Agenda
City of Minnetonka
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commission Meeting
Tuesday, August 18, 2026
6:00 PM
Community Center - Minnehaha Room
14600 Minnetonka Blvd

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call: Quintana, Brown, Dean, Dubanaeva, Green, Omar, Chen
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes
   A. July 14, 2026 meeting minutes
5. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda
6. Report from Staff
   A. Summary of current projects and programs
7. Report from DEI Commission Members
   A. Updates from commissioners
8. Business Items
   A. Minnetonka elections presentation
   B. Minnetonka zoning update presentation
9. Adjournment

DEI Commission
Agenda Item 4.A
Meeting of August 18, 2026

Title:	July 14, 2026 meeting minutes
Report from:	Jayce Alexander, DEI Supervisor
Submitted Through:	Moranda Dammann, Assistant City Manager

Action Requested:	Motion
Form of Action:	Minutes
Votes needed:	5 votes

Recommended Action
Motion to approve meeting minutes.

ATTACHMENTS:
July 14, 2026 meeting minutes

Minutes
Minnetonka DEI Commission
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, July 14, 2026

1. Call to Order

Chair Chen called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Commissioners Mohamed Omar, Martin Quintana, Nahla Wetsch, Jason Brown, Alisa Dean, Raina Green and Elisa Chen were present.

City staff members Jayce Alexander and Corinne Burrell were present.

3. Approval of Agenda

Omar moved, Brown seconded a motion to approve the meeting agenda. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. June 9, 2026 meeting minutes

Omar moved, Quintana seconded a motion to approve the meeting minutes. All voted "yes." Motion carried.

5. Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda

Kevin Ringhofer, Minnetonka resident, provided an update on the city's pre-eviction notice initiative. He shared that he had spoken with City Council members, who indicated they plan to pursue a permanent solution later this year. Jayce Alexander, DEI Supervisor, added that Community Development Director Julie Wischnack will attend the August DEI Commission meeting to provide additional information.

Mike Meehan, Minnetonka resident, shared that he is involved with a democracy defense group focused on engaging underserved communities and encouraging young

people to vote. He explained that the group is coordinating transportation and other support to increase voter participation and expressed appreciation for the work of the DEI Commission.

6. Report from Staff

A. Summary of current projects and programs

Alexander reported that the city is hosting City Lab, a summer program in partnership with Breakthrough Minneapolis at Blake. Approximately 20 rising ninth-grade students will visit Minnetonka City Hall and spend a half-day with the Police, Fire, Community Development and Natural Resources departments to learn about city government.

Burrell provided an update on the upcoming Disability Pride Celebration, scheduled for Saturday, July 25, from 1 to 3 p.m. at Lionsgate Academy in Minnetonka. She shared that the event will include a silent disco, a food truck and informational tables hosted by organizations serving individuals with disabilities.

Alexander also shared that the Golden Valley DEI Commission will host the annual DEI and Human Rights Commission Forum on September 29. In addition, he announced that the commission is sponsoring an event titled “The Importance of a Multicultural Democracy” on July 16 at Brookview in Golden Valley.

7. Report for DEI Commission Members

A. Updates from commissioners

Commissioner Green shared information about Democracy is for Everyone, a nonpartisan grassroots organization that encourages voter registration and civic participation. The group plans to participate in the upcoming Raspberry Festival and hopes to have a presence at neighborhood Night to Unite events.

Commissioner Dean suggested including apartment communities in Night to Unite outreach. Alexander noted that the city's election team has educational voting materials available for distribution. Chair Chen added that the organization is placing a particular emphasis on youth engagement, and Alexander suggested partnering with the Youth Advisory Board.

8. Business Items

A. Minnetonka High School Political Advocacy Club presentation

Minnetonka High School Political Advocacy Club (PAC) members Danny, Marcus, and Brayden presented ideas for increasing youth engagement with local government. They explained that PAC provides students with a space to discuss current events, share political perspectives, host town halls, invite guest speakers, communicate with elected officials, and participate in site visits.

In response to Chair Chen's question, the students reported that the club has approximately 20 active members, with peak attendance reaching about 30 students. Club leadership uses the summer months to plan programming for the upcoming school year.

Alexander asked whether the club collaborates with Hopkins High School. Club members said they have not but would be interested in developing a partnership. Commissioner Brown asked whether PAC was modeled after another organization. Members explained that the club was established three years ago by a group of seniors and has continued under new student leadership. Commissioner Green noted that Blake School has a similar organization.

PAC members proposed creating a formal connection between the club and the City Council. Under their proposal, the city would share information about current initiatives with PAC, the club would gather student feedback through surveys, and youth representatives would present that feedback to the City Council. Members suggested using the VANTAGE program as an initial avenue for collaboration. They also explained that the club is primarily student-led, promotes respectful dialogue through a "talking through the tension" model, and serves as a safe space for productive discussion.

Commissioner Green asked how the club encourages participation among students who may not initially be interested in civic engagement. Members said that providing food has been an effective incentive and that emphasizing the importance of civic participation helps recruit members. In response to another question, they noted that Minnetonka High School already conducts mock elections.

Commissioner Dean asked which issues are currently of greatest interest to the club. Members identified e-bike policy and civics education standards. She also encouraged

the group to connect with Minnetonka High School alumni, and members said they would explore that opportunity.

Chair Chen suggested that the Opus development project would be an excellent opportunity for student input. When asked about preferred communication methods, the students requested contact through their personal email addresses.

PAC members also proposed establishing a Youth Commission that would attend City Council or DEI Commission meetings regularly, either monthly or as topics of interest arise. They explained that the student representative to the school board is selected through teacher recommendation followed by a student vote and suggested that Youth Commission members could be selected through a city application and interview process.

Alexander asked about the group's long-term goals. Members said they would appreciate additional opportunities to speak at City Council meetings. Commissioner Green reminded the students that they are welcome to speak during the Citizens Wishing to Discuss Items Not on the Agenda portion of any City Council meeting.

Alexander also encouraged the club to engage middle school students to build interest in civic participation before they enter high school.

B. Moon Festival planning

ACE intern Jenna Khalili presented preliminary ideas for the Moon Festival, scheduled for the evening of Friday, Sept. 25, 2026. She explained that the event's goals are to celebrate Asian cultures represented in Minnetonka while providing a welcoming, family-friendly cultural experience.

Khalili proposed activity stations throughout the Community Center banquet room and utilizing the adjacent pond for lantern displays or releases.

She also shared a list of potential community partners, including CAAM Chinese Dance Theater, Minneapolis Plum Blossom Martial Arts Center, and the Minnetonka Chinese Immersion Center. Potential food vendors included Thanh Luong Vegetarian, Mandarin Yang, Dragon Jade, and Viet Hoa. She suggested offering tea and mooncake samples, along with interactive activities such as lantern decorating, origami, and Chinese

calligraphy. Khalili emphasized that educational components should accompany interactive activities so attendees can better understand the cultural significance of the festival.

Commissioner Brown suggested inviting a local Chinese drumming group and Theater Mu. Chair Chen noted that she has already received a quote from the drumming group. Commissioner Green recommended including a K-pop dance performance to appeal to youth attendees. Chair Chen shared that she has a contact who could provide a mooncake cooking demonstration. Commissioner Dean suggested inviting a Hopkins-Minnetonka Recreation Tai Chi instructor, and Chair Chen recommended reaching out to the Taiwanese American Association of Minnesota, which has previously hosted Lunar New Year programming at the library.

C. 2026 planning

Chair Chen asked commissioners to consider how they would like to conclude 2026 and how they envision organizing the commission moving forward.

Alexander proposed reducing the number of DEI Commission meetings to allow commissioners to attend meetings of other city boards and commissions and report back on relevant initiatives. He explained that commissioners would initially attend as community members rather than in their official capacity as commissioners. The remainder of the year could serve as an informal pilot before potentially implementing the model more formally in 2027.

Commissioner Brown asked how the proposal would work in practice. Alexander said he would connect with staff liaisons to gather additional information.

Commissioner Quintana shared that this collaborative model aligns with how he originally envisioned the DEI Commission. Chair Chen expressed support, noting that it could help move initiatives forward more effectively.

Chair Chen emphasized the importance of first identifying the commission's long-term goals to help determine future priorities and direction.

Burrell will distribute a survey to gauge commissioners' interest in serving as liaisons to their boards and commissions. Commissioner Brown requested a standardized meeting note template for commissioners participating in those meetings.

9. Adjournment

Chen moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. All voted “yes.” Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarissa Seracki
Deputy City Clerk

DEI Commission
Agenda Item 6.A
Meeting of August 18, 2026

Title:	Summary of current projects and programs
Report from:	Jayce Alexander, DEI Supervisor
Submitted Through:	Moranda Dammann, Assistant City Manager

Action Requested:	Discussion
Form of Action:	Other
Votes needed:	N/A

Summary Statement
DEI Supervisor, Jayce Alexander, will share information about current projects and programs being worked on within the team. Staff will go over the changes to the commission's September calendar.

Recommended Action
Receive the update and provide feedback.

DEI Commission
Agenda Item 7.A
Meeting of August 18, 2026

Title:	Updates from commissioners
Report from:	Jayce Alexander, DEI Supervisor
Submitted Through:	Moranda Dammann, Assistant City Manager

Action Requested:	Discussion
Form of Action:	Other
Votes needed:	N/A

Summary Statement
Commissioners will report any updates from their involvement in other city groups or community organizations.

Recommended Action
Share updates from involvement in other community groups.

DEI Commission
Agenda Item 8.A
Meeting of August 18, 2026

Title:	Minnetonka elections presentation
Report from:	Becky Koosman, City Clerk
Submitted Through:	Moranda Dammann, Assistant City Manager

Action Requested:	Discussion
Form of Action:	Other
Votes needed:	N/A

Summary Statement

Minnetonka City Clerk, Becky Koosman, and Records Specialist, Tanya Witschen, will deliver an overview of the election process in Minnetonka.

Recommended Action

Receive the presentation from staff and provide feedback.

DEI Commission
Agenda Item 8.B
Meeting of August 18, 2026

Title:	Minnetonka zoning update presentation
Report from:	Susan Thomas, AICP, City Planner
Submitted Through:	Julie Wischnack, FAICP, Community Development Director Moranda Dammann, Assistant City Manager

Action Requested:	Discussion
Form of Action:	Other
Votes needed:	N/A

Summary Statement
Minnetonka's existing zoning ordinance was adopted in the mid-1980s. It has been amended hundreds of times, making it difficult to navigate, hard to interpret and less aligned with current community goals. At the direction of city council, staff and community members began an update process in February 2025. A draft ordinance is now available.

Community development staff will present a summary of the ordinance.

Recommended Action
Receive the presentation from staff and provide feedback.

Background
See supplemental background report.

ATTACHMENTS:
Supplemental Background Report

Supplemental Background Report

Zoning in General

Zoning is a planning tool that cities use to manage land use and development within specific areas, known as “zones.” By regulating what can and cannot be built in these zones, cities aim to protect public health and safety while advancing broader community goals. The complete set of regulations for all zones is referred to as a zoning ordinance or zoning code.

In 1916, New York City adopted what is widely regarded as the nation’s first city-wide zoning ordinance. This ordinance introduced height restrictions to preserve sunlight and fresh air at street level, as well as setback (or massing) requirements to prevent new buildings from blocking the windows of neighboring structures. Cities across the country soon followed suit, using zoning to establish local regulations. Zoning itself is a neutral tool—its impact depends on the specific rules communities choose to implement. For instance, rules that require buildings to be set back a certain distance from natural resources—such as wetlands or steep slopes—help protect these sensitive areas. Conversely, rules that restricted residency in certain areas based on race, ethnicity, or religion resulted in discriminatory and exclusionary practices.

Zoning in Minnetonka

Minnetonka adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1966. As the community and its goals evolved, the ordinance underwent frequent updates. In 1986, the entire zoning ordinance was rewritten to align with contemporary goals. Over the past 40 years, the regulations have been updated more than 300 times, resulting in a zoning ordinance that is now difficult to navigate, hard to interpret, and less aligned with current community objectives.

Zoning Ordinance Update

At the direction of city council, staff and community members began a zoning update process in February 2025. The goals of the update are to:

- Shift from a traditional zoning ordinance – focused mainly on restricting undesirable uses – to a modern approach that proactively defines what is allowed on a property to better advance the community’s goals.
- Support a diverse range of housing options by removing barriers to allow minor increases in density that matches the comprehensive plan.
- Maintain strong environmental protection and promote sustainability initiatives.
- Simplify the development process for all parties, including property owners, developers, residents, and city staff.
- Align the zoning ordinance with the city’s comprehensive plan, translating long-term policy goals into clear, enforceable development standards.

A draft of the updated zoning map and ordinance is now available on the Zoning Ordinance Update page at minnetonkamatters.com. The draft ordinance features significant updates to the existing approach. The following summary highlights the most substantive changes.

- **Zoning Districts.** The existing ordinance contains many different residential zoning districts but relatively few non-residential districts. The zoning districts in the draft ordinance reflect the land uses contemplated in the comprehensive plan. Residential districts are consolidated, while village center districts are established. The existing zoning districts roughly translate to the proposed zoning districts as follows:

Existing Zoning District	Proposed Zoning District
R-1 Low-Density Residential District	LDR Low Density Residential District
R-1A Residential Alternative District	
R-2 Low-Density Residential District	
R-3 Low- or Medium-Density Residential District	MDR Medium Density Residential District
R-4 Medium-Density Residential District	
R-5 High-Density Residential District	HDR High Density Residential District
B-1 Office Business District	VC Village Center Districts
B-2 Limited Business District	
B-3 General Business District	
I-1 Industrial District	FD Flexible Development District
PID Planned I-394 District	VC-I Village center District I: Ridgedale

The proposed village centers serve as hubs for both business and community life. As the city's zoning consultant notes, "over time, these nodes have developed distinct characteristics that make them special." The updated zoning code honors these qualities by establishing tailored standards for each current and future village. The village centers include:

District	Purpose of the District
VC-A: 101 & 7	To promote a concentrated core of economic and community-oriented activity at and near the intersection of Hwy 101 and Hwy 7.
VC-B: Williston & 7	To support commercial and mixed-use development activities at and near the intersection of Williston Road and Hwy 7.

VC-C: Country Village	To support commercial and mixed-use activity that recognizes the recreational and economic value of the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail within and near the Country Village Shopping Center at the intersection of Hwy 7 and Hopkins Crossroads.
VC-D: Minnetonka Blvd	To provide areas for community-oriented development along Minnetonka Boulevard near the Minnetonka Community Center.
VC-E Minnetonka Blvd & 101	To promote mixed-use economic development at a scale and intensity compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods.
VC-F: Glen Lake	To support a variety of residential, commercial, and community uses near Glen Lake.
VC-G: Cedar Lake Rd	To support and control economic development near the intersection of Cedar Lake Road and Hopkins Crossroad.
VC-H: Opus	To support existing commercial uses while enabling the adaptation of the Opus II Business Park into a residential, mixed-use neighborhood at a density and scale that leverages the planned METRO Green Line Opus Station.
VC-I: Ridgedale	To provide flexible development standards that support the transformation of the area surrounding Ridgedale Center from an automobile-dependent commercial node to a walkable, mixed-use neighborhood.
VC-J: Carlson	To provide flexible standards for residential and commercial development north of Hwy 12/I-394 and west of I-494.
VC-K: Minnetonka Blvd & 169	To provide appropriate standards for commercial and mixed-use development along Minnetonka Boulevard near Hwy 169.
VC-L: Minnetonka Mills	To preserve the front setback pattern established near the intersection of Minnetonka Boulevard and Shady Oak Road while supporting commercial and mixed-use economic activity.
VC-M: Southwest Light Rail	To leverage the extension of the METRO Green Line for the creation of a mixed-use, high-activity neighborhood near the Shady Oak LRT Station.

- **Lot Dimensions and Setbacks.** Minimum lot sizes and setbacks are reduced and simplified in low-density residential areas to allow for more flexible development.

Measurement	Existing Ordinance (R-1, R-1A, R-2)	Proposed Ordinance LDR
Lot Area	Varies 12,500 to 22,000 sq. ft.	Standardized to 18,000 sq. ft.
Lot Width	Varies from 45 ft to 80 ft	Standardized to 90 ft
Front Yard Setbacks	Varies from 25 ft to 50 ft depending on street type	Set uniformly to 25 ft to 35 ft depending on street type
Side Setback	Varies from 10 ft to 30 ft combined	Set uniformly to 10 ft
Rear Yard Setback	Varies from 20% of lot depth to 40 ft	Set uniformly at 25 ft
Impervious Surface	N/A unless located within 1000 sq. ft. of a lake or creek	Capped at 20% without stormwater treatment but can increase up to 50% with higher levels of stormwater treatment.

- **Dwelling Type.** In low-density districts, single-family, two-family, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are proposed to be permitted. For reference, in 2025, the city issued building permits for 36 new single-family homes and 4 ADUs.

- **Sustainable and Resilient Features.** Construction, redevelopment, or major renovation of multi-unit residential or commercial buildings must incorporate sustainable and resilient features. Applicants can choose from a menu of options, such as all-electric heating and water systems, solar panels, stormwater harvesting and reuse, recycled building materials, and internal bike share programs.

- **Trail-Oriented Design.** Development in a village center district adjacent to existing or planned trails must meet specific design standards. These standards ensure safe, attractive, and accessible pedestrian and multi-modal connections. Projects must include a set number of amenities from a trail-oriented features menu, which may include bicycle repair stations, public art, picnic areas, hydration stations, and shaded seating.

Public Engagement

June 2025 Engagement Activities:

- Summerfest – Planning staff hosted a zoning display, allowing attendees to ask questions about zoning and share opinions about housing types, lot sizes, and desired neighborhood amenities.



July 2025 Engagement Activities:

- Visual Preference Survey – An online survey was posted on the Zoning Ordinance Update page at minnetonkamatters.com, gathering feedback on housing types and building proximity to property lines. A total of 170 responses were received.

- Phone Survey – The city's consultant, Morris Leatherman Company, conducted a survey of 300 residents to gather preferences on housing types, lot sizes, and opinions on commercial development (e.g., stores and offices).

- City Media – The Minnetonka Memo included a short article about the zoning ordinance update, and social media posts invited residents to visit the minnetonkamatters.com Zoning Ordinance Update page.



June 2026 Engagement Activities:

- Summerfest – Planning staff again hosted a zoning display, speaking directly with 170 attendees about topics such as lot sizes and twin homes in predominantly single-family neighborhoods.

August 2026 Engagement Activities:

- Minnetonka Night to Unite – Planning staff provided staff, councilmembers, and community workgroup members with written information, including an overview of the ordinance update and answers to frequently asked questions, for use at block parties.

- DEI Commission – On Aug. 18, planning staff will present a general overview of the draft ordinance to the commission. Commissioners are asked to share information with their networks and request that feedback be provided to planning staff.

- Direct Emails – Staff will send direct emails to local non-profits and businesses to raise awareness and encourage participation in the process.

- Social Media – Posts will remind residents about the zoning ordinance update and invite them to Virtual Zoning Office Hours.

- Virtual Office Hours – Staff will be available online to answer questions and gather feedback on the draft ordinance: Tuesdays, Aug. 11 and 25 (6–7 p.m.) and Thursdays, Aug. 13 and 27 (12–1 p.m.).

September 2026 Engagement Activities:

- Minnetonka Memo – The Memo will include an article on the ordinance update, as well as dates and times for virtual office hours.

- MinnetonkaMatters.com – The Zoning Ordinance Update page will be opened for public comment and questions.

- Planning Commission – On Sept. 3, planning staff will present a general overview of the draft ordinance to the commission and request feedback and suggestions.

- Sustainability Commission – On Sept. 15, planning staff will present a general overview of the draft ordinance (for areas pertaining to their work) to the commission.

Commissioners will be asked to share information with their networks and request that feedback be provided to planning staff.

- Developer Meeting – On Sept. 17, staff will host an online meeting for local developers to present a general overview of the draft ordinance and gather feedback.

- Virtual Office Hours – Staff will be available online to answer questions and take feedback on the draft ordinance: Tuesdays, Sept. 8 and 22 (6–7 p.m.) and Thursdays, Sept. 10 and 24 (12–1 p.m.).

October 2026 Engagement Activities:

- City Council Introduction – On Oct. 5, the city council will introduce the zoning ordinance at its regularly scheduled meeting.

- Planning Commission Public Hearing – On Oct. 8, the planning commission will host the first of two public hearings on the zoning ordinance. This may be a joint hearing with the city council.

- Citywide Open House – Staff will host a zoning display within the community development area, highlighting significant differences between the existing and proposed ordinances.

- Planning Commission Public Hearing – On Oct. 22, the planning commission will host the second of two public hearings on the zoning ordinance and make a recommendation to the city council.

- City Council Consideration – On Nov. 9, the city council will consider the zoning ordinance for approval.