

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 24, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Introduction / Roll Call

Chair Ficek called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m., and at his request, Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer called the roll.

Present: Chair Bryant Ficek, Vice Chair Edwin Hodder, Members Jarrod Cicha, and Daniel Fergus.

Youth Commissioners: Carsten Bauer and Alexis Jendro

Absent: Members Allison Luongo, Des Mueller, and Katie Brokaw Palalay (Excused)

Staff Present: Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer; Sustainability Specialist Noelle Bakken, and Environmental Manager Ryan Johnson

2. Approve Agenda

Motion

Vice Chair Hodder moved, Member Fergus seconded, approval of the February 24, 2026, Agenda as presented.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

3. Public Comments

Ms. Mindy Erickson, Mid Oaks Lane

Ms. Erickson, a Roseville resident, urged the Commission not to add Segment 38 (the Aldine Street right-of-way) to the Pathway Master Plan when updates resume. She noted that the City has already conducted an extensive review, including multiple staff memos, surveys, public meetings, and two feasibility studies. Previous evaluations found that pathway spacing goals are already met by nearby existing paths, the segment ranked very low in priority under the City's criteria, and

building a standards-compliant path would require removing dozens of mature trees.

Ms. Erickson also explained that the segment is currently being evaluated as a potential trail park. Still, even that option would primarily serve as a local shortcut and could damage established trees. She asked that if the City Council ultimately decides not to develop the area as a trail park due to environmental or financial concerns, that decision should stand. In either case, she requested that Segment 38 not be included in future pathway plan updates.

Chair Ficek thanked Ms. Erickson for attending and for providing her comments in advance since she will be unable to attend next month's meeting. He then asked if there were any additional public comments on items not listed on the agenda. Hearing none, he closed the public comment period.

4. Business Items

a. Communication Items

Public Works Director Freihammer provided updates on several ongoing and upcoming City projects. The Lexington Pathway project has been awarded and is expected to begin in the spring, completing a missing segment between County Road B and Highway 36. The Hamline Avenue project plans have been submitted for state aid, and a well-attended neighborhood meeting was held on February 10. The City hopes to bid on that project within the next month, though it may extend into next year due to the volume of work.

Mr. Freihammer explained that the City is also preparing to bid on a seven-mile pavement management project. For Twin Lakes Phase Two and the Wagner Pathway, easements are still being acquired, but it is hoped construction will begin this year. A sewer lining project for large-diameter mains is expected to go out for bid soon, with construction anticipated in the fall.

Mr. Freihammer explained that booster station improvements are planned for 2026, and construction on the Cohansey lift station is targeted for spring 2026. A comprehensive lift station analysis report is underway to guide planning over the next 10 years, with results to be presented to the Commission. Finally, wayfinding signage installation is partially complete, with a second phase scheduled for spring. Additional permits have been secured, and an agreement with the library is expected to finalize the placement of a sign on library property for improved visibility.

Mr. Freihammer provided updates on the following items:

Wayfinding Signage

About 14 signs have been installed, with roughly 10 remaining. All signs are

on hand, but final installation is pending permits and coordination on exact placement. A second phase will begin in the spring.

Willow Pond Project

The project has been delayed due to the need for an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW). A consultant has been hired, and the Commission may review it around June. Construction could occur in late fall or winter, depending on timing.

Keya Park Pathway

City Council directed staff to proceed with a basic pathway installation (Option C), keeping the roadway unchanged.

Lighting & Neighborhood Updates

Intersection lighting improvements will resume in the spring. In the Owasso Hills neighborhood, residents generally support enhanced lighting. An appraisal is underway, and there may be future discussion of amending the policy depending on the findings.

Ramsey County Projects

Ramsey County has significant work planned over the next several years:

County Road C (2026): Mill and overlay from Lexington Avenue to Little Canada Road; bridge work to follow the next year.

Fairview Avenue: Resurfacing from Larpenteur Avenue to County Road B2, including signal work at County Road B and Gluek Lane, plus some roadway redesign.

County Road D (Design for 2027): Proposed pathway addition on the south side from Cleveland Avenue to Fairview Avenue.

Victoria Street (2028 project): Currently in design.

Rice Street (2028 project): From Wheelock Parkway to County Road B; coordinated with G Line transit improvements.

Larpenteur Avenue: Corridor study beginning soon.

MnDOT Projects

Snelling Avenue: Mill and overlay beginning around April 15, to be completed before the State Fair; includes west-side pathway from Lydia Avenue to Old Highway 8.

Highway 280: Resurfacing project spanning two years.

Gateway Bridge Project: Major multi-bridge rehabilitation (approx. 12 bridges, ~\$100 million) from Washington Street in St. Paul to Fairview Avenue.

Snelling & Highway 36 Interchange: Long-term project (2031–2032) to potentially eliminate the cloverleaf and improve pedestrian crossings.

Other Updates

Water Efficiency Rebates: Approximately \$6,000 available through June 30; additional funds may be requested if fully used.

Finance Director: Michelle Pietrick retired; Sam Magureanu (from Little Canada) has been hired and will likely present at future utility rate discussions.

Winter Operations: Multiple snow and ice events have been handled recently.

Composting: Leaf compost turning is underway earlier than usual, due to high volume.

Water Main Breaks: Over 40 breaks this winter — a high season.

Water Meter Replacement: Pilot phase nearly complete; preparing to transition to full implementation.

Mr. Freihammer noted that, overall, Roseville is experiencing an unusually high volume of infrastructure and capital activity at the city, county, and state levels over the next several years.

b. Climate Equity Action Plan Update

Sustainability Specialist Noelle Bakken introduced Mr. Ted Redmond from PaleBLUEdot to provide an update on the Climate Equity Action Plan.

Mr. Redmond of PaleBLUEdot provided an update on the City’s climate planning process, noting that the project is approximately 60-65% complete and nearing the end of the second phase, which focuses on collaborative planning. A full draft plan is expected by the end of March. Since the fall, the team has completed the first round of community engagement, which included both in-person opportunities and an online survey. They have also conducted three of four Climate Justice Advisory Group workshops and two of three staff workshops. Preliminary goals and action items have been collaboratively developed and reviewed, including evaluation against equity criteria. The team is now refining and prioritizing those actions based on feedback, removing items that lack consensus, and preparing revisions for the next community meeting.

Mr. Redmond explained that the initial survey, open from August 20 through February 1, received 282 responses, which Mr. Redmond described as a strong turnout compared to similar municipal surveys. Sixty-five percent of respondents expressed concern about climate change, and roughly 61% to 62% agreed that it is important for the City to take action to prepare for impacts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Fifty-eight percent indicated that the City should be a leader in addressing climate change. Eighty-two percent reported noticing signs of climate change, and 76% said they had personally experienced climate-related impacts. The survey results revealed four major themes: support for municipal climate leadership, support for energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives, support for waste reduction and recycling expansion, and concern about protecting natural resources such as drinking water, trees, and ecosystems.

Mr. Redmond stated that the next community meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2026, and will focus on reviewing and refining preliminary goals and action items. The Climate Storytelling Project will remain open through March 19, 2026, to gather additional creative and narrative input. Draft plan development will continue through late March, followed by draft review in April and May, with final presentations anticipated in June or July. Overall, the project remains on schedule and continues to incorporate broad community and staff input.

Chair Ficek thanked Mr. Redmond for the update.

Member Fergus said he found the survey results fascinating, particularly the statistic showing that about 40% of respondents who were not concerned about climate change still reported noticing its effects. He remarked that this seemed striking to him and asked whether similar patterns have appeared in other cities where the consultant has conducted comparable surveys.

Mr. Redmond explained that earlier surveys did not consistently separate responses from individuals who were not concerned about climate change but still reported noticing its effects. However, after observing that trend emerging, his team began tracking it more intentionally over the past year. He noted that the percentages vary by community. In some recent cities surveyed, around 20% of those not concerned reported noticing impacts, and only about 2% to 5% reported being personally affected. In comparison, Roseville's survey reported rates of observation and personal impact among that group are somewhat higher than average. However, he mentioned there has been at least one other community with even higher numbers.

Member Fergus suggested that the data may indicate a shift away from outright climate denial. He observed that some individuals may no longer deny that climate change is occurring, even if they are not personally concerned about it. He clarified that he was not speaking about his own views but rather commenting on what the survey responses might reflect.

Mr. Redmond agreed and explained that this evolving understanding is exactly why his team began separating those responses. He noted that about ten years ago, they often assumed that individuals who said they were not concerned about climate change did not believe it was real. However, over time, they have recognized that this is not necessarily the case. By analyzing those responses more closely, they are trying to understand better what “not concerned” actually means, since it may reflect something other than denial.

Member Fergus asked whether participation in the Climate Storytelling Project is intended specifically for Roseville residents, or whether individuals who live nearby but feel closely connected to the community would also be welcome to contribute.

Ms. Bakken shared that the City is launching an additional storytelling initiative, led by consultant Johtsna Harris and in partnership with Change Narrative. This effort will involve deeper, long-form storytelling workshops with a small number of selected participants. She explained that while PaleBLUeDot’s Climate Storytelling Project includes accessible tools like the “2040 diary” visioning exercise, this new collaboration will allow for more in-depth personal narratives.

Ms. Bakken emphasized that envisioning the future is a critical part of effective community engagement, as it helps residents imagine what Roseville could look like after 15 years of climate action. She confirmed that participation is open to individuals who feel closely connected to the community, even if they do not live within city limits.

Mr. Redmond explained that the Climate Storytelling Project offers several ways for people to participate. The diary exercise is designed to be simple and brief, using guided prompts to help participants imagine what Roseville might look like after the climate plan is implemented. The team plans to use those responses to craft short vision narratives that could be included at the beginning of plan sections, such as clean transportation, to help illustrate community goals in a more personal and relatable way.

Mr. Redmond explained that, in addition to the diary, participants may submit open-ended responses, upload artwork, photos, or videos, or record short video reflections. Depending on the volume and type of submissions received, some creative content may be incorporated directly into the plan or potentially featured in a public display or gallery in collaboration with the City.

Ms. Bakken added that she has reached out to Arts Roseville to help spread the word about the storytelling initiative. She noted that she may follow up again to encourage artists and community members further to submit creative work, emphasizing that the City would welcome those contributions.

Chair Ficek thanked Mr. Redmond and Ms. Bakken for the presentation.

c. 2026 Sustainability Update

Ms. Bakken began by reaffirming that the Public Works Commission serves as the City's "green team," a role established in 2018 to receive sustainability updates, evaluate policies, advise staff, and help communicate initiatives to the community. She thanked the commissioners for continuing to serve as a valuable sounding board as new sustainability efforts have been introduced.

Ms. Bakken then referenced the City's sustainability timeline, noting that Roseville's efforts span more than 20 years. Milestones include joining the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, participating in the GreenStep Cities program, installing solar in 2014, joining the Partners in Energy program in 2019, launching electric vehicle initiatives in 2020, receiving sustainability awards, and establishing the Green To Go program in 2024. She acknowledged that the timeline continues to grow and may need to be presented differently in the future to make it less overwhelming, as the number of initiatives has significantly expanded.

Ms. Bakken reviewed the City's current sustainability goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan, noting that they may evolve as new goals are developed through the Climate Equity Action Plan process. The primary greenhouse gas goal is to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050 compared to 2005 levels. As of 2024, Roseville has reduced non-travel emissions by 45%, based on regional indicators data that tracks emissions back to 2005, but does not include transportation-related emissions.

Ms. Bakken also reviewed the City's renewable energy goals. One goal is to power 100% of municipal electricity use with renewable sources by 2040. Currently, the City receives a small portion of its electricity from two community solar gardens and on-site solar panels, though significant progress remains to be made. Another goal is to generate 25% of municipal electricity through on-site solar by 2040. The City is currently generating about 5% through existing solar panels, with upcoming installations at the booster station expected to increase that to approximately 7%. A fourth goal is to generate enough in-bound solar electricity to meet 10% of the City's electricity use by 2030. To better measure progress, the City has begun requiring rooftop solar permit applicants to provide estimated kilowatt production data, improving tracking and accuracy moving forward.

Mr. Freihammer asked whether Ms. Bakken has a rough estimate of current progress toward the goal of producing enough inbound solar electricity to meet 10% of citywide electricity use by 2030, specifically whether it is currently around 2% or another approximate figure.

Ms. Bakken said she does not currently have an estimate of the percentage of inbound solar electricity relative to citywide usage but can look into it. She noted that later in the presentation, she will share data on the number of solar

permits issued and installations completed, which may provide additional context.

Mr. Freihammer noted that there has been a noticeable amount of solar installation activity, particularly following the adoption of the City's ordinance. He asked whether staff had a sense of the current progress toward the solar production goal.

Ms. Bakken provided a comprehensive update on the City's sustainability efforts, beginning with progress toward Comprehensive Plan goals. Roseville aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050 compared to 2005 levels. As of 2024, non-transportation emissions have been reduced by 45%, based on regional data. Reductions in electricity-related emissions are largely due to Xcel Energy increasing its renewable energy portfolio, while decreases in stationary combustion are partly attributed to milder winters. Transportation emissions dropped significantly during the pandemic and have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, though future trends remain uncertain. Solid waste and wastewater emissions have remained relatively flat. Projections show that while some reductions will occur under current policies, additional action will be required to meet climate targets, particularly in residential energy efficiency and transportation.

Ms. Bakken reviewed renewable energy goals for municipal operations, including transitioning to 100% renewable electricity by 2040 and generating 25% of municipal electricity on-site by 2040. Currently, the City generates about 5% of its electricity through on-site solar power, which is expected to increase to approximately 7% with new installations. Tracking of rooftop solar installations has improved through permit data collection, though current estimates remain incomplete.

Ms. Bakken highlighted 2024 as an especially active year. The City-maintained Step Five in GreenStep Cities, implemented the Green To Go ordinance, secured two major grants, expanded community engagement to 19 events totaling approximately 135 staff hours, and participated in multiple advisory committees and conferences. Recycling initiatives were also significant, including the rollout of 12,000 City-owned recycling carts, the collection of over 2,500 tons of recycling, successful cleanup and shredding events, and continued zero-waste event efforts, including a 95% diversion rate at Tapped and Uncorked.

Regarding Green To Go outreach, Ms. Bakken described efforts to educate and support businesses through website updates, mailings, in-person outreach to nearly 100 food-licensed businesses, a packaging fair, and coordination with state agencies. Residential education efforts included recycling games at community events, promotion of the Environmental Center and food scraps recycling, newsletter tips, and internal staff discussions. The City also

launched an online map recognizing compliant businesses and distributed “Sustainable Steward” stickers.

For 2026 updates, Ms. Bakken noted a shift toward email communication with businesses. She clarified exemptions for certain items such as small sauce cups, pre-packaged manufacturer items, food wraps, and plastic films. Enforcement is currently limited, with a focus on outreach due to the challenges restaurants face. The City is also offering funding assistance for compostable utensils to ease the transition, with some early participation.

Overall, Ms. Bakken emphasized that sustainability efforts continue to expand across multiple fronts, with strong engagement, measurable progress, and ongoing refinement of strategies.

Chair Ficek expressed appreciation for the City’s online map recognizing businesses that comply with the Green To Go ordinance. He said he found it to be a great addition and has personally used it to both commend businesses for their efforts and ask others why they are not yet included on the list.

Ms. Bakken encouraged commissioners to let her know if they notice restaurants that appear to be compliant, but are not yet listed on the City’s website. She explained that some businesses may be close to meeting the requirements but missing one or two items, and she is happy to follow up to verify and potentially add them. She emphasized that her goal is to focus on positive reinforcement and recognition rather than enforcement or penalties, preferring to highlight and encourage good practices rather than punish noncompliance.

Chair Ficek complimented Ms. Bakken and thanked her for her efforts, noting that he especially appreciated the focus on promoting positivity and encouraging businesses through recognition rather than enforcement.

Ms. Bakken acknowledged that the idea for the online recognition map originated in St. Louis Park, giving them credit for launching a similar initiative first. She added, somewhat humorously, that while it is not officially a competition, Roseville may now have more restaurants listed as compliant.

Vice Chair Hodder complimented the recognition approach, comparing it to the Blue Eagle program from the New Deal era under Franklin D. Roosevelt, when businesses displayed a symbol to show participation in federal recovery efforts. He said he appreciated the historical parallel and thought the recognition element was a nice touch.

Ms. Bakken responded lightheartedly that she had not intentionally drawn inspiration from FDR’s Blue Eagle program, but that she appreciated learning about the historical reference. She then asked if there were any additional questions about the Green To Go program before moving on, noting that

commissioners are welcome to ask questions throughout rather than waiting until the end.

Member Fergus asked for clarification about the food paper wrappers and liners that are exempt under the Green To Go ordinance, specifically wondering whether those materials are typically coated with wax or plastic.

Ms. Bakken indicated she would just put those materials in the trash.

Member Fergus said he was thinking of materials like parchment paper and questioned whether it would be overly burdensome for businesses to switch to compostable options for food paper wrappers and liners.

Ms. Bakken explained that one challenge with food paper wrappers and liners is that it can be difficult to determine what type of coating they contain, such as wax or plastic, and whether they are truly compostable. She noted that she has not yet identified parchment-style products that are clearly compostable, though she acknowledged she could look into it further. She added that products certified as compostable, such as those labeled BPI, would qualify.

Ms. Bakken also shared an update that the City's recycling hauler, Waste Management, is now accepting plastic-lined paper cups in its recycling stream, which changes previous guidance. Throughout 2025, compostable cups were essentially the only compliant option. However, Waste Management is currently the only material recovery facility in the Twin Cities accepting those cups, and acceptance does not yet extend to similar items, such as bowls. She cautioned that if contamination issues arise or other haulers report problems, the City may revisit whether those cups remain eligible for use. Under the ordinance, materials accepted by the City's residential recycling hauler qualify as compliant.

Member Cicha asked how many restaurants are currently listed as compliant under the Green To Go program and how many remain noncompliant.

Ms. Bakken estimated that Green To Go compliance is currently likely in the low 20% range. Midway through last year, it was around 19%, and she believes it has increased slightly since then. She said she will confirm the exact number from her spreadsheet and share updated figures with the Commission.

Ms. Bakken highlighted the City's first clothing swap event, led by the 2025 sustainability intern, which she described as a major success. The event collected more than 2,100 pounds of clothing and drew 116 participants in a single afternoon. Donations were gathered from community members and local churches. At least half, and possibly up to two-thirds, of the clothing was redistributed directly to residents, with the remaining items donated to nonprofit organizations. She noted lessons learned, including the need for additional sorting time and the potential to expand the event to multiple days

this year. The event had a strong community impact, particularly for individuals seeking professional attire and families in need of children's clothing. Due to positive feedback, the City plans to repeat and expand the event, possibly in coordination with Ramsey County's school supply swap.

Ms. Bakken also provided updates on electric vehicles. In 2025, the City added three electric vehicles, bringing the fleet to five or six. The electric fire truck was delivered in September and is expected to enter service soon. The Fire Department also added a Rivian R1S command vehicle, and Community Development added a second Ford F-150 Lightning after a positive experience with the first. With increased EV adoption, the City is now working to upgrade electrical service in the police garage to accommodate additional charging capacity.

Mr. Freihammer clarified that the City added four electric vehicles, not three. The Ford vehicles came with chargers installed, and two additional chargers were added. Due to increased electrical demand, the City upgraded to a larger transformer after repeated breaker trips caused by multiple vehicles charging simultaneously.

Mr. Freihammer explained that the upgraded transformer now provides sufficient capacity to support future fleet electrification. Although the Police Department does not yet have fully electric vehicles, they do operate hybrids that require charging, and future take-home or undercover vehicles may also be electric. Infrastructure improvements also included extending electrical capacity to the north side of the building to accommodate future parking lot chargers. He noted that the upgraded system became operational about three weeks ago and represents a significant step forward in supporting fleet electrification.

Ms. Bakken noted that the Ford F-150 Lightning is being discontinued, but Community Development secured its second vehicle before production ended. She added that the new truck is white with a red Roseville logo and commented that it looks sharp when seen driving around the city.

Chair Ficek asked whether staff has an estimate of how much fuel the City is saving as it transitions portions of the fleet to electric vehicles.

Mr. Freihammer said the City should be able to generate a report estimating fuel savings by comparing past fuel usage from the replaced gas-powered vehicles to current electric usage. He noted that staff could review historical data, such as how many gallons those vehicles used annually, to calculate the reduction.

Mr. Freihammer also shared that during planning for the new Maintenance Operations Center, staff initially focused only on fuel pumps and traditional fleet servicing and realized they had to adjust their thinking to account for

electric vehicles. Electric vehicles do not use fuel codes or pumps, which changes how fleet infrastructure is planned and tracked. With six or seven fully electric vehicles now in service, future facility planning must include adequate electrical capacity to accommodate continued electrification. He emphasized that proactively sizing electrical systems is important, as retrofitting undersized infrastructure, like replacing the transformer in the lower garage, can be more complicated and costly later.

Ms. Bakken clarified that the City currently has four fully electric vehicles, the Rivian command vehicle, the electric fire engine, and two Ford F-150 Lightnings, along with two plug-in hybrid Mitsubishi Outlanders. She noted that she tends to stay informed about new electric vehicle purchases because information about them usually reaches her as they are added to the fleet.

Mr. Freihammer said the City should be able to run a report estimating fuel savings, particularly for the first Ford F-150 Lightning, which has been in service for over a year. By comparing it to the gasoline vehicle it replaced, staff can calculate how many gallons of fuel would have been used and estimate savings. However, he noted that it may be more difficult to quantify electricity usage because the vehicles do not have a separate electrical meter or breaker dedicated to charging. Even so, the City should at least be able to estimate the gallons of gasoline avoided.

Ms. Bakken shared that, anecdotally, she has heard the vehicles only need to be charged about once every 1.5 to 2 weeks, often using simple wall outlet trickle charging that can take about a day and a half to recharge the battery fully. She noted that the Ford F-150 Lightnings have large battery capacities with a range of over 300 miles, which she described as impressive for typical city use.

Chair Ficek said he raised the question because residents often ask about the costs of transitioning to electric vehicles, since it represents an investment. He noted that demonstrating measurable fuel savings helps show that the City is seeing a return on that investment.

Ms. Bakken agreed and added that electric vehicles also tend to have lower maintenance needs because they have fewer fluids and fewer moving parts than gasoline vehicles. She shared a personal example, noting that in the years they have owned their Chevy Bolt, the only routine maintenance has been tires and windshield wipers, aside from a one-time electrical system issue that was covered under warranty.

Vice Chair Hodder asked whether the City has reviewed its rooftop solar installations to determine whether they are producing the energy savings projected in the original feasibility study. He noted that the question could be addressed later in the presentation if that information comes up, but said he was curious about current performance relative to expectations.

Environmental Manager Johnson said the City previously reviewed rooftop solar performance, either last year or late the year before, and found that, overall, the systems were delivering solid savings. Some elements, such as demand credits and peak usage reductions, were more difficult to quantify precisely. He noted that panel degradation over time is minimal and that staff have not observed any significant decline in production since installation.

Mr. Johnson added that the City may revisit the analysis in the coming years, particularly as planning for the maintenance operations center advances. At that time, staff can evaluate whether to expand existing systems, retrofit current installations, or incorporate additional solar capacity into new facilities. He also said updated information could be shared through future commission packets.

Vice Chair Hodder asked whether the City is considering re-roofing the skating center in the future to support potential solar panel installation and expand solar capacity at that facility.

Mr. Johnson said re-roofing the skating center to accommodate solar remains under consideration and is still on the City's radar. He recently discussed it with the Parks and Recreation Director, and both departments are interested in pursuing it. However, planning considerations include the timing of roof replacement, structural capacity, panel racking systems, and weight loads.

Mr. Johnson noted that the skating center would be an ideal candidate for solar due to its high energy usage and large, open roof area, making it one of the most promising facilities for expanded solar installation.

Ms. Bakken added that the skating center offers significant roof space that could be well utilized for solar. She noted that the booster station project this year is maximizing available roof area. Even with that effort, it will only offset about 5% of that facility's energy use because it is such a high-energy consumer. Given the skating center's large roof and substantial energy demand, she said it presents a strong opportunity to expand solar generation meaningfully.

Vice Chair Hodder commented that it would be beneficial if the school district and retail property owners with large flat roofs also invested in solar installations. He noted that those buildings present strong opportunities for solar generation, though he acknowledged that those properties are outside the City's direct jurisdiction.

Ms. Bakken shared that she regularly encourages Rosedale leadership to consider installing solar, noting the significant rooftop space available. She believes there has been positive movement, as Rosedale has become more engaged with Earth Day activities and appears increasingly interested in sustainability efforts. She also mentioned encouraging the installation of

electric vehicle chargers and noted that additional chargers were added last year as part of the Dick's Sporting Goods expansion. She said progress is incremental but moving in the right direction.

Ms. Bakken concluded the electrification update by highlighting the Ramsey County electrification event held in November, where the electric fire truck was showcased. The event focused on both home and vehicle electrification, featuring representatives from CEE discussing the Home Energy Squad program and Minnesota Lung bringing electric vehicles for public viewing. She noted that partnering with the county made the event easier to organize than prior City-led ride-and-drives, and she expects it to return this year.

Ms. Bakken then provided updates on the bike plan. The City's MnDOT Active Living Planning Assistance Grant draft plan is still in process. A demonstration bike lane was installed on Hamline Avenue between County Road B and County Road B2 in May 2025 and removed in November due to winter conditions. It is planned for reinstallation in spring 2026, and staff plans to keep it in place through winter 2026-27 to understand winter maintenance needs better. Feedback from a community survey was evenly split, with strong opinions both in favor and opposed, which she described as typical for bike infrastructure projects. The location was selected in part due to its proximity to Roseville High School and heavy student foot and bike traffic.

Ms. Bakken also noted participation in several biking and active transportation conferences, including an e-bike policy summit focused on standardizing legislation and an active transportation summit in Richfield. For 2026, the City plans to finalize and release the bike plan, promote biking to Rosefest events, create maps showing safe routes, provide portable bike racks through Bike Minnesota, and distribute educational materials on safe biking and e-bike use.

Member Fergus commented on the Hamline Avenue demonstration bike lane, noting that he is not surprised by the evenly split feedback. He said he has heard strong opinions both in favor and against it. From his personal experience, the roadway initially felt narrow, but over time, it became more comfortable. He suggested that familiarity may reduce discomfort as drivers and cyclists adjust to the new configuration, even when the bollards are removed.

Ms. Bakken acknowledged that the roadway did feel narrow after installation and said the City plans to adjust the design when it is reinstalled. She noted that too many bollards were used initially, which may have made the corridor feel visually overwhelming. Another major concern raised by residents was the loss of the right turn lane onto the Highway 36 ramp. While she has not personally observed significant traffic backups, she recognized that others may experience them during peak times. She added that the right-turn-lane

change had already been under consideration by MnDOT, so the timing of both changes contributed to public reaction.

Ms. Bakken said the City will evaluate how the bike lane performs when it is reinstalled and may refine the design, including refreshing worn striping. She found it personally useful and made a point of using it regularly while biking to work, noting that she observed increased bike usage during the summer. She also mentioned seeing at least one instance of a motorcycle using the bike lane, acknowledging that there can be a learning curve and adjustment period when new infrastructure is introduced.

Chair Ficek added that, in his experience, even walking along the sidewalk felt more comfortable with the bike lane in place because it created additional space between pedestrians and vehicle traffic. He noted that this provided an unexpected side benefit beyond bicycle use.

Ms. Bakken provided updates across several sustainability initiatives. She reviewed progress under the Partners in Energy program, noting that although the City formally graduated in 2022, implementation continues. In 2024, the City exceeded its annual goal for residential energy engagement, reaching more than 1,500 households through utility programs, and more than doubled its commercial engagement goal with over 200 participating businesses. Renewable energy participation among residents continued to grow, with more than 1,300 residents subscribed to solar or renewable programs. She highlighted that overall electricity and natural gas usage declined from 2023 to 2024, largely due to milder weather. Looking ahead, she plans to increase outreach to households experiencing energy burden, potentially host an energy resource fair, and continue promoting Home Energy Squad visits.

Ms. Bakken also shared updates on the GreenStep Cities program, where Roseville maintained Step Five status and improved metrics related to building energy use, fleet fuel efficiency, and tree planting. The City completed three Gold Leaf climate actions in 2024, including maintaining a green team, supporting a student internship, and advancing bike planning efforts.

Ms. Bakken stated that in pollinator initiatives, the City transitioned from “No Mow May” to a broader year-round pollinator protection focus, updated website resources, and increased education about keeping grass clippings out of streets to reduce phosphorus runoff. The first native plant sale was highly successful, distributing over 4,000 plants and numerous seed mixes, and will return this year. A pollinator education event was also held in partnership with the Minnesota Bee Lab.

Ms. Bakken briefly referenced the Climate Equity Action Plan process, noting that community engagement is nearing completion and adoption is anticipated later this year.

Ms. Bakken explained that looking ahead in 2026, priorities include continued Green To Go outreach, bike plan finalization, food scraps pickup preparation, recycling events, a second clothing swap, expanded pollinator efforts, potential urban agriculture collaboration, safe cycling education, additional electric vehicle outreach, and exploration of sustainability practices within homeowners' associations in partnership with the University of Minnesota.

Ms. Bakken concluded by inviting the commission to ask questions and provide feedback.

Member Fergus asked about the Home Energy Audit program, noting that he saw a code in the newsletter for a free audit. He asked how often homeowners are recommended to complete a home energy audit and whether it should be done annually.

Ms. Bakken said she would not recommend getting a home energy audit annually. Based on her personal experience, she completed one in 2017 and another in 2024, about 7 years apart. She suggested that homeowners may consider a follow-up audit several years after completing improvements, such as insulation projects, to evaluate whether those changes achieved the expected energy savings and air-sealing benefits.

Ms. Bakken noted that audits can also help identify aging equipment, such as water heaters, that may need to be replaced in the future. Overall, she suggested every five to ten years as a reasonable interval rather than annually. She also reminded the commission that residents can receive a free Home Energy Squad audit if they book in February.

Ms. Bakken thanked the commission for their time and noted that she has a few follow-up items she will report back on. She then transitioned to the next agenda item, indicating that Jesse would provide the Campus Master Plan update and offering to pull up the presentation, if needed.

d. Civic Campus Project Update

Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer provided an update on the Civic Campus Master Plan, focusing on the North Side campus and the outer perimeter. The license passport center was envisioned as a one-story design with efficiencies in common lobbies and reduced elevator space. The maintenance operations center was considering different ways to provide buffers and screening to the neighborhood, with a focus on the façade design. The City is also conducting a parking study to determine the appropriate size of the parking lot, taking into account peak usage times and complementary uses on the site.

Member Fergus noted that Member Luongo had commented at another meeting about a proposed rain garden at the Maintenance Operations Center site, specifically at the northwest corner of Lexington Avenue and Woodhill Drive.

He observed that the Maintenance Operations Center building appeared to extend close to the roadway and questioned how the rain garden would be accommodated in that space.

Mr. Freihammer explained that the general design concept, consistent with zoning code, is to place the building closer to the street. In the northwest corner of the Maintenance Operations Center site, there is potential space for stormwater features, possibly integrated with storage areas or adjacent park space. Depending on the final parking lot design, some stormwater infrastructure may also be located underground.

Mr. Freihammer noted that south of Woodhill Drive, some existing buildings and previously permitted stormwater infrastructure will remain, so that portion of the site does not start from scratch. However, north of Woodhill Drive, there is currently little stormwater retention infrastructure, so that area will require more comprehensive planning. He indicated that additional details on stormwater design will be forthcoming as plans advance.

Chair Ficek asked whether the planned parking lot size for the maintenance operations center is based on minimum zoning requirements or if it is being designed differently.

Mr. Freihammer explained that the parking lot size is based on a combination of zoning considerations and a recent parking study conducted in January. Staff analyzed peak usage times, particularly at the License and Passport Center, which is the primary driver of parking demand. They also reviewed traffic associated with the VFW, the dance studio, park users, and staff parking. Late afternoon, especially around three o'clock on Fridays, make sure to complete and submit your background checks (refer to the email sent by Rebecca).

Mr. Freihammer explained that although January is not typically the highest demand month, usage was still strong enough to provide reliable data. Staff added a modest buffer to account for higher summer activity. He noted that while some design scenarios might suggest fewer spaces, actual peak demand indicated the need for a larger lot to avoid overflow issues. The current estimate is approximately 150 parking stalls.

Chair Ficek asked about vehicle access to the new building, specifically whether visitors would need to drive through the new parking lot to reach it or whether access would also be provided directly from Woodhill Drive.

Mr. Freihammer explained that primary access to the License and Passport Center will be from Woodhill Drive under all design options. The connection to the east, near the maintenance operations center, would serve only as a secondary access point for large vehicles or in emergencies and would not serve as the main entrance. There will be no direct access to Lexington Avenue, and

the existing access point near the apartments will be eliminated due to a lack of legal access rights.

Mr. Freihammer noted that Woodhill Drive will likely experience increased traffic, and the City may evaluate geometric changes or coordinate with the county on signal timing adjustments. Plans also include constructing a pathway along the north side of Woodhill Drive from the License Center to Lexington Avenue. Long term, the goal is to complete a pathway along the south side of Woodhill Drive, improving pedestrian connectivity to the park and across the civic campus. This may involve narrowing portions of Woodhill Drive, particularly to the west, as the roadway was previously wider when it functioned as a county road. The timing of pathway construction is still under consideration and may occur as part of or separately from the main project.

5. Commission Direction on Member-Initiated Agenda Items

Mr. Freihammer updated the Commission on upcoming agenda items.

6. Approval of January 27, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Comments and corrections to the draft minutes had been submitted by PWETC commissioners before tonight's meeting, and those revisions were incorporated into the draft presented in the meeting materials.

Motion

Member Fergus moved, Member Cicha seconded, approval of the January 27, 2026, meeting minutes as presented.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

7. Adjourn

Motion

Member Fergus moved, Vice Chair Hodder seconded, and the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:33 p.m.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0

Motion carried.