



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

1408 Lake Street South
Forest Lake, MN 55025
www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

Monday, February 2, 2026

6:01 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Leif Erickson	EDA President	Present	
Eric Langness	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Jill Grindahl	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Blake Roberts	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Jennifer Lorge	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Chris Hoyt	EDA Commissioner	Present	
Johnathan Wright	EDA Commissioner	Present	

3. Pledge of Allegiance

4. Election of Officers

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the five positions available for the Economic Development Authority, including the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and assistant treasurer.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Lorge made a Motion to Nominate Leif Erickson as EDA President. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Grindahl. Motion carried 6-1 (Erickson abstained).

Motion: EDA President Erickson made a Motion to Nominate Eric Langness as EDA Vice President. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Roberts. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion: EDA President Erickson made a Motion to Nominate Community Development Director Wittman as secretary. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Roberts. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Roberts made a Motion to Nominate Chris Hoyt as Treasurer. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Grindahl. Motion carried 6-1 (Erickson abstained).

Motion: EDA Commissioner Roberts made a Motion to Nominate Elle Larkin as Assistant Treasurer. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Langness. Motion carried 6-1 (Erickson abstained).

5. Approve the Agenda



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Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Approve the Agenda as submitted. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Wright. Motion carried 7-0.

6. Open Forum – Citizen Petitions, Requests, and Concerns

The Open Forum is available for residents to express personal opinions on any item of business. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes.

Comments:

None.

7. Consent Agenda Consideration (Action Items)*

None.

8. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

a) Southwest Area Study

- i. Acceptance of Headwaters Parkway Extension Report
- ii. Roadway Phasing Policy Recommendations

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the previous decision by the Economic Development Authority and City Council to set a preferred alternative for extension number two. She reviewed the findings of the study, including a preliminary cost estimate and street and utility layouts. She discussed the two recommendations to adopt the Premature Development Language in its subdivision regulations, and the right-sizing approach to allow for roadways less than needed for full build-out.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked about the plat coming forward and if it contemplated what the study considered. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the plat was following preferred alignment two.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked if the developer was in line. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the developer would like Headwaters Parkway to head straight south to 190th, but this roadway was designed as a major collector road. She said that having Headwaters Parkway go straight south would lead to another collector road. She stated that Headwaters Parkway was designed to be an east-west connector.

EDA President Erickson asked about why the developer wanted to go straight south. Community Development Director Wittman answered that when the roadway goes west, there would be a greater impact on developable land.



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EDA Commissioner Roberts asked if the developer was aware of the possibility of the roadway change so it would be less costly. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the Headwaters Parkway design was reduced from a four-lane split to a two-lane split, so it would be less of a benefit for them.

EDA Commissioner Langness asked about the premature development and if it would be a tool that the City would have, but not an entitlement for the developer. Community Development Director Wittman answered that if the City decided to use the tool, the developer could propose a reduced roadway design when they could show they would be able to build out the full roadway in the future. She clarified that Elmcrest was not included in this.

EDA Commissioner Langness expressed concerns because it could be disastrous long-term for the City to be stuck with the bill or have a roadway that would be halfway finished. He suggested building the road fully. He clarified that it was for the road and trail usage, not underground utilities. Community Development Director Wittman answered that underground utilities and full-capacity stormwater would have to be fully developed.

EDA Commissioner Langness asked if the developer could put a portion of its funding toward its future build. Community Development Director Wittman answered that she was unsure about this option because of recent case law. She discussed another project that utilized deferred assessment agreements.

EDA Commissioner Langness asked if they could have a developer pay for the portions adjacent to the developer, but if a nearby developer would be charged anything for increased capacity needed on a roadway. Community Development Director Wittman clarified that you could only consider the development impact.

EDA President Erickson voiced concerns about whether the watershed district would change its requirements in the future. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the developer might not be compelled to build to a bigger standard unless there was a proportional impact that they were creating.

EDA President Erickson asked if there were tools to take it into delineation, or if it would be subjective. Community Development Director Wittman answered that it came down to the total traffic generated by the development at the time. She discussed potential contemplated land use changes with the 2028 future land use update, which could impact the traffic modeling.



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EDA Commissioner Lorge asked which percentage was paid by the City and the developer for Headwaters Parkway. Community Development Director Wittman answered that unless there was an upsizing requirement, the developer would pay for the project.

EDA Commissioner Roberts voiced support for the project because feeder roads would keep traffic off other roads and benefit the community. EDA Commissioner Grindahl noted his agreement.

EDA Commissioner Hoyt asked if a developer installed a roadway that was supposed to be a four-way, but instead built a two-way, and they would put the additional money in an escrow account. Community Development Director Wittman answered that she would check with the legal counsel, but she did not think they could do this option.

EDA Commissioner Hoyt asked how they could get funds if the builder went out of business.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Approve the Southwest Area Study. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Hoyt. Motion carried 7-0.

Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Recommend the City Council approve the Premature Development and Interim Design regulations. Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Grindahl. Motion carried 7-0.

9. Regular Agenda (Action Items)

a) Downtown Master Plan Review

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the downtown plan, divided into several directives. She asked for feedback on the ways the EDA could assist the City.

EDA Commissioner Langness answered that he would prioritize the wayfinding directive.

EDA President Erickson asked about policy and zoning adjustments in this space. Community Development Director Wittman answered that they were undergoing BOOST, which was intended to make the code more transparent. She said that the code updates would continue until the adoption of the comprehensive plan.

EDA Commissioner Roberts expressed interest in the Lake Street Corridor Directive, especially when considering the landscaping on the corridor.

EDA President Erickson asked about ensuring a spectrum of financial participation tools were in place to level development. Community Development Director Wittman answered that they had the business subsidy, tax increment, and tax abatement policies to update in 2026. Additionally, they would have Headwaters 123 Work and finalize the Southwest Area study.



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EDA Commissioner Grindahl said the redevelopment activity would be where they would get the most bang for their buck. She discussed making the streetscape walkable and accessible to retail.

EDA President Erickson said that the road was busy, and they would need to promote safety. He discussed the opportunities to do wayfinding and engage developers to create a walkable loop.

EDA Commissioner Lorge discussed Centennial Parkway and the benefit of providing access to park bikes and walk into town. EDA Commissioner Roberts said that the County was open to conversations about trail extensions.

EDA Commissioner Langness said that the Lake Street Corridor was critical, but the areas that needed the most attention were outside of downtown. Community Development Director Wittman said that there was a Highway 61 Aesthetics and Water Quality Study completed in 2012, which addressed the Highway 1 aesthetics. She said it might be beneficial to update the 2012 corridor assessment and extend it. EDA Commissioner Langness stated that the critical parts of the business corridors outside of downtown needed to be improved, and the roads needed to blend in.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked about the updates to a park and if they coordinated with the DNR to expand the number of slips. Community Development Director Wittman said they identified a preferred site under private ownership, but they did not hear back.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked if the hotel and event center would help alleviate the parking needs at Lakeside Park. Community Development Director Wittman answered that it would create additional parking, but there could still be a parking problem because there would be new usage.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked about people not wanting to add slips because the lake is too busy. Community Development Director Wittman answered that the downtown plan added transient boat docking, but expanding the boat docking would require an environmental assessment worksheet, so they have not moved forward with that option yet.

EDA President Erickson asked about a deadline to decide on the boat docking downtown. Community Development Director Wittman responded that the agreement with the DNR to maintain the existing launch expired. They did not have land to move the launch from the current location. If they moved the launch, they would need to sign a new agreement with the DNR.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked about the boat relocation study. Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the three options for the boat launch and the preferred alignment.

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked if they could find an alternative location for the canoe launch.

Community Development Director Wittman gave a summary of the Highway 61 study.



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b) 2026 Workplan

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the priorities established by the City Council that the EDA could support. She summarized the 2024 work plan.

EDA Commissioner Roberts asked about City Engineer Goodman attending EDA meetings.

EDA President Erickson asked about bringing back to Public Works the desire to get canoes and kayaks downtown.

10. Updates

a) City

i. Citywide Transportation Updates

Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the Transit Link On-Demand Pilot Service. She said that the City's contributions to transportation were minimal currently. The City did not want to explore reshaping the taxing districts' systems for transportation.

EDA Commissioner Langness asked if anyone could use Transit Link On-Demand Services. Community Development Director Wittman confirmed this information and detailed the communication strategy.

b) Washington County

EDA Commissioner Lorge asked about the program for remodels and upgrades for rentals. Community Development Director Wittman answered that there were housing programs the County was administering on the City's behalf.

EDA Commissioner Roberts requested feedback on the proposed hotel development project. EDA Commissioner Langness stated that most of his concerns could be addressed in the design process.

EDA President Erickson suggested putting programming details in the City's utility billing.

c) Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

None.

d) Other

None.

11. Adjourn

Motion: EDA Commissioner Langness made a Motion to Adjourn the Regularly Scheduled EDA Meeting at 7:38 p.m.

Motion seconded by EDA Commissioner Wright. Motion carried 7-0.