



Executive Summary

City Council Workshop

AGENDA ITEM: Vacant City Council Seat
PREPARED BY: Jacob Schillander, City Administrator
RECOMMENDED ACTION: Discussion

Summary:

On July 27, 2026, Council Member Connie Francis submitted her written resignation from the Maple Plain City Council, creating a vacancy on the Council effective upon receipt of the resignation. The City Council will formally acknowledge receipt of the resignation, accept the resignation, and declare the vacancy by resolution.

Under Minnesota Statutes § 412.02, Subdivision 2a, the City Council has the authority to fill the vacancy by appointment. Because less than two years remain in the unexpired term, no special election is required, and any appointee would serve until the qualification of a successor.

The Council has three options for addressing the vacancy:

1. Leave the seat vacant through the end of 2026 and operate with a four-member council.
2. Solicit applications and appoint a resident to serve the remainder of the term.
3. Appoint Nate Pearson to serve through December 31, 2026.

Staff recommend Option 3: Appointing Nate Pearson. Mr. Pearson is one of only two candidates currently on the November 2026 ballot for the two City Council seats whose terms begin in January 2027. As a result, he is likely to assume office following the election. Appointing Mr. Pearson would maintain a full five-member council, provide continuity in governance, and eliminate the need for a short-term application and interview process.

The Council could make the appointment as early as August 24, 2026, allowing Mr. Pearson to participate in approximately four months of council meetings, budget discussions, and other city business before the commencement of his potentially elected term in January 2027. This would provide additional opportunity to become familiar with council procedures, ongoing projects, and policy matters, resulting in a smoother transition should he be elected in November.

For these reasons, staff believe appointing Nate Pearson is the most practical and efficient option for filling the vacancy while ensuring the Council continues to operate with its full complement of members.