

Minutes

Committee of the Whole



Meeting date: January 21, 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's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:01 p.m.

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

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

Agenda approved

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

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Toni Carter, seconded by Morales to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2025 Metropolitan Council's Committee of the Whole minutes. **Motion carried.**

Chair Hutcheson and Regional Administrator O'Connor provided high-level overview of actions the Council has taken in response to heavy federal presence in the region.

Information

1. ABRT Plan Update Final Recommendations (Kyle O'Donnell Burrows)

Kyle O'Donnell Burrows, Planning Manager for Arterial BRT, presented on final corridor recommendations as a part of the Arterial BRT Plan Update. The presenter briefly recapped the steps that have been used thus far by the ABRT Planners: identifying candidate corridors, screening the candidates, and evaluating the 11 candidate corridors based on criteria such as equity and cost. Presenter reinforced the emphasis on ridership of the BRT Lines, striving to serve 25 or more passengers or more per service hour. Investment in new BRT Lines will be focused on areas with highest expected ridership demand in the region.

Eight Arterial BRT Lines are planned for operation by 2030, and the purpose of the 2025 Arterial BRT Plan Update is to identify the next three lines, scheduled to open between 2030 and 2035. The presenter reviewed the technical evaluation results, in which each potential corridor was scored based on the following criteria: ridership, equity, cost, and land use. The next Arterial BRT Lines are being prioritized based on these technical evaluation results, as well as community feedback, readiness, and partner coordination.

Burrows highlighted two corridors that are recommended to advance as Arterial BRT Lines: West 7th as the future J Line, and Nicollet, recommended for the K Line. The presenter also identified a few corridors that are not recommended to advance as Arterial BRT Lines at this time for feasibility, forecasted ridership, or land use considerations.

Burrows went on to highlight three candidate corridors that are being studied for the L Line: Franklin / Grand / 3rd corridor, the Johnson / Lyndale S corridor, and the Randolph / E 7th corridor. Statistics such as forecasted productivity and passengers per service hour were compared for each of the candidate corridors.

Presenter detailed next steps, which include bringing a Business Item to the Council in the coming months to recommend corridors for the J Line + K Line to the Metropolitan Council for approval.

Council Members asked follow-up questions about project timeline and assessment criteria and thanked the presenter for the groundwork that has been laid for these BRT Lines.

2. Fare Policy Update (Tom Randall and Dustin Cresini)

Tom Randall, Senior Project Manager, presented high-level updates to the Fare Policy in response to changing community needs and to leverage new features from the fare collection modernization system project. The project is expected to be fully implemented by Quarter 1 of 2027. The Fare Policy updates will leverage new system technology for easier payment options; improve customer service; enhance equity and affordability; and simplify fare products and prices.

Dustin Cresini, Project Manager, covered the proposed changes in 2026 – Phase 2a, which includes:

- Consolidate peak and off-peak fares into one all day fare for express fares.
- Standardize reduced fare rider programs to \$1 fare program.
- Expand age range for \$ 1 youth fare to increase age range to 6-18 years.
- Establish separate Metro Micro fare to eliminate peak and off-peak pricing.

Council Members expressed support for the consolidated express fares and standardizing reduced fare rider programs, as the purpose of fare simplification is to round fares to the whole dollar amounts to eliminate coin change. Council Members had concerns about proposed increases to Metro Micro fares since this is a new program. For Metro Micro fares, Council Members asked staff to consider having similar fare structure as the other programs in the Fare Policy.

Presenters provided information about fare capping and the need to educate riders on how they can leverage capping benefits. Council Members and presenters discussed forms of payment, how the new system tracks fare capping on local and express rides and with different forms of payment. Council agreed that the ability to make fares more digitally seamless reduces barriers to riding public transit.

Presenters closed the presentation with next steps for community feedback, including a 60-day public comment period and three public comment hearings.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:44 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Council's Committee of the Whole meeting of January 21, 2026.

Council contact:

Mee Cheng, Recording Secretary
Mee.Cheng@metc.state.mn.us
651-602-1222

