

Roseville Public Works, Environment and Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Roseville, Minnesota 55113

1. Swearing in of New Commission Members

Chair Ficek performed the Oath of Office on new Commissioners Luke Sandstrom and Charles Tedder.

2. 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, and Members Daniel Fergus, Allison Luongo, Katie Brokaw Palalay, Luke Sandstrom, and Charles Tedder

Youth Commissioners: Carsten Bauer and Alexis Jendro

Absent: None

Staff Present: Public Works Director Jesse Freihammer; Assistant Public Works Director/City Engineer Jennifer Lowry

3. Approve Agenda

Motion

Member Hodder moved, Member Fergus seconded, approval of the April 28, 2026, Agenda as presented.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

4. Election of Officers

Public Works Director Freihammer explained that, as required by City Code, 201.06.A, at the last meeting preceding the end of regular terms of appointment,

each advisory commission shall select a chair and vice chair from among its appointed members for a term of one year and appoint a member to serve on the Ethics Commission. He noted that since this should have been completed at the March meeting, the two new PWET commissioners cannot vote, be elected as chair or vice chair, or serve on the Ethics Commission.

Motion

Member Fergus moved, Member Brokaw Palalay seconded, appointing Ficek as Chair of the PWETC.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Motion

Member Fergus moved, Member Brokaw Palalay seconded, appointing Hodder as Vice Chair of the PWETC.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Motion

Member Luongo moved, Member Brokaw Palalay seconded, appointing Fergus to serve on the Ethics Commission.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

5. Public Comments

Vice Chair Hodder commented that Clean Up Day was a major success, noting the large turnout and long wait times due to high participation.

Member Brokaw Palalay agreed that Clean Up Day was very successful, noting the long wait but smooth process, and suggested holding the event more than once a year due to its popularity.

Public Works Director Freihammer noted that Clean Up Day was very successful, with a strong turnout, good weather, and satisfied vendors, and said that updated statistics would be shared next month. He added that while some communities have tried hosting the event twice a year, many have returned to once annually due to lower participation at one of the events, so expanding to two events is unlikely, without significant demand.

Chair Ficek expressed appreciation for former members Cicha and Mueller, thanking them for their service and contributions to the commission.

6. Business Items

a. Communication Items

Assistant Public Works Director Jennifer Lowry provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated April 28, 2026.

Ms. Lowry provided a brief update on ongoing City projects, noting progress on facility planning, upcoming council discussions, and multiple construction efforts, including roadway projects, sewer work, and pathway development, many of which are moving forward with favorable bid pricing. She also highlighted coordination on signage installation and acknowledged numerous county and state projects underway, warning that while travel may be challenging during construction, improvements will benefit the community long term.

Ms. Lowry provided updates on upcoming and ongoing regional projects, including timelines, public meetings, and major road closures, noting that several projects may impact travel through the State Fair period. She also shared that the City has reapplied for water efficiency rebate funding, with program updates expected, and confirmed that some funds remain available this year due to additional funding received from Met Council.

Chair Ficek asked for clarification on how many awards or devices are included in the water efficiency rebate program.

Ms. Lowry estimated that the initial funding supported about 120 rebates, with additional funds added later, and explained that standard rebates are capped at \$300 per address. In contrast, equity-based rebates can reach \$600 or even \$1,200 for certain items, such as washing machines. She noted the updated program is more comprehensive and complex, but ultimately an improvement.

Member Fergus asked whether the rebate limits apply per item or if the \$300 cap is the total allowed per address.

Ms. Lowry clarified that the standard rebate would remain capped at \$300 per address, applied as a water bill credit, while equity-based rebates could be additional and vary by device, in accordance with Met Council guidelines. She noted that the updated program is expected to launch on July 1, alongside other sustainability initiatives, including an internship program, a native plant sale, a shredding day, and recent Earth Day cleanup efforts.

Ms. Lowry shared brief council updates, noting that Roseville appointed a representative to the Falcon Heights Les Bolstad Golf Course redevelopment

advisory committee, though no proposals have been received yet. She also mentioned that a closed session was held to discuss a potential offer to the VFW, and an offer has since been made.

Vice Chair Hodder asked for clarification about the potential offer to the VFW, specifically whether it relates to the license and dance studio portion of the project.

Mr. Freihammer clarified that the City is considering purchasing a portion of the VFW parking lot to create shared parking access, not the building itself, and the VFW would continue operating as usual.

Chair Ficek asked when the delineators for the bike lanes on Hamline Avenue will be installed.

Ms. Lowry said installation of the bike lane delineators on Hamline Avenue is pending county street sweeping, which is expected within the next couple of weeks, possibly sooner.

b. Approve Bike Plan

Assistant Public Works Director Lowry provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated April 23, 2026.

Ms. Lowry provided an overview of the City's first bike-specific plan, explaining that it originated from the capital improvement plan and was supported by an MnDOT grant that paired the City with consultants and other communities. She described the extensive process, including public engagement, surveys, workshops, and a working committee made up of City staff, residents, and partner agencies, all contributing to shaping the plan and refining it into a more concise document with additional technical appendices.

She highlighted key findings, including gaps in the current bike network, safety concerns, and the need for more consistent, user-friendly infrastructure, especially for riders who are less comfortable sharing the road with traffic. Engagement results showed strong community interest, with hundreds of survey responses and comments identifying desired routes, problem areas, and opportunities for improvement, along with feedback from a demonstration bike lane project on Hamline Avenue.

Ms. Lowry explained that the plan introduces a proposed bike network with two tiers: a primary grid of major routes designed for all users and secondary traffic-calmed neighborhood connections, and acknowledges that many key corridors are outside the City's direct control and will require coordination with county and state partners. She emphasized that this plan is just the first step, with future

work focused on prioritization, additional outreach, equity considerations, funding, and implementation through partnerships and ongoing projects.

Member Fergus pointed out a minor issue in Appendix B, noting that the community engagement section appears to repeat content and does not include the demonstration project.

Ms. Lowry explained that the demonstration project was not included in Appendix B because it was added as a separate appendix.

Member Fergus noted another minor concern, pointing out that several photos in the plan show people biking without helmets and suggesting the City may want to consider whether that is appropriate.

Ms. Lowry acknowledged the concern about helmet use in the photos, noting it had come up in past work as well, and pointed out that helmet use is not legally required. She asked whether there would be any objection to editing the images to include helmets.

Member Fergus explained it was not a major issue, but suggested that future versions include more images of people wearing helmets, especially since some pages show none.

Member Brokaw Palalay appreciated the example from Lyndale Avenue in Richfield, noting that it helps residents visualize higher-quality bike infrastructure beyond basic painted lanes. She encouraged continuing to include such examples to broaden understanding and support improved bike facilities.

Ms. Lowry explained that many examples were included in the appendices to keep the main document concise while still providing valuable visuals for future engagement and discussions, noting that a shorter main report is more accessible for residents.

Member Brokaw Palalay reiterated appreciation for including a clear example in the main document, noting that even a single visual helps residents better understand what improved bike infrastructure could look like without overwhelming the report.

Chair Ficek reflected positively on his involvement in developing the bike plan, praising the collaborative process, the finalized vision statement, and the more concise summary format. He emphasized that the plan is a strong first step and should remain a living document that continues to evolve, noting the importance of ongoing updates and implementation to achieve the long-term vision.

Member Sandstrom asked for clarification that the draft prioritization in the appendix would remain preliminary even after the bike plan is approved, and confirmed that prioritization will be addressed as a next step.

Ms. Lowry explained that the bike plan is more conceptual compared to the pathway master plan, which involves more detailed, segment-by-segment engagement. She noted that while some outreach was conducted, additional steps and input will be needed before implementation, and the council's discussion will help guide the plan's next steps.

Member Sandstrom asked whether the map intentionally shows only public schools and whether there was a specific reason private schools were not included.

Ms. Lowry said it was not intentional that only public schools were shown. She explained that before using schools as a planning factor, the city would need to more clearly define and refine which types of schools or facilities to consider.

Motion

Member Fergus moved, and Member Luongo seconded, to recommend that the City Council approve the bike plan.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0

Motion carried.

Ms. Lowry explained that the plan will be presented to the Parks Commission before going to council, likely in June, to keep the process moving forward. She noted that the goal is to align the bike plan with the pathway master plan over time, avoid separate prioritization efforts, and gain council support to proceed with next steps.

c. Pathway Master Plan – Continued Segment Review

Public Works Director Freihammer provided a brief review and update on projects and maintenance activities listed in the staff report dated April 28, 2026.

Chair Ficek noted this was a continuation of prior discussions and that the group would review the segments with the intent to vote on a recommendation for approval, and asked for clarification on the exact wording of the motion.

Mr. Freihammer explained that the group is continuing to review and refine the pathway master plan by working through existing and proposed segments, aiming to reach a consensus rather than a formal vote. He noted that as they move further down the list, segments may be less prominent or more complex, and introduced the next segment for discussion, a proposed connection along

Pascal Street between County Road B and Commerce Street, originally added based on resident feedback.

The commission reached a consensus to leave the previous segment as is.

Mr. Freihammer introduced a “constellation link” concept, which focuses on connecting parks rather than strictly following roadway corridors. He explained that the next segment would connect Applewood Park to Autumn Grove Park, potentially using existing and new pathways. He asked whether the group should expand the plan to include additional residential connections, such as Arona Street.

Member Brokaw Palalay, speaking from her experience living in the neighborhood, expressed strong support for adding the connection, noting that residents already frequently walk between these two parks even without a formal pathway. She explained that Applewood Park is relatively small, so people often extend their walks by looping through the surrounding area, and completing this connection would create a more seamless and enjoyable route for walking dogs, exercising, and everyday recreation. She added that the distance between the parks is short and practical, making it an easy improvement with meaningful benefit, especially given the nearby apartment complexes that would likely generate consistent foot traffic. While acknowledging other nearby pathway improvements, she emphasized that this local connection serves a different purpose and would still see strong use from neighborhood residents.

Chair Ficek raised a counterpoint, questioning whether it is necessary to designate a specific residential street for a pathway when nearby multiple streets already provide low-speed, walkable north-south connections. He emphasized the importance of consistency in how the commission approaches adding residential streets to the plan, recalling prior discussions on whether such designations are needed when similar alternatives already exist.

Mr. Freihammer responded that while consistency is important, each situation can be evaluated on its own merits, and the group does not need to apply a rigid, one-size-fits-all standard.

Chair Ficek noted that in past discussions, the group has generally avoided adding residential street segments, though it is not a strict rule, and there have been exceptions. He offered this as a consideration for consistency as the group evaluates the current segment.

Member Sandstrom questioned whether property owners would be assessed for a sidewalk.

Chair Ficek clarified that there are no direct assessments to property owners for adding a pathway or sidewalk, but noted that impacts such as placement, trees, and space can lead to pushback, especially on very local streets. He explained that residential streets often have less need for separated pedestrian infrastructure due to lower traffic. In contrast, collector roads like Lydia Avenue and County Road C2 carry higher volumes, making such infrastructure more appropriate.

Members Brokaw Palalay and Fergus agreed to maintain consistency, expressing support for not adding the residential connection, given that nearby routes like Hamline Avenue and County Road C2 are expected to provide adequate pathway infrastructure.

Mr. Freihammer explained that while some residential segments, like East Snelling Service Drive, were added due to high parking demand and limited walkability, that situation is unique and not comparable to most neighborhood streets. He noted that Arona Street and similar streets have lower traffic and less consistent parking issues, making a pathway harder to justify and more difficult to defend to residents, especially when nearby streets have similar conditions. Based on that, he suggested removing the segment to remain consistent with past practice and avoid unnecessary impacts.

Member Luongo asked whether a separate pathway segment for Lydia Avenue was already planned, and whether that connection had been addressed previously.

Mr. Freihammer confirmed that Lydia Avenue is already included as a separate pathway segment and noted that it was reviewed and retained in the plan during the previous meeting.

Member Brokaw Palalay clarified that her earlier support was based on current conditions, noting that people rely on informal routes because nearby roads, such as County Road C2 and Hamline Avenue, lack safe walking infrastructure. She acknowledged, however, that with planned improvements to those routes, the need for a residential connection may be less critical.

Mr. Freihammer noted that while the map shows many planned connections, relatively little has been built so far. However, Hamline Avenue is a good starting point, with future priorities including Lydia Avenue and County Road C2. He indicated the Arona segment would likely rank low and supported its removal, then introduced the next constellation link connecting County Road B2 to Acorn Park via Galtier and Matilda Streets, noting that it runs through a residential area with limited park access and minimal traffic demand.

Member Luongo, speaking from personal experience living in the area, explained that she regularly walks along these streets and does not see a need

for an off-street pathway on Galtier or Matilda. She noted that traffic volumes are low, making it comfortable to walk in the street, and added that the nearby park access point does not generate significant vehicle demand. While she acknowledged occasional busier periods, such as when disc golfers are present, she emphasized that overall usage does not justify additional infrastructure and suggested that, if anything, Transit Street might be a more logical location for improvements.

Mr. Freihammer added that no pathway segments are currently planned along Transit Street and noted that some existing sidewalks in the area were installed to meet past development requirements rather than as part of a coordinated long-term connectivity plan. He explained that many commercial properties were historically required to install sidewalks adjacent to their parcels, which is why some segments appear disconnected today.

Based on Member Luongo's input and the broader discussion about consistency and need, Mr. Freihammer agreed that the proposed segment would be difficult to justify and supported removing it from the plan, a decision the group ultimately agreed to.

Mr. Freihammer explained that this segment follows a partially platted but unused right-of-way that was originally intended for a roadway connection that was never completed. He noted the corridor could potentially serve as a pathway connection and help break up a long half-mile gap between streets, but it has remained a conceptual line on the plan with no recent public input or clear origin.

The discussion among commission members centered on balancing long-term connectivity goals with consistency, practicality, and community impact when evaluating pathway segments.

Member Fergus generally emphasized a practical, resident-focused perspective, often questioning whether new pathways were truly necessary in low-traffic residential areas where walking in the street is already comfortable. He highlighted the importance of consistency with past decisions, noting that similar residential streets had not been prioritized, and supported removing segments that did not clearly improve safety or access.

Chair Ficek reinforced this consistency lens, reminding the group that while exceptions can be made, the commission has historically been cautious about adding pathways on local residential streets unless there is a clear need, such as higher traffic volumes or safety concerns. He also clarified that even conceptual segments can raise concerns among residents, particularly when they affect trees, yards, or perceived changes to neighborhood character.

Member Brokaw Palalay brought a more experiential, safety-oriented perspective, often referencing how people actually use the area today. She highlighted situations where the current infrastructure is lacking, such as unsafe or incomplete walking routes. She encouraged thinking beyond street classifications to consider real-world behavior, safety risks, and broader connectivity, including system-level issues such as crossing major roads.

Mr. Freihammer provided technical context throughout, explaining the origins of segments, existing right-of-way constraints, historical planning decisions, and feasibility challenges. He frequently pointed out that many segments are conceptual, may require significant engineering or property acquisition, and would undergo additional public engagement before implementation. He also emphasized prioritization, noting that lower-ranked segments are less likely to be built and should be evaluated carefully to avoid unrealistic expectations.

Across the discussion, the group consistently weighed whether segments should remain as long-term concepts or be removed to maintain a clear, realistic, and defensible plan. The overall approach reflected a balance between preserving future opportunities for connectivity, especially where a right-of-way exists, and ensuring the plan remains consistent, practical, and aligned with actual community needs.

7. Commission Direction on Member-Initiated Agenda Items

Mr. Freihammer outlined the upcoming schedule, noting that the May PWETC meeting has been moved up to May 19, 2026, and will focus on a waste management and recycling update and a stormwater presentation. He added that June will include preparation for a joint council meeting, a review of the climate equity action plan for recommendations, and a discussion of leaf site recommendations, to bring key items to the council and inform residents ahead of the fall cleanup season.

Chair Ficek noted that the packet includes future agenda topics and encouraged members to suggest additional items for consideration.

Member Brokaw Palalay asked whether the City has had any recent discussions about implementing a citywide organized trash collection program, similar to the unified recycling system, and suggested it might be worth considering as a future agenda topic.

Mr. Freihammer explained that a citywide organized trash collection program is ultimately a council-directed initiative and is typically revisited every year or two. He noted that the commission does not begin exploring it without council authorization to avoid unnecessary work or public concern. Still, he suggested it could be a good topic to raise at the joint council meeting.

Vice Chair Hodder asked when the commission's tour schedules will be available.

Mr. Freihammer said tour scheduling is still being worked out, noting that a visit to St. Paul Regional Water may be delayed due to construction, possibly until later in the year. He added that the team is exploring options like another MRF tour and a visit to a public works facility, with updates expected soon, and mentioned interest in organizing a trail exploration as well.

8. Approval of March 24, 2026, Meeting Minutes

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

Chair Ficek noted that some of the pronouns for people were off in the comments and could be corrected.

Motion

Member Hodder moved, Member Luongo seconded, approval of the March 24, 2026, meeting minutes as amended.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Abstain: 2 (Sandstrom, Tedder)

Motion carried.

9. Adjourn

Motion

Member Hodder moved, Member Luongo seconded, adjournment of the meeting at approximately 8:26 p.m.

Ayes: 9

Nays: 0

Motion carried.