

**MINUTES**  
**MONTICELLO CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING**  
**Monday, February 23, 2026 – 5:00 p.m.**  
**Monticello Community Center**

Present: Lloyd Hilgart, Charlotte Gabler, Kip Christianson, Tracy Hinz, Lee Martie  
Absent: None  
Staff: Rachel Leonard, Sarah Rathlisberger, Angela Schumann, Matt Leonard, and Tom Pawelk

**1. Call to Order**

Mayor Lloyd Hilgart called the special meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

**2. City Council Priorities**

City Administrator Rachel Leonard presented an overview of projects and initiatives planned for 2026, summarizing priorities that were included in the 2026 budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The purpose of the discussion was present the items in a comprehensive list to allow Council to refine as needed to achieve the overall vision and goals for the city.

Key projects include the water treatment plant, parking lot improvements at the Monticello Library, the annual street improvement project, additional phases of the buildout at Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Athletic Park, and projects on west County Road 39. In addition to the construction projects, Ms. Leonard noted initiatives that will require city resources, including administration of the local elections, new programs like the Home Rehabilitation Program, and the EDA's recent approval of an update to the Downtown Small Area Plan

Ms. Leonard reported that many major improvements from the 2017 Downtown Plan have been completed, including the re-centering of Broadway and Walnut Street, updates to West Bridge Park, and redevelopment of Block 52. She noted the EDA's recent decision for an updated Plan will focus more on the east side, planning Block 34 redevelopment opportunities, Highway 25 corridor considerations in coordination with MnDOT, Cedar Fair site redevelopment, and support for small business development downtown. She added that the water treatment plant project will not include relocating wells at this time due to budget constraints. Staff will continue to explore potential funding and timing for relocation in the future.

Additional topics discussed included expanding the parking lot behind Doors of Davlee, pedestrian improvements under the TH25 bridge between the sides of bridge park, ADA accessibility for east side pathways, and sidewalk connections. Ms. Leonard emphasized

that funding decisions involve both new investments and maintaining existing City assets and infrastructure and stressed the importance of Council input on asset maintenance and project prioritization.

Ms. Leonard also provided updates on outside funding sources to support City projects. The City will use the State Housing Aid for a local Home Rehabilitation Program and awarded grants for Emerald Ash Borer and Bertram improvements. Staff also continue to pursue additional funding options for existing projects in the CIP, including an effort to designate The Pointes at Cedar a regional park through Greater MN Parks and Trails. She noted that projects not identified in the CIP or prioritized would be brought to Council for consideration before pursuing external funds, as accepting funds can shift priorities and may require City match contributions.

Council discussion highlighted the need to determine priorities for sustainable park development and land use planning, with proactive planning for future residential and industrial development to address infrastructure costs and avoid limiting development opportunities. Ms. Leonard noted that while the City can address emerging priorities during the year, doing so may require deprioritizing or removing other work plan items due to current staff capacity, which is near maximum with ongoing projects including the water treatment plant, proposed public works facility, Bertram Regional Athletic Park planning, and data center discussions. She stressed the importance of ongoing review of priorities and work plan adjustments as needed to maintain service levels and project progress.

There was minimal discussion by Councilmembers, and no changes were suggested to the work priorities.

### **3. Adjournment**

By consensus, the meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Recorder: Jennifer Schreiber \_\_\_\_\_

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Administrator