

COTTAGE GROVE CITY COUNCIL

12800 RAVINE PARKWAY SOUTH

COTTAGE GROVE, MN 55016

TRAINING ROOM - 6:00 P.M

August 6, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

The City Council of the City of Cottage Grove, Washington County, Minnesota, held a Special Workshop Meeting on August 6, 2025, at Cottage Grove City Hall, 12800 Ravine Parkway. Mayor Bailey called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. WORKSHOP - OPEN TO PUBLIC

A. Twin City Land Development - Tank Property Concept Workshop

Staff Recommendation: Receive information from Twin City Land Development on their proposed Concept Plan for the land east of Keats Avenue and south of 70th Street and provide comment and feedback on their proposed Concept Plan.

Mayor Bailey said the only item that we're going to be discussing today is looking again at the Twin City Land Development, the concept that they brought back to us after a previous workshop. So, I'm not sure, who am I kicking this to? Community Development Director Emily Schmitz replied oh, I can introduce them, absolutely.

Director Schmitz said Mayor and Council, so we've got Twin City Land back with us, Tracey and Ashley. As you mentioned, Mayor, at a previous workshop they presented their concept for the Tank Property on the east side of Keats. You had some thoughts about how they could reconfigure the neighborhood a little bit and if we could look at some things a little bit differently. So, since that time, they've obviously taken a look, and we've also solidified an alignment for the parkway, which helped them to really start to have a vision for how this could work with the parkway. So, they've done some work, and I am going to pass it off to Tracey and Ashley, who are going to kind of give you an overview of what they tweaked and looked at since your last conversation, and then, obviously, we'll have time for questions.

Good Evening, Mayor and Council Members, thank you again for having us. I am Tracey Rust, VP of Twin Cities Land Development. Ben Schmidt, President, was here in early April. So, at that time, again we got feedback. We had fully anticipated moving forward with Preliminary Plat and getting plans in, and we were not approved then. Quickly after that meeting, we said hold on, we want to revisit the alignment of Ravine Parkway because this is the first piece of a bigger puzzle; we totally get that and want to work with the City, and staff has been fantastic to work with on what does the City need to see and how does that need to look, that kind of thing. So, we went back and forth several times with the City on why its aligned where it is, the engineering wants alignment between roads and easements and things like that. So, where its ended up now is more in alignment with the storm sewer easement that runs through I'm going to call it the middle, but its not the middle of our parcel because ours is just the land that we have under contract right now; but it is now through the middle where if you remember earlier, it ran much further east, along that west future park alignment. So, again, for various reasons its now more towards the middle, between Keats and that park area.

We do have the outlook and can touch on the name of Ravara Trails is what we are calling it now, and that really, truly means, we had several different names, we kind of do a deeper dive not myself, by any means, I'm an engineer, I'm a numbers person. We've got somebody who's a little more creative in our office that does work on marketing, and it really is more of a spinoff; we had a lot of things on Ravine, but there's the Ravine Parkway and we didn't want it to be Ravine necessarily, but wanted to be kind of a spinoff of it, so that's where we ended up

with it. No more magic than that, other than just Ravara Trails. Seeing as there are going to be trail systems through this to connect to parks, that kind of stuff, so a lot of times we do meadows and brooks and things, so again we just decided to do it with the trails on that.

So, yes, alignment now with Ravine Parkway where it is. We then took a look at how does the rest of our Site Plan fit in with what the feedback was that we got. The biggest change was in my opinion on that feedback, the 28-foot lots and what we call the tall skinnies that the builders have is now a 40-foot lot instead of those 25-foot lots. So, a larger lot but still a smaller product to get some more diversity there.

Townhomes are still the same, we've got the two different product types, the Suburban and the Urban. Urban are the ones that have the front door and the garage are opposite sides, and then the Suburban are the garage and the front door are on the same side of the street. So, those two products are still the same, just kind of reconfigured a little bit. Then we have what we call the standard Single Family, which is still 65-foot lots. Then we did take and secure, if you remember that old plan had the 65-foot kind of on the east side of the site; we've now taken Indian Boulevard, put that through the middle, and put all of that standard on the south side, just to make that more of just a natural divide with the product type.

We still have ponding in there, obviously; we've got a lot of green space, we've got trails that will run through, so Keats will have the trail, Ravine Parkway will have a trail, so we kind of tried to figure out what do we do with trails. The original plan had a trail that ran through linking, through here; we kind of thought that was a little redundant at this point now that we do have roadways on both sides, so we've taken that out to just have it again be more green space. But we will have, again, Ravine Parkway, Keats will have trails coming through to connect to that east-west, so there will obviously be your standard sidewalks and things like that, too, through the development.

We've got the park up to the top, which the City has indicated to be a future park area with that water tower as well, so that is still the plan for that. As far as design wise, I think that's, I want to say that's it for us. It is honestly a pretty big change, just the density alone, now having Ravine fully on, going through our site vs. fully off the site. So, those numbers are for us significant, I think we were 684 with the first plan and we're now at 569 with this one. But again, we're excited about this plan, excited about the different product types that we can end up getting to the City as well.

So, yeah, we are open to questions, comments, feedback. If everything seems to look fairly good, our plan is to move forward pretty quickly here. At this point, we are not going to start construction this year, which is fine, there are crops that are still out there, and we knew that we would plan on purchasing at some point this year; the plan, though, is to get through Preliminary Plat or PUD and once we have that approval, purchase the land by the end of the year or early January. Final Plat through the winter so that we are ready to go. The big push for me now at this point with construction lines is to make sure that we can get in early with contractors, as early as possible in the winter to get some numbers dialed in and finalized before spring; and then start construction, this obviously will be a phased development.

As far as builders, nothing's really changed on that. We do not have builders lined up yet, but I'll be honest, they are all knocking down the door so they all want to be here. So, there will be more than one builder here; will we have one for each product? Probably not. My guess is that we'll even have possibly multiple for the single family, maybe it's one each for townhomes and the 40-foot product; but we will figure all of that out earlier than later because when we do the official submittals, we would like to have the actual products and the actual builders with our submittals, too.

It's short and sweet because we have been here before and this is more of a revision, but we're open to questions and comments.

Mayor Bailey said just a couple from me real quick, and this might be more for staff, possibly. So, you said you could move the Ravine Parkway over? That was confirmed for him. So, and the purpose for doing that is?

Public Works Director Ryan Burfeind replied I can speak to that, Mayor and Council, so there were a handful of reasons: 1) Going back to when the Watershed put in their trunk storm sewer through there, the intent was to have those two aligned because that trunk storm sewer is an encumbrance on that property, and Ravine Parkway is a large Right-of-Way. So, the plan was to align those, which is what they did here. 2) We also looked at the usability of that road as a collector roadway, and most of your traffic is heading west. So, there was a concern that

all the way to the east is it really going to get the use that a collector roadway should? You really want that collector halfway through the neighborhood. 3) Cost: This did reduce the length by somewhere around the order of 700 feet, which doesn't sound like a lot, but a road like this costs a lot per foot, so this development will have a lower cost to build it.

Mayor Bailey replied I personally don't have an issue with it; if anything, it makes more sense to have housing on both sides, kind of like on the other side of Ravine. So, that does make sense. And then as you, for the future, as we're moving south, we still see it hooking up like out here at some point? So, there won't be any issues with kind of looking back to get down to this, right in here?

Director Burfeind replied south of 80th would follow a pretty similar path to what we planned in the past, so.

Mayor Bailey said okay, and then there's something that, there is one house kind of up on the far border.

Council Member Thiede replied it looks like its gone; Mayor Bailey asked its gone, I assume? Tracey said yes, the Brier property? Mayor Bailey replied yep, and Tracey confirmed that.

Mayor Bailey asked everything to the north is Geis?

City Administrator Jennifer Levitt replied no, well, Geis is to the east side of it.

Mayor Bailey replied yeah, but kind of kitty-corner from it? Administrator Levitt replied yeah, both are **Geis**.

Council Member Thiede asked and did we end up changing the park?

Administrator Levitt replied yes, Mayor and Council, what you see is the modified park layout. We had to modify the park based upon the orientation of the Ravine Parkway; that change then modified it, and so, you can kind of see how the ballfields and the sections all lay out in the neighborhood. Just as an update, too, we got the appraisal complete for the Geis property, those two parcels that we're looking at, we're making good headway on potential acquisition partnership with Minnesota Land Trust and Watershed District. And Twin Cities Land has done a good job because we've had to, it's a puzzle, right? And, so, looking at the Geis parcel as well, looking at the land that's desired to be preserved, we had to make some shifting and adjustment. So, what has turned out very nice is the Ravine Parkway; the nice part is this section of roadway here with the storm pond provides that buffer to the single family that would be here. So, you think about that product, it will probably most likely be here on this parcel, it provides a nice buffer to there. So, they've done a really nice job of really realigning the product types and providing kind of that variation and buffering that we desired. I think our final element is just to work with Zac on the water tower part and just how those features and access integrate into their plot.

Council Member Garza asked is the darker green over there, is that a continuation of the park?

Administrator Levitt replied that's what we're hoping with the Geis acquisition that we'll be able to provide that trail network. Hence, where their main trails kind of, you start to see a lot of trails in the area.

Council Member Olsen said this alignment makes quite a bit more sense. Mayor Bailey said I agree. Council Member Olsen said yeah, so, I'm very happy with your company.

Council Member Thiede said well, before with the park, we had water features right in this area right there. So, did we decide to take those out, or are those still in play? You have this color because it's still part of the park?

Administrator Levitt replied twofold: 1) This summer and spring, an ecological survey was done on the property. In doing the ecological survey, there are kitten tails, sedges, and other things that are rare and have a lot of ecological value; and so, that's why the Minnesota Land Trust is interested, so we had to take off those water features that we had shown. Potentially, we're looking at acquisition to the south. Zac has been in contact with that resident, so maybe if we do a canoe or kayak launch, it could be off that property vs. off Geis. So, that's a good catch of why that it is. 2) Also, they're not always excited about asphalt trails, so we're working with Lennar to provide a trail that would be on the perimeter of it, and so, I think it's all going to come together. It takes great partners, like the ones in the room, to make all these things come together, and I think that's what's happening. So, we appreciate their time to pause to enable it all to come together.

Mayor Bailey said yeah, and this is our first jump across 19, so, it's kind of a big, big deal for us.

Tracey replied it is, and I mean, we recognize that, so.

Council Member Garza said and the flow now, I like the way that it flows; Mayor Bailey said I agree. Council Member Garza said it isn't as choppy now, it has a more natural flow. Council Member Olsen said it does, yeah.

Mayor Bailey said I don't know if you can answer this or not, but this is obviously going to be in phases, but this is a big chunk. Is your target or goal in the future just to continue, and then move to kind of the next pieces of the Tank property?

Tracey replied yeah, that's our goal. We don't have them under contract at the moment, but yes. Mayor Bailey replied okay, good.

Council Member Thiede said let's see, and to the right, there, there, and down below 80th, right? That was confirmed.

Mayor Bailey asked are they also where the park is, too, or at least part of it? Tracey replied yeah.

Administrator Levitt replied so, as part of that, we would be looking at an agreement for how they dedicate land, similar to what we did with Posavads, remember north of 65th Street, dedicated the Still Ponds. So, that agreement would be memorialized, and then Ryan, his team is still finishing up the pieces of the new report for the parkway and then getting those things kind of wrapped up as well.

Mayor Bailey replied Jennifer, I know you're looking at them taking or having the Minnesota Land Trust to have an Agreement up on the top there. Over in the, that's Geis', right? Administrator Levitt replied yep. Mayor Bailey said those little jaunts that kind of go out are trees or woods, I know they're back there, so does that, is the topography there flat or is it all draining down?

Administrator Levitt replied Ryan walked it, so he can probably talk more about that, but in our acquisition, it actually followed the woods.

Mayor Bailey replied okay, so we would do that. I just, its not part of your Agreement right now, though; Administrator Levitt replied no. Mayor Bailey asked but do you think that would ever be the case? Administrator Levitt replied no. Mayor Bailey said okay.

Director Burfeind said it will be around us, straight down into the lake, and it's really, it's really nice in there. There are huge Oaks and the amount is just, massive Oak trees and they really do need care.

Administrator Levitt said and the property owner that Zac was talking with is right here. He knows potentially acquire some property up here, and so that way, then we could have the access to the water in that area that wouldn't be encumbered by the Minnesota Land Trust.

Council Member Thiede asked so, this is the hill right here, correct, that's out there? Yes, all right, I understand.

Council Member Garza asked so when are we doing this, the rest of that? Because I know you said you want to acquire that portion on the lower right, but what about the rest of it, all that gray area down here?

Tracey replied additional private property, further in, to the south? Council Member Garza replied yes. Tracey said they're additional private properties.

Council Member Thiede said no, they're not.

Tracey said oh, nope, along the lake? Council Member Garza replied yes, along there. Tracey replied so, that's all private. Council Member Garza said so, that's not. Council Member Thiede said there's those three lots and then, yeah, I wouldn't call it that. Council Member Garza said okay.

Mayor Bailey said that house that they're, Zac, you said earlier there's land over there that Zac's going to talk to them again later. How many acres is that?

Administrator Levitt replied its quite a large parcel because it goes out into the water by there.

Mayor Bailey said okay, and we know who they are? Administrator Levitt confirmed that.

Director Burfeind said and that is a better spot for the canoe launch, I think. Historically, this lake has gone up and down so much, on the way north it actually has almost dried up, you know decades ago. So, the southern part's been the water body for much longer, so it would be a much safer spot.

Mayor Bailey said all right, I think we're all in agreement.

Council Member Olsen asked are we in agreement to move forward? Mayor Bailey said I like it. Council Member Clausen said I agree. Council Member Olsen said yeah, it's awesome.

Tracey replied sounds good, these are the meetings I like.

Council Member Olsen said yeah, thanks for the work you guys put in on this; Mayor Bailey said yes. Council Member Olsen said yeah, this turned out much better.

Tracey replied it's our pleasure, thank you. We'll be back.

Mayor Bailey said there you go, now the fun begins. Tracey replied yeah, right. I'm sure, but that's all right, thank you. Mayor Bailey said yeah, thank you two for coming tonight.

Council Member Clausen asked Jennifer, is the land area to the immediate south of this, that we're talking about, is that residential? Administrator Levitt replied that is guided as single family. Council Member Clausen asked and then to the north, except for the corner, that's commercial? Administrator Levitt replied a portion of it, it's Mixed Use and High Density. Tracey replied yeah. Council Member Clausen said okay.

Mayor Bailey said and if anybody knows Goebels, go talk to them. There's commercial that will go there right away. Council Member Olsen said, yeah, and now's the time. Mayor Bailey said they would sell. Council Member Clausen said all right.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 6:19 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Judy Graf and reviewed by Tamara Anderson, City Clerk