# Minutes

Metropolitan Council

**Meeting date:** July 22, 2026 **Time**: 4:00 PM **Location:** 390 Robert Street

**Members present:**

- ☒ Chair, Robin Hutcheson
- ☒ Judy Johnson, District 1
- ☒ Reva Chamblis, District 2
- ☒ Tyronne Carter, District 3
- ☒ Deb Barber, District 4
- ☐ John Pacheco Jr., District 5
- ☒ Robert Lilligren, District 6
- ☒ Yassin Osman, District 7
- ☒ Anjuli Cameron, District 8
- ☒ Diego Morales, District 9
- ☒ Peter Lindstrom, District 10
- ☒ Gail Cederberg, District 11
- ☒ Mark Jenkins, District 12
- ☐ Chai Lee, District 13
- ☒ Toni Carter, District 14
- ☒ Victor Obisakin, District 15
- ☒ Wendy Wulff, District 16

☒ = present

## Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Metropolitan Council acknowledges that the land we currently call Minnesota and specifically the seven-county region is the ancestral homeland of the Dakota Oyate who are present and active contributors to our thriving region. As part of the Metropolitan Council's commitment to address the unresolved legacy of genocide, dispossession, and settler colonialism and the fact that government institutions, including the Metropolitan Council, benefitted economically, politically, and institutionally after the forceable removal of the Dakota Oyate, the Metropolitan Council is dedicated to instilling Land, Water, and People Commitments in regional policy. These commitments support the Dakota Oyate, the eleven federally recognized Tribes in Minnesota, Ho-Chunk Nation, and the American Indian Communities representing over 150 diverse Tribal Nations that call the seven-county region home.

## Call to order

A quorum being present, Council Chair Hutcheson called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Council to order at 4:03 p.m.

## Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment was read by Council Member Lilligren.

## Agenda approved

Council members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda.

## Approval of minutes

It was moved by Morales, seconded by Wulff to approve the minutes of the July 8, 2026, regular meeting of the Metropolitan Council. **Motion carried.**

## Public invitation

No public comments were made.

## Consent business

Consent business adopted (Items 1-2)

1. **2026-120:** That the Metropolitan Council declares the property, identified on the attached Exhibit A and commonly referred to as 1286 Paul Parkway NE, Blaine, Anoka County, Minnesota, as surplus for disposition, and to authorize the Regional Administrator to dispose of the surplus property consistent with Council policy and Federal regulations.
2. **2026-121:** That the Metropolitan Council authorizes its Regional Administrator to execute a subrecipient grant agreement with Minnesota Valley Transit Authority (MVTA) for modifications made to the Apple Valley Transit Station in the amount of $5,000,000.

   It was moved by Morales, seconded by Chamblis.

   **Motion carried.**

## Non-consent business – Reports of standing committees

### *Community Development*

1. **2026-114 SW:** That the Metropolitan Council adopt the attached Advisory Comments and Review Record and take the following actions:

   1. Authorize the City of Carver to place its comprehensive plan amendment into effect.

   2. Find that the amendment does not change the City's forecasts.

   3. Advise the City to implement the advisory comments in the Review Record for Regional Parks, Land Use, Transportation, and Water Resources.

   It was moved by Lilligren, seconded by Barber.

   **Motion carried.**

2. **2026-123 SW:** That the Metropolitan Council adopt the attached Advisory Comments and Review Record and take the following actions:

   1. Authorize Eureka Township to place its comprehensive plan amendment into effect.

   2. Revise the Township's forecasts for employment upward as described in Table 1 of the Review Record.

   3. Advise the Township implement the advisory comments in the Review Record for forecasts and surface water supply.

   It was moved by Lilligren, seconded by Wulff.

   **Motion carried.**

### *Environment*

1. No reports.

### *Management*

1. No reports.

### *Transportation*

1. **2026-118:** That the Metropolitan Council authorize the Regional Administrator to award and execute contract 26P009 with HDR, Inc. for engineering and construction administration services for the METRO H Line project and associated ADA improvements in the amount not to exceed $17,929,911.

   It was moved by Chamblis, seconded by Osman. Council Member Barber recused from voting on business item 2026-118.

   **Motion carried.**

### *Joint reports*

1. No reports.

### *Other business*

1. No reports.

## Information

1. **Climate Action Work Plan Annual Report** (Lisa Barajas, Laura Bretheim, Jeff Freeman, Jen Kostrzewski)

   Executive Director of Community Development, Lisa Barajas, greeted the Council and welcomed Council Member Lindstrom to open the presentation. Council Member Lindstrom shared his experience at a recent meeting in Thief River Falls, as attendees were provided with N95 masks due to the wildfire smoke and poor air quality. Lindstrom expressed concern that this scenario was becoming more common due to drought conditions exacerbated by climate change. He emphasized the importance of the climate work being done by Metropolitan Council staff and stakeholders.

   Barajas began the presentation on the Annual Report, detailing the progress on implementing the Climate Action Workplan. This is a five-year plan organized around 6 commitments, 20 strategies, and 73 actions with defined timelines, outcomes, and divisional responsibilities. Barajas shared the climate vision, which is to reduce contributions to greenhouse gas emissions in the region and make services and facilities resilient to the impacts of climate change.

   Laura Bretheim, Senior Project Coordinator for Sustainability in Metro Transit, gave the Council a progress update for the year— noting that over half of the 73 CAWP actions are on track or complete. Bretheim noted that staffing increases in 2025-26 led to significant progress. Bretheim addressed the commitment toward lowering emissions, explaining that the Metropolitan Council is considered a large emitter, and reducing our emissions by even a small amount makes a difference.

   Jeff Freeman, Sustainability Manager within Metro Transit, presented the Council with a closer look at emissions by division—noting that Environmental Services and Metro Transit are the largest emitters. Most Environmental Services emissions come from the wastewater treatment process, and Metro Transit's emissions are due to bus service, light rail propulsion, and facility operations.

Jen Kostrzewski, Assistant Manager of Water Policy + Planning in Environmental Services, gave a more detailed look at the emissions produced by Environmental Services, citing the successes of some management efforts and grant programs in the division. Kostrzewski highlighted facility efficiency and resource recovery processes that are creating improvements in energy efficiency.

Barajas highlighted technical assistance tools that have been created to advance climate mitigation and adaptation in the region. Kostrzewski highlighted operational adaptations that have been utilized to improve flood response and Native landscape improvements near wastewater recovery facilities.

Laura Bretheim continued the presentation by highlighting the Environmental Justice Playbook, which provides resources for staff, and cross-cutting efforts to expand staff and training dedicated to climate work.

Barajas closed the presentation by looking ahead to the CAWP version 2.0, which will continue and enhance actions taken to advance Minnesota's climate work.

Council Member Chamblis inquired about MTS vehicle considerations as well as environmental justice priorities. Council Member Lindstrom referenced grant programs for water efficiency and tree planting that aim to advance environmental equity. Council Member Carter asked about collaboration with other local governments to support climate goals. Several Council Members expressed appreciation for the scope of the work and encouraged the team to move forward with ambitious climate goals.

2. **Immigrant Contributions to the Regional Economy** (Baris Gumus-Dawes)

Baris Gumus-Dawes, Planning Analyst – Research, presented the item and provided information and data on immigrant contributions to the regional economy. Presenter shared the context and rationale behind the project, summarized the findings of the contributions, and discussed next steps with questions for discussion.

Council Member Johnson commented on the data which is from 2023-2024 and is prior to Metro Surge and had a question if there are current data and trends to compare or supplement the data. Presenter shared the data sets are the latest releases which are from 2023-2024. Joel Huting, Senior Manager – Research, added there are current research in place that will conclude later in the year that will update the data and forecasts. Chair also added that there has been engagement with GREATER MSP and it will be a good opportunity to share, compare, and learn from each other and with other agencies.

Council Member Tyronne Carter asked a question on the breakdown of data on immigrant country of origin. Presenter confirmed that data is available.

Council Members Tyronne Carter, Morales, and Obisakin offered suggestions for audiences to disseminate results and convening.

Council Member Osman thanked the presenter and the team for their work and commented on the importance of the data and encouraged further research to support immigrant contributions to the economy of the region.

Council Member Toni Carter asked for clarification on August 5th date. Presenter stated it is the date the team will present to the Council on the ethnographic research findings. Council Member Toni Carter commented on the impact of immigration and effects on businesses and economy.

Council Member Chamblis suggested opportunities to look at other impacts such as housing with data disaggregated geographically.

Chair closed with thanks to the presenter and the team and look forward to seeing the presentation on the ethnographic research in August.

## Reports

Chair Hutcheson noted that the Council presented at the July 21, 2026 Scott County Board Workshop with Council Member Wulff and Regional Administrator O'Connor.

Regional Administrator shared that the Council completed the Interim Final Rule re-certifications and 400 of the original 800 vendors were re-certified. Completion of this step allows the program to keep going.

## Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

## Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Council meeting of July 22, 2026.

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**Council contact:**

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