

Memorandum

TO: City Council Workshop
FROM: Niki Hill, AICP , Assistant Community Development Director
DATE: August 17, 2026
SUBJECT: Planning discussion items
ITEM NUMBER: 1.c
SECTION: GENERAL BUSINESS

REQUESTED MOTION

INTRODUCTION

The city is currently working on the update to the development code. As staff and the consultant have continued reviewing the code and receiving feedback, some additional topics have been identified that were not part of the original scope of the update. Staff is seeking direction from the city council on whether these topics should be incorporated into the current development code update or explored separately.

DISCUSSION

Development code update

As the development code update continues, staff has identified two additional topics that could be incorporated into the current update.

Tree replacement requirements

The city's current tree replacement requirements can result in a 6:1 replacement ratio when right-of-way projects are included. Staff has received comments regarding the current replacement requirements and whether the level of replacement is appropriate.

As part of the workshop materials, staff has provided a staff-prepared comparison of replacement requirements for council's consideration. It shows that our 6:1 replacement requirements are generally higher than comparison cities.

Staff is seeking council direction on whether the city's tree replacement requirements should be reviewed as part of the current development code update. If included, staff would use the information provided and further research to develop potential options for council consideration.

Shoreland regulations

Staff is proposing to include updates to the city's shoreland regulations as part of the development code update. Staff has been working with our consultant HKGI and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on these changes.

The proposed modifications are generally intended to clean up and clarify existing language

and improve consistency with applicable shoreland regulations, rather than represent a major policy change. The review would also include consideration of section 10 of the DNR model shoreland ordinance – shoreland PUD, and whether it should be incorporated into the city's regulations.

Staff is seeking council direction on whether these shoreland updates should be included in the current development code update.

Separate policy discussion – data centers

Data centers are an emerging use that can have unique land use, infrastructure, environmental, and community considerations. Staff is seeking general council direction to begin exploring potential regulations or policies related to data centers. At this time, the city does not have land that would be suitable for development as a data center without requiring a rezoning. As a result, staff is not recommending a moratorium on data centers at this time.

While staff believes this is a growing concern of the public and local regulations should be considered, we are seeking direction to further investigate data center regulations or policy considerations. If so, staff believes this topic is outside the scope of the current development code update, and would best be addressed separately through a future development code amendment or other policy process.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff is seeking general direction from the city council. No formal action is requested.

ATTACHMENTS

[Tree Preservation- Replacement Market Comparison](#)