

South St. Paul City Council Work Session

Session Notes for May 27, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Francis called the City Council Work Session to order at 7:00 PM on May 27, 2025

No formal Council Action is taken at a work session meeting, this is a summary of discussion that took place.

Council Members Present: Jimmy Francis, Lori Hansen, Joe Kaliszewski, Matt Thompson, Pam Bakken, and Todd Podgorski. Council member Tom Seaberg was absent.

Staff Present: Ryan Garcia, City Administrator, Shannon Young, Director of Parks and Recreation, Howard Steenberg, Public Works Director

Other Government Entities Represented:

- Dakota County: Commissioner Joe Atkins, Parks Planner John Mertens

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Dakota County Mississippi River Trail Presentation

Dakota County Commissioner Joe Atkins introduced John Mertens with Dakota County Parks and consultant Andrew Montgomery with Damon Farber. The County was seeking feedback and support for their ongoing effort, currently in its “3rd Phase”, to add interpretive nodes along the Mississippi River Greenway specifically along the Greenway in South St. Paul. The project is anticipated to bid in 2026, and would include three implementations in South St. Paul. Council members supported the project. In addition to the current proposal, the City Council also voiced support for additional collaboration with Dakota County on any efforts to utilize the Armour Gatehouse structures as an interpretive element somewhere along the Greenway. Commissioner Atkins, Mr. Garcia and Mr. Mertens acknowledged that this collaboration has been discussed by Staff, and we continue to discuss ideas around where and how these structures could be meaningfully repurposed and relocated.

B. Public Works Central Maintenance Facility – Pre-Design Phase

Dustin Phillips and Nate Enger with Kraus-Anderson shared a presentation on three scope alternatives for the potential replacement of the City’s Central Maintenance Facility, which is currently located at 400 Richmond Street and was constructed in 1970. Each alternative demonstrated various approaches to meeting, or in some cases compromising, current and future functionality and space considerations for the Public Works Department. Council’s consensus was to proceed with a formal design solicitation in Summer 2025, generally aligning with a “Better-Best” level of program

and scope.

C. City Administrator's Update

Mr. Garcia provided brief informational updates on the following:

- Mr. Garcia shared that the 2026 Capital Investment Request timeline had started with the State of Minnesota. 2026 is a “regular” bonding year and Mr. Garcia confirmed that the City’s top priorities were bonding assistance for a replacement public works facility and for a replacement aquatics facility.
- Mr. Garcia advised that the first development phase of the Wakota Crossing project was anticipated to submit for Site Plan and Plat review and approval in the first week of June, to be slated for formal review and entitlement in July.
- Mr. Garcia shared that Staff held a kick-off meeting with Odor Management Consultant Chuck McGinley and Sanimax personnel, including a facility tour. An odor management plan as required by the 2025 Settlement Agreement between Sanimax and the City continues to be developed and will be reviewed by the City in Summer 2025.
- Mr. Garcia shared that he and Mayor Francis had the opportunity to represent the City/EDA at a recent Minnesota Real Estate Journal Southeast Metro Development Summit at Mendakota Country Club. The Yards / Backyards project was highlighted on a panel with developer Ben Beard.
- Mr. Garcia reminded Council that the 2025 LMC Annual Conference was scheduled for June 25 – 27 in Duluth and still had an opening for Councilmember attendance.
- Mr. Garcia shared a reminder that the 2025 National Brownfields Conference is open for registration, with the event taking place August 5 – 8 in Chicago.

3. CLOSED SESSION

- A. Closed Session pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 13D.05, Subd. 3(c) to develop or consider offers for the purchase of real property at 417 Concord Street North.

Councilmember Hansen Moved to close the meeting at 9:05 P.M., Seconded by Councilmember Bakken.

6 Ayes / 0 Nays

Councilmember Bakken Moved to re-open the meeting at 9:15 P.M., Seconded by Councilmember Thompson.

6 Ayes / 0 Nays

- B. Closed Session pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 13D.05, Subd. 3(c) to develop or consider offers for the purchase of real property at the southwest corner of Hardman

Avenue South and Armour Avenue.

Councilmember Thompson Moved to close the meeting at 9:15 P.M., Seconded by Councilmember Kaliszewski.

6 Ayes / 0 Nays

Councilmember Kaliszewski Moved to re-open the meeting at 9:48 P.M., Seconded by Councilmember Podgorski.

6 Ayes / 0 Nays

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council at the regular work session meeting, Mayor Francis declared the meeting adjourned at 9:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/: Ryan Garcia
City Administrator