:

- Recent Commissioner community engagement at the Discover Your Parks (DYP) events
- 2025 Grant Awards to the Parks and Recreation Department
- Minnesota Recreation and Park Association Award of Excellence in Management Strategies for the 2024 Natural Resources Management Plan Update
- Bike lanes on Hamline Ave.

d) **PREPARE FOR JOINT MEETING WITH CITY COUNCIL**

Staff reported that the Parks and Recreation Commission is tentatively scheduled for a joint meeting with the City Council on Monday, September 15, 2025. Staff noted that joint meetings provide an opportunity for the Commission to meet with the Council, highlight recent work, share feedback, and receive input or requests from the Council.

Staff suggested that, to help frame the upcoming conversation with the City Council, the Commission may wish to organize its topics into the following categories:

- Review of work completed over the past year
- Commission goals moving forward
- Priorities for the next year
- Items on which the Commission wishes to provide feedback to the City Council
- Areas where feedback from the Council is requested

The Commission discussed how to address the Aldine right of way with the City Council and potential recommendation options that the Commission could provide to the City Council.

Vice-Chair Beckman inquired if staff believes the City Council will be looking for a recommendation at the joint meeting. Staff stated that they don't believe that the City Council will be looking for a recommendation at that time. They do want the recommendation to be provided in a timely manner, but they don't believe they will want a recommendation that does not have proper due diligence completed by the Commission.

The Commission agreed to highlight the following items with the Commission:

- Rosebrook Park upgrades
- Commission Goals
- Volunteers and Friends Groups
- Commissioner Community Engagement
 - Include specific examples of feedback received from residents
 - Finding a new park

- How to get additional demographics to feel welcome at DYP events
- Park Tour
- Success of Recreation Programs
- Cedarholm Update

Chair Matts-Benson suggested that Commissioners share any stories of community engagement to ensure they are included in the meeting packet.

Commissioner Botzek recommended highlighting park buildings to help educate on their uses. Staff relayed that they would bring data on park building use to the Commission at a future meeting.

6. COMMISSION DIRECTION ON MEMBER INITIATED AGENDA ITEMS

The Commission did not relay any member-initiated agenda items.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

a) DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

- Staff reported that the new Puppet Wagon has been a big hit this summer, noting appreciation to the Friends of Roseville Parks for their donation that helped make the purchase possible.
- The new scoreboard was installed at the John Rose MN OVAL. Thanks to generous contributions from the Friends of the OVAL Foundation and the Midway Speedskating Club, the City was able to purchase a larger scoreboard than originally planned.
- Staff reported that Rosefest was a great success this year. The Run for the Roses drew more than 400 participants, the parade saw very high attendance, and the Party in the Park and fireworks received positive feedback.
- The Cedarholm Community Building hosted two Music on the Patio events this summer. These events provide opportunities for non-golfers to enjoy the amenities at Cedarholm.
- Natural Resource Updates
 - Received a \$251,795 Metropolitan Council Tree Planting Grant
 - Received \$500,000 from MN DNR Conservation Legacy Program Grant
 - Received MRPA Award of Excellence for 2024 Master Plan update
 - Staff reported that the Natural Resources Supervisor position has been filled, with the new hire beginning in August.
- New entrance signs, siding, and a bike rack have been installed at the Harriet Alexander Nature Center.
- Despite significant weather and smoke challenges this summer, programs were successful and participant feedback has been very positive.
- The Roseville Skating Center has updated its dehumidification system along with several heat pump units.

- Staff reported that formal community engagement has begun to gather feedback on the design of the new splash pad at Rosebrook Park, with additional engagement sessions scheduled in the coming weeks.
- The ABBA cover band performance at *Live at the Rog* was a major success, drawing a very large crowd to the Central Park Frank Rog Amphitheatre.

b) **OTHER NEW OR RELEVANT COMMUNICATION ITEMS**

Chair Matts-Benson commended the summer staff, noting that her children participated in several activities and that the programs were phenomenal. She added that staff were consistently well-trained, kind, and positive influences in the programs.

Commissioner Kooistra agreed, highlighting the excellent work of summer staff at the Discover Your Parks events. He added that he appreciates living in Roseville because of the wide range of activities and events available to the community.

Commissioner Kooistra noted that he may not be able to attend next month's meeting and asked if he could still provide feedback on agenda items. Staff responded that his feedback could be included in the meeting packet or as a bench handout in order to comply with Open Meeting Law.

8. **ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Danielle Christensen, Parks and Recreation Department Assistant