City of ROSEVILLE Minnesota, USA

Planning Commission Regular Meeting
City Council Chambers, 2660 Civic Center Drive
Minutes – Wednesday, July 1, 2026 – 6:30 p.m.

1. **Call to Order**
Chair Bjorum called to order the regular meeting of the Planning Commission meeting at approximately 6:30 p.m. and reviewed the role and purpose of the Planning Commission.

2. **Roll Call**
At the request of Chair Bjorum, City Planner Thomas Paschke called the Roll.

Members Present: Chair Erik Bjorum and Commissioners Steve Cyra, Allison Campbell Jensen, Rose Lindsay, Erin Lynch, and Ben Schaefer

Members Absent: Vice-Chair Pamela Aspnes

Staff Present: City Planner Thomas Paschke, Community Development Director Janice Gundlach, and Sustainability Specialist Noel Bakken

3. **Approve Agenda**

MOTION
Member Lindsay moved, seconded by Member Campbell Jensen, to approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Motion carried.

4. **Public Comment**

5. **Review of Minutes**

a. **May 6, 2026, Planning Commission Regular Meeting**

MOTION
Member Schaefer moved, seconded by Member Cyra, to approve the May 6, 2026, meeting minutes.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Motion carried.

6. **Communications and Recognitions:**

7. Public Hearing

8. Business

9. Commission Direction on Commission Member Initiated Agenda Items

a. Evaluate Roseville's EVCS and EVSE (Electric Vehicle Charging) Requirements for New Parking Areas – Commissioner Cyra

Sustainability Specialist Noel Bakken presented an overview of Roseville's existing electric vehicle charging ordinance and explained why staff believed it was an appropriate time to evaluate whether revisions were warranted.

Ms. Bakken reviewed the ordinance's history, explaining that it was developed during the City's Phase Two Zoning Code Update process. While the first phase of the zoning update focused primarily on implementing the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the second phase included sustainability initiatives identified by the Planning Commission and City Council. Because transportation is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, staff determined that encouraging electric vehicle infrastructure aligned with the City's long-term sustainability objectives.

City Planner Thomas Paschke evaluated ordinances adopted by comparable Minnesota communities, including St. Louis Park, Minneapolis, Edina, and guidance prepared by the Great Plains Institute. Based on that research, Roseville adopted its ordinance in 2023 requiring electric vehicle charging infrastructure in larger parking lots associated with new development and major redevelopment projects.

Ms. Bakken summarized the City's current requirements. Parking lots containing fewer than 30 spaces are exempt from the ordinance. Larger commercial developments are generally required to provide electric vehicle charging stations equal to approximately 5% of the parking supply. In contrast, multifamily residential developments have separate requirements that emphasize Level 1 charging for overnight use. Residential charging requirements recognize that residents typically leave vehicles parked for extended periods, making slower, more practical charging necessary. In contrast, commercial developments require Level 2 charging to serve customers and employees during shorter visits.

Ms. Bakken explained that since the ordinance became effective, only two developments have been subject to charging requirements. Both developments ultimately requested and received variances, reducing the number of charging stations required. Those variance requests prompted staff to revisit the ordinance to determine whether adjustments may be appropriate before additional projects move forward.

Ms. Bakken then reviewed anticipated changes to the Minnesota State Building Code. The proposed code will establish statewide minimum electric vehicle charging requirements for new developments. Unlike Roseville's ordinance, the proposed state standards distinguish among installed charging stations, EV-ready spaces with conduit and wiring already in place, and EV-capable spaces that reserve future electrical capacity for charging equipment.

Ms. Bakken acknowledged that the proposed state terminology has generated questions throughout Minnesota, including among electrical inspectors and municipal staff. She explained that staff contacted state building officials directly to obtain clarification regarding the new definitions and confirmed that the proposed requirements remain under consideration.

Mr. Paschke also compared Roseville's ordinance with those of Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, and Edina. While Roseville's commercial requirements are generally consistent with those of comparable communities, the City's residential requirements exceed those of the State Building Code. Because state law prohibits municipalities from enforcing building standards more restrictive than the State Building Code, Roseville will eventually need to revise or repeal portions of its ordinance once the state requirements take effect.

Ms. Bakken presented several possible options for commission consideration. Staff could continue researching the issue, prepare an ordinance amendment to reduce the commercial charging requirement for employment-based developments from 5% to 3%, or wait until the State Building Code is finalized before recommending revisions.

Ms. Bakken concluded by noting that transportation currently accounts for approximately 48 percent of Roseville's greenhouse gas emissions. The City's Climate Equity Action Plan establishes a goal of reducing transportation emissions by 57 percent by 2036 while increasing electric vehicle ownership from approximately 1.6 percent of all registered vehicles to 15 percent. She emphasized that, regardless of any modifications that may eventually be made to the ordinance, encouraging electric vehicle charging infrastructure continues to support the City's adopted sustainability goals.

Commissioner Campbell Jensen thanked staff for the extensive research and commented that the presentation provided valuable background regarding both the City's existing ordinance and anticipated state requirements. She asked staff to clarify the distinction between employment-based developments and traditional commercial developments to better understand how the proposed three percent requirement would be applied.

Ms. Bakken explained that the discussion primarily involved office and employment campuses where parking facilities are used almost exclusively by employees throughout the workday. Those developments differ significantly from retail centers where customers arrive and depart throughout the day, creating much different charging patterns and infrastructure needs. She explained that the proposal was intended to recognize those operational differences while still encouraging electric vehicle charging.

Commissioner Lynch asked about the anticipated timeline for implementation of the new State Building Code and whether Roseville needed to act immediately.

Community Development Director Janice Gundlach explained that the revised building code is expected to take effect sometime in 2027. As with other building code revisions, the state typically provides an educational period before strict enforcement begins. She reminded the commission that municipalities cannot maintain standards that are more restrictive than the State Building Code. Once the new requirements become effective, Roseville will be required to amend or repeal portions of its ordinance to remain consistent with state law.

Ms. Bakken added that some Minnesota communities are evaluating alternative approaches that rely on development incentives rather than mandatory requirements. Under those programs, developers could receive flexibility in areas such as setbacks or building height in exchange for voluntarily providing additional sustainability improvements, including electric vehicle charging infrastructure or solar energy systems.

Commissioner Lindsay questioned whether reducing Roseville's commercial charging requirement from five percent to three percent would have prevented either of the two recent variance requests.

Ms. Bakken explained that both developments would likely have continued seeking variances because each request involved unique circumstances, rather than simply objecting to the required percentage. One development proposed installing fewer charging stations but providing faster Level 3 chargers that would better serve public users. Another employment-based development demonstrated that projected employee demand did not justify the number of charging stations required under the ordinance.

Ms. Gundlach further explained that the Dick's Sporting Goods variance involved a retail development, meaning the proposed three percent reduction for employment developments would not have applied. She emphasized that the two variance requests were fundamentally different and were evaluated independently based on their individual circumstances.

The commission discussed whether reducing the required percentage would eliminate future variance requests or merely reduce their magnitude. Several commissioners observed that developers would likely continue to request variances whenever they believed site-specific conditions justified a different approach.

Commissioner Lindsay questioned whether creating a separate employment-based classification could unnecessarily complicate the ordinance by introducing additional definitions that might be difficult to administer consistently.

Ms. Bakken acknowledged that clearer terminology would likely be necessary if the commission chose to pursue that option.

Ms. Gundlach agreed, explaining that Roseville's Comprehensive Plan already distinguishes employment districts from traditional commercial districts. If the commission wished to proceed, staff could develop language that more accurately reflected those distinctions rather than relying on the phrase "private commercial."

The discussion then shifted toward the variance process itself.

Ms. Gundlach explained that applicants requesting variances must demonstrate practical difficulties associated with complying with the ordinance. Simply preferring fewer charging stations is not sufficient. Applicants are expected to provide evidence supporting their request, including parking demand studies, operational data, or other documentation demonstrating why the ordinance creates unique hardships for a particular development.

The commission agreed that this process encourages thoughtful discussion regarding each project's actual charging needs rather than relying solely on numerical requirements. They also discussed how quickly an ordinance amendment could be completed if modifications were desired.

Ms. Gundlach explained that staff could prepare a zoning text amendment relatively quickly. Following a public hearing before the Planning Commission, the amendment would proceed to the City Council before becoming effective after publication. She estimated that revisions could become effective as early as September if directed by the commission. She also advised the commission that several employment-based developments are currently undergoing review. At least one project may seek a variance if the current five percent requirement remains unchanged.

Commissioner Campbell Jensen commented that reducing the requirement to 3% could provide a reasonable bridge until the State Building Code becomes effective, while also creating greater consistency for projects currently under review.

Some of the commissioners began considering whether modifying the ordinance's existing cost exception might provide a more effective solution.

Ms. Gundlach reminded the commission that the ordinance currently includes an exception that allows flexibility when compliance costs exceed 5% of the total project cost. She explained that recent variance requests have shown that the greatest expense often lies in electrical infrastructure rather than the charging stations themselves.

Ms. Bakken agreed, explaining that the charging equipment itself represents only a small portion of the total installation cost. The necessary electrical infrastructure, transformers, switches, and utility improvements often account for the majority of project expenses.

Several commissioners indicated they preferred exploring modifications to the existing cost exception rather than lowering the required percentage of charging stations.

Commissioner Campbell Jensen observed that modifying the cost exception could maintain the City's commitment to sustainability while recognizing that infrastructure costs vary significantly between developments.

Commissioner Lindsay agreed that refining the exception would avoid creating additional classifications while preserving flexibility for projects experiencing unusually high installation costs.

Ms. Bakken cautioned against selecting a new cost threshold without first consulting developers, architects, and other industry professionals.

Mr. Paschke indicated that staff would prefer to gather additional information before recommending any revisions to the existing exception.

The commission also discussed whether infrastructure costs vary depending on the availability of electrical service throughout the city.

Ms. Gundlach explained that Roseville's commercial districts generally have sufficient electrical capacity because the community is fully developed. However, the cost of delivering additional electrical service to individual developments can vary considerably depending on the equipment required and site-specific conditions.

As the discussion continued, commissioners reflected on the ordinance's overall purpose rather than focusing solely on numerical requirements.

Commissioner Campbell Jensen emphasized that Roseville's Comprehensive Plan encourages long-term sustainability and that electric vehicle charging infrastructure will become increasingly important as vehicle technology continues to evolve. She commented that charging infrastructure should be viewed similarly to other essential building systems that require long-term investment.

Ms. Bakken agreed, explaining that although federal tax incentives have been reduced, staff expect electric vehicle ownership to continue increasing as used electric vehicles become more widely available and affordable. She believes the long-term demand for charging infrastructure will continue growing regardless of short-term market fluctuations.

Several commissioners observed that the previous variance requests had already prompted constructive discussions and, in some instances, led to improved charging infrastructure. Rather than simply reducing requirements, the variance process encouraged developers to justify their requests while allowing the commission to evaluate the merits of each proposal individually.

Ms. Gundlach suggested that staff further evaluate modifications to the ordinance's cost exception rather than immediately reducing the required percentage of charging stations. Staff also intends to consult with developers, architects, and other municipalities to determine whether alternative exception language may better address unusually high infrastructure costs while preserving the City's sustainability goals.

The commission expressed general agreement with that approach. Rather than pursuing an immediate ordinance amendment to reduce charging requirements, the commission reached consensus directing staff to continue researching potential revisions to the cost-based exception and to return with additional recommendations at a future meeting.

10. Adjourn

MOTION
Member Lynch, seconded by Member Cyra, to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 0
Motion carried.