

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 3, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor & City Council

CC: Dave Bennett, Director of Public Works/City Engineer; Jeff Schroepfer, Police Chief; Mikayla Schmidt, Interim Community Development Director; Lynette Peterson, City Clerk; Michelle Mahowald, Communications & Human Resources Director; Natalie Draper, Director of Library; Brenda Angelstad, Finance Director; Chris Hood, City Attorney

From: Ben Martig, City Administrator

RE: "Supplemental Agenda Background Memo" for November 4, 2025 No. 1.

Summary Report:

The following is an update on agenda items as supplemental background agenda information made available for Tuesday November 4, 2025:

1. 25-584 Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) Presentation.

Staff did receive additional information from the City Attorney related to the City of Northfield's ability to provide any contribution to this organization. First, he indicated that Minnesota State Statute 469.191 CONTRIBUTIONS TO REGIONAL OR LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS does provide an opportunity for the City to provide to this organization but does recommend exploring a service contract if this is of interest:

A home rule or statutory city or town described in section [368.01 subdivision 1](#) or 1a, may appropriate not more than \$50,000 annually out of the general revenue fund of the jurisdiction to be paid to any incorporated development society or organization of this state for promoting, advertising, improving, or developing the economic and agricultural resources of the city or town.

Additionally, the City of Northfield has a unique City Charter provision that would allow a contribution as well. The following is the language in City Charter that relates:
Section 9.1. – Council to Control Finances.

“... The council may contribute city funds to any entity to promote the health, safety, and welfare of the city, if the gift does not have as its primary objective the benefit of a private interest.”

City Attorney Hood also would advise using a service contract should this be of interest.

This is only clarity on the legal considerations of a potential City contribution toward SMIF. There is no action scheduled and there are no funds budgeted for 2026. See memo in the packet for other details.

9. 25-591 Reports From the Mayor and Council Members.

Please see the below link provided by Mayor Zweifel:

- [2026 Draft Climate Action Framework Update](#)
Includes foundational ideas and climate actions that will be further refined before the final framework is released. Two previous rounds of public feedback in 2025 collected comments on initiatives and actions steps included in the framework. We are now seeking input on the draft, including introductory content, draft goal chapters, and early ideas for metrics to track progress.

To provide feedback on the draft, please respond to the questions below. You do not have to respond to all of the questions, just be sure to click "submit" at the end of the survey to ensure your feedback is recorded. The last question allows you to upload a file if you wish to submit a letter.

Survey responses will be accepted until 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, November 9, 2025.

- [All Aboard! Informational Webinar About the Draft State Rail Plan](#)
Minnesota businesses and residents are invited to provide feedback on the final draft of the Minnesota State Rail Plan. The final draft of the plan is now available for review and public at the above link. All comments received will be used to guide updates to the plan, which shapes the future of Minnesota's rail infrastructure and investments.

Links to the following webinars are also at the above website.

Webinar 1: Thursday, Nov. 6, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Webinar 2: Friday, Nov. 7, 9:30-11:00 a.m.