

Minutes

Equity Advisory Committee



Meeting date: March 17, 2026

Time: 6:00 PM

Location: Virtual

Members present:

- Co-Chair, John Pacheco Jr., District 5
- Co-Chair, Carmeann Foster, District G
- Yassin Osman, District 7
- Dr. Tyronne Carter, District 3
- Toni Carter, District 14
- Michael Luseni, District A
- Vacant, District B

- Samirra Isse, District C
- Anita L. Urvina Davis, District D
- Zakariya Abdullahi, District E
- Vacant, District F
- Vacant, District H
- Vacant, at large

- Mitchel Hansen, at large
- Markeya Knight, at large
- Astrid Benedetto, at large
- Vacant, at large
- Vacant, at large
- Vacant, at large
- Vacant, at large
- = present, E = excused

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, Co-Chair Carmeann Foster called the regular meeting of the Equity Advisory Committee to order at 6:08 p.m.

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment was read by Co-Chair Carmeann Foster.

Agenda approved

It was moved by Astrid Benedetto, seconded by Anita Urvina Davis to approve the agenda. Committee Members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. **Motion carried.**

Approval of minutes

Due to low quorum 17 February 2026 minutes will be approved at April's meeting.

Public invitation

No conversation here.

Information

Presentation Title-

Metropolitan Council Civil Rights Unit Introduction and Accessibility Compliance Policy and Procedure Review- Scottie Carter, Manager of Civil Rights Unit, Office of Equity and Equal Opportunity

Presentation Overview-

- Introducing the Civil Rights Unit (CRU) within OEEO
- Ensures compliance with Title VI (civil rights), ADA Title II (accessibility), and Title VII (religious accommodations)
- Focuses on making services, programs, and facilities accessible and equitable
- Provides training, policy guidance, and complaint resolution
- Promotes language access and inclusive public engagement
- Tracks progress through metrics, reports, and compliance reviews
- Works with all departments to build a culture of inclusion and non-discrimination Presentation

Notes-

CM Tony Carter: “I’m wondering, since you’re new in this role, focused on education and providing information how, over the long term, you will ensure visibility of this work and that people are aware of the recourse available to them in uncomfortable or unjust situations. Given the current climate, where there is a lot of fear and intimidation, are we doing anything to highlight this work and make sure employees understand the pathways available to them? It feels like an incredibly critical moment for this work, so I’m curious—how are you approaching this unusual time? Is there anything specific you can share about what we’re doing to respond to this moment?”

Scottie Carter: “Thank you, Councilwoman. I really appreciate your acknowledging the work we truly value that. For us, we’ve been very intentional about increasing visibility. We’ve been listening to tours, going into different divisions, and having open and honest conversations about the work we do. I’ll often reach out directly to leadership and ask to meet with their teams. For example, we’ve met with multiple divisions within Metro Transit, tailoring conversations to each group. As a newer team, we’ve had the opportunity to step in, introduce ourselves, and create space for dialogue. We’re also working on a strategic plan to better introduce our office and help people understand how to utilize our services. A big part of this is helping people see just how important this work is, not something that can be overlooked. A lot of what we do is informational, clarifying misunderstandings. For example, I’ve had conversations explaining the difference between executive orders and codified law. My background as a lawyer really drives those discussions. I also think it’s important to acknowledge that we are in unprecedented times. As someone with a political science background, I didn’t expect to see some of the things happening today. But I always go back to the law what does the law say? And right now, those protections still exist unless Congress changes them. Visibility is critical. We cannot shrink in these moments—we need to be present and visible. My team takes that seriously. Even in a short time, we’ve made ourselves visible across the organization, and we intend to continue doing that.”

Co-Chair Carmeann: “If there are other members with questions, please use the raise hand feature.”

Anita Urvina Davis: “I previously served as Chair of the Civil Rights Commission for about 12 years. One thing I found helpful when explaining civil or human rights was simplifying it. I would tell people: everyone has equal rights to receive information. Many people don’t read the full legal language and may misunderstand civil rights. But framing it simply, as everyone has the



right to access information, helps people understand equity in their work. So, I think keeping it simple is key.”

Scottie Carter: “Thank you, I really appreciate that perspective. I agree—we often overcomplicate things. At its core, this work is about human dignity. That’s the foundation I try to return to when explaining it.”

Transition to Presentation Second Presentation Notes

Tony Carter: “I’d like you to slow down and clarify how we should provide feedback. I’m having trouble accessing the document, and others might be as well.”

Scottie Carter: “Thank you for raising that. I’ll follow up after the meeting and send accessible copies of the documents so everyone can review them.”

Astrid Benedetto: “I’m unable to access the document because it requires a Met Council login.”

Scottie Carter: “I’ll send out PDFs after the meeting to ensure everyone can access them.”

“When reviewing the documents, we’re looking for feedback on:

Whether the procedures are clear or too vague

Whether requirements and standards make sense

Whether the document is easy to follow

We want this to be usable by everyone across the organization. This is still a work in progress, so your feedback is valuable and will directly shape the final product.”

Mitchell Hansen: “How would you like us to provide feedback? Should we use track changes or send comments directly?”

Scottie Carter: “Yes, track changes work well. You can also send questions directly to us—we welcome all feedback.”

Lila Elterwely: “Feedback can be shared directly with the team, and we’ll also revisit this in a future public meeting to discuss how feedback was used.”

Mark Samander: “A feedback loop centralizes how accessibility issues are reported and addressed. Currently, issues can be difficult to track across departments. With a centralized system: Report are routed through accessibility contact points, trends can be identified issues can be addressed proactively. A documentation loop ensures all actions are recorded from reporting to resolution so we can track progress and improve over time.”

CM Tony Carter:

“That makes sense. It will also help avoid repeating work and allow us to reuse solutions.”



Carmeann Foster: “How will these changes be communicated to the community? Especially since people may already believe the website is inaccessible.”

Scottie Carter: “That’s a great point. We need to think more strategically about communication and likely partner with our communications team to ensure the public is aware of improvements.”

Carmeann Foster: “Without outreach, people may avoid using the system altogether. We need to actively bring them back.”

Scottie Carter: “This is complex work, but it’s important. We truly value your partnership and feedback. We’re here as a resource please connect with us, share ideas, and hold us accountable. That’s how we’ll improve.”

Anita Urvina Davis: Shared concerns about parkway closures impacting elderly and disabled residents. Highlighted healthcare service reductions affecting seniors.

Mitchell Hansen: “I’m seeing a major eviction crisis. Many people are only one month behind on rent and need small amounts of support. Even small donations can prevent major hardship. I encourage continued community support and organizing.”

Announcement

No announcements

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Equity Advisory Committee meeting of March 17,2026.

Approved this 21st day of April 2026.

Council contact:

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