



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

City Council Work Session

April 14, 2026

ITEM #1	CALL TO ORDER
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Mayor Supple called the work session to order on April 14, 2026, at 5:05 p.m., in the Bartholomew Room.

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

Absent: None.

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Sack Thongvanh, Assistant City Manager; Kristin Asher, Public Works Director; Chris Link, Assistant Public Works Director; Karl Huemiller, Recreation Director; Melissa Poehlman, Community Development Director; Julie Urban, Assistant Community Development Director; Jennifer Anderson, Support Services Manager; and Michelle Friedrich, City Clerk.

Guests: Katrina Joseph, City Prosecuting Attorney; Greg Holly, City Prosecuting Attorney.

ITEM #2	ITEM DISCUSSION
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a. City Council Policy Proposals.

City Manager Rodriguez reviewed the policy topic order and gave a brief overview of the work session discussion items. She noted Council Members ranked policy proposals in order of importance with the highest-ranked item 1. Kratom Policy; followed by 2. the Sidewalk Policy; 3. Section 8 Discrimination Prohibition Policy; and 4. Gun Safety Policy.

Kratom Policy Discussion

Mayor Supple introduced the Kratom Policy topic, citing concerns about limited regulation and its growing discussion at local and state levels. Support Services Manager Anderson reported increased attention to the issue, noted differing views on regulation of natural and synthetic forms, and confirmed local availability. Staff added the Advisory Board of Health will conduct further review with policy consideration anticipated in early 2027. Council supported continued research, including health impacts, youth access, and other unregulated substances, with staff assessing availability including online access, with general Council agreement on the proposed timeline and process for future policy consideration.

Gun Safety Policy Discussion

Mayor Supple introduced the gun safety policy topic, noting that state-level action is unlikely in the near term. She emphasized the importance of discussing potential local options despite legal limitations, citing recent community impacts, including the Annunciation Catholic Church shooting. Mayor Supple added the topic was brought forward to explore possible approaches, even if immediate policy changes may be constrained.

City Prosecuting Attorney Joseph provided legal context on firearm regulation, noting that state preemption currently prevents municipalities from enacting or enforcing stricter gun laws than state law. They explained that even if preemption were lifted, local regulations would likely face significant legal challenges, including constitutional issues and potential litigation. Courts, particularly at the federal level, have recently taken a narrow view of firearm restrictions, making enforcement and defense of local ordinances difficult. Staff emphasized these constraints while acknowledging the council's role in setting policy.

Council and City Prosecuting Attorney Joseph discussed future prospects for firearm-related legislation, noting that issues such as ghost guns and other regulations may reemerge depending on legislative changes. City Prosecuting Attorney Joseph reiterated that local ordinances would remain unenforceable under current state preemption and could face legal challenges even if allowed. Council noted examples from other cities, such as adopting contingent ordinances, were discussed. Council also considered more targeted approaches—such as restrictions in public buildings—as potentially more defensible, while acknowledging ongoing legal, political, and enforcement uncertainties. City Manager Rodriguez noted Council would be provided more information on the topic at a future work session.

Sidewalk Policy Discussion

Council Member Hayford Oleary introduced a discussion on developing a long-term sidewalk and street design policy, emphasizing a “100-year vision” that incorporates sidewalks during reconstruction, traffic calming measures, and safer street design. Discussion included challenges related to tree placement, infrastructure constraints, and costs associated with grants, retrofitting, and maintenance.

Council and staff discussed balancing future sidewalk expansion planning with consideration of roadway width, tree canopy planning, and safety needs—particularly in residential areas and school zones. There was general support for a long-term, network-based pedestrian plan and prioritization of sidewalk connections. Staff and council also noted financial considerations, including infrastructure costs and future maintenance, emphasizing that the policy should establish minimum goals and direction first, and balancing funding strategies to follow accordingly through future planning processes and budgets.

Section 8 Discrimination Policy Discussion

Council Member Burk introduced the Section 8 Discrimination Prohibition Policy topic related to affordable housing. He noted the proposed ordinance would prohibit landlords from discriminating against prospective tenants. Staff provided an update on potential tenant protections, including non-discrimination policies related to Section 8 housing. Discussion included landlord feedback, administrative burdens, and ongoing efforts through the “Bring It Home” program, which aims to support tenants and landlords using housing vouchers.

Council discussed feedback from landlords regarding pre-eviction protections and researching the financial impacts to landlords. Staff noted current workload and that conditions differ from when the temporary emergency pre-eviction protection ordinance was initially adopted. Council and staff discussed obtaining additional landlord input before considering a permanent change to pre-eviction notice requirements and Section 8 policies. Council was divided with some members supporting

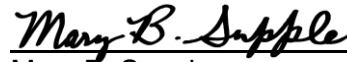
further study and allowing the current emergency ordinance to expire, while others supported extending the emergency ordinance.

Council and staff discussion included challenges related to housing programs, landlord participation, and regulatory requirements. Council discussed impacts with a temporary extension to the existing emergency ordinance and noted when the current emergency ordinance is set to expire. Council directed staff to implement the staff suggested timelines to consider both pre-eviction notification and Section 8 policy changes, including additional feedback from landlords and tenants, and allowing the current emergency pre-eviction notification ordinance to expire.

ITEM #3	ADJOURNMENT
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Mayor Supple adjourned the work session at 6:56 p.m.

Date Approved: April 28, 2026



Mary B. Supple
Mayor



Michelle Friedrich
City Clerk



Katie Rodriguez
City Manager