

## **NOTICE OF AGENDA**

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY** [City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

Forest Lake City Center – Community Room 2<sup>nd</sup> Level  
Forest Lake, Minnesota

**October 9, 2023 – 5:30 PM**

- 1) Call to Order
- 2) Roll Call
- 3) Pledge of Allegiance
- 4) Approve the Agenda
- 5) Approve Minutes from Regular Meeting of September 11, 2023
- 6) Work Plan Discussion – SWOT Analysis Workshop
- 7) Other - City Updates
- 8) Washington County Update
- 9) Forest Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Update
- 10) Adjourn

#### **EDA MISSION STATEMENT**

Assist and support the economic climate of the City of Forest Lake through programming and communication to achieve the greatest outcome for its citizens and businesses by:

- Marketing the City and its assets
- Supporting existing businesses
- Supporting new businesses
- Creating partnerships
- Providing a vision for the future of commercial areas



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# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

1408 Lake Street South  
Forest Lake, MN 55025  
[www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us](http://www.ci.forest-lake.mn.us)

## Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

Karin Derauf, Deputy City Clerk

Monday, September 11, 2023

5:30 PM

City Center - Council Chamber

[City of Forest Lake - Livestream and Recorded Meetings](#)

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Roll Call**

| Attendee Name | Title         | Status  | Arrived |
|---------------|---------------|---------|---------|
| Mara Bain     | EDA President | Present |         |
| Sam Husnik    | Commissioner  | Present |         |
| Jenny Lorge   | Commissioner  | Present |         |
| Jeff Larson   | Commissioner  | Present |         |
| Jill Grindahl | Commissioner  | Present |         |
| Chris Hoyt    | Commissioner  | Absent  |         |

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Approve the Agenda**

Comments:

**Motion to:** Approve the Agenda

|                  |                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>ADOPTED [5 to 0]</b>               |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Jenny Lorge, EDA Member               |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Sam Husnik, EDA Member                |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Bain, Husnik, Lorge, Larson, Grindahl |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     |                                       |
| <b>ABSTAIN:</b>  |                                       |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | Hoyt                                  |

**5. Approve EDA Meeting Minutes from Regular Meeting of May 8, 2023**

Comments:

**Motion to:** Approve EDA Meeting Minutes from May 8, 2023



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|                  |                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>ADOPTED [5 TO 0]</b>               |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Sam Husnik, EDA Member                |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Jeff Larson, EDA Member               |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Bain, Husnik, Lorge, Larson, Grindahl |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     |                                       |
| <b>ABSTAIN:</b>  |                                       |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | Hoyt                                  |

**6. Approve EDA-Council Joint Workshop Minutes from June 12, 2023**

Comments:

**Motion to:** Approve EDA-Council Workshop Minutes from June 12, 2023

|                  |                         |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>ADOPTED [5 TO 0]</b> |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Jeff Larson, EDA Member |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Jenny Lorge, EDA Member |
| <b>AYES:</b>     |                         |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     |                         |
| <b>ABSTAIN:</b>  |                         |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | Hoyt                    |

**7. Approve EDA Workshop Minutes from August 14, 2023**

Comments:

**Motion to:** Approve EDA Workshop Minutes from August 14, 2023

|                  |                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>ADOPTED [5 TO 0]</b>               |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Jill Grindahl, EDA Member             |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Jeff Larson, EDA Member               |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Bain, Husnik, Lorge, Larson, Grindahl |
| <b>NAYS:</b>     |                                       |
| <b>ABSTAIN:</b>  |                                       |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | Hoyt                                  |

**8. EDA Work Plan Review**

Comments: Community Development Director Wittman reviewed the EDA Work Plan goals from 2022. President Bain commented on the creation of a visitor’s bureau. Nannette LaNasa from the Chamber of Commerce provided comment on the CVB noting that covid halted research and work for this project. President Bain asked if there is enough support from the community and stakeholders to continue the pursuit of this project. Nannette indicated there are other



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communities that should be involved such as Columbus with Running Aces. She also mentioned regional involvement. EDA Member Grindahl asked about the goal of the CVB. Nannette noted that funds for a visitor's bureau come from occupancy tax from individuals staying at hotels. EDA Member Lorge asked if there is a visitor's bureau further north and Nannette indicated that there is. Community Development Director Wittman noted that a regional program would be more beneficial than very local. Mayor Bain commented on the idea of having a visitor's bureau providing access to Explore Minnesota website. Community Development Director Wittman noted that the Work Plan was started before covid and we are experiencing a different world now.

Community Development Director Wittman mentioned the Downtown Revitalization and indicated work can continue on this goal and next steps. President Bain commented on the Boat Launch and Shoreline Studies as well as the expansion of the current incentive program for Downtown businesses. Community Development Wittman indicated there will be an update on these items later in the meeting.

Community Development Director Wittman commented on partnership with the Washington County EDA, Open to Business, local area businesses, Chamber of Commerce, and the school district. Nannette LaNasa noted that it has been a good partnership with having Abbi Wittman available and involved at their meetings. She also commented on the Career Launch survey that was implemented as well as the Optimize Your Business Summit meetings that are being held throughout the County. Chris Eng from Washington County EDA commented that the Career Launch has been very important to local businesses who want to make a connection with students. Chris Eng also commented on the labor shed study and noted that Washington County has contracted with a company called Real-Time Talent. He noted they help to develop a work plan to make a connection between jobs open and available work force to fill those needs. Chris noted that the full study is available online and he will share the information with Staff to pass along.

Community Development Director commented on business incentive policies, identifying infrastructure needs along the Highway 61 corridor, and supporting the Washington County revolving loan program.

City Administrator Casey mentioned there is a proposed position in the 2024 Budget including a part-time EDA Planner. He indicated it is a necessary position because the Community Development Director's attention has been directed into processes of how work gets done. Community Development Director Wittman noted that the five goals with three action steps each is a significant amount of work for a City that is lacking in the staff resources to accomplish the work.

### 9. Headwaters 123 Update



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Comments: Community Development Director Wittman commented on concept plats for Headwaters 123 with the idea to open up the property to more than a data center and market it for more than this type of use. She noted there has been inquiries on residential, but not necessarily data centers. She noted she is looking for feedback on exploring other options. EDA Member Grindahl commented on warehouse space as a use. Community Development Director Wittman noted there is not a lot of commercial development happening with the increase of costs across the board for construction and development.

President Bain noted that there is a large area of potential residential to the west of Headwaters 123 and indicated that it would be good to explore commercial businesses that are friendly to residential areas. Chris Eng from Washington County suggested workshopping to have developers come in to discuss what is happening in the commercial development and construction industry. President Bain suggested that it would also be good to have CBRE join the discussion. EDA Member Husnik asked about the interceptor line that splits the middle of the property. City Administrator Casey noted that there will be no buildings going over the line, but perhaps a street, so there would be access to the line. He noted that it would cost approximately \$15,000,000 to move the line so that is not an option. There was further discussion regarding uses of the Headwaters 123 property.

### 10. Banner Program

Comments: Community Development Director Wittman commented that one of the City Councilmembers expressed interest in changing the banners on light posts in the city. She indicated that there has been a national group with a banner program that reached out to the City. She noted she will explore this option first and bring back information to the EDA. President Bain indicated that the Lion's Club has been a partner for the banners and noted that they should be included in the conversation. President Bain commented that she would rather focus esthetic efforts on open landscape.

### 11. Development Update

Comments: Community Development Director Wittman noted that Mr. Car Wash was approved, there will be a new Ford Dealership, and the Washington County Hazardous Waste Site was approved, and the City is currently reviewing a plan for Interstate Companies. She also commented on Hidden Creek and the first phase of twenty-two (22) lots is currently being graded. She also noted that there is a potential apartment complex that will be approved in the Council Meeting later in the evening.

### 12. Staff Update

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Comments: Community Development Director Wittman noted she attended the Career Launch Meeting. She also indicated that there is really no youth interested in exploring government as a career.

### 13. Washington County Update

Comments: Chris Eng commented that he is working with City Staff to develop a new SWAT analysis for the direction of the EDA Work Plan.

### 14. Forest Lake Chamber of Commerce Update

Comments: Nannette LaNasa commented that she is working on Fall visits with businesses and activating new members. She also noted that she is working with City Staff on the Hometown Holiday events, as well as building a leadership program with the local businesses members.

### 15. Adjourn

Motion to: Adjourn

|                  |                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>RESULT:</b>   | <b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>            |
| <b>MOVER:</b>    | Jenny Lorge, EDA Member               |
| <b>SECONDER:</b> | Jill Grindahl, EDA Member             |
| <b>AYES:</b>     | Bain, Husnik, Lorge, Larson, Grindahl |
| <b>ABSENT:</b>   | Hoyt                                  |

**Date:** October 9, 2023  
**To:** President Bain and EDA Members  
**From:** Abbi Wittman, Community Development Director  
**Re:** 2023 Work Plan Update

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As discussed at the EDA's last meeting, staff advised the EDA on the need to update the EDA's workplan. At the EDA's meeting in October, Washington County EDA Director Chris Eng will guide the EDA in a work plan workshop.

The workshop will be a brainstorming "SWOT" (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) session:

- For the strengths, we will be looking for input on internal perspectives that are controllable. What can we build upon and how do we enhance our existing assets?
- For weaknesses, we will also be looking for internal areas for improvement. What can we shore up that is controllable?
- For opportunities, we will be looking for external perspectives. What can we influence and invest in which could help the EDA set priorities and help with budgeting for the next 3 years.
- For threats, we will be looking at what things should we monitor and watch that are also external perspectives and not under our direct control.

The input from the EDA Members will be extremely important to develop the appropriate work plan goals and priorities to be developed over the next couple of months. Please see the enclosed worksheet to help think about these things in advance of the next meeting.

# SWOT Analysis

A Snapshot of Today

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths<br/>(Build)</b></p>     | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities<br/>(Influence &amp; Invest)</b></p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses<br/>(Shore-up)</b></p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats<br/>(Monitor &amp; Watch)</b></p>          |

Strengths & Weaknesses

Internal Perspective (You Control)

**S** (What are you doing well?  
areas?)

**W** (What areas need improvement?)

Opportunities & Threats

External (Outside Control)

**O** (What are the growth  
areas?)

**T** (What could unravel?)