

CITY OF STEINBACH
Regular Council Meeting
April 7, 2026

MINUTES

1. Minutes of the Regular Council Meeting of City of Steinbach Council held on Tuesday, April 7, 2026, at City of Steinbach Council Chambers.

2. Mayor Earl Funk called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., with the following members of Council present: Councillors Susan Penner, Michael Zwaagstra, Bill Hiebert, Jac Siemens, Jake Hiebert & Damian Penner. Also present: City Manager, Troy Warkentin, Senior Manager, Corporate Services, Adam Thiessen and City Clerk, Amanda Dubois.

3. Councillor J. Hiebert opened the meeting.

R26-066 4. Councillor S. Penner, Councillor B. Hiebert RESOLVED that the agenda be adopted.

-Un. Carried-

R26-067 5. Councillor J. Hiebert, Councillor M. Zwaagstra RESOLVED that the minutes of March 17, 2026 Regular Council Meeting be approved.

-Un. Carried-

6. Council meeting recessed and Public Hearing was called to order at 7:35 p.m., by Mayor Earl Funk. Public Hearing was to consider Rezoning By-Law 2273.

By-Law 2273 - Rezoning

Owner/Applicant: Randy & Ruth Reimer

Civic Address: 492, 498 & 506 McKenzie Avenue

Legal: Parcel 6 & the ELY 10 FT of the WLY 20 FT of Parcel 7, Plan 7445

Parcel 7 EXC the WLY 20 FT Plan 7445 & Parcel 8 EXC the WLY 2 FT

Plan 7445 & Parcel 8 Plan 7445

Purpose: To rezone the properties from “RLD” Residential Low Density to “RMD” Residential Medium Density to allow for multi-family to be constructed.

6.1 Troy Warkentin, City Manager introduced By-Law 2273 and reported that notices pursuant to The Planning Act had been completed.

6.2 Troy Warkentin, City Manager provided that six items of correspondence had been received.

6.3 Written correspondence has been received from Manitoba Municipal Relations - Community Planning Branch regarding By-Law 2273 voicing no concerns.

6.4 The applicant Randy Reimer, 498 McKenzie Avenue, was present at the public hearing and provided the following:

- The three properties are located along a collector street within an established neighbourhood characterized by large lots and a mix of housing styles.
- The proposed development consists of three 16-unit multi-family buildings, offering a mix of one, two, and three bedroom units. This will provide a range of rental housing options for residents of Steinbach, including individuals, couples, families, and seniors.
- The buildings are positioned toward the rear of the 1.5-acre parcel, with parking located at the front. Balconies are oriented to the front and rear to avoid side-facing views toward neighbouring properties. These design decisions were made intentionally to respect privacy and reduce visual impact from the street, helping the development remain consistent with the character of the neighbourhood.
- The development will be constructed in phases. The first phase will take place at 492 McKenzie Avenue, which is currently vacant. The second phase will extend east to 498 and 506 McKenzie Avenue and complete the remaining two buildings.

- A strong effort has been made to engage neighbouring property owners throughout the process. Adjacent residents and those across the street were consulted, and written support has been received from nearby neighbours, including the church and the open green space to the rear.
- They have worked closely with the City's Planning and Zoning Department to ensure compliance with all applicable requirements. Drainage will be designed in accordance with City standards under the direction of the Engineering Department. The parking lot meets all requirements, with sufficient parking provided, along with designated space for garbage and recycling in accordance with City specifications.
- The site is within walking distance of all levels of education, from kindergarten through Grade 12, as well as several churches, manufacturing facilities, and the downtown core along Main Street, located a short distance away.

6.5 Mr. Reimer was prepared to answer questions of council.

7. Council discussion and questions followed.

8. Harold Kihn, 474 McKenzie Avenue, was present at the public hearing to formally object and provided the following:

- The proposed multi-unit development is inconsistent with the existing neighbourhood character, which is primarily composed of bungalow and two storey side-by-side homes. The subject properties are flanked by single-family dwellings, providing no appropriate transition to the proposed three-storey buildings.
- There are existing infrastructure concerns in the area, including sewer and drainage limitations. Notably, several basements experienced flooding in September 2024 and again in September 2025 due to sewage backup and water infiltration.
- Higher-density housing should be situated on corner sites and designed to transition appropriately within the surrounding neighbourhood. The current proposal introduces forty to forty-five foot, three-storey structures directly adjacent to single family and side-by-side homes, which is not compatible.
- Traffic congestion along McKenzie Avenue is already a concern, with frequent eastbound and westbound traffic, including large trucks and tractor-trailers. Many eastbound trucks turn right toward La Broquerie via Highway 52 and require full use of the curb lane. With only 80 parking spaces proposed, overflow street parking is likely, which could reduce this four-lane truck route to a single lane.
- Residents of the proposed development traveling eastbound on McKenzie Avenue would need to perform U-turns near the German Church of God, creating additional traffic hazards.
- There is an existing mailbox located along the eastbound curb that already presents challenges. The proposed development is also located on a curve in the roadway, approximately 200 feet from a busy intersection that has experienced several accidents.
- The height and scale of the three-storey buildings will result in overlooking into adjacent backyards, reducing privacy and impacting residents' ability to comfortably enjoy their outdoor spaces, including evenings, gardens, and recreational use.
- There is insufficient infrastructure to support pedestrian movement and children's play. Limited green space within the development suggests that the parking lot may be used informally as play space, raising safety concerns. It is unclear where residents, including children, will safely walk and gather.

9. Andrew Rempel, 399 McKenzie Avenue, was present at the public hearing to formally object. He explained that they purchased their property in July of 2023, attracted by the larger home, double lot, proximity to schools, and the relatively quiet nature of the neighbourhood. Since that time, he has experienced two major rainfall events.

- He noted concerns with undersized land drainage sewer (LDS) infrastructure and existing street drainage limitations. Mr. Rempel has personally maintained the six catch basins located in front of his property, as runoff from McKenzie Avenue and Main Street flows west toward these basins. He emphasized their importance when properly maintained but expressed concern that an additional 48 units would further strain an already overburdened system that has experienced backups.
- He identified vehicle congestion, increased pressure on the nearby intersection, and the likelihood of additional on-street parking as ongoing concerns.
- He raised questions regarding winter snow clearing, specifically where residents' vehicles would be relocated while on-site parking areas are being cleared. He stated that the proposed development represents an incompatible building type for the existing neighbourhood.

10. Claudette Van Berkel, 406 Hespeler Street South, was present at the public hearing to object and emphasized that the development would significantly alter the character of the neighbourhood. She noted concerns regarding changes to existing views and a loss of privacy for surrounding properties. Increased noise levels associated with the development would become a nuisance and had concerns about the decrease in property values. She stated that the neighbourhood's appeal lies in its large backyards, open green space, and mature trees. She expressed concern that additional rainwater runoff from the development could overburden the existing sewer system, exacerbating current infrastructure challenges.

11. Ron Wychnenka, 524 McKenzie Avenue, was present at the public hearing to object and explained that during the winter months, snow is routinely piled three to four feet high along the street, requiring him to walk into traffic in order to access the crosswalk.

12. Justin Deschauer, 458 McKenzie Avenue, was present at the public hearing to object and provided that when the streets are plowed the berm is often filled with snow, creating a safety hazard, particularly for children walking to school. He questioned whether a sidewalk would be installed to provide a safe pedestrian route. He noted that since a previous proposal in 2008, there have been no upgrades to the sewer system or street drainage. The existing system is already inadequate and will not be able to accommodate additional water runoff generated by the proposed development.

13. Phil Kalyta, 445 McKenzie Avenue, was present at the public hearing to object. He confirmed that eastbound traffic on McKenzie Avenue is already heavily utilized by trucks and school-related traffic, and raised concerns regarding the management of on-street parking within the curb lane. He suggested designating the area as a no-stopping zone from the west limit of the subject area to the Highway 52 intersection. Relocating the existing community mailbox may help alleviate issues. Sewer capacity and sump pump discharge should be addressed prior to any increase in residential density. He suggested a pedestrian sidewalk along the south side of McKenzie Avenue should be installed and questioned who would be responsible for the associated costs. Should the development be approved, he requested a condition be included limiting the building height to two storeys.

14. Gary Snider, 534 Wilson Street, was present at the public hearing to express his support for the proposed development. The project represents a necessary change for the City and emphasized that long-term infrastructure funding, tax stability, and improvements to streets, sidewalks, and the sewer system require increased municipal revenue. Increasing residential density is one of the most effective ways to generate the income needed to support these priorities.

15. Justin Deschauer, 458 McKenzie Avenue, returned to the podium to clarify that he is not opposed to development, but is concerned with development that does not fit the character of the neighbourhood. He expressed that large parking areas are undesirable and requested that Council consider conditions such as a reduced building size, increased green space, and fewer units. He suggested the proposal be redesigned to better match the surrounding area, including the possibility of moving the building closer to the street and having parking at the rear of the site.

16. Ben Derksen, board member of the Steinbach Sommerfeld Church, was present at the hearing and expressed concerns about limited green space and potential use of church property by tenants. He raised concerns about pets and maintenance, and requested a fence be installed if the development proceeds to provide separation between properties. He also noted potential disruptions during church functions and funerals, and cited drainage concerns due to past flooding in the area.

16.1 Councillor M. Zwaagstra requested clarification whether the Church was now formally objecting, as a representative of the Steinbach Sommerfeld Church had submitted a letter of support.

16.2 Mr. Derksen clarified that he is not formally objecting, rather bringing up some concerns.

17. Hein Harder, 486 McKenzie Avenue, was present at the hearing. He expressed concern after hearing the potential impacts of the development on the neighbourhood and questioned what financial costs he may be responsible for related to streets and fencing.

17.1 Mayor Funk requested clarification from Mr. Harder if he was formally objecting as he had submitted a letter of support or if he was asking for items to be kept in mind.

17.2 Mr. Kihn, 474 McKenzie Avneue, returned to the podium (with the consent of Mr. Harder) to state that he has spoken with Mr. Harder in German at length and he is not in favor of the development and is objecting.

18. Randy Reimer, 498 McKenzie Avenue, returned to the podium to clarify that the development would be constructed in two phases. Phase one would begin on the vacant lot at 492 McKenzie Avenue. Once completed, the remaining two lots would be developed, with all three properties ultimately consolidated under one title and governed through a development agreement.

In response to concerns regarding compatibility with the existing neighbourhood, Mr. Reimer explained that the building was intentionally designed to be positioned toward the rear of the properties, with balconies oriented to both the rear and front to help maintain privacy for adjacent neighbours. He noted that the proposal complies with all required setbacks and parking requirements.

He also stated that privacy fencing already exists on both sides of the properties and that, in discussions with church representatives, a fence was not necessarily requested but was raised as a possible option. He further noted that all new development would be subject to an approved lot grading plan, which must be reviewed and approved by the City's engineering department.

19. There being no further discussion, Council meeting re-opened at 8:47 p.m.

R26-068 20. Councillor D. Penner, Councillor M. Zwaagstra RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach give second reading to By-Law 2273, being a rezoning by-law, subject to the execution of a development agreement.

-Un. Carried-

R26-069 21. Councillor J. Hiebert, Councillor B. Hiebert RESOLVED that the following accounts be approved for payment:

Accounts Payable (March 31, 2026)	\$	1,581,935.39
By-Weekly Pay Period No. 07 (March 25, 2026)	\$	324,197.92

-Un. Carried-

R26-070 22. Councillor M. Zwaagstra, Councillor S. Penner RESOLVED that the building permits as issued during the month of March, 2026 be accepted. (list attached)

-Un. Carried-

R26-071 23. Councillor B. Hiebert, Councillor S. Penner RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach accept the following approved Excavator's Licence as issued by the Operations Department.

Lic. No. 26-20 -JR Sewer & Water - Jody Reimer - Sewer & Water

-Un. Carried-

R26-072 24. Councillor M. Zwaagstra, Councillor S. Penner RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach give first reading to By-Law 2276, being the 2026 Realty and Education Tax Levy by-law.

-Un. Carried-

R26-073 25. Councillor S. Penner, Councillor J. Hiebert RESOLVED that the City of Steinbach give first reading to By-Law 2277, being the 2026 Business Tax Levy by-law.

-Un. Carried-

26. Correspondence from the Municipal Board regarding a proposal to annex certain lands from the RM of Ste. Anne to the Town of Ste. Anne were acknowledged.
Received as information.

- 27. Correspondence and a request for support from STARS were acknowledged.
Received as information.

- 28. Minutes of the Seine Rat Roseau Watershed District of February 17, 2026 and February 18, 2026 were acknowledged.
Received as information.

- 29. Minutes of the Jake Epp Library of January 28, 2026 were acknowledged.
Received as information.

- 30. Correspondence regarding the 2026 Municipal Operating Grant and One Manitoba Growth Revenue Fund from the Minister of Municipal and Northern Relations was acknowledged.
Received as information.

- 31. Correspondence and a request for Traffic Safety Measures from Parkhill School were acknowledged.
Council reached a consensus to refer the matter to administration, with a request that a report be prepared and presented at a future meeting.

- 32. Correspondence and a Security Rebate effective March 31, 2026 (\$200,000.00) from the Minister of Justice and Attorney General was acknowledged.
Received as information.

- 33. Councillor S. Penner, Councillor D. Penner RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned.

-Un. Carried-

Time of adjournment 9:18 p.m.

*ad

Mayor

City Manager