

LEAVENWORTH CITY STUDY SESSION MINUTES

May 12, 2026

Mayor Florea called the May 12, 2026 Study Session to order at 5:30 PM.

Council Present: Mayor Carl J. Florea, Clint Strand, Anne Hessburg, Zeke Reister, Shane Thayer, Mike Bedard and Rob Eaton.

Council Absent: Travis McMaster.

Staff Present: Matthew “Selby”, Chantell Steiner, Celeste Barry, Brantley Bain and Andrea Fischer.

1. Chamber Report

Chamber of Commerce Director Troy Campbell reported on Maifest and current visitor trends. Welcome Center traffic reached a record 425 visitors on the Saturday of Maifest, representing a 160% increase over the prior year, with weekend traffic running 50–150% above typical levels. However, overall pedestrian traffic for May was down approximately 7.7% compared to the same period last year, an improvement over April, which ended down roughly 13%. Campbell attributed the decline in part to significantly higher gas prices and a reported 50% reduction in Canadian tourism statewide. He noted that despite increased marketing efforts, returns have diminished, and the Chamber is adjusting its marketing strategy accordingly.

He also announced the completion and publication of the Chamber's annual economic profile report, available on the Chamber website, covering topics including lodging tax collections, Leavenworth Area Promotions (LAP) funding and assets, marketing campaigns, and festival visitor data.

He mentioned the upcoming launch of a destination podcast called Talking Schnitzel, set to debut July 1st, with approximately 55 topics identified. Finally, he reported that 18 of 20 slots for the Recreation Ambassador Program have been filled by nonprofit partners, ensuring ambassadors will be present on the river and at trailheads for 10 consecutive weekends this summer.

2. Home Link Class Presentation – Mountain Meadows Path Project

Students from the Home Link class presented their community impact project, which proposes painting footprints on sidewalks in the Mountain Meadows neighborhood to assist residents with dementia and memory loss in navigating safe walking routes independently. The proposed route covers a one and two block loop originating from Mountain Meadows. One segment of the sidewalk was identified as deteriorating due to road salt damage and was excluded from the route for safety reasons. Additional obstacles noted included a basketball hoop obstructing one portion and general sidewalk deterioration along the back street, which residents reportedly already avoid.

The students specified that exterior latex paint, donated by Marson & Marson, will be used, mixed with 25% water for workability. Footprints on the first block will be yellow and on

the second block will be blue. Stamps will be made from couch cushion foam, and footprints will be one foot long and spaced three feet apart.

The students sent out a petition around the area of the project with 43 residents signing in support of the installation of footprints on their sidewalks, and two residents agreed to place benches in their yards to provide resting spots along the route.

For maintenance, future Home Link students will conduct annual reviews following winter to assess and repaint worn footprints as needed.

During Council discussion, Councilmember Eaton noted the trip hazards identified in the students' presentation and suggested the Council investigate the specific deteriorated sidewalk sections, quantify the concrete squares requiring replacement, and consider taking action to make repairs concurrent with the permit process and the Mayor indicated staff would work on that in parallel.

Council members offered enthusiastic praise for the quality and thoughtfulness of the presentation.

3. Comprehensive Plan Review/Updates

Community Development Director Maggie Boles introduced the draft Parks & Recreation Element and the Parks, Recreation & Open Space (PROS) Plan for Council review and initial feedback. She noted that a second draft incorporating comments from the new Recreation and Tourism Manager, Steven Rubinstein, and the Planning Commission would follow. The PROS Plan is being prioritized ahead of the broader Comprehensive Plan schedule to qualify the City for grant funding opportunities that require an adopted plan. The goal is to bring the PROS Plan to the Planning Commission for a public hearing in June and to the Council for potential adoption by the end of June. The full Comprehensive Plan remains on track for adoption by September.

Director Boles noted that community survey results identified more trails, an indoor pool, and more natural areas as the top desired park facilities. She highlighted a proposed level-of-service goal of placing all residential areas within a half mile of a park, which has informed the addition of pocket park language in the plan.

The Council asked questions and discussed the information that was presented.

Director Boles noted that public comment on the Comprehensive Plan is open through the end of May.

4. Council Updates/Suggestions for Future Agenda Items

Councilmember Bedard raised the idea of a Youth Conservation Corps program, citing a model run by a conservation district in Island County, as a way to engage young residents in trail building and habitat restoration. City Administrator Selby indicated he would not recommend adding that responsibility to existing staff at this time, but expressed openness to the concept if a nonprofit, such as the Cascadia Conservation District, were to lead the effort. Several Councilmembers expressed interest in exploring the idea through community partners.

Study Session adjourned at 6:35 PM.

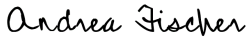
Leavenworth Study Session Minutes
May 12, 2026

APPROVED

DocuSigned by:

A8B4411C12AB49D...
Carl Florea
Mayor

ATTEST

Signed by:

D5CBE4ADAE1B451...
Andrea Fischer
City Clerk