



Richfield Economic Development Authority

Agenda

April 20, 2026 -- 7:15 PM

Note: Meeting begins immediately following HRA Meeting

Richfield Municipal Center
Council Chambers
6700 Portland Avenue South

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Open Forum**
 - a. Participants can share their comments in person, by voicemail, or email, and may also request to participate virtually. For more information on submitting comments, refer to the Economic Development Authority Agenda and Minutes page on the [City's Website](#).
4. **Approval of the Agenda**
5. **Approval of Minutes**
 - a. Approval of the minutes of the Regular Economic Development Authority Meeting of March 16, 2026.
6. **Presentations**
7. **Consent Calendar**

Consent Calendar contains several separate items, which are acted upon by the Economic Development Authority in one motion. Once the Consent Calendar has been approved, the individual items and recommended actions have also been approved. No further EDA action on these items is necessary. However, any EDA Commissioner may request that an item be removed from the Consent Calendar and placed on the regular agenda for discussion and action. All items listed on the Consent Calendar are recommended for approval.

 - a. Resolution supporting an application for Hennepin County Business District Initiative Program grant funds for wayfinding and placemaking projects in downtown and authorizing the Executive Director to execute any associated agreements.
8. **Consideration of Items, if Any Removed From Consent Calendar**
9. **Public Hearings**
10. **Resolutions**
11. **Other Business**
12. **Executive Director's Report**
13. **EDA Discussion Items**
14. **Approval of Claims**
15. **Adjournment**

Auxiliary aids for individuals with accessibility needs are available upon request. Requests must be made at least 96 hours in advance to the City Clerk at 612-861-9739.

Includes Materials - Materials relating to these agenda items can be found in the EDA agenda packet located by the entrance. The complete EDA agenda packet is available electronically on the [City of Richfield's website](#).



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota
Regular Meeting
March 16, 2026

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting President Hanson called the meeting to order at 7:11 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

- a. Oath of Office for Brett Stursa.

City Clerk Friedrich administered the Oath of Office to incoming Economic Development Authority (EDA) Commissioner Brett Stursa, formally swearing her into the role. City Clerk Friedrich read out loud the responsibilities and ethical obligations associated with the role, after which Commissioner Stursa affirmed their commitment and signed the official documentation. The Economic Development Authority welcomed the new commissioner and acknowledged the completion of the swearing-in Oath of Office ceremony.

- b. Election of officers for the Richfield Economic Development Authority.

Acting President Hanson opened the floor for nominations for Economic Development Authority seats of President, Vice President, Secretary Treasurer, and Assistant Treasurer.

Commissioner Supple nominated Gordon Hanson for President.

MOTION: made by Supple, seconded by Hayford Oleary to appoint Gordon Hanson as President.

Motion carried: 5-0

Commissioner Supple nominated Sean Hayford Oleary for Vice President.

MOTION: made by Supple, seconded by Young to appoint Sean Hayford Oleary as Vice President.

Motion carried: 5-0

Commissioner Supple nominated Michelle Friedrich for Secretary.

MOTION: made by Supple, seconded by Hayford Oleary to appoint Michelle Friedrich as Secretary.

Motion carried: 5-0

Commissioner Supple nominated John Young for Treasurer.

MOTION: made by Supple, seconded by Hayford Oleary to appoint John Young as Treasurer.

Motion carried: 5-0

Commissioner Supple nominated Mary Bogie for Assistant Treasurer.

MOTION: made by Supple, seconded by Hayford Oleary to appoint Mary Bogie as Assistant Treasurer.

Motion carried: 5-0

2. ROLL CALL

EDA Present: President, Gordon Hanson; John Young; Mary Supple; Sean Hayford Oleary; and Brett Stursa.

Staff Present: Julie Urban, Acting Executive Director; Jan Youngquist, Economic Development Manager; and Michelle Friedrich, City Clerk.

Staff Absent: Melissa Poehlman.

Guests: Lily Shaw, Hennepin County Economic Development Manager.

3. OPEN FORUM

President Hanson gave instructions on how to participate in the open forum. No residents participated in the public comment opportunity.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION: made by Young, seconded by Stursa to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion carried: 5-0

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: made by Hayford Oleary, seconded by Supple, to approve the Minutes of the Regular Economic Development Authority meeting of February 17, 2026.

Motion carried: 5-0

6. PRESENTATIONS

- a. Overview of the Elevate Hennepin initiative.

Economic Development Manager Youngquist introduced Hennepin County Development Manager Lily Shaw as presenter of the Elevate Hennepin presentation.

Ms. Shaw presented the Elevate Hennepin program, highlighting its role in supporting small businesses across the county. She noted that small businesses make up many establishments and are critical to the local economy, which led to the creation of the program in 2020 in response to the pandemic and community needs.

Ms. Shaw highlighted the program offers a centralized resource hub, no-cost one-on-one advice, business navigation services, and peer-cohort learning opportunities, all designed to reduce barriers and support businesses at various stages. She noted additional resources include a digital library,

workshops, and access to financing through small business loans and recovery funds.

The EDA Commission expressed appreciation for the Elevate Hennepin program and its support for small businesses. Ms. Shaw provided additional information on the \$2 million recovery fund for businesses impacted by Operation Metro Surge, with applications open online for a limited period and grants ranging from \$3,000 to \$10,000 for eligible businesses. It was noted that the program is open to all qualifying businesses in the county.

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

Acting Executive Director Urban presented the Consent Calendar.

- a. Consider the adoption of a resolution amending the Bylaws of the Economic Development Authority to adjust the order of operations.
- b. Consider resolutions designating official depositories for the Economic Development Authority for 2026, including the approval of collateral.

MOTION: made by Young, seconded by Stursa to approve the Consent Calendar items 7a-b as presented.

Motion carried: 5-0

8. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS, IF ANY, REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

9. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

10. RESOLUTIONS

None.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Consider the creation of the Small Business Resiliency Program to provide one-time forgivable loans to small businesses adversely impacted by recent federal immigration actions and the allocation of \$150,000 in Economic Development Authority funds for the program.

Economic Development Manager Youngquist reported that recent federal immigration enforcement actions under Operation Metro Surge have caused significant economic impacts to local small businesses, including workforce shortages, reduced customer activity, and revenue loss, particularly affecting immigrant- and minority-owned businesses.

The EDA Commission and staff discussed program administration details, confirming that forgivable loan applications are intended to be processed quickly upon verification through a simple form. Staff indicated funds would be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis following submission of required application materials, with the potential to return to the EDA Commission for additional funding if demand exceeds available resources. Staff noted outreach efforts will include newsletters, direct engagement with local businesses, and coordination with existing networks, along with promotion of related resources such as the Elevate Hennepin program.

MOTION: made by Supple, seconded by Hayford Oleary, to approve creation of the Small Business Resiliency Program to provide one-time forgivable loans to small businesses adversely impacted by recent federal immigration actions and the allocation of \$150,000 in Economic Development Authority funds for the program, and authorize the execution of related agreements and program documents with Next Stage for the administration of the program.

The EDA Commission expressed appreciation to staff for quickly developing and advancing the program. The EDA Commission noted the significant challenges facing local businesses and voiced strong support for the initiative, emphasizing its importance not only for business recovery but also for maintaining community vitality, preventing commercial vacancies, and protecting the local tax base.

Motion carried: 5-0

12. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Acting Executive Director Urban noted there was nothing additional to report.

13. EDA DISCUSSION ITEMS

The EDA Commission expressed appreciation to Senator Wicklund and Representative Howard for meeting with local small business representatives, as well as to El Tejaban for hosting the meeting and to the business owners who participated. The discussion was noted as a productive opportunity to share local business concerns and perspectives with state legislators.

14. APPROVAL OF CLAIMS

MOTION: made by Stursa, seconded by Hayford Oleary, to approve claims.

<u>U.S. BANK</u>	<u>March 16, 2026</u>
EDA Check #23867-23887	\$33,399.00
TOTAL	\$33,399.00

Motion carried: 5-0

15. ADJOURNMENT

This meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:42 p.m.

Date Approved: April 20, 2026

Gordon Hanson
EDA President

Michelle Friedrich
City Clerk

Julie Urban
Acting Executive Director

DRAFT



Economic Development Authority Meeting 4/20/2026

Agenda Section: Consent Calendar

Agenda Item: 7.a.

Report Prepared By:

Jan Youngquist, Economic Development Manager

Department Director:

Melissa Poehlman, Community Development Director

Item for Consideration:

Resolution supporting an application for Hennepin County Business District Initiative Program grant funds for wayfinding and placemaking projects in downtown and authorizing the Executive Director to execute any associated agreements.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hennepin County’s Business District Initiative (BDI) Program provides grants for implementation of strategies that enhance the economic vitality of priority business districts in suburban cities within the county. On April 2, 2026, staff submitted an application to the BDI Program requesting \$50,000 in grant funds to begin implementing wayfinding and placemaking projects that align with the concepts identified in the Downtown Richfield Placemaking Playbook (Placemaking Playbook), which was approved by the Economic Development Authority (EDA) in February 2026.

Proposed wayfinding projects include both traditional wayfinding--kiosks and signage, as well as exploratory wayfinding with ground-based graphics that can guide people toward nearby destinations, highlight amenities that they might otherwise miss, and improve the pedestrian experience without adding visual clutter. Placemaking projects are proposed to include district gateways--such as branded public art at a primary gateway to downtown and banners along key corridors.

The BDI Program does not require applicants to provide matching funds, but a match is strongly encouraged and considered in evaluation of the grant application. The 2026 EDA budget includes \$28,000 for wayfinding and placemaking and staff will be proposing to add \$22,000 to the 2027 EDA budget, which would result in a one-to-one grant match. These funds would allow us to build upon the momentum from the Placemaking Playbook with a large impactful rollout that will result in the branding making more sense from a district standpoint, which would improve the potential for buy-in from the community, lead to immediate tangible results, and set the stage for future implementation of additional concepts from the Placemaking Playbook.

It is anticipated that the Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority would announce its funding decisions in June 2026 and if funded, the project would commence in late summer.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Consider a resolution supporting an application for Hennepin County Business District Initiative Program grant funds for wayfinding and placemaking projects in downtown and

authorizing the Executive Director to execute any associated agreements.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- In November 2024, the EDA was awarded a BDI grant from Hennepin County to develop a downtown branding and placemaking strategy.
- The EDA contracted with CivicBrand, a national consultant, to lead development of the branding and placemaking strategy.
- In February 2026, the EDA approved the Downtown Richfield Brand Identity & Style Guidelines and Placemaking Playbook.
- EDA staff submitted an application to Hennepin County's BDI Program on April 2, 2026, seeking grant funds to begin implementing wayfinding and placemaking projects informed by the Placemaking Playbook.

EQUITABLE OR STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS OR IMPACTS

- The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan identifies a vibrant downtown as a desired outcome, developing a downtown strategy as a strategic initiative to support this outcome, and proactively marketing downtown as an action step.
- There are several small businesses owned by women and people of color in downtown. Implementation of

POLICIES (RESOLUTIONS, ORDINANCES, REGULATIONS, STATUTES, ETC.)

- The 2040 Comprehensive Plan guides the area around Lyndale Avenue/66th Street/Nicollet Avenue as Mixed Use, with the intent of creating a downtown with residential, commercial, office, and recreational opportunities.
- The 2023-2026 Strategic Plan places a priority on community development and identifies a vibrant downtown as a desired outcome.

CRITICAL TIMING ISSUES

- Hennepin County requires a resolution of support from the governmental agency applying for BDI grant funds prior to execution of a grant agreement.
- The Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority is scheduled to take action on its BDI funding decisions in June 2026.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

- The 2026 EDA budget includes \$28,000 for wayfinding and placemaking and staff will be proposing to add \$22,000 to the 2027 EDA budget for these activities.
- If the grant is awarded, staff time will also serve as an in-kind match.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

None.

ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATION(S)

The EDA could decide not to approve a resolution of support and direct staff to withdraw the BDI grant application.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 042026 EDA Resolution BDI Application

RICHFIELD ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY RESOLUTION NO.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AN APPLICATION FOR HENNEPIN COUNTY BUSINESS DISTRICT INITIATIVE PROGRAM GRANT FUNDS AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ANY ASSOCIATED AGREEMENTS

WHEREAS, the Richfield Economic Development Authority (EDA) was formed in 2017 to provide economic development, business assistance, and housing assistance programming; and

WHEREAS, the Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority has opened a call for projects through its Business District Improvement (BDI) Program; and

WHEREAS, the BDI Program provides funding assistance for the implementation of strategies that enhance the economic vitality of priority business districts in suburban municipalities through a competitive application process; and

WHEREAS, the City of Richfield's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan prioritizes the downtown Richfield business district as part of its strategic priorities to create a vibrant downtown and a community where all can thrive; and

WHEREAS, the EDA approved the Downtown Richfield Placemaking Playbook in February 2026, which provides a framework for wayfinding and placemaking activities; and

WHEREAS, the EDA has identified the need to begin implementation of the Placemaking Playbook with a wayfinding and placemaking project to enhance the economic vitality and vibrancy of the downtown Richfield business district; and

WHEREAS, the EDA has available local funds to provide a match for the grant, should the grant funds be awarded; and

WHEREAS, the EDA has the institutional, managerial, and financial capability to ensure adequate project and grant administration; and

WHEREAS, the EDA certifies that it will comply with all applicable laws and regulations as stated in the contract grant agreements.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Richfield EDA supports an application for Hennepin County Business District Initiative Program grant funds and authorizes the Executive Director to execute any such agreements as may be necessary to implement the grant funded project.

Adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the Richfield Economic Development Authority this 20th day of April, 2026.

Gordon Hanson, President

ATTEST:

Melissa Poehlman, Executive Director