



AGENDA

City Council

Workshop Meeting

January 13, 2026

Hadley Conference Room

5:00 PM

5:00 PM Tree Board Interview Candidates:

- Michelle Rietgraf
- James Lasch

5:20 PM Discuss Tree Board Applicants

5:25 PM Overview of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update

5:50 PM Local Affordable Housing Aid Utilization

6:15 PM City Attorney Presentation: Open Meeting Law, Serial Meetings, More

6:35 PM Administrator Update

6:40 PM Council Topics

6:55 PM Adjourn



COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

To:	Honorable Mayor and City Council
From:	Cory Tietz, Public Works Director
Date:	January 13, 2026
Subject:	Tree Board Interview Candidates: Michelle Rietgraf and James Lasch

BACKGROUND

At the January 13, 2026 Workshop, the City Council will interview two individuals for consideration to serve on the Tree Board. At this time, the Tree Board has one vacancy.

City staff have also interviewed the applicants ahead of the Council Workshop and recommend an interview by the Council for the two applicants as noted.

Application and staff interview materials will be provided to the City Council under separate cover.

COUNCIL DIRECTION REQUESTED

The City Council should interview each Tree Board applicant and select one to fill the vacant seat.



COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

To:	Honorable Mayor and City Council
From:	Luke McClanahan, City Planner Andrew Gitzlaff, Community Development Director
Date:	January 13, 2026
Subject:	Overview of the 2050 Comprehensive Plan Update

BACKGROUND

Each municipality within the seven-county metropolitan region is required by the Metropolitan Council (Met Council) and under State Statute to update its Comprehensive Plan by the end of 2028. Oakdale's updated Comprehensive Plan will serve as the official guide for land development and infrastructure planning through 2050. The plan is also intended to support the efficient and effective use of land, protect and preserve natural features, and promote the overall public health, safety, and welfare of the community.

At the January 13th Workshop, City staff will outline the process for developing the 2050 Comprehensive Plan and will seek the City Council's guidance on key topics for the update. The workshop coincides with the Met Council's recent publication of the official [System Statement for Oakdale](#). The System Statement initiates the update process and serves as a guide for the project. In addition to the components contained within the System Statement, the Met Council specifies [required plan elements](#) to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. The required plan elements include land use, housing, transportation, water resources, parks and trails, climate, natural systems, and implementation.

It is expected that the Comprehensive Plan update will incorporate, align with, and build upon the City's existing portfolio of planning documents which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan](#)
- [Park System Plan](#)
- [Glenbrook Small Area Plan](#)
- [12th Street and Geneva Avenue Redevelopment Study](#)
- [Strategic Plan 2025-2027](#)
- [Water System Study](#)
- [EV-Ready Community Study](#)
- [Oakdale Housing Study \(2025\)](#)

In addition, the Comprehensive Plan update will cross reference other applicable planning documents such as the Minnesota Department of Transportation's [Highway 120/Century Avenue Study](#) and the forthcoming Washington County [Climate Action Plan](#).

Next Steps

Given the scale of the project and the necessary technical requirements for the update, the City will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the coming months to select a qualified consulting firm for project support. It is expected that the consulting firm will lead the report writing effort, prepare graphic design work, assist with public engagement activities, coordinate goal setting/visioning meetings, perform data analysis (e.g., transportation modeling), provide strategic guidance on the overall process, and inform the

City of best practices based on other cities' comprehensive plan efforts and the Met Council's latest information.

Although the consulting firm will lead certain components of the Comprehensive Plan update, City staff will manage the overall project. City staff will also conduct public engagement efforts (e.g., public meetings, online questionnaires, stakeholder identification), prepare packets for City Council and advisory body meetings, conduct GIS work (mapping), perform select data analysis, inventory developable sites, and compile existing planning documents that will inform the update.

The project team, consisting of City staff and the selected consulting firm, will begin by performing data collection and analysis. Throughout the multi-year update process, extensive public engagement with diverse stakeholder groups will be conducted. The project team will rely on guidance from the City Council and feedback from advisory bodies throughout the process. The Comprehensive Plan must be submitted to the Metropolitan Council by December 31, 2028. Prior to formal submittal, an "affected jurisdictions review" is required to allow other government agencies the opportunity to review and comment on the City's updated plan.

COUNCIL DIRECTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the City Council identify topics of focus for the Comprehensive Plan update that are beyond the required plan elements, if any. Given that the update process is in its early stages, staff recommend that the City Council consider broader themes and approaches rather than technical details.

While the City is working through the appeal process related to the System Statement projections, early progress on the Comprehensive Plan update is necessary to avoid delays in the overall project timeline. Achieving early progress will also help the City to secure a qualified pool of consultants, through the RFP process, to support the update.

Attachment

Presentation Slides

2050 Comprehensive Plan Update Process

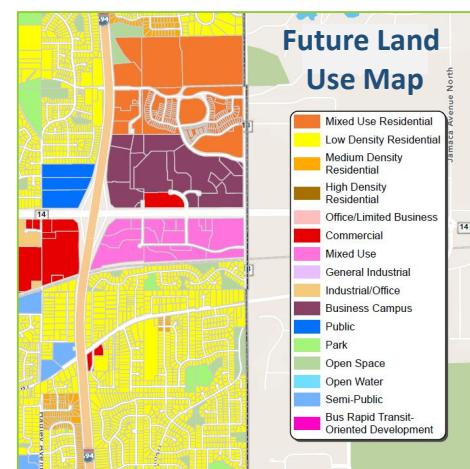
Oakdale City Council

January 13, 2026

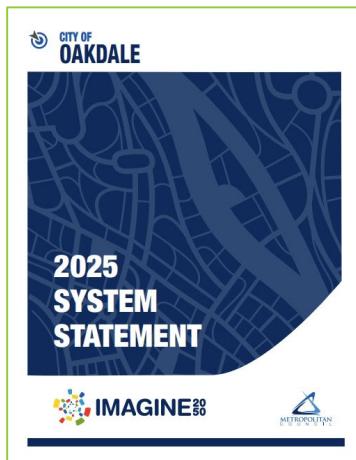


What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- Guides land development and infrastructure planning
- Ensures efficient and effective use of land
- Promotes health, safety, and welfare of the community



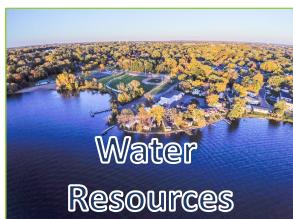
Why Update the Comp Plan?



- Update required every 10 years
- MINN. STAT. 473.864 (2025)
 - Cannot conflict with Met Council's Imagine 2050 regional guide
- Deadline to submit update: Dec. 31, 2028



Required Plan Elements



Integration of Planning Documents

City Plans

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan
- Park System Plan
- Glenbrook Small Area Plan
- 12th Street and Geneva Avenue Redevelopment Study
- Strategic Plan 2025-2027
- Water System Study
- EV-Ready Community Study
- Oakdale Housing Study (2025)

Other Relevant Plans

- MnDOT Hwy 120/Century Ave Study
- Wash Co Climate Action Plan

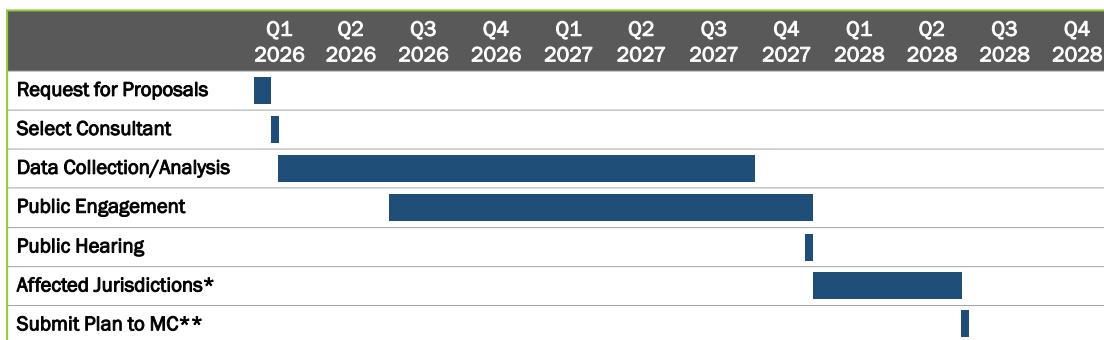


Areas of Focus

- Community engagement
- Vision, goals, strategies
- Redevelopment/opportunity sites
- Higher growth scenario
 - If projections remain artificially frozen
- Climate action planning
 - Separate grant request
- Other Council priorities?



Draft Schedule



* Affected jurisdictions must be given a full six months to review the draft plan.

** The plan must be submitted to the Metropolitan Council no later than December 31, 2028.





COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

To:	Honorable Mayor and City Council
From:	Andrew Gitzlaff, Community Development Director
Date:	January 13, 2026
Subject:	Local Affordable Housing Aid Utilization

BACKGROUND

At the November 10, 2025 City Council Workshop, Council discussed a preliminary prioritization plan for the utilization of Local Affordable Housing Aid (LAHA) by comparing two options for administering a program. LAHA was created by the 2023 Minnesota Legislature, and is funding derived from a Twin Cities regionwide sales tax that is distributed to eligible communities within the metro area for Qualified Projects defined under [Minnesota Statutes, Section 477A.35](#) that contribute towards affordable housing. The November 10, 2025 [City Council Workshop Memo](#) provides additional background on LAHA.

As noted in the November 10, 2025 [City Council Workshop minutes](#), the Council agreed to pursue Option 2 – a partnership agreement with the Washington County Community Development Agency (CDA). The Council was open to CDA partnership programs related to preserving, renovating, and improving existing housing for homeowners, and partnerships with other groups on the creation of new housing, acquisition/rehabilitation, and resale of existing homes. The CDA would be responsible for administering the program, including the allocation of funds to qualified projects based on the City's priorities and meeting all reporting and compliance requirements. Council directed staff to create a framework from Council's objectives, work with Washington County CDA on draft terms - including a potential 10% of LAHA funds set aside for self-administered projects, and continue the discussion at the January 13, 2026 City Council Workshop.

Below are draft terms for an agreement with Washington County CDA for Council consideration regarding the use of LAHA Funds that Oakdale City staff and Washington County CDA staff have discussed:

- All LAHA funds received and expended under this Agreement will be spent solely on Qualifying Projects.
- The City has received \$643,816 in LAHA funding from the State of Minnesota through the end of 2025, of which up to \$643,816 will be transferred to the CDA (final amount to be determined based on Council input on whether to set aside 10% for self-administered projects).
 - *Staff does not recommend a set aside due to the added administrative responsibilities which would likely exceed current staffing capacity and create a duplicative process for State reporting, project selection, and compliance management for a relatively small percentage of the overall LAHA funding.*
- All City of Oakdale LAHA funds shall be used within the City of Oakdale and shall not supplant other current or future funding through CDA programs from being spent in Oakdale.
- Any principal and interest loan proceeds received by the CDA from the use of Oakdale LAHA funds shall be reinvested within the City of Oakdale on Qualifying Projects.
- The City directs the CDA to use its LAHA funds as follows:
 - CDA's Home Improvement Loan Program (up to 45% of LAHA funding).
 - CDA's First Generation Homebuyer Program (up to 10% of LAHA funding).

- CDA's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investments Partnership Program (HOME) Solicitation Process set aside for grants to third party providers (including but not limited to Two Rivers Community Land Trust and Habitat for Humanity) for acquisition, rehab, construction, and sale of affordable owner-occupied housing (up to 45% of LAHA funding).
- The distribution of funds for Qualifying Projects that exceed the percentage allocation identified above shall be subject to the approval of the City Administrator.
- The City reserves the right to use the funds on Qualifying Projects in Oakdale that do not fit under a specific Washington County program. The City will work with Washington County as early as reasonably possible on the Qualifying Project funding request.

Washington County CDA staff will be in attendance at the Council Workshop to provide a high-level overview of the CDA and programs offered, and answer questions from Council.

COUNCIL DIRECTION REQUESTED

It is requested that the City Council provide feedback on the draft terms, including whether some of the funds should be set aside from the contract for self-administered projects. Once direction is received, staff will work with Washington County CDA and the City Attorney to update the agreement template and then bring the final agreement to a future City Council meeting for consideration of approval.



COUNCIL MEMORANDUM

To:	Honorable Mayor and City Council
From:	Christina M. Volkers, City Administrator
Date:	January 13, 2026
Subject:	City Attorney Presentation: Open Meeting Law, Serial Meetings, More

BACKGROUND

At Tuesday's Workshop, City Attorney Thomson will provide the annual overview of the Open Meeting Law, discuss serial meetings, and provide additional information pertinent to elected officials.

Attachment

Presentation Slides

Open Meeting Law

- 1983 Court Decision (*Moberg v. Robbinsdale School District*) defined "meeting" as a gathering of a quorum or more of the City Council at which they discuss, decide, or receive information as a group on matters relating to city business
- "Electronic gatherings" did not exist in 1983

Serial communication between members can also violate the Open Meeting Law!



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Quote From 1983 Court Decision

"Of course, serial meetings in groups of less than a quorum for purposes of avoiding public hearings or fashioning agreement on an issue may also be found to be a violation of the statute **depending upon the facts of the individual case.**"

Definition of “Serial Meeting”

Gatherings of less than a quorum for the purposes of avoiding public meeting or fashioning agreement on an issue and done with the intent of avoiding the requirements of the OML

Serial Meeting Determination

- Whether a “serial meeting” has occurred depends on two factual determinations:
 - What was the purpose of the meeting; and
 - What was the intent of the elected officials who participated in the meeting?

1996 North Mankato Case

- Applicants for city administrator were serially interviewed by all five members of the City Council in one-on-one closed interviews
- The five city councilmembers were present in the same building, but each conducted separate interviews in five different rooms.
- Decision on who to hire was made at an open meeting

1996 North Mankato Case

- Trial court found that the private interviews were not conducted for the purpose of avoiding a public meeting.
- The court of appeals upheld the trial court's decision.
- Conclusion: Gatherings involving less than a quorum of a public body held for the purpose of avoiding the requirements of the OML constitute "serial meetings" and violate the OML.

E-Mails and Open Meetings

- Can e-mails constitute a “serial meeting”?
- 2009 and 2017 IPAD Advisory Opinions said yes

IPAD Advisory Opinion No. 09-20

- Newspaper reporter sends email to a board member asking for comments on a previously published newspaper article
- Board member sends a proposed statement to other board members
- Seven board members respond with comments **and cc all other board members**

IPAD OPINION 09-20

- Emails among members of joint powers board (Metro Gang Strike Task Force) concerning contents of press release violated the Open Meeting Law

IPAD OPINION 09-20

- Comments included:
 - “I support the statement”
 - “I agree with the others”
 - “The statement reflects a solidarity on the part of the board”

IPAD OPINION 09-20

- Commissioner concluded that a quorum or more of the board commented and provided direction to the board member regarding the statement
- The group emails were the functional equivalent of a “meeting”

IPAD OPINION 09-20

- If the board member had taken action without consulting a quorum of the board, no violation would have occurred
- A “one-way communication” is permissible

- What should the board members have done?
- Call an emergency meeting

Case Study

- Council members receive their packets. One of the items is a controversial matter that the council has not previously discussed at a meeting.
 - Council Member A contacts Council Member B to discuss the matter before the council meeting. OML Violation? NO
 - Council member A then contacts Council Members C and D to discuss the matter. OML Violation? Potentially
 - Council Member A does not contact any council member other than Council Member B, but Council Member B contacts all the other council members and tells them about her conversation with Council Member A. OML Violation? Potentially

Social Media

In 2014, the OML was amended to state that “use of social media by members of a public body does not violate the open meeting law as long as the social media use is limited to exchanges with all members of the general public.” Emails are not considered “social media” for purposes of the new law.

ADVICE

- With respect to the OML, treat emails (or tweets or text messages) like phone calls
- Do not engage in email conversations, serial or otherwise, between more than one other council member
- Even a “one-way” email can quickly turn into a series of emails
- Work through the city administrator
- Remember that emails between council members will almost always be public data