

MINUTES
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE WORK SESSION
April 6, 2026
City Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor King. Council Members Laura Helle, Paul Fischer, Jason Baskin, Rebecca Waller, Oballa Oballa, Michael Postma and Council Member-at-Large Austin

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: City Administrator Craig Clark, Police Chief David McKichan, Public Works Director Steven Lang, Parks, Recreation, & Forestry Director Jason Sehon, Library Director Julie Clinefelter, Finance Director Emily Burns, Human Resource Director Trish Wiechmann, and City Clerk Brianne Wolf

APPEARING IN PERSON: Austin Daily Herald

Mayor Steve King opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Item #1 Airport Consultant Selection – Steven Lang

Public Works Director Steven Lang explained every five years the City must request proposals from engineering firms to assist with the airport's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Although three firms were invited, only one, SEH, submitted a proposal. SEH has been the city's long-time airport consultant and has performed well.

Mr. Lang stated the selection process is based on qualifications rather than cost, and choosing a consultant commits the City to working with them for five years. Costs are reviewed later, on a project-by-project basis when proposals are brought forward. While there is some concern about receiving only one proposal, it's noted that pricing is likely similar across qualified firms, and the City has had a positive experience with SEH.

Moved by Council Member-at-Large Austin, seconded by Council Member Oballa to place this item on the April 20, 2026, Council agenda. Carried.

Item #2 – 2027 Jetter/Vac Procurement – Steven Lang

Public Works Director Steven Lang requested authorization to move forward with ordering a new jetter vac truck for delivery in 2027 by signing paperwork now to secure a spot. Mr. Lang stated the jetter truck is a critical, high-cost piece of equipment used to respond to sewer backups, and reliability is essential. It is typically replaced on a nine-year cycle. Cost estimates

show a significant increase since the last purchase in 2018, but with a higher trade-in value, the net cost to the city is projected at about \$485,000, which is still within the \$500,000 budgeted in the 2027 capital plan.

Mr. Lang recommended committing early to lock in 2026 pricing, avoiding upcoming 2027 emissions-related changes and potential reliability concerns, and saving approximately \$55,000 through lower chassis and equipment costs. No funds would be spent until delivery in 2027. He stated this step simply reserves a production slot. The request is for general council authorization to proceed.

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Fischer approving pre-authorization to procure the jetter vac truck. Carried.

Item #3 – On Street Parking Discussion – Steven Lang

Public Works Director Steven Lang described traffic and safety concerns near the Hormel Institute, particularly around 8th Street NE and 16th Avenue NE. Mr. Lang stated large vehicles have had difficulty accessing a loading bay due to parked cars, sometimes forcing trucks to unload in the road and creating traffic issues. In response, no-parking signs have already been installed near the driveway and a busy pedestrian crosswalk to improve safety and traffic flow.

Mr. Lang stated the discussion for no parking has expanded to include 16th Avenue NE, where parking during large events often overflows onto the street, causing congestion especially with truck traffic. The Hormel Institute supports adding no-parking restrictions along this area as well. While there are concerns about displaced parking, a nearby underused parking lot is expected to accommodate overflow, even though it requires a slightly longer walk.

Mr. Lang presented three options to Council:

- Do nothing
- Only allow for parking on one side of the road on 16th Avenue NE
- Restrict parking on both sides of the road

Mayor King would be in favor of allowing for one side of parking on the road.

Council Member Baskin does not think there should be any restrictions on parking on 16th Avenue.

Council Member Oballa does not think there should be any restrictions on parking on 16th Avenue.

Council Member Postma does not think there should be any restrictions on parking on 16th Avenue.

Council Member Helle does not think there should be any restrictions on parking on 16th Avenue.

Mr. Lang will not impose any restrictions on 16th Avenue and will keep the signs on 8th Street NE.

Item #4 – Administrative Report

None

Item #5 – Open Discussion

None

Moved by Council Member Baskin, seconded by Council Member Postma, to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 PM. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brianne D. Wolf, City Clerk