

Information Item

Committee of the Whole



Meeting Date: October 16, 2024

Topic

American Indian Advisory Council Draft Land Acknowledgment Statement and Recommended Commitments

District(s), Member(s):	ALL
Policy/Legal Reference:	Minn. Stat. § 473.175
Staff Prepared/Presented:	Allison Waukau, Tribal Liaison & Native Relations Coordinator (651) 377-0090 Angela R. Torres, Senior Manager, Local Planning Assistance (651) 602-1566
Division/Department:	Community Development / Regional Planning

Background

To implement a community-centered engagement approach, to initiate co-creation of a regional land acknowledgement with the region's American Indian population, and to acknowledge the historic harm that Indigenous people in this region have survived, the Council established an American Indian Advisory Council as part of the development of Imagine 2050.

The Advisory Council includes highly respected leaders of American Indian communities in this region. Members represent Dakota, Ojibwe, Ho-Chunk, and Lakota communities and range from youth advocates to community elders. On September 4, 2024, the Advisory Council presented their recommendations for commitments to action to the Committee of the Whole at the Minneapolis American Indian Center. In addition to producing recommended commitments, the Advisory Council also drafted a Land, Water, and People Acknowledgement Statement with recommendations for its use. On October 16, 2024, the Draft Acknowledgement Statement will be presented to the Committee of the Whole for its discussion and consideration as part of Imagine 2050.

Summary

The American Indian Advisory Council met starting in March 2024. Early in the process, the Advisory Council recommended that Met Council commitments to action would be more valuable and impactful than a land acknowledgement. The Advisory Council then convened Met Council staff from each policy area to understand Met Council roles and responsibilities in order to develop effective recommendations for commitments. Those recommended commitments cover a wide range of Met Council work and were presented to the Council on September 4, 2024.

One of the recommended commitments addresses the topic of acknowledgement, as follows:

1. *As a responsible government agency, the Council will lead in publicly recognizing the genocide and displacement that American Indian communities survived and continue to endure.*
 - a. *The Advisory Council is drafting a Land, Water, and People Acknowledgement Statement for the Met Council and to include in Imagine 2050.*

- b. *The Advisory Council encourages the Met Council to understand the value of a statement is to increase recognition of the seven-county region as Dakota land and promote action.*

The attached Land, Water, and People Acknowledgement Statement represents the Advisory Council's recommended acknowledgement language. It also contains recommendations for where, when, and how the Acknowledgement Statement should be used.

Next Steps

Council staff will work internally to develop policies and practices for using the Acknowledgement Statement in alignment with the Advisory Council's recommendations.

