



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

## City Council Work Session

### January 13, 2026

<b>ITEM #1</b>	<b>CALL TO ORDER</b>
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Mayor Supple called the work session to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Bartholomew Room.

*Council Present:* Mary Supple, Mayor; Walter Burk, Sean Hayford Oleary, Rori A. Coleman-Woods.

*HRA Present:* Gordon Hanson, Commissioner; John Young, Commissioner.

*Remote Access:* Council Member Christensen participated remotely via interactive technology for an excused medical reason.

*Staff Present:* Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Melissa Poehlman, Community Development Director; Julie Urban, Assistant Community Development Director; and Michelle Friedrich, City Clerk.

*Guests:* Aaron Diederich, Lupe Development; Keith Matte, BKBM; Greta Norris, Pope Design; Steve Minn, Lupe Development; Jesse Symynkywicz, Damon Farber; and Jake Steen, Larkin Hoffman.

<b>ITEM #2</b>	<b>ITEM DISCUSSION</b>
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- a. Presentation of a revised housing development proposed by Lupe Development for the American Legion site at 6501 Portland Avenue, Richfield.

Community Development Director Poehlman introduced the presentation and reminded Council and the Housing Redevelopment Authority of the zoning code and flexibility, without a variance in some areas. Community Development Director Poehlman noted four questions for Council and HRA consideration regarding the revised project proposal, including (1) whether the plan warrants flexibility related to the reduced parking ratio, the absence of a required building step-back, and the placement of parking within the green buffer adjacent to the park; (2) whether the proposed affordability structure--80% of units in each building at or below 60% AMI with the remaining 20% yet to be determined, adequately addresses the HRA's concern that the project not be fully income-restricted; (3) whether the project design meets the HRA's expectations for funding consideration; and (4) whether Council and HRA members are willing to consider resolutions of support for funding applications at this time given the lack of specificity regarding affordability and tax-based financing.


The development team presented an updated project proposal reflecting revisions made since the June presentation, incorporating civil engineering, architecture, and landscape design input and ongoing coordination with city staff. The team emphasized the importance of the site, its proximity to parkland and community amenities, and their commitment to high-quality design that integrates with the surrounding neighborhood. Updates included revised building massing, step-backs, reduced building lengths, enhanced pedestrian connections, courtyards oriented to Portland Avenue and Veterans Memorial Park, expanded green space, and added sustainability features such as solar readiness. The landscape and engineering teams outlined plans for improved streetscapes, public connections, stormwater management, fire access, and utility infrastructure, noting challenges related to sewer capacity and site grading. The developer also presented data supporting a reduced parking ratio, requested flexibility on EV charging requirements due to cost and utilization concerns, and outlined the proposed affordability mix of 80% of units at or below 60% AMI. The team requested candid feedback on the design, consideration of zoning and parking flexibilities, assistance with neighborhood engagement, and potential resolutions of support for future funding applications. Council and HRA provided initial feedback noting significant design improvements, lingering concerns about building step-backs and EV parking, and the need for further staff review.


<b>ITEM #3</b>	<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>
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Mayor Supple adjourned the work session at 6:54 p.m.

Date Approved: January 27, 2026

  
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 Mary B. Supple  
 Mayor

  
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 Michelle Friedrich  
 City Clerk

  
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 Katie Rodriguez  
 City Manager