COUNCIL ON ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS

Meeting of the Board

November 20, 2024
5:00 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.
Location: 658 Cedar Street – Centennial Office Building (Ladyslipper Room)
OR
Click here to join the meeting

Or call in (audio only)
651-395-7448
Phone Conference ID: 286 443 524#

AGENDA

Time	Item	Information/Discussion/Action
5:00 P.M.	Public Comments (2 mins max per person)	Information/Discussion
5:10 P.M.	Board Business – Roll Call – Approval of September 19, 2024 Minutes – Approval of November 20, 2024 Agenda	Information/Discussion/Action
5:20 P.M.	November Financial Report	Information/Discussion
5:25 P.M.	FY26-27 Change Item Proposal	Information/Discussion/Action
5:35 P.M.	2025-2026 Legislative Agenda*	Information/Discussion/Action
5:55 P.M.	Election of Executive Committee Officers (Minn. Stat. § 15.0145, subd. 4)	Information/Discussion/Action
6:10 P.M.	2025 Council Meeting Schedule	Information/Discussion/Action
6:20 P.M.	Community Updates	Information/Discussion

Next Meeting of the Board: TBD

An agenda item with an * is an item the Council Board will take public comments on during the Public Comments time pursuant to the Council's Policy on Community Input at Council Meetings.

A quorum exists when forty percent of voting members are present.

COUNCIL ON ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS

Minutes
Council Board Meeting
September 18, 2024
5:00 – 6:30 P.M.
Location: Blazing Star Room – Centennial Office Building
658 Cedar Street – Saint Paul, MN 55155
OR
Click here to join the meeting

Interim Chair Wang called the meeting to order at 5:10 P.M.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS
No public comments were made.

II. Introductions
Brief introductions were made to the new board members.

III. ROLL CALL

Present:
Ajeet Yadav – In person
Chang Wang – In person
Khendum Gyabak – Virtual
Shwetha Vijayakumar – In person
Ngawang Dolker – In person
Yixiu Chen – Virtual
Senator Eric Pratt – In person
Senator Susan Pha – In person
Representative Jim Nash – Virtual
Bryan Thao Worra – Virtual (late arrival)

Staff: Sia Her, Andrew Morris, Mai Tong Vang, Jessi Evjen
Absent: Daisy Zan, Elizabeth Eckman, Pia Puentespina, Touachongka Vue Xiong, Representative Liz Lee

With 9 out of 15 voting members present at the time of roll call, a quorum was present.

Meeting came to quorum at 5:20 P.M.

IV. APPROVAL OF MAY 16, 2024, MINUTES
MOTION: To approve the minutes from the May 16 Board meeting.

BY: Shwetha Vijayakumar
SECOND: Ngawang Dolker

V. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2024, AGENDA

Shwetha Vijayakumar asked if a call for the community survey could be added to the agenda. Interim Chair Wang said that could be covered in the Community Updates.

MOTION: To approve the September 18 Board meeting agenda.
BY: Interim Chair Wang
SECOND: Senator Pratt

VI. COUNCIL'S STATUTORY ROLE

Executive Director Her reminded the board of the importance of the enabling statute and that the Council is a non-partisan, non-cabinet, executive branch agency.

VII. SEPTEMBER FINANCIAL REPORT

Executive Director Her told the newest members of the board that they would be trained on financial report in their mandatory training with the Department of Administration.

The current unobligated amount is $86,000. This does not reflect a $140,000 carryover into the second year of the biennium. Total available cash is the sum of both amounts.

Senator Pratt asked if the carryover was from the previous biennium or from the fiscal year. Executive Director Her replied that it is the fiscal year. She explained that a large portion of the carryover is due to the time the Council went without a research director and was not paying that salary.

Shwetha Vijayakumar asked what the "other operating costs" covers. Executive Director Her explain that that account is for anything that does not fall under one of the other categories.

VIII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATES

Executive Director Her reminded the board that the Leadership Awards Dinner is on October 18 at the Brooklyn Center Heritage Center. We expect about 500-600 people. The theme is "We the People". 2025 will mark the 40th anniversary of the Council and the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. In terms of state government guests, we have invited all legislators, commissioners, and the governor. Budget-wise, the Executive Director has raised close to $40,000 for the dinner. The dinner is held biannually, on the even year of the biennium. We had almost 700 people at our last dinner. We hope to have only 500 people this year. Registration closes this Friday. Mai Tong Vang added that we will not be extending the registration window because we already have 500 people registered. Executive Director Her reminded the board members to register if they have not already done so. There will be a VIP reception prior to the dinner program. We have 25-26 different groups. Most of the organizations we work closely with will be in attendance. We recognize that the dinner ticket may be prohibitive to many in our community, so we are offering free admission to select communities. Ajeet Yadav asked how we reach out to the communities. Executive Director Her said that we reach out by email, at community events, and post on our website and social media. She encouraged all board members to wear cultural attire.

Executive Director Her said that we are working with the Minnesota Humanities Center on the 50th Anniversary joint commemoration. Additionally, the Historical Society of Minnesota is deploying a competitive grants program ($400,000).

Senator Susan Pha asked if there is any support that the board members can give for the dinner. Executive Director Her said the board members' job is to just come early, greet people, and represent the Council. We have many other volunteers to help with set up and registration.

IX. CHAIR SINGH

Interim Chair Wang welcomed the Council's former chair, Saraswati Singh, to share some words with the Council because she has not yet had the opportunity to address the board since her term ended.

Former Chair Singh welcomed the new members. She said serving on the board is a very rewarding experience and a great way to support communities. In her time on the Council, she learned more about her community and was able to get more involved. She was grateful for the opportunity to lead, which is often not available for Asian women. She thanked Senators Laine and Pratt for their leadership and support during her time on the Council. Former Chair Singh stressed that the Council is non-partisan; thus, it is important that the board works with people from any political party and to not stereotype based on a person's political identity. She learned a lot about political speak and agendas during her time on the Council. She stressed that board members should be aware of the political environment they are working in, remain non-partisan in their role, and to advocate for their communities by bringing attention to the issues facing their respective communities. She was proud to work with Interim Chair Wang and Treasurer Dolker. She stated she was happy to pass the baton to Ms. Vijay Kumar to represent the Indian community. Former Chair Singh encouraged Ms. Kumar and other board members from large communities to support not only their own, but other smaller Asian communities that do not have as much power.

Senator Pratt thanked Ms. Singh for her service and for being so involved at community events. Executive Director Her thanked her for making the Council a priority in her life and attending so many events. She talked about how she was actively engaged and worked to build her knowledge. Director Her thanked her for being a friend, mentor, and advisor. Ms. Evjen thanked Ms. Singh for being so friendly and welcoming. She was a wonderful face for the council and helped solidify her decision to accept her position for the council. Ms. Vang talked about how much Ms. Singh has grown in her time on the Council and that she was such a great example for the new board members. Ms. Vang said she was proud of her and grateful to former Chair Singh for showing her what true leadership is. Mr. Morris thanked her for the energy she injected to the board. He encouraged other board members to take inspiration from her to be engaged and represent all API communities of Minnesota. Senator Pha thanked Ms. Singh for her time on the board and representing the communities. Representative Nash thanked Ms. Singh and said that he enjoyed working with her. Ms. Singh thanked him for breaking her stereotypes and showing that you can work with people of all parties. Interim Chair Chang recalled attending a Tibetan event with Ms. Singh and how they learned from each other. He feels humbled to serve as interim chair after her time as chair. He thanked her for her time on the board.

X. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Interim Chair Wang called for the election of a new chair. He discussed the responsibilities of the role, which includes serving on the Executive Committee, working closely with staff, and being knowledgeable about the council, the different communities the council services, and the government's role. Senator Pha said that the role is open to anyone, so she told new members that they should not feel like they cannot self-nominate or nominate someone else. She said it requires a lot of time and effort, but either new or existing members can fill the role if they have the passion and commitment.

Bryan Thao Worra nominated himself. Senator Pha nominated Ajeet Yadav.

Senator Pratt made a motion to close nominations.

Treasurer Dolker nominated Pia Puentespina. Ms. Puentespina humbly declined and expressed support for Mr. Thao Worra.

Interim Chair Chang motioned to close the nomination portion. Senator Pratt seconded.

Mr. Thao Worra discussed his history with the Council. He started working with the Council in 1998 and has since worked to defend the Council as a private citizen. In 2018, he formally joined the board as the representative of the Lao ancestry community. He values opportunities to learn from and support other API communities within the state. Mr. Thao Worra said with the 50th anniversary of the Southeast Asian diaspora, as well as the upcoming 250th anniversary of America, now is the time to work together, learn from each other, and change our ideas of who we have been, who we are today, and who we can be.

Mr. Yadav talked about his time living in Marshall, Minnesota where he was an environmental, health and safety consultant. He served 23 school districts where he was brought closer to communities. Mr. Yadav is a graduate of the Humphrey Policy Fellowship program. He lived in Brainerd and while there, he worked for the state college. He was then promoted and moved to Woodbury. He said that he believes in One Minnesota. We should work together to address concerns we have and help our community prosper.

Ms. Vijayakumar asked both nominees about a time when they disagreed with popular opinion and how they handled it. Mr. Yadav said it's important to let people speak, stay cool and calm, consult subject matter experts. People with more experience should also get advice. Mr. Thao Worra discussed how people tried to erase Lao history from textbooks. He worked to push back against the popular consensus. Mr. Thao Worra emphasized that it's important to do our own research and get our stories out there. His work includes one of the first timelines of Lao history, currently being used by teachers and community builders.

Ajeet Yadav, Shweta, and Senator Pha voted for Ajeet Yadav. Bryan Thao Worra, Chang Wang, Khendum Gyabak, Pia Puentespina, Ngawang Dolker, Yixiu Chen, Senator Eric Pratt, and Representative Jim Nash voted for Bryan Thao Worra.

With three votes for Ajeet Yadav and eight votes for Bryan Thao Worra, Mr. Thao Worra was elected as the new Chair.

Chair-elect Thao Worra expressed his appreciation for being selected as Chair and looks forward to working with others to realizing a state that our founders, ancestors, and elders have worked so hard to build for us. He wants to continue traditions and leave a legacy for our next generations to be proud of.

XI. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Interim Chair Wang asked board members to review the Executive Committee report and asked if there were any questions. No one had questions.

XII. COMMUNITY UPDATES

Ms. Dolker said that Alice Kendall donated a Tibetan shrine to the Minneapolis Art Institute. It opened on Saturday. She encouraged all to visit. It is a permanent piece, so it will be there for a while. She added that there were nuns here from India who are currently creating a new sand mandala. It will be there for one week. The mandala symbolizes the belief that nothing is permanent. Also, the Tibetan community has been working on a charter school. This school will be the first U.S. public school that offers Tibetan language. It is also the first to offer social, emotional, and ethical learning. The school is open to all and will open in the fall in the Columbia Heights area.

Ms. Vijayakumar and Mr. Yadav did not have any community updates.

Chair Elect Thao Worra said it was the last week of Laomerica 50 Democracy and Diaspora exhibit at the Minneapolis Central Library. The exhibit has 110 objects reflecting 100 years of community history. He encouraged people to come see it before it closed on the 27th.

Ms. Puentespina discussed the ongoing effort to bring Filipino teachers to Minnesota and looks forward to being more involved in those conversations.

Executive Director Her on behalf of Representative Nash provided an update. She said that he represents Carver County, home to one of the Hindu temples that was recently burglarized. The Chaska Police Department, alongside others in law enforcement and was able to, recently, apprehend the individuals responsible for the more than one dozen burglaries at Hindu and Buddhist temples across Minnesota. Representative Nash was a part of this effort, and it turned out that Carver County was integral in resolving this issue. With the support of people such as Representative Nash, community leaders have been more actively engaged in conversations about these burglaries and the role of law enforcement in maintaining public safety. Representative Nash added that prosecutorial services will be coming from Carver County. The perpetrators are from Eastern Europe so we are hoping they will be prosecuted, deported, and flagged so they are not allowed re-entry into the U.S.

Interim Chair Wang discussed the recent targeting of the Chinese community during this campaign season. He is glad that the community is still celebrating holidays. He also said he was recently personally politically attacked as a board member. He considers the U.S. his home and encourages anyone to reach out to Executive Director Her, Chair Elect Thao Worra, or himself if they want to talk or have questions. Ms. Singh said that she stands with Interim Chair Wang and will support him and the Chinese community.

Senator Pha said it is a good time for the board to have a retreat to discuss the outcomes of the community survey and what direction we want to go in the future, including which bills and policies the Council might consider supporting. The retreat would also be a great opportunity to get to know each other, especially with four new board members. Mr. Yadav supported the idea and suggested having it at the Woodbury community center.

Interim Chair Wang adjourned the meeting at 6:57 P.M.

MINNESOTA

MANAGER'S FINANCIAL REPORT

Run DateTime: 11/13/2024 12:37 PM
Source Report #: KK002
As of Date: 11/13/2024

Selection Criteria: Budget Period - 2024, Fund - 1000 to 6000, DeptID - G9N30000 to G9N3ZZZZ, AppropID - G9N0000 to G9NZZZZ

Break On: Budget Period, Fund, DeptID, AppropID

Budget Period:	**Fund:**	**DeptID:**	**AppropID:**
2024	**1000**	**G9N31000**	**G9N1100**
	General	Asian-Pacific Council	Council on Asian Pacific MN

Remaining Payroll Projection **Full-Time (41000): $0.00** **Part-Time (41030): $0.00** **Total: $0.00**

Account Class and Description	Current Budget	Pre-Encumbered	Encumbered/ Committed	Expended	Unobligated	Unexpended
41000 Full Time - Salary	410,000.00	0.00	85,793.01	324,206.99	0.00	85,793.01
41050 Overtime and Premium Pay	14,000.00	0.00	2,294.88	11,705.12	0.00	2,294.88
41070 Other Employee Cost	2,500.00	0.00	405.38	2,094.62	0.00	405.38
410CL Expense Budget Closing-PAYROLL	-88,493.27	0.00	-88,493.27	0.00	0.00	-88,493.27
41100 Space Rental And Utilities	23,000.00	0.00	0.00	22,837.64	162.36	162.36
41110 Printing And Advertising	9,500.00	0.00	66.38	5,908.25	3,525.37	3,591.75
41130 Prof-Tech Serv-Outside Vend	55,000.00	0.00	0.00	52,641.50	2,358.50	2,358.50
41155 Communications	4,000.00	0.00	2,019.97	1,930.03	50.00	2,069.97
41160 Trav-Sub-InState-Border Comm	3,500.00	0.00	50.00	2,600.39	849.61	899.61
41170 Trav/Sub-OutOfState-BorderComm	6,000.00	0.00	0.00	4,536.89	1,463.11	1,463.11
41180 Employee Development	2,000.00	0.00	0.00	896.75	1,103.25	1,103.25
41190 State Agcy-Prov Prof-Tech Serv	500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	500.00
41196 Rate-Based MNIT Services	19,000.00	0.00	7.85	18,492.15	500.00	507.85
41197 Agency-Specific MNIT Services	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	2,482.78	2,517.22	2,517.22
41300 Supplies	10,000.00	0.00	0.00	767.78	9,232.22	9,232.22
41400 Equipment	6,700.00	0.00	2,174.49	3,227.89	1,297.62	3,472.11
41500 Repairs To Equip and Furn	3,000.00	0.00	832.57	266.18	1,901.25	2,733.82
43000 Other Operating Costs	49,300.00	0.00	1,030.00	16,320.11	31,949.89	32,979.89
49890 Reverse 1099 Expenditure	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
499CL Expense Budget Closing-NonPay	-57,410.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	-57,410.40	-57,410.40
Total	**477,096.33**	**0.00**	**6,181.26**	**470,915.07**	**-0.00**	**6,181.26**

Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans

FY 2026-27 Biennial Budget Change Item

Change Item Title: Operating Request

Fiscal Impact ($000s)	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
General Fund				
Expenditures	175	195	195	195
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Other Funds				
Expenditures	0	0	0	0
Revenues	0	0	0	0
Net Fiscal Impact = (Expenditures – Revenues)	175	195	195	195
FTEs	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**

Request:
In order for the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans (the Council) to maintain its current capacity and meet its growing duties, the Council **must receive an increase of $370,000.00** (over the biennium, this totals $175,000 in the first year, and $195,000 in the second year) to increase our current staff capacity from 4 FTEs to 5 FTEs (fringe benefits, in-state travel expenses, workstations, and IT needs), including a new position for a Special Projects Coordinator. This proposal ensures that the Council continues to deliver on its statutory responsibility of working for the implementation of economic, social, legal, and political equality of Asian Pacific Minnesotans (Min. Stat. § 15.0145).

The increase we are asking for is the result of our careful consideration and consultation with SmART. The following is a more nuanced explanation as to why we are requesting this amount:

- *Salaries:* We are currently working with HR to reallocate one of the four current FTE positions to ensure that this position description accurately reflects the role and responsibilities expected of the incumbent. An updated position description will impact the respective pay scale. The addition of an additional FTE will also impact the Council's budget in this area.
- *Travel:* In the next biennium, the Council expects to tour regions of the state with significant Asian Pacific ancestry communities.
- *Professional Technical Contracts:* To effectively serve a population of more than 370,000 with a current staff capacity of four FTEs, we make strategic use of the State's targeted group business program to procure skilled expertise for critical needs. These contracts allow us to further the Council's reach while remaining excellent stewards of State resources and uplifting targeted business communities. This support will remain necessary even in the case that the Council's request for an additional FTE is met.
- *Other Operating Costs:* A small amount of this request anticipates needs related to in-state travel and to developing an understanding of the current and most urgent needs of our communities (i.e., disseminating survey material, paying entrance to community events, etc.).

The $370,000.00 request is a 29 percent change compared to our current biennial funding of $1.286M (biennial budget). Our only funding source is General Funds.

Rationale/Background:
The Council's staff team currently consists of four policy-oriented and community-driven individuals serving in the following capacities:

- *Executive Director:* Manages all operations and projects and develops and implements strategic and well-informed plans for the Council. The executive director also serves as the public face of the Council to the community and to local, state, and federal-level government.
- *Research Director:* Conducts original research and regularly produces research reports to inform both the Legislature in its policy-making process as well as the Council in its advocacy and outreach.
- *Legislative and Public Affairs Liaison:* Educates, informs, and engages the Asian Pacific Minnesotan population on issues such as health and human services, E12 education, higher education, gender-based violence, jobs, economic development, and housing; assists in developing policy positions and legislative initiatives that benefit the Asian Pacific Minnesotan population; and maintains close connection between the Council and other stakeholders.
- *Office Manager:* Manages the office of the Council; administers and monitors the Council budget; assists with supervision of agency's support staff; and performs and coordinates numerous administrative functions as the assistant to the executive director.

With the addition of one FTE (a *Special Projects Coordinator*), this request will achieve greater parity between our staffing level (currently, 4 FTEs) and that at the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (currently, 5 FTEs) and the Council on Minnesotans of African Heritage (currently, 6 FTEs). All three ethnic councils share an enabling statute, statutory duties, and serve similar-size populations, and this increase in staff capacity will allow our Council to continue to meet growing expectations from the communities we serve and from state government.

As the needs of our communities have grown and changed, it has become apparent that the Council must increase its capacity to continue its impactful work in our communities as spelled out in our enabling statute. Without the addition of a Special Projects Coordinator, the Council will continue to lack the ability to fully meet its statutory charges.

The Legislature most recently restructured the ethnic councils in 2015. In January of 2018, after a two-year strategic planning process, the Council adopted its current strategic plan. Under this plan, the Council must deliver on the following goals:

- Minnesota's Asian Pacific communities benefit from the Council's work.
- Minnesota's Asian Pacific communities trust the Council.
- The Council is an agent of change in state government.
- The Council leads dynamically and effectively.

The Council strives to ensure strategic, effective, and efficient use of its small but dedicated team of employees. All position descriptions have been audited and, at times, re-audited to ensure that Council staff—with their strong policy, administrative, and non-partisan political skills—are aligned with the roles and responsibilities that best position the Council to deliver on its statutory duties to Minnesotans and their legislators. The Council staff serve as bridges to Minnesotans from more than 40 unique communities from diverse ethnic and national backgrounds. Some of these communities are emerging, while others trace their roots back to the earliest years of statehood. Our staff help these communities build their capacities

to advocate for themselves uniquely and more effectively at various levels of government, including state government.

Specifically, the Council has, and will continue to:

- Publish original research reports and present research findings to stakeholder groups.
- Recommend and advise on legislative actions during the session.
- Be present in our many linguistically, politically, and culturally diverse communities.
- Facilitate and coordinate community/government interactions.

With this proposal, the Council seeks an increase to its base budget and staff capacity that will allow it to 1) advocate on behalf of Minnesota's socioeconomically and culturally diverse Asian Pacific community, and 2) facilitate and build relationships between various stakeholders, particularly between the executive and legislative branches of government and our various communities.

Proposal:
This request will add one additional FTE to the Council's staff team, a *Special Projects Coordinator*, who will enhance the Council's work with our smaller Asian Pacific Minnesotan communities and provide support to the growing demand for high-profile events by our communities. This position will be primarily focused on capacity-building initiatives within our smaller communities and coordinating events between state government and across our communities. Examples of projects beginning this biennium that will be led by this position include:

- Supporting projects honoring the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War, including the design and execution of the 50th anniversary joint commemoration program.
- Working with strategic partners, including DEED and MN Tourism, on an initiative to create an interactive dashboard mapping Asian Pacific points of interest across the state.
- Assisting small communities, such as our Cambodian Minnesotan community, with designing and executing leadership development projects.
- Partnering with emerging communities, such as our Micronesian community in Milan, Minnesota, to build community and organizational capacity.

This proposal is needed to ensure the Council's capacity to meet the growing needs of Minnesota's fast-growing Asian Pacific ancestry communities and ongoing mandates from state government. The proposal follows a budgetary cycle (FY24-25) in which the Council received an increase to its base budget to simply maintain previous capacity. In this current biennium, the Council has delivered above and beyond our statutory duties, including the following:

- Tracked and testified on more than 60 bills that directly pertained to Asian Pacific communities.
- Provided advocacy training to community-based organizations to enhance their capacity and ability to engage with state government during the legislative and policymaking process.
- Conducted a thorough and representative survey of Asian Pacific Minnesotans and compiled a resulting legislative priorities survey to guide the work of the Council according to its constituency.
- Hosted over 700 guests, including community leaders, elected officials, and awardees at the 2024 Asian Pacific Minnesotans Leadership Awards Dinner to honor the contributions of Asian Pacific Minnesotans to our state and nation.

- Assisted with the execution of the historic Minnesota Songkran Festival, which has become the largest Songkran Festival in the nation, held on the Capitol grounds which required liaising directly with foreign diplomats from Thailand.
- Coordinated with local leaders, law enforcement, and communities in response to organized criminal activity targeting Asian-led places of worship, including convening faith organizations and community leaders with the FBI.
- Served as cultural interpreter/broker on complex policy issues between the following groups: legislators and their staff; the governor, his staff, and executive branch agency heads and their staff; municipal and local government officials and their staff; leaders of community-based organizations and community leaders/members of Asian Pacific ancestry; and other stakeholders.

Additionally, our Council contributed to important initiatives with broader impacts on Asian Pacific Minnesotans, including the following:

- Connected Asian Pacific leaders and organizations with state government leaders to provide input on administrative practices, policies, and services of direct impact to the communities we serve.
- Developed easy-to-understand infographics to broadly disseminate information and educate community members on major developments during the legislative sessions.
- Assisted with the planning and execution of the first Cambodian Heritage Day at the Minnesota Historical Society.
- Co-hosted Taste of Asia, one of the largest festivals celebrating culture and cuisine from across Asian Pacific Minnesotan communities.

The relationships established by the Council serve to validate and uplift the lived experiences of an incredibly diverse community of Minnesotans of Asian Pacific ancestry, to build and maintain the credibility and legitimacy of our state and nation's democratic institutions, and to empower our communities to engage with government at various levels. This requested 29 percent increase to our base budget will ensure that we can even more effectively serve and meet the growing needs and expectations of our fast-changing communities and state government.

Equity and Inclusion:
The Council is statutorily charged with working on behalf of over 370,000 Minnesotans descended from more than 40 nations. These individuals span every imaginable challenge related to linguistic, cultural, ethnic, gender, and immigration status differences. The Council, steadfast in its statutory duties and responsibilities, works tirelessly to navigate these differences and reduce inequities by liaising with state government to create a more representative democracy.

To meet the legislative and advocacy needs of this wide array of individuals, the Council maintains an exquisitely experienced team of professionals deeply familiar with the Asian Pacific Minnesotan community's diversity. This team is tasked with the impossible: working proactively, retroactively, and reactively to circumstances that range from predictable to unimaginable—with a current staff team of only four FTEs.

Despite the tall order, including working to address the needs of an increasingly complex community consisting of emerging communities such as newly arrived Afghan evacuees, the Council works around the clock to respond to and preempt challenges facing the community. In recent years, we have advised

lawmakers to pass legislation on one of the most complex issues facing our community: violence against Asian Pacific women and children. These successful legislative initiatives include the Working Group on Violence Against Asian Pacific Women and Girls bill (passed in 2015), the Exploited Families Rental Assistance Pilot Program bill (passed in 2016), and the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Prevention Pilot Program bill (passed in 2019). Equally important, we played leading roles in advancing and improving legislative requests for the following issues:

- Southeast Asian Economic Disparities Relief grant
- Establishing a Spoken Language Health Care Interpreter Registry
- Establishing an Office of New Americans within DEED
- Increase Teachers of Color Act
- Increased funding for English Language Learners (ELL)
- Expanding access to higher education and post-secondary options
- Capacity-building grants for non-profit organizations
- Legacy grants to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War
- Bonding projects to support community-driven capacity
- Post-conviction relief
- Increased mental health supports to students and families
- Economic supports to Asian Pacific-owned small businesses

Impact on Children and Families:
According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau reporting, Asian Pacific Minnesotans are nearly a decade younger than the overall state population. The Council works to address the unique challenges faced by a younger population by being responsive to the needs of Asian Pacific families. Some of the ways the Council has prioritized children and families include:

- Advocated for policies that close the education achievement gap.
- Organized public forums for Asian Pacific parents and teachers to directly communicate with the Minnesota Department of Education leadership and staff.
- Analyzed and disseminated existing state government research (e.g., Minnesota Student Survey, Minnesota Report Card, Counting All Students Report) on the status of Asian Pacific students.
- Worked in direct partnership with the Commissioner of Education to ensure that the voices of Asian Pacific families were included in executive-level decision-making.

The Council has strived to inform the legislative and executive branches of the realities of our diverse Asian Pacific communities. As these communities grow and change, without this change item request, the Council will not be able to effectively serve the substantial and complex needs of Minnesota's Asian Pacific communities.

The intended results of this proposal will:

- Improve services and programming to ensure the Council can best meet the needs of its fast-changing constituents.
- Maintain the ability to secure expert, experienced contractors when limitations prevent staff from managing crucial tasks.

- Cover the increasing cost to rent office space at the Capitol complex.
- Support reestablishing a statewide presence in areas of greater Minnesota.

Our partners will continue to be our community members, community-based organizations, educational institutions, small businesses, and state and local governments.

This is an exciting, yet extremely challenging, time for the Council. We have positioned our agency to maximize the number and quality of interactions between Asian Pacific Minnesotans and their government.

IT Related Proposals: N/A

Results:
The following measurements are used to track the Council's performance in implementing its strategies:

Measure name	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data
Publication of Original Research Reports	Quantity	A research project we are undertaking, on a topic which has received little to no attention qualifies as an original research project.	Original research is an expensive and time-consuming endeavor. Depending on the priorities placed before our research staff, we have had very little to no capacity to begin new and resource-demanding original research on the issues of importance to our communities.	N/A.
Legislative Activities During the Session	Quantity	These activities/actions include calling on community leaders to testify and helping them with crafting their testimonies; submitting letters of support or opposition to committees; our roles on specific legislative proposals and the meetings we convene on these efforts; etc.	Depending on staff capacity, whether it's a budget or bonding session, and community priorities, our activities will vary from year to year.	80

Measure name	Measure type	Measure data source	Historical trend	Most recent data
Attendance at Cultural Events and Community-led Meetings	Quantity	These activities/actions include Council staff speaking at these events, assisting with finding venue and inviting government officials, Council sponsoring events hosted by small emerging communities, etc.	As our communities have grown and become increasingly passionate about retention of culture and language, these events have increased insignificantly. This increase has been especially stark post-COVID.	60
Facilitation and Coordination of Community Engagement and Inclusion Activities	Quality and Quantity	These activities include community-hosted and Council-hosted events whereby the intention from the beginning is to bring as many Asian Pacific ancestry groups to the table given the objectives of an event/gathering.	In the last five years, our diverse Asian Pacific ancestry leaders have adopted and increasingly implemented this practice of being inclusive (via those invited and the talking points of each event).	35/end of event surveys

The Council collects this data and maintains it in-house. Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 15.0145, the Council shares highlights in its annual report, and when requested.

Statutory Change(s):
This proposal will not require statutory changes to Minn. Stat. § 15.0145.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement: [for cabinet agencies | removed for publication]

The Council is not a cabinet agency. Not applicable.

COUNCIL ON
ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS

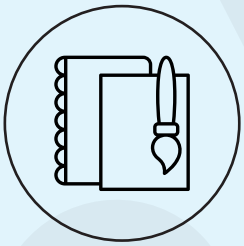
2025-2026
Biennial Legislative Agenda

Pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 15.0145, the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans is a state agency created to advise the Legislature and the Governor on issues of importance to Asian Pacific Minnesotans, advocate on behalf of this community on these issues, and serve as a bridge between state government and Minnesotans of Asian and Pacific Islander ancestries.

Priority Issues*

The Council will actively track and pursue legislation in the following areas:

ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE



ARTS, CULTURE, AND HERITAGE

INCOME/WAGES

HOME OWNERSHIP

EMPLOYMENT

Ongoing Positions

In addition to the above legislative priorities derived from community input, the Council will actively advocate for legislation that achieves the following:

- Programs and services that are respectful of and responsive to the linguistically and culturally diverse communities of Minnesota, including Asian Pacific Minnesotans.
- Collection of disaggregated data to better inform policymaking on issues of importance to Asian Pacific Minnesotans.
- Increased understanding of violence against Minnesota's Asian Pacific women and children.

*These issues were identified as high priorities by participants of the 2024 Legislative Priorities Survey.

Approved by the Board on TBD/Month, Day, 2024

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COUNCIL ON
ASIAN PACIFIC MINNESOTANS

2025-2026 Biennial Legislative Agenda

Each even number year of the biennium, the Council deploys a biennial survey to identify and understand the most pressing issues in our communities across the state. In continuing methods first implemented during the pandemic, we deployed the survey using a hybrid online and in-person model to capture a wide range of feedback from our diverse APM communities. In recognizing that communities experience unique barriers, the Council partnered with our nonprofit organizations to disseminate the survey via online through social media channels, email distribution lists, and community events. The results of this survey informs the Council's legislative work over the coming biennium.

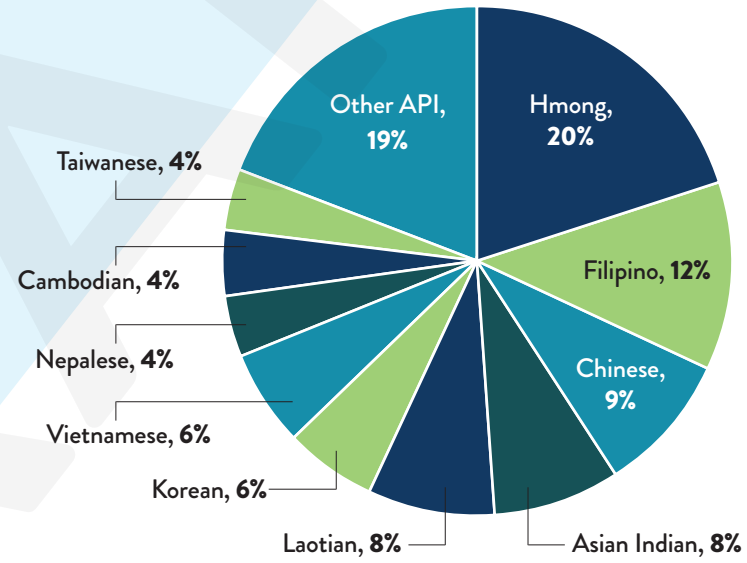
❍ **SURVEY OPENED JULY 15**

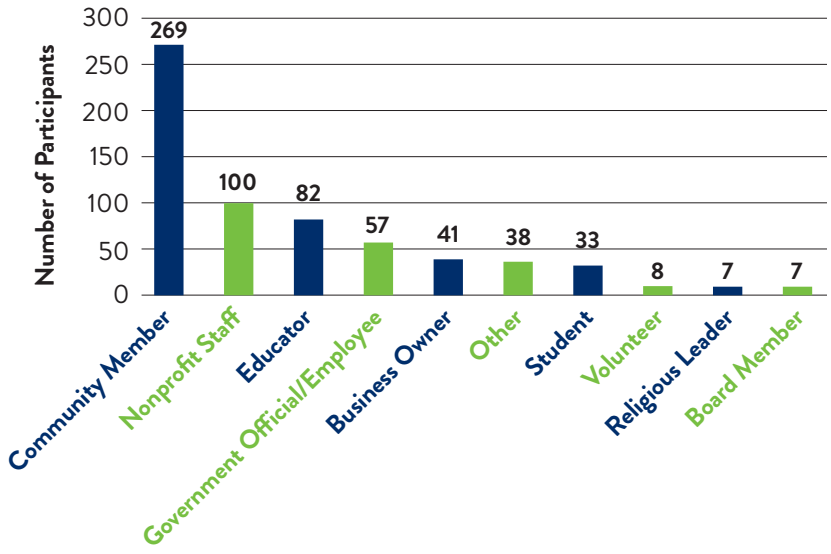
● **SURVEY CLOSED OCTOBER 31**

☑ SURVEY SAMPLE

Five-hundred and eighty respondents identified as Asian and Pacific Islander. Their percentage of the total response are displayed on the graph as *ethnicity, percent respondents.*

"Other API" includes participants who identified as Karen (22), Tibetan (17), Japanese (14), Karenni (13), Afghan (13), Native Hawaiian (11), Thai (10), Indonesian (6), Pakistani (3), Samoan (3), Malaysian (3), Burmese (2), Sri Lankan (1), Guamanian/Chamorro (1), Bangladeshi (1), Indo-Guyanese (1), and Singaporean (1).





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15.0145 ETHNIC COUNCILS.

Subdivision 1. **Three ethnic councils; creation.** (a) The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs includes public members with an ethnic heritage from Mexico, any of the countries in Central or South America, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, or Puerto Rico.

(b) The Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage includes public members of black African ancestry.

(c) The Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans includes public members with an ethnic heritage from any of the countries east of, and including, Afghanistan or the Pacific Islands.

Subd. 2. **Membership.** (a) Each council has 15 voting members. Eleven members of each council are public members appointed by the governor. Four members of each council are legislators.

(b) The governor shall appoint 11 members of each council as follows:

(1) the Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs must include one member representing each of the state's congressional districts and three members appointed at large. The council must include at least five women. The governor must attempt to ensure that the demographic composition of council members accurately reflects the demographic composition of Minnesota's Latino community, including recent immigrants, as determined by the state demographer;

(2) the Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage must include members who are broadly representative of the African heritage community of the state. The council must include at least five women. At least three members must be first or second generation African immigrants, who generally reflect the demographic composition of these African immigrants, as determined by the state demographer; and

(3) the Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans must include one member from each of the five ancestries with the state's highest percentages of Asian-Pacific populations, as determined by the state demographer. The other six members must be broadly representative of the rest of the Asian-Pacific population, with no more than one council member from any one ancestry. The council must include at least five women. For purposes of this clause, ancestry refers to heritage that is commonly accepted in Minnesota as a unique population.

(c) Four legislators are voting members of each council. The speaker of the house and the house minority leader shall each appoint one member to each council. The Subcommittee on Committees of the senate Committee on Rules and Administration shall appoint one member of the majority caucus and one member of the minority caucus to each council.

(d) The governor may appoint a commissioner of a state agency or a designee of that commissioner to serve as an ex-officio, nonvoting member of a council.

Subd. 3. **Appointments; terms; removal.** (a) In making appointments to a council, the governor shall consider an appointee's proven dedication and commitment to the council's community and any expertise possessed by the appointee that might be beneficial to the council, such as experience in public policy, legal affairs, social work, business, or management. The executive director of a council and legislative members may offer advice to the governor on applicants seeking appointment.

(b) Terms, compensation, and filling of vacancies for members appointed by the governor are as provided in section 15.059. Removal of members appointed by the governor is governed by section 15.059, except that: (1) a member who missed more than half of the council meetings convened during a 12-month period automatically is removed from the council; and (2) a member appointed by the governor may be removed

by a vote of three of the four legislative members of the council. The chair of a council shall inform the governor of the need for the governor to fill a vacancy on the council. Legislative members serve at the pleasure of their appointing authority.

(c) A member appointed by the governor may serve no more than a total of eight years on a council. A legislator may serve no more than eight consecutive years or 12 nonconsecutive years on any one council.

Subd. 4. **Training; executive committee; meetings; support.** (a) A member appointed by the governor must attend orientation training within the first six months of service for the member's initial term. The commissioner of administration must arrange for the training to include but not be limited to the legislative process, government data practices, open meeting law, Robert's Rules of Order, fiscal management, and human resources. The governor must remove a member who does not complete the training.

(b) Each council shall annually elect from among the members appointed by the governor a chair and other officers it deems necessary. These officers and one legislative member selected by the council shall serve as the executive committee of the council.

(c) Forty percent of voting members of a council constitutes a quorum. A quorum is required to conduct council business. A council member may not vote on any action if the member has a conflict of interest under section 10A.07.

(d) Each council shall receive administrative support from the commissioner of administration under section 16B.371. The council may contract in its own name but may not accept or receive a loan or incur indebtedness except as otherwise provided by law. Contracts must be approved by a majority of the members of the council and executed by the chair and the executive director. The council may apply for, receive, and expend in its own name grants and gifts of money consistent with the powers and duties specified in this section.

(e) The attorney general shall provide legal services to the councils on behalf of the state on all matters relating to the councils, including matters relating to the state as the employer of the executive directors of the council, and other council staff.

Subd. 5. **Executive director; staff.** (a) The Legislative Coordinating Commission must appoint an executive director for each council. The executive director must be experienced in administrative activities and familiar with the challenges and needs of the ethnic council's larger community. The executive director serves in the unclassified service at the pleasure of the Legislative Coordinating Commission.

(b) The Legislative Coordinating Commission must establish a process for recruiting and selecting applicants for the executive director positions. This process must include consultation and collaboration with the applicable council.

(c) The executive director and applicable council members must work together in fulfilling council duties. The executive director must consult with the commissioner of administration to ensure appropriate financial, purchasing, human resources, and other services for operation of the council.

(d) Once appointed, each council is responsible for supervising the work of its director. The council chair must report to the chair of the Legislative Coordinating Commission regarding the performance of the executive director, including any recommendations regarding disciplinary actions. The executive director must appoint and supervise the work of other staff necessary to carry out the duties of the council. The executive director must consult with the council chair prior to taking the following disciplinary actions with council staff: written reprimand, suspension, demotion, or discharge. The executive director and other council staff are executive branch employees.

(e) The executive director must submit the council's biennial budget request to the commissioner of management and budget as provided under chapter 16A.

(f) The Legislative Coordinating Commission may delegate its responsibilities under this section to a subcommittee or subgroup of the commission or the chair of the council.

Subd. 6. **Duties of council.** (a) A council must work for the implementation of economic, social, legal, and political equality for its constituency. The council shall work with the legislature and governor to carry out this work by performing the duties in this section.

(b) A council shall advise the governor and the legislature on issues confronting the constituency of the council. This may include, but is not limited to, presenting the results of surveys, studies, and community forums to the appropriate executive departments and legislative committees.

(c) A council shall advise the governor and the legislature of administrative and legislative changes needed to improve the economic and social condition of the constituency of the council. This may include but is not limited to working with legislators to develop legislation to address these issues and to work for passage of the legislation. This may also include making recommendations regarding the state's affirmative action program and the state's targeted group small business program, or working with state agencies and organizations to develop business opportunities and promote economic development for the constituency of the council.

(d) A council shall advise the governor and the legislature of the implications and effect of proposed administrative and legislative changes on the constituency of the council. This may include but is not limited to tracking legislation, testifying as appropriate, and meeting with executive departments and legislators.

(e) A council shall serve as a liaison between state government and organizations that serve the constituency of the council. This may include but is not limited to working with these organizations to carry out the duties in paragraphs (a) to (d), and working with these organizations to develop informational programs or publications to involve and empower the constituency in seeking improvement in their economic and social conditions.

(f) A council shall perform or contract for the performance of studies designed to suggest solutions to the problems of the constituency of the council in the areas of education, employment, human rights, health, housing, social welfare, and other related areas.

(g) In carrying out duties under this subdivision, councils may act to advise on issues that affect the shared constituencies of more than one council.

Subd. 7. **Duties of council members.** A council member shall:

(1) attend and participate in scheduled meetings and be prepared by reviewing meeting notes;

(2) maintain and build communication with the community represented;

(3) collaborate with the council and executive director in carrying out the council's duties; and

(4) participate in activities the council or executive director deem appropriate and necessary to facilitate the goals and duties of the council.

Subd. 8. **Reports.** A council must report on the measurable outcomes achieved in the council's current strategic plan to meet its statutory duties, along with the specific objectives and outcome measures proposed for the following year. The council must submit the report by January 15 each year to the chairs of the

committees in the house of representatives and the senate with primary jurisdiction over state government operations. Each report must cover the calendar year of the year before the report is submitted. The specific objectives and outcome measures for the following current year must focus on three or four achievable objectives, action steps, and measurable outcomes for which the council will be held accountable. The strategic plan may include other items that support the statutory purposes of the council but should not distract from the primary statutory proposals presented. The biennial budget of each council must be submitted to the Legislative Coordinating Commission by February 1 in each odd-numbered year.

History: *2015 c 77 art 2 s 5; 2016 c 130 s 6-8; 1Sp2017 c 4 art 2 s 15*