



# City of Independence Minutes

City Council Meeting  
Tuesday, April 28, 2026

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1. **Call to Order.** Mayor Schwarzler called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

2. **Roll Call.** Mayor Schwarzler present.

Present: Councilor Evan Sorce, arrived at 6:40 PM  
Councilor Bill Boisvert  
Mayor Kate Schwarzler  
Councilor/Council President Kathy Martin-Willis  
Councilor Marilyn Morton  
Councilor Shannon Corr

Absent: Councilor Dawn Roden

City Staff Present: Kenna West, City Manager  
Myra Russell, City Recorder  
Shawn Irvine, Assistant City Manager  
Gerald Fisher, Public Works Director

3. **Work Sessions.**

3.1. **Work Session: Parks SDC Methodology Update (Fisher).**

This work session focused on reviewing Parks System Development Charges (SDCs), with PW Director Fisher providing an overview of the process and Steve Donovan presenting details. The city has completed required statutory compliance steps, including notifications to interested parties and posting methodology for review. The presentation covered the history and background of parks SDCs, the 2026 Capital Improvement Plan, and specific analysis including forecasts for single-family home SDCs and comparisons with neighboring communities. Council was presented with two options for funding parks and related services. Option 1 would result in significantly higher SDC (system development charge) fees, while Option 2, which includes alternative funding sources, was recommended as a more viable alternative. The current SDC for parks is \$5,617, and under Option 2, it would increase to approximately \$5,887, which would place the city in line with other communities like Salem and Albany. The discussion also covered population projections and the calculation of SDC fees based on dwelling units and people per unit. The group discussed ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) charges and data limitations. Fisher explained that while there is no hard statistical data on ADUs due to their recent introduction, they currently assume 1.5 people per ADU in their model, though this could be adjusted downward to encourage ADU development. A councilor suggested considering a tiered approach to SDC fees based on square footage,

with homes under 900 square feet having one charge and larger homes having another. Steve noted that this approach is becoming more prevalent in urban planning. The discussion concluded with an agreement to run current SDCs as usual and revisit the topic as a whole later. This will come back for adoption at a future council meeting.

- 3.2. **Work Session: Update-Moderate Income Revolving Loan Fund (Irvine).** Assistant CM Irvine discussed the Modern Income Revolving Loan (MIRL) Fund program, expressing continued uncertainty about its implementation despite previous interest. Irvine explained that while the program has been expanded to allow alternative repayment methods, including potentially 0% interest loans to developers, there are still concerns about the program's effectiveness in achieving sufficient affordability. The discussion highlighted challenges with creating affordable ownership, including risks associated with upfront land purchases, potential foreclosures, and the complexity of managing affordability requirements over time. Irvine concluded that while the program has interesting aspects, the effort and potential risks may not justify the benefits, particularly given the complications in ensuring long-term affordability and managing individual property sales over an extended period. Irvine expressed reservations about proceeding with a loan program due to several risk factors. Key concerns included potential gaps in repayment if the fire department's tax base increases mid-loan, complications in property assessment for multiple properties under the program, and timing challenges with the fee-in-lieu system starting after property completion. The city council discussed concerns about taking on financial responsibilities typically handled by banks or escrow companies, with council members expressing that this would be better managed by the state through rent-to-own or lease-to-own financing instruments. The council agreed that the proposal was too complicated and would require significant resources to manage effectively, with one member noting that previous similar attempts had been abandoned due to complexity. Council suggested waiting for potential future program improvements rather than being an early "beta tester" of the rural housing initiative.

4. **Adjournment.** Mayor Schwarzler adjourned the meeting at 7:20 pm.

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MAYOR KATE SCHWARZLER

ATTEST:

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Myra Russell, City Recorder