

CITY OF FALCON HEIGHTS
Regular Meeting of the City Council
City Hall
2077 West Larpentour Avenue
AGENDA
January 22, 2025 at 7:00 P.M.

A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

B. ROLL CALL: GUSTAFSON_X__ LEEHY_X__ MEYER_X__

MIELKE_X__ WASSENBERG_X__

STAFF PRESENT: LINEHAN_X__ HENRICKSEN_X__

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Wassenberg motions to approve the agenda;
Approved 5-0

D. PRESENTATION

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. January 8, 2025 City Council Meeting Minutes
2. January 8, 2025 City Council Special Workshop Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Leehy motions to approve the meeting minutes;
Approved 5-0

F. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Public Hearing for the 2025 Pavement Management Program and Resolution
25-06 Ordering Improvement and Preparation of Plans and Specifications

Mayor Gustafson provides instructions for the public hearing.

City Engineer Henricksen explains the neighborhoods and streets involved in the 2025 street improvement project and that they will all receive a full-depth reclamation. The north-south streets in the Northome neighborhood had the full-depth reclamation done around 2013/14. Henricksen explains what the proposed improvements are for both neighborhoods. The parking lot of Curtiss Field was identified for improvements; this will not be assessed. The trails in the Falcon Woods neighborhood will also be rehabilitated but not assessed. Henricksen continues to explain the other public agencies involved in the project and their responsibilities. There are also private utilities involved, and the city will coordinate any necessary relocations or improvements in conjunction with the project. This will be identified during the design process. Next, Henricksen explains the project cost estimates, which include contingencies. Actual project costs will become clearer once bids are received. Cost estimates are based on previous projects. Project funding comes from several sources. Part of the funding comes from assessments. The City's assessment policy explains that road costs are assessed at 40% to the benefiting parcel, and 60%

is taken on by the City. Streets are assessed by the front footage of each lot or by lot unit. For this project, both methods are used, and Henricksen explains why, as it has to do with neighborhood layouts. He then shows the proposed parcels to be assessed and explains that 40 parcels are not being assessed as they were included in a previous project or are not abutting a road that is being improved. For Falcon Woods, the estimated per-parcel assessment is \$3,850, and for Northome, the range is \$1,525 to \$2,750. Once the final assessment roll is calculated and approved by the council, there is the option to pay partially or in full, interest-free for the first 30 days. Afterward, the assessments will be added to property tax rolls, and the first payment is due in 2026. The length and interest rate are set by the council. There is also hardship deferral. Henricksen explained that there was a neighborhood meeting on January 9th that was well attended. There were several comments regarding the coordination of private improvements in the public ROW. He explains that everyone involved will do their best to ensure these are not damaged or impacted and coordinate with homeowners. The contractor also has to maintain access to everyone's property. While there might be short periods where access is restricted, the contractors will communicate this with homeowners. Throughout the project, there will be newsletters and door hangers to provide updates, as well as weekly e-updates. Lastly, Henricksen goes over the project timeline and requested council actions.

Mike Tracy - 1998 Garden Avenue

Mike wonders how it is determined that the project needs to be completed and if residents are able to park at Blaze Credit Union when access to Falcon Woods becomes difficult.

Joan Hoiium - 1997 Garden Avenue

Joan wonders why the path between the Falcon Woods neighborhood is going to be concrete and is hopeful the path between Prior Avenue and the neighborhood gets repaired.

Florence Gleason - 1954 Autumn Street

Florence wonders if sidewalks or road striping will be added in Falcon Woods to slow drivers down.

Paul Eberhard - 1497 Iowa Avenue West

Paul explains their landline has been down since Thanksgiving and CenturyLink has been lacking in their communications. He wonders if the damage to the landline is in the same area as the road project and if this can be repaired at the same time.

Mike Breen - 1492 California Avenue West

Mike makes a couple of comments. First, he hopes the city continues to prioritize amenities at the parks. Second, he points out there are a lot of speeding cars coming through California Avenue and is wondering what the possibilities are of not making it a through street or adding striping. Third, he wonders about making California Avenue permit parking during the State Fair.

Rick Seifert - 1485 California Avenue West

Rick believes the project is overdue, the road is not in great condition, and feels Falcon Heights has a fair assessment policy.

Gregg Hammerly – 1416 Idaho Avenue West

Greg wonders if homeowners will receive a separate bill from property taxes regarding the assessment, if boulevards will be included in the road project as they have some landscaping, if there will be water service disruption, and if parking on the street will be off-limits during the project.

Paul Eberhard – 1497 W. Iowa Avenue

Paul points out that the State Fair is earlier this year than normal.

Mike Breen - 1492 California Avenue West

Mike comments about having the State Fair pay partially for the road project.

Councilmember Meyer motions to close the public hearing

Councilmembers Leehy and Wassenberg thanked residents for commenting and sharing concerns.

Mielke wonders how the timeline of the Falcon Woods Road renovation aligns with the Community Park renovation.

Staff starts answering resident-raised questions. Henricksen answers various questions asked. Regarding the question of why the project is happening now, he explains Falcon Heights has a pavement management plan that gets updated frequently and outlines the strategy behind road rehabilitation projects. If followed, roads will maintain their conditions better and longer. Throughout, surveys and boring samples are done to determine what kind of rehabilitation is needed and to determine when. Roads in both Falcon Woods and Northome were identified as needing rehabilitation earlier. The overall goal is to stay away from a full reconstruction of the roads, as those are even more costly. Regarding the parking concerns, Henricksen explains the kinds of work that would prohibit parking temporarily and that it depends on the contractor's schedules. This will all be communicated with homeowners. Often, prohibited parking is during business hours. Henriksen explains the trail towards the park from the neighborhood will be concrete because putting in asphalt is difficult to accomplish with today's construction standards. The design engineers chose concrete as they feel it's the easiest to install and the least disruptive to the surrounding homeowners. The other trail connecting the neighborhood to Prior Avenue will have the low point addressed by looking at drainage and grading, but it's currently still in the design phase. Henricksen explains a sidewalk was not included in the scope for Falcon Woods because the speed limit and traffic volume does not warrant the need.

Linehan adds comments regarding the CenturyLink outage, saying copper wire theft is impacting the services severely, agrees their communication is lacking, but they are aware of the outages and working on repairs. State legislators are also pushing for improvements to ensure everyone can contact emergency services when needed. Homeowners need to work directly with CenturyLink on getting reimbursement. He continues to explain that improvements to Curtiss Field and other parks are not pushed aside for the road project, they are budgeted for using different funds. The parking lot at Community Park will be improved as well, including storm improvements, but this will need to be coordinated with the other renovations planned for the park to ensure heavy machinery doesn't damage a newly paved parking lot. Regarding State Fair concerns, Linehan notes the city has a State Fair

Task Force that reviews resident concerns and looks at solutions. Regarding payment of the assessment, Linehan goes over the schedule and explains once the contractor completes the work and submits their final invoice, that will be used to determine final assessment amounts. Once determined, a letter with the final amount and a date for an assessment hearing will be mailed to each property included in the project. If the final amount is adopted by the Council at the hearing, that's when the 30-day interest-free pre-payment period starts. Afterward, the remaining assessments will be certified to Ramsey County and added to property tax rolls.

Henricksen continues to explain that in general boulevards are not disturbed, only in some spots where curbs are being replaced. However, if residents do have private irrigation or landscaping in boulevards, there will be an opportunity to coordinate that with the contractors once a more detailed schedule is finalized and communications will be sent out. There will also not be water disruption as part of the project. However, St. Paul Regional Water Services will be replacing some lead service lines in Northome, and they will coordinate that. He also notes escalating schedules will not increase costs, and they're anticipating the project in both neighborhoods will be wrapped up quickly. However, there is always the potential for unforeseen disruptions in the schedule.

Linehan responds to comments from the audience and explains Falcon Heights is not allowed to install speed bumps. All street projects in Falcon Heights receive funding through Municipal State Aid, but this doesn't allow speed bumps. Traffic in the Falcon Woods neighborhood is all local, it is not a thoroughfare way. Additionally, the width and layout of the roads in the neighborhood generally do not warrant sidewalks or striping.

Henricksen responds to comments from the public and states they can conduct speed assessments, and he prefers to use the data to make decisions to address any speeding issues if those are warranted. Linehan adds citywide speed studies were conducted, which led to changing the overall speed limit down to 20 mph. There is also a speed trailer that will be deployed to keep collecting data.

Gustafson adds that the data on the conditions of the roads are available in the council's packet on the City's website as well. He notes that keeping roads in good shape allows the city to collect MSA and fund the maintenance.

Wassenberg comments that the Parks and Recreation Commission continues to discuss improvements for Curtiss Field.

Councilmember Wassenberg Motions to Approve Resolution 25-06 Ordering Improvement and Preparation Of Plans And Specifications For The 2025 Pavement Management Project;
Approved 5-0

G. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. General Disbursements through 1/16/25: \$829,379.04
 - Payroll through 1/12/25: \$22,798.41
 - 1/7/25: \$8,560.87
 - 1/12/25: \$14,237.54
 - Wire Payments through 1/12/25: \$283,087.33

- Payroll: \$12,087.33
 - Bond and Interest Payment: \$271,000
2. Approval of City Licenses
 3. Approval of Resolution 25-07 Accepting Resignation of Mishy Wang from the Community Engagement Commission

Councilmember Leehy motions to approve the consent agenda;

Approved 5-0

H: POLICY ITEMS:

1. Consideration of Approving Resolution 25-08 and Proposal from DDA Human Resources, Inc. (DDA HR) as City Strategic Goal Setting Facilitator

Linehan explains DDA Human Resources, Inc. (DDA HR) is a specialized consulting firm dedicated to serving the human resources needs of local governments in Minnesota. Funds for consulting are available in the 2025 budget. The current strategic plan, adopted in 2019/20, has reached the end of its life cycle. Now is the time for the council to set new goals to provide staff direction. The two consultants have experience in this field and in going through the process with other municipalities. Linehan believes it will be a beneficial process for the city and its operations.

Mielke proposes the council comes together and determines goals on their own, without the consultants. Leehy and Wassenberg believe it is beneficial to have an objective consultant guide the goal-setting process and help with determining the mission and vision of the city. Meyer sees both sides but believes it is a good use of funds, and using a facilitator will require less staff time. Gustafson is in favor and also believes it's beneficial to bring in a consultant to facilitate the discussion and keep everyone on track.

Councilmember Leehy motions to approve Resolution 25-08 and Proposal from DDA Human Resources, Inc. (DDA HR) as City Strategic Goal Setting Facilitator;

Approved 5-0

I. INFORMATION/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Leehy thanks Mishy Wang for her time serving on the CEC.

Wassenberg comments on the great condition of the ice rinks at Curtiss Field.

Mielke explains the environment commission met last week. Together with the City of Lauderdale, they are planning a sustainability fair for April 26. There was also the first meeting of the Climate Action Team. The State Fair Task Force met as well, and they are working on initiatives to address challenges with the fair. Lastly, she thanks the community for making donations to the International Institute.

Meyer provides a shoutout to Public Works for clearing the streets from snow effectively and efficiently.

Gustafson, along with Wassenberg, attended the League of Local Government event, which was a tour of the waste energy center last week. He explains their process.

Linehan notes staff is busy scheduling tax appointments. City Hall is a host site for free tax appointments provided by AARP. This time provides top call volume for staff. The contract

with the St. Anthony Police Department is signed and staff is working on a transition plan as their start date is March 1st. Public Works is working on a watch station at Falcon Heights City Hall. Staff is also working on a series of Coffee with a Cop throughout February and March at various locations in the city. If residents are wondering about the ice rink opening hours, they can call the weather line at 651-792-7607.

Wassenberg comments on the size of the general disbursement on the consent agenda. Linehan explains these include four payments to the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department (November/December 2024 and January/February 2025) as well as scheduled bond payments.

J. COMMUNITY FORUM:

Please limit comments to 3 minutes per person. Items brought before the Council will be referred for consideration. Council may ask questions for clarification, but no council action or discussion will be held on these items.

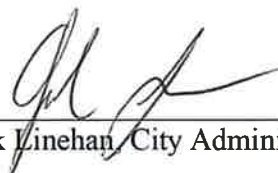
K. ADJOURNMENT: 8:40 PM

Councilmember Mielke motions to adjourn the meeting;
Approved 5-0



Randall C. Gustafson, Mayor

Dated this 12th day of February, 2025



Jack Linehan, City Administrator