

**COUNCIL STUDY SESSION
MEETING**

City Hall Council Chambers
July 28, 2025

AGENDA



-
- 1. Call to Order - 6:00 p.m.**
 - 2. Council Miscellaneous Discussion Items**
 - a. Commission Code of Respect
 - 3. City Manager Miscellaneous Discussion Items**
 - a. Strategic Planning Update and Reporting
 - 4. Adjournment**

Council Regular Meeting

DATE: 7/28/2025
TO: Council Study Session
FROM: Reggie Edwards, City Manager
THROUGH:
BY: Reggie Edwards, City Manager
SUBJECT: Commission Code of Respect

Requested Council Action:

Council review and deliberate on the subject of Commission Code of Respect

Background:

In 2024, the City Council developed a Code of Conduct pertaining to City Council members.

In May of 2025, the City Council reimagined and changed the "Code of Conduct" to a "Code of Respect" pertaining to City Council members. The intent of the change was to guide members toward a desired behavior of demonstrating "respect" towards each other instead of memorializing a reactionary and punitive approach.

At the time, the Council also desired to provide such guidance for the City's appointed officials (Commissioners). The Council directed staff with the assistance from legal to develop a draft Code of Respect for Commissioners. Attached is a copy of that draft.

Budget Issues:

N/A

Inclusive Community Engagement:

Antiracist/Equity Policy Effect:

Strategic Priorities and Values:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft City Commission Code of Respect 7.28.2025

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City Commission Code of Respect and Ethics

A. Commissioner Conduct with One Another

City Commissions are composed of individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds, personalities, values, opinions, and goals. Despite this diversity, all have chosen to serve the community. In all cases, this common goal should be acknowledged even as Commissioners may "agree to disagree" on contentious issues.

1. In Public Meetings

- (a) **Commissioner Interaction.** Commissioners agree to practice civility, professionalism and decorum in discussions and debate. Difficult questions, tough challenges to a particular point of view, and criticism of ideas and information are legitimate elements of a free democracy in action. Commissioners can promote camaraderie and collaboration by refraining from making belligerent, personal, impertinent, slanderous, threatening, abusive, or disparaging comments. Shouting or physical actions that could be construed as threatening will not be tolerated. Commissioners should make every effort to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, including listening actively during Commission meetings.
- (b) **Deference to Order.** Commissioners agree to honor the roles of Commission leadership including the Chair and Co-Chair in maintaining order by deferring to their direction and guidance. It is the responsibility of the Chair and/or Co-Chair to keep the Commission meetings on track during meetings. Commissioners agree to honor efforts by the Chair or Co-Chair to focus discussion on current agenda items. If there is disagreement about the agenda or Chair or Co-Chair's actions, those objections should be voiced politely and with reason, following procedures outlined in parliamentary procedure.
- (c) **Setting a Positive Example.** One prominent goal of every commission meeting should be to demonstrate a positive example of decorum and respect for constituents. To accomplish that goal, Commissioners agree to avoid comments that personally attack other Commissioners. If a Commissioner is personally attacked by the comments of another Commissioner, the offended Commissioner will make notes of the actual words used and may call for a "point of order" to challenge the other Commissioner to justify or apologize for the language used. The Chair or Co-Chair will maintain control of this discussion.
- (d) **Collaborative Problem Solving.** Another goal of the commission meeting is to demonstrate effective problem-solving approaches. Commissioners have a responsibility to show how individuals with disparate points of view can find common ground and seek a compromise that benefits the community as a whole.
- (e) **Timeliness.** To ensure smooth and timely execution of each commission meeting, Commissioners agree make best efforts to be punctual and keep comments relative to topics discussed. Every Commissioner has made a commitment to attend meetings and participate in discussions. Therefore, it is important

that Commissioners be punctual and that meetings start on time. It is equally important that discussions on issues be relative to the topic at hand to allow adequate time to fully discuss scheduled issues.

- (f) **Endorsement of Candidates.** Commissioners have the right to endorse candidates for all Council seats or other elected offices. It is inappropriate to mention endorsements during commission meetings or other official City meetings or functions.
- (g) **Professional Courtesy.** Commissioners endeavor to avoid putting colleagues in awkward or disadvantageous positions in an effort to capitalize on another colleagues' vulnerability or to embarrass them publicly. Commissioners agree to make every attempt to submit questions or concerns to the Staff Liaison prior to formal meetings to avoid surprising Commissioners, Council Liaisons, or Staff at said meetings.
- (h) **Personal Attacks.** Commissioners shall not personally attack, under any circumstance, another member of a Commission. Commissioners acknowledge that cultural differences, body language, tone of voice, as well as the words they use, could be experienced as intimidating, off-putting, or aggressive to the message recipient.

2. In Private Encounters

- (a) **Respectful Workplace Values.** Commissioners agree to continue to model respectful behavior in private. The same level of respect and consideration of differing points of view that is deemed appropriate for public discussions should be maintained in private conversations.
- (b) **Data Practices.** Commissioners recognize that written notes, voicemail messages, social media and email may be public information. Technology allows words written or said without much forethought to be distributed wide and far. Commissioners agree to consider the following: (1) how they, their family and/or friends would feel if this voicemail message was played on a speaker phone in a full office? Or broadcast on the nightly news; (2) What could the consequences be if this email message was forwarded to others? Commissioners agree that written notes, social media postings, voicemail messages and email should be treated as potentially "public" communication.
- (c) **Public-Private Considerations.** Even private conversations can have a public presence. City officials are always on display – their actions, mannerisms, and language are monitored by people around them that they may not know. Lunch table conversations could be overheard, parking lot debates may be watched, and casual comments between individuals before and after public meetings noted.
- (d) **Personal Comments.** Commissioners agree to refrain from making personal comments about other Commissioners. It is acceptable to publicly disagree about an issue, but it is unacceptable to make derogatory comments about other Commissioners, their opinions and actions.

B. Commissioner Conduct with City Staff

Governance of the City is a cooperative effort, including elected officials, appointed officials, and staff. Therefore, every effort should be made to be cooperative and show mutual respect for the contributions made by each individual for the good of the community.

1. Respectful Workplace Values. Commissioners agree to treat all staff as professionals. Commissioners agree to engage in clear, honest communication that respects the abilities, experience, expertise, and dignity of each individual. Berating, personal, impertinent, slanderous, threatening, abusive, or disparaging comments toward staff are not acceptable and are automatic grounds for a Code of Resect violation.
2. Limited City Staff Contact. Questions for City staff and/or requests for additional background information should be directed to the City Manager or City Attorney. Commissioners agree to copy the City Manager on or keep the City Manager informed of any request. Except in extraordinary circumstances, Commissioners agree to avoid disrupting City staff while they are in meetings, on the phone, or engrossed in performing their job functions.
3. Staff Criticism. Commissioners should not publicly criticize an individual employee. Commissioners agree to express concerns about the performance of a City employee directly to the City Manager through private correspondence or conversation. Commissioners will refrain from expressing concerns in public, to the employee directly, or to the employee's manager.
4. Political Solicitation. Commissioners will not solicit any type of political support (financial contributions, display of posters or lawn signs, name on support list, etc.) from City staff.
5. Personal Comments about other Commissioners. Commissioners agree to refrain from speaking ill of other Commissioners to staff. This puts staff in an uncomfortable and compromising position because staff have the responsibility to treat all Commissioners equally and with respect.
6. Personal Attacks. Commissioners shall not personally attack, under any circumstance, a member if city staff. Commissioners acknowledge that cultural differences, body language, tone of voice, as well as the words they use, could be experienced as intimidating, off-putting, or aggressive to the message recipient.

C. Commissioner Conduct with the Public

1. In Public Meetings (For Commissions with Public Hearings)
 - (a) **Create a Welcoming Environment.** Making the public feel welcome is an important part of the democratic process. No signs of partiality, prejudice or disrespect should be evident on the part of individual Commissioners toward an individual participating in a public forum. Every effort should be made to be fair and impartial in listening to public testimony.

- (b) **Speaking Time.** The Commission as a body agrees to be fair and equitable in allocating public hearing time to individual speakers. The Commission Chair or Co-Chair will determine and announce limits on speakers at the start of the public hearing process and ensuring those with Brooklyn Center addresses have an opportunity to speak. Generally, each speaker will be allocated two minutes to speak. Applicants or their designated representatives may be allowed more time. If many speakers are anticipated, the Chair or Co-Chair may shorten the time limit and/or ask speakers to limit themselves to new information and points of view not already covered by previous speakers.
- (c) **Public Hearing Speakers.** No speaker will be turned away unless the speaker exhibits inappropriate behavior. Each speaker may only speak once during the public hearing unless the Commission requests additional clarification later in the process. After the close of the public hearing, no more public testimony will be accepted unless agreed upon by the Commission.
- (d) **Avoid Public Debate.** Commissioners agree to avoid debate and argument with the public. Only the Chair or Co-Chair – not individual Commissioners – can interrupt a speaker during a presentation. However, a Commissioner can ask the Chair or Co-Chair for a point of order if the speaker is off the topic or exhibiting behavior or language the Commissioner finds disturbing. Commissioners may request that the Chair or Co-Chair seek clarification from the speaker.
- (e) **Commission Chair to Focus Discussion.** If speakers become flustered or defensive by Commissioner questions, it is the responsibility of the Chair or Co-Chair to calm and focus the speaker and to maintain the order and decorum of the meeting. Questions by Commissioners to members of the public testifying should seek to clarify or expand information. It is never appropriate to belligerently challenge or belittle the speaker. Commissioners agree to refrain from providing personal opinions or revealing inclinations about upcoming votes until after the public hearing is closed.
- (f) **Personal Attacks.** Commissioners shall not personally attack, under any circumstance, a member/members of the public. Commissioners acknowledge that cultural differences, body language, tone of voice, as well as the words they use, could be experienced as intimidating, off-putting, or aggressive to the message recipient.

2. In Unofficial Settings

- (a) **No Promises.** Commissioners may not make promises on behalf of the Commission. Commissioners may be asked to explain a Commission policy or recommendation or to give their opinion about an issue as they meet and talk with constituents in the community. It is appropriate to give a brief overview of City policy and to refer to City staff for further information. It is inappropriate to overtly or implicitly promise Commission or Council action, or to promise City staff will do something specific (fix a pothole, plow a specific street, plant new flowers in the median, etc.).

- (b) **Personal Comments.** Commissioners agree to refrain from making personal comments about other Commissioners to constituents. It is acceptable to publicly disagree about an issue, but it is unacceptable to make derogatory comments about other Commissioners, their opinions and actions.
- (c) **Public-Private Considerations.** Commissioners may be observed by the community as they serve the city in their capacity as commissioners. Commissioner behaviors and comments serve as models for proper conduct in the City of Brooklyn Center. Commissioners agree to reflect honesty and respect for the dignity of each individual in every word, communication, (whether in social media or otherwise), and action taken by Commissioners, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is a serious and continuous responsibility.

D. Commissioner Conduct with Other Public Agencies

Commissioners will be as clear as possible when representing City or personal interests. If a Commissioner appears before another governmental agency or organization to give a statement on an issue, the Commissioner must clearly state:

1. If his or her statement reflects personal opinion or is the official stance of the City;
2. Whether this is the majority or minority opinion of the Commission. Even if the Commissioner represents his/her/their own personal opinions, the Commissioner must remember that the comments may reflect upon the City as an organization.

If the Commissioner is representing the City, the Commissioner must support and advocate the official City position on an issue, not a personal viewpoint.

E. Poor Conduct and Accountability Measures

1. Conduct

- (a) **Violations.** Commissioners who violate the Code of Respect will be subject to accountability measures. Any violations that potentially constitute criminal conduct shall be handled by the criminal justice system.
- (b) **Factors.** Factors that will be considered in determining the appropriate restorative measure or sanction include but are not limited to the following: seriousness of the violation and number of preceding violations.

2. Types of Accountability Measures

(a) **Restorative Measures**

Commissioners agree to engage in restorative measures prior to initiating sanctions for violations of the Code of Respect. Restorative measures include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Private meeting Commissioner and City Manager

- (ii) Informal Mediation between involved parties and Mediator
- (iii) Mediator issues recommendations (i.e. training, public apology, meeting suspension, etc.)
- (iv) Commissioner / Involved Parties to follow recommendations
- (v) If Commissioner refuses to follow recommendations, then the process moves to sanctions:

(b) Sanction

Commissioners may face commission removal for failing to engage in restorative measures or for continued violations of the Code of Respect.

3. Process

(a) Complaint / Reporting a Code of Respect Violation

- (i) A Commissioner may report a potential Code of Respect violation by another Commissioner by bringing the matter to the attention of the official of their choice, Mayor, City Manager, or City Attorney.
- (ii) A Brooklyn Center staff member may report a potential Code of Respect violation by a City Commissioner by bringing the matter to the attention of the City Manager or Human Resources Manager.
- (iii) If the potential violation involves the Mayor, it should be brought to the attention of the Mayor Pro Tem, City Manager or City Attorney.
- (iv) A community member may report potential Code of Respect violations by a member of a City Commission to the Mayor, City Manager or any member of the City Council.

(b) Investigation

- (i) Triage. The Mayor and City Manager will gather initial information, consult with the City Attorney if necessary and decide how to move forward.
- (ii) Fact Finding. If necessary, the matter will be referred to the criminal justice system. The Mayor and City Manager will determine whether to pursue independent fact-finding or internal fact-finding.
- (iii) Possible Outcomes. After an investigation, the City Manager, in consultation with proper staff, will determine if the complaint is substantiated or unsubstantiated. A restorative solution will be sought prior to moving to a sanction.
 - (1) If Substantiated: The Commissioner will have a consultation with the City Manager, if that is unsuccessful, then the parties move to a graduated resolution process:
 - Informal mediation with harmed individuals and City designee (Mediator);
 - Mediator issues recommendations
 - Commissioner / Involved Parties to follow recommendations

- If Commissioner refuses to follow recommendations, then the process moves to sanction.

(2) Sanction: (Last Resort)

- City Manager compiles redacted report for Council review (names, commission, other identifying information will be removed from the report)
- After review of the circumstances and recommendation, Council will use a standard form provided by the Administration to communicate their vote
- Administration will provide Council forms to Mayor
- Mayor will state Council vote on the record
- If Commissioner is removed from service, Commissioner will receive a letter of removal from the Council
- Commission Removal results in automatic bar from Commission Appointment for 2 years

(3) If Unsubstantiated: City Manager to work with City Attorney to determine resolution compliant with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act

4. Conduct During Meetings

- (a) **Inappropriate Statements.** For inappropriate statements or conduct by Commissioners occurring during a Commission meeting, a verbal correction by the Commission Chair will normally be the first step to address the matter, either during or after the meeting.
- (b) **Further Incidents.** Further incidents at the same meeting may be addressed by subsequent verbal corrections accompanied Repeated incidents can give rise to Chair not recognizing the offending Commissioner to speak. A Commissioner can request that the Chair take any of these actions against an offending Commissioner if the Chair has not done so on her/his/their own.

F. Ethics

1. Open Meeting Law

- (a) With certain exceptions, meetings of Council Commissions must be open the public. A meeting is a gathering of a majority of Commissioners at which City business is discussed. It is not necessary that action be taken for a gathering to constitute a “meeting.”
- (b) A meeting does not include chance social gatherings as long as public business is not discussed.
- (c) A majority of Commissioners should not communicate with each other by phone, email, in-person, or otherwise, to discuss City business.
- (d) Use of social media does not violate the open meeting law as long as social media use is accessible to all Members of the public.

See Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13D, for further information regarding the Open Meeting Law.

2. Gift Law

A City Commissioner cannot accept a gift from someone who has an interest in any matter involving the City.

A “gift” includes money, property, a service, a loan, forgiveness of a loan, or a promise of future employment. A “gift” does not include:

- Campaign contributions;
- items costing less than \$5;
- items given to members of a group; the majority of whose members are not local officials;
- gifts given by family members; or
- food or beverages given at a reception, meal or meeting at which a Council Member is making a speech or answering questions as part of a program

See Minnesota Statutes, Section 471.895 City Charter, Section 14.04(A), and Section II, 2.95 of the Brooklyn Center Code of Policies for further information regarding the Gift Law and procedure.

3. Conflict of interest

- (a) City Council Members cannot have a personal financial interest in a sale, lease, or contract with the City.
- (b) City Council Members cannot participate in matters in which the Council Member’s own personal interest, financial or otherwise, is so distinct from the public interest that the
- (c) Council Member cannot be expected to fairly represent the public’s interest when voting on the matter.

See Minnesota Statutes Section 471.87, and Section II, 2.95 of the Brooklyn Center Code of Policies of further information about Conflicts of Interest involving Public Officers.

Council Regular Meeting

DATE: 7/28/2025
TO: Council Study Session
FROM:
THROUGH:
BY: Shannon Pettit, City Clerk
SUBJECT: Strategic Planning Update and Reporting

Requested Council Action:

Discussion of Strategic Planning Progress Report and Update

Background:

In 2023, the City completed its 5-year strategic plan, which included a mission, vision, values, and priorities. The strategic plan has been the guidance for operational actions, budgets, and evaluations. Staff will be presenting and discussing with the council the first report for accessing annual progress on strategic goals. This first iteration of a scorecard will enable staff, council, and the community to begin realizing progress made on strategic goals, while providing data for needed adjustments.

Budget Issues:

Inclusive Community Engagement:

Antiracist/Equity Policy Effect:

Strategic Priorities and Values:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Strat Priorities CC



Executing on Strategic Priorities



1

Overview

- Intent
- Current & Future Execution Process
- Current Status



2

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Intent

- City's strategic plan was completed in 2023
- Priority areas include:
 - Enhance Economic Growth
 - Develop Financial Stability
 - Increase Safety for Community & Employees
 - Improve Employee Engagement
 - Improve Communication



3

3

Intent

- Strategic plans require execution
- The key areas of execution include:
 - Focus
 - Visibility
 - Ownership



4

4

Execution Framework & Process

- Successful execution needs a consistent process
- An effective process will:
 - Maximize the chances for success
 - Find new areas of progress
 - Challenge the organization
- An effective process should not:
 - Tie projects to individual achievement



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Current Execution Process

- FOCUS
 - Departments created individual priority projects with City Manager
 - Monthly status meetings with department heads
- VISIBILITY
 - Documentation of strategic priorities and progress
- OWNERSHIP
 - Each priority has an owner that is responsible for pushing the work forward



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Future Process

• FOCUS

- City Council develops high level priorities
- Departments create project plans
- Clearly define key results
- Monthly status meetings with department heads

• VISIBILITY

- Documentation of strategic priorities and progress
- Regular report out of progress

• OWNERSHIP

- Each priority has an owner that is responsible for pushing the work forward
- Priorities do not change without discussion



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Current Status

Category	Number of Projects
Enhance Economic Growth	7
Develop Financial Stability	13
Increase Safety for Community & Employees	14
Improve Employee Engagement	13
Improve Communication	17

64 Priority Projects



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Current Status

Category	Example Project
Enhance Economic Growth	By the end of 2025, ensure the development and beginning implementation of an economic growth plan.
Develop Financial Stability	Deliver 2025 Capital Plan
Increase Safety for Community & Employees	Upgrade City Hall security cameras and telecom
Improve Employee Engagement	Update new employee orientation to improve experience and ensure policy trainings are accurate
Improve Communication	Implement monthly all-staff meetings with City Manager

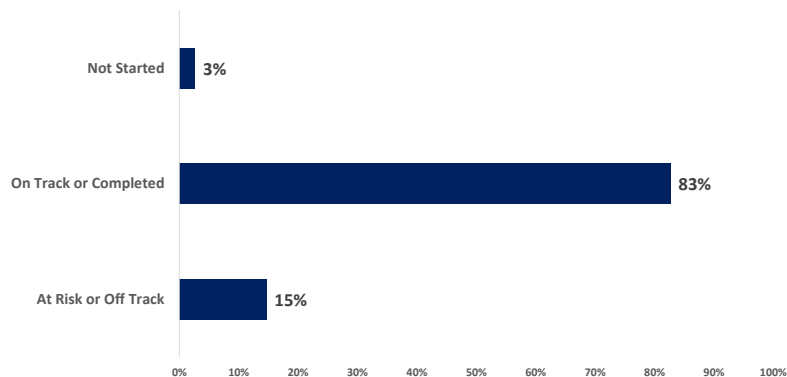


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Current Status

Phases of Completion



10

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Current Status

