

# PUBLIC COMMENT REPORT

## 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Amendment 2 2050 Aviation System Plan Update

December 5, 2025

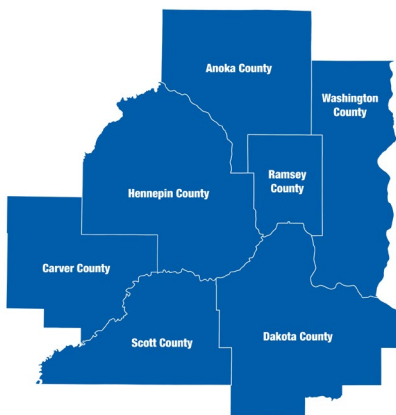


The Met Council's mission is to foster efficient and economic growth for a prosperous metropolitan region.

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The Metropolitan Council is the regional planning organization for the seven-county Twin Cities area. The Met Council operates the regional bus and rail system, collects and treats wastewater, coordinates regional water resources, plans and helps fund regional parks, and administers federal funds that provide housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income individuals and families. The 17-member Council board is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the governor.

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## Background

The Metropolitan Council sought public comments on 2050 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) Amendment 2, which updates and replaces the Aviation System Plan in full. Unlike the other investment plans found in the TPP, the Aviation System Plan is not a federally required plan and was a standalone plan until it was incorporated into the 2030 TPP. This separate purpose allows the plan to function largely independent from the rest of the 2050 TPP. Due to this, the Aviation System Plan received a minor update with the adoption of the 2050 TPP in February 2025 while staff conducted a more thorough update simultaneously. TPP Amendment 2 will be to replace the entire Aviation System Plan in full, which can be found as attachment 2 and 3 of Business Item 2026-8.

The work done on the update consisted of developing multiple trend analysis for the aviation industry to understand industry technology changes like unmanned aerial systems and any regulation changes around topics like aircraft noise and safety standards. In addition, Council staff convened two small policy review teams that consisted of agency and industry partners and local governments to develop policies and actions to guide the regional aviation system. These teams also helped review early drafts of the plan prior to releasing the document for public comment. These partners were made aware of the release for public comment and offered another opportunity to submit comments for the plan during this period. Regional partners did not provide additional written comments during this period.

The plan amendment was available for public comment between September 25, 2025 and November 10, 2025. The Met Council hosted a public hearing on the amendment on October 27, 2025. The Met Council advertised the availability of the draft amendment, comment period, and public hearing through social media, email, and notices on its website and in the Star Tribune newspaper.

The following report includes a spreadsheet of comments received, responses from Met Council staff, and any recommended changes to the amendment.

### People engaged

- Total comments: 4
- Web page: 82 views
- Facebook posts: 912 views, 10 interactions
- GovDelivery emails:
  - Announcement: 4,778 unique opens, 224 unique clicks

### Methods used

- Star Tribune ad (2 consecutive Saturdays)
- Web page notice
- GovDelivery email announcements
- Facebook
- BlueSky (no analytics available)

### Comments received through

- Form submission
- Email

## Engagement Themes

Four people or organizations provided comments during the comment period. Some comments covered more than one topic. In general, the nature of the comments are beyond the scope of

the Aviation System Plan, which is primarily a policy document that addresses the aviation system at a regional level. Due to this, no changes are recommended from the comments received. The following themes were raised by the comments.

## **Air service at MSP**

Multiple comments were submitted in relation to air service at MSP International Airport with suggestions on how the airport should handle air carrier services. The Aviation System Plan is a policy document that outlines policy and system considerations for the regional system at a high level. Policy 7 directly relates to air service planning. *Coordinate planning and investments that continue to promote aviation access to the state, nation and world from the Twin Cities metro. Ensure regional airports continue to support local economies and businesses.*

Policy 7 generally guides activities to support economic growth and wellbeing in the metro by maximizing capabilities of existing infrastructure and to deliver high quality services. The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) operates the MSP International Airport under this general policy guidance and state law. Per state law, the MAC is required to create and update long-term comprehensive plans (LTCP) that cover a 20-year planning horizon for anticipated activity and investments needed to meet existing and future needs. The LTCP for MSP International Airport was completed in 2024 and incorporated into the Aviation System Plan. This plan envisions the expansion and modernization of airport terminal facilities to meet growing demand, and other airport needs through 2040. These comments will be passed along to the MAC for their consideration as the MSP 2040 Plan is implemented.

## **Sustainable aviation fuel**

A comment was submitted on sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) policy and regional efforts. A major consideration in the 2050 Aviation System Plan is system sustainability and strategies to both reduce the environmental impact of ongoing aviation activity in the region and to maximize the economic impact of aviation for the region and state. SAF is a burgeoning industry that aims to help drive sustainability in the aviation sector for flights which do not have a clear path to decarbonizing from existing technology. SAF is a type of biofuel that can utilize many different types of fuel to power jet turbine aircraft that cannot easily be refitted with batteries due to weight. GreaterMSP, in partnership with the MAC, Delta Airlines, and major Minnesota businesses, is in the process of building up this industry in the state to support sustainability efforts at MSP and eventually airports around the world. The Aviation System Plan supports this effort and identifies policy to help move the region toward reducing emissions from aviation activity. Comments submitted focused on the procurement of SAF in the state and considerations of this on how it impacts statewide GHG emissions. The Plan does not directly establish policy for the procurement of SAF for regional aviation activity. The Plan does note that the ultimate statewide goal in the transportation sector is to be net-zero, while SAF will be a crucial element of this transition, it is only one tool to meet state targets for GHG emissions reduction.

## Comments and Responses

Commenter	Comment	Response
Trey Pinex	<p>Aviation Plan is misguide Since NWA merged we have few direct flights We have to compete with Detriot and Salt Lake MSP should allow SL to get more direct flights with UTah low population MSP should expand gates.Move Airlines to Terminal 2 .Delta can get more gates and siphon flights from Salt Lake SLC .To accomadate more flights extend the runway at STPAUL airport and move some smaller airlines there like SCA SWA Froiniter With few flights per day this noise impact will be minimal</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. The Aviation System Plan does have policy that guides regional airport operators. Policy 7 states: Coordinate planning and investments that continue to promote aviation access to the state, nation and world from the Twin Cities metro. Ensure regional airports continue to support local economies and businesses.</p> <p>Specific air carrier services at MSP International Airport are not a matter considered in the Aviation System Plan. The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) with air service carriers collaborate on scheduled service at MSP. The MAC recently completed the MSP Airport 2040 Long-term Comprehensive Plan, which outlines future plans to expand Terminal 2 significantly. This expansion and other planned improvements at the airport may provide for greater terminal flexibility for air carriers at the airport in the future. There is no scheduled commercial air service planned at downtown St. Paul Airport in any long-range plan and the airport currently does not have modern facilities to support regular scheduled commercial air service.</p>
Dana Akulu	<p>MSP need to expand Delta should be the sole AIRLINE @Terminal 1 with all other Airlines using Terminal 2 MSP should let plane dischagre passengers when the Gates arent available like EUROPE Transport people with a bus We shouldnt have to wait 30-60 mins when the plane is early and the gate is occupied on the runway</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment. Specific air carrier services at MSP International Airport are not a matter considered in the Aviation System Plan. The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) with air service carriers collaborate on scheduled service at MSP. The MAC recently completed the MSP Airport 2040 Long-term Comprehensive Plan, which outlines future plans to expand Terminal 2 significantly. This expansion and other planned improvements at the airport may provide for greater terminal flexibility for air carriers at the airport in the future.</p>

Marceil Luedtke

Three needs I would like to have considered: 1. Need a larger and better traffic-controlled arrival pick-up area ASAP. Dangerous for passengers and drivers. Exhaust fumes are awful for health, especially for those of us with asthma.

2. There is no easy, direct metro transportation route from the north suburbs to MSP. 3. The low-flying airplane traffic and noise have increased A LOT over Roseville. Can the flight paths be altered or planes fly at higher altitudes? Thank you.

Thank you for your comment. Metro airports are required to complete and update long-term planning documents, and these documents are then incorporated into the Aviation System Plan. The MSP International Airport 2040 Long-term Comprehensive Plan outlines planned improvements for the pick-up/drop-off area for Terminal 2 to address curb front congestion with plans to rework the second floor of the terminal to allow for a two-level roadway to split the pick-up and drop-off areas to improve operations. At Terminal 1, plans indicate future reconstruction of the roadway pick-up and drop-off areas in conjunction with the planned replacement of the Green and Gold ramps to improve operations of the terminal.

Transit service providers including Metro Transit, MVTA, SouthWest Transit and others are expanding service directly to MSP. The Aviation System Plan identifies existing and planned service to MSP from these carriers. North metro service will be expanded with the planned Blue Line Extension light rail that is planned to be under construction in 2027 and begin service in 2031.

Additional flight traffic over Roseville in 2025 may have been a result of the scheduled runway reconstruction at Downtown St. Paul Airport, which saw the relocation of based jet aircraft there to Anoka County-Blaine Airport, among others. It may also have been from runway work at MSP that diverted incoming and outgoing flight patterns to less frequently used runways. In general, the Aviation System Plan has policies in place to limit noise impacts to residents near airports in the region. However, air traffic considerations, like flight paths, is handled exclusively by the Federal Aviation Administration with input and coordination from airport operators. By law, airport operators must have public use airports open to air traffic with few restrictions. The MAC and other airport operators do produce voluntary noise abatement practices for pilots who use regional airports to follow to limit impacts on surrounding communities.

The Nature Conservancy

Thank you for the opportunity for The Nature Conservancy to comment on the Metropolitan Council's Draft 2050 Transportation Policy Plan Amendment #2. The Nature Conservancy is a global nonprofit organization working to conserve the land and water on which all life depends toward our vision where nature and people thrive. As an organization whose work is grounded in science, we have expertise and insight on potential landscape-scale impacts that should be considered when we look locally, nationally and globally regarding the carbon benefits and risks associated with Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). It is from that expertise we offer the following reflections on the portion of the Draft Policy Plan regarding SAF. We commend the Council's consideration of and aspiration to achieve electrification in the aviation sector. We support this goal and hope for this advancement to be actualized in the coming decades. We understand there are significant gaps preventing electrification in the near term and recognize the present opportunity to utilize SAF to reduce aviation emissions. When relying on SAF to offset emissions in the aviation sector, we implore the Council to seek or require that fuels utilized at Minneapolis Saint Paul International Airport have been produced without causing direct or indirect land conversion from natural landscapes like prairies and forests, and fully account for the carbon impacts of feedstock sourcing. The carbon and environmental benefits of SAF can only be actualized if feedstocks are not transported long distances and are not produced via conversion of natural lands to row crops. Further, adherence to sustainable harvest guidelines, especially regarding Minnesota's iconic forest lands, must be carefully reviewed when considering biomass-derived SAF. SAF has a role in emissions reductions in the aviation sector. However, the true carbon and environmental benefits of SAF are dependent on their overall impact including sustainable production, harvesting, and transportation of feedstocks. While we work towards electrification, the SAF utilized to support emissions reduction in the aviation sector must be appropriately

Thank you for your comment. The Minnesota state legislature established GHG reduction targets for all sectors of the economy by 2050, including the aviation sector. The Met Council has also established goals to guide 2050 planning efforts and one of those goals is leading on climate change, of which greenhouse gas emissions are the primary source. Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) presents an opportunity for the state and the region both economically and as an interim measure to reduce carbon emissions from the aviation sector while more permanent solutions emerge. The Aviation System Plan considers SAF in this context and established policies with regional partners to focus on both SAF for large commercial flights and electrification for smaller scale aviation activities like flight training and recreational flying. While the sourcing of SAF is not considered directly in the Aviation System Plan, downstream carbon emissions and environmental impacts are important to note and better understand as planned SAF use increases in use in the future.

measured to achieve the intended environmental benefits.



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