

Minutes

Community Development Committee



Meeting date: November 3, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Street

Members present:

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| ☒ Chair, Robert Lilligren, D6 | ☐ Diego Morales, District 9 | ☐ Victor Obisakin, District 15 |
| ☒ Vice Chair, Toni Carter, D14 | ☒ Peter Lindstrom, District 10 | ☒ Wendy Wulff, District 16 |
| ☒ Reva Chamblis, District 2 | ☐ Chai Lee, District 13 | ☐ = present, E = excused |
| ☒ Anjuli Cameron, District 8 | | |

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, Committee Chair Lilligren called the regular meeting of the Community Development Committee to order at 4:00 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 Chamblis, seconded by Lindstrom to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2025, regular meeting of the Community Development Committee. **Motion carried.**

Consent business

2025-283 Metro HRA Administrative Plan Revision – Housing Quality Standards (Stephanie Paulson 651-602-1584)

It was moved by Carter, seconded Lindstrom that the Metropolitan Council approve the revisions to the Housing Choice Voucher Administrative Plan as described in this report and attachments.

Motion carried.

The Community Development Committee recommended approval of the proposed action without questions or discussion as part of its consent agenda.

Non-Consent business

1. 2025-287 Approval of Payment Standards for Metro HRA Rent Assistance Programs (Terri Smith 651-602-1187)

It was moved by Chamblis, seconded Carter that the Metropolitan Council approve payment standards as shown in Table 2 for the Housing Choice Voucher and other rent assistance programs effective January 1, 2026.

Motion carried.

The Community Development Committee recommended approval of the proposed action without questions.

2. 2025-288 Funding Recommendations for 2025 Livable Communities Demonstration Account and Transit Oriented Development Grants (Hannah Gary 651-602-1633; Nate Kabat, Livable Communities Advisory Committee Member)

It was moved by Carter, seconded Chamblis that the Metropolitan Council:

Award 15 Livable Communities Demonstration Account and Transit Oriented Development grants as shown in Table 1, and;

Authorize the Executive Director of Community Development to execute the grant agreements on behalf of the Council.

Motion carried.

Council Members were supportive of the recommendations and expressed excitement for the variety of project types and locations. There was a question about feedback given to project teams not being recommended for funding. Staff described the process of reaching out and noted that the focus of the conversations on how the team can position an application under the new scoring system.

3. 2025-269 Gale Woods Farm Special Feature, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Award (Pieper), Three Rivers Park District (Jessica Lee 651-602-1621)

It was moved by Wulff, seconded Chamblis that the Metropolitan Council:

Approve a grant of up to \$365,356 from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Three Rivers Park District to acquire a 1.58-acre parcel located at 6801 County Road 15 in Minnetrista, MN, for Gale Woods Farm Special Feature.

Motion carried.

The Community Development Committee recommended approval of the proposed action without questions.

Information

Plat Monitoring Program Update (MacKenzie Young Walters 651-602-1373)

In 2001, the Metropolitan Council (Council) worked with 12 pilot cities, Housing First Minnesota, and Metro Cities to create the Plat Monitoring Program (Program). The Program was designed to help the Council measure how land use policy, specifically policies relating to density, were implemented at the local level in developing communities. In addition to providing the Council with data, the Program also provides participants with additional



flexibility in their land use planning. Currently 45 cities participate in the program and 3 of those cities rely on the flexibility provided by the program to remain consistent with Council density policy.

The Program works by asking participants to submit a list of the prior year's approved sewer residential developments in the spring of each year. The data provided indicates the mix of housing in developments (i.e. the number of single-family and multi-family units) along with a breakdown of the development's acreage indicating how many acres are being used for housing, parks, arterial right-of-way, wetlands, and other uses (i.e. being reserved for future development). This information allows the Council to calculate the actual net residential density of developments and see how land is being utilized in these cities.

Plats corresponding to the reported developments are added to a GIS database along with building permit data. The resulting data allows the Council to visually see where development is occurring in these Cities and track how quickly building permits are being pulled for platted lots. Monitoring the changes in these trends helps inform the Council's forecasting and understanding of development patterns.

Participating cities whose plat monitoring data indicates that their actual developments' average net residential density is higher than the minimum average net residential density required by Council policy can incorporate their Program performance into their average net density calculations to allow for additional flexibility in how they guide land within their city. To clarify, ordinarily compliance with the Council's density policy is determined by assuming that all planned land uses will develop at the minimum permitted density range; however, Program participants can add their actual development data to these calculations. If a city has consistently been approving developments above their minimum permitted net density, this will result in a higher average net density for the city. In practice this means that they can guide larger areas of their city for lower density uses or employ land use categories with lower density ranges because they have demonstrated that they are approving developments with net densities above the permitted minimums. This allows a city to better provide a mix of housing types, both lower and higher density, to meet the overall housing needs within their community. It is important to note that Program data is only ever used to benefit cities. Cities that have planned for an average net density that meets Council policy, but which have reported actual developments to the Program resulting in an average net density below Council policy are not penalized.

While this flexibility is valuable and several communities utilize it to demonstrate consistency with Council policy, the Program now includes over 20 years of data for some of the communities. This has resulted in the Program data no longer providing appropriate credit for recent developments in cities. Additionally, the data set now spans multiple comprehensive planning cycles, including those with different density requirements for some of the community designations. For these reasons, Imagine 2050's Land Use policy commits the Metropolitan Council to reviewing the administrative guidelines relating to the local implementation of density policy and states that the Council will "[u]pdate the Plat Monitoring Program to better reflect more recent development patterns by examining a lookback period that is not dependent on when the program was initiated in 2000, or when participation in the program began." This review also needs to consider how the Program can fairly incorporate the average net density increases in Imagine 2050 and the role the Program will have in evaluating Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) expansion requests from participating cities.

Committee members and staff discussed the differences in density, credit rules and the challenges of increasing density per acre.

Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) Implementation Guidelines Update (MacKenzie Young Walters 651-602-1373)

Local comprehensive plans for communities with regional wastewater service must identify

the timing and staging of lands available for urban development through the planning horizon in 10-year stages. In many cases, communities also identify areas planned for longer-term urbanization, described as urban reserve areas or long-term service areas. Any areas planned to accommodate regional forecasted growth are expected to ultimately achieve a minimum net residential density based on the jurisdiction's community designation when wastewater services become available. These policy expectations are defined in Imagine 2050.

To ensure an adequate supply of developable land to accommodate future regional growth, the Council continues to monitor the region's land supply. Through local comprehensive plans and plan amendments, the Council tracks the designation of guided land uses, ensures consistency with minimum density policies in sewered areas, and plans for areas with current or future regional service needs (i.e. MUSA). In addition, the Council continues to administer the Plat Monitoring Program, which tracks and reports annually on density trends of residential development in communities primarily designated as Suburban Edge although also the program also includes some Rural Center and Suburban communities.

In October of 2004, the Council adopted the initial "Guidelines for Evaluating Plan Amendments Proposing Changes to Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) Timing Staging." In early 2007, the Metropolitan Council and Metro Cities' staff discussed the guidelines relative to the density calculation and amended them for use in the 2008 comprehensive plan reviews. The Council revised these implementation guidelines in 2017 to reflect the policies of Thrive 2040 and in 2023 to provide additional clarity. With the adoption of Imagine 2050 and its associated MUSA policies, the Metropolitan Council again needs to update the MUSA Implementation Guidelines to reflect the policies and priorities adopted in Imagine 2050.

This update focuses on integrating Imagine 2050's policies into a clear and transparent process for evaluating development within the MUSA, providing some flexibility for communities as they grow over time, and ensuring that the practices and procedures related to comprehensive plans and plan amendments are clear. The Land Use Policy chapter of Imagine 2050 outlines specific direction in Objective 1, Policy 2, Action 2.2.

Committee members and staff discussed density calculations, approaches for flexibility, and an inefficiency surcharge and its circumstances. The Committee members requested follow-up of possible ramifications.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Community Development Committee meeting of November 3, 2025.

Council contact:

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