

Incorporating Public Comments: Metropolitan Council

In spring 2026, the Olmstead Implementation Office (OIO), in partnership with the Dendros Group, Inclusion Consultants, and state staff, held a public comment period. This included:

- Virtual meetings
- An online survey in multiple languages
- Individual interviews
- Submissions from organizations
- Email comments

This document includes themes from all public comment. Agency teams were asked to address how feedback was incorporated into their goals and strategies in the Olmstead Plan.

For more information about this feedback, please review the transportation and housing public comment summary report.

Transportation Goal 1

Transportation Goal 1: Public transit will run on time

The Metropolitan Council agency team updated their goals or strategies based on this feedback. They shared:

The Metropolitan Council revised the format of the goals from a table format to a bulleted list. This matches the format used in other goal areas. The Council also added a strategy related to transit information and technology. Recent and ongoing advancements in transit technology systems enable more predictable arrival times, incorporate real-time traffic information into paratransit routing, and offer better options for customers to track vehicles. These improvements help drivers and passengers keep service running on time and help riders be aware of reliable actual pick-up times even when delays occur.

Additionally, more information about on-time performance was incorporated in the goal document. While 100% on-time performance is the Council's aspiration, practical and budget limitations do not currently allow for this level of performance.

Two strategies were removed from this goal area, related to travel training and support for travel trainers specializing in certain disabilities. These remain important strategies but are incorporated in Goal 2 where they have a more direct impact. These strategies relate indirectly to on-time performance so they are removed from Goal 1.

Finally, several comments related to accountability for system performance and outcomes, and for public transparency of system performance. The Council added information in the goal text related to current monthly reporting through its Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee, and information about how transit service contracts are structured with direct financial accountability for system performance through bonuses and damages. These relate to safety, customer service, on-time performance, accessibility, and other key metrics.

Transportation Goal 2

Transportation Goal 2: People with disabilities will use fixed route public transit more often

The agency team did not update this goal or strategies based on this feedback. They shared:

While not directly in response to comments, the Met Council moved a strategy from Goal 1 to Goal 2. The planned strategy relates to travel training and specifically financial support for travel trainers specializing in certain disabilities. This strategy is better aligned with Goal area 2 so the strategy moved to this goal.

Many of the comment areas related to topics beyond the control of the Metropolitan Council, such as sidewalk snow and ice removal. The Council added additional text providing context and description of the roles of public entities in the transportation system. Based on comments related to the cost and affordability of fares, the Council added information about a 2025 law change that makes regular route services free for certified Metro Mobility riders.

General feedback themes for all transportation goals

These themes apply to Metropolitan Council's transportation goals and strategies more generally.

Feedback theme: Rural areas need more transportation options

The Metropolitan Council agency team did not update their goals or strategies based on this feedback. The team shared:

This comment theme may relate more directly to greater Minnesota. The Metropolitan Council has limited jurisdiction to the 7 county Metro area. This includes Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington Counties. Transit services within rural or greater Minnesota is the responsibility of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

The full 7-county metropolitan area has transit service options that are available and accessible. Transit Link is the region's transit service for trips where fixed route is infrequent or not available. Transit Link currently has capacity for additional rides. A demonstration pilot is currently underway in portions of Forest Lake, Stillwater, and Hastings that offers on-demand, app-based rides midday on select weekdays.

Feedback theme: Transit and other transportation options need to be accessible

The Metropolitan Council agency team did not update their goals or strategies based on this feedback. They shared:

Services are currently accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), though the Council acknowledges individual circumstances may vary by person and by trip. The Council added information within the goals document that specifies the various roles of transportation providers and roadway authorities. A major theme of comments related to winter sidewalk maintenance; except at bus shelters and rail platforms this function is outside of the Met Council's authority and budget. Roadway authorities and (when required by ordinance) private property owners are responsible for this access.

Feedback theme: People with disabilities need reliable transit and transportation options

The Metropolitan Council team updated their goals or strategies based on this feedback. They shared:

The Council added a strategy to leverage technology improvements to increase both the reliability and accuracy of transit information as well as the actual reliability of service. Through greater awareness and reliability of actual pickup times and vehicle locations, customers will spend less time actively waiting for transit because they will have greater assurance of actual arrival time.

Feedback theme: Transit and transportation are critical for accessing employment, health care, and community life

Metropolitan Council did not update their goals or strategies based on this feedback. The agency shared:

The Council acknowledges this feedback and agrees that transit is critical for accessing employment, health care, and community life. This need is inherent to the purpose of transportation systems and drives the mission of the Council's transportation services. These include regular route buses and trains and complementary ADA paratransit services such as Metro Mobility. The goals developed recognize and advance this need by enabling on-time and accessible public transportation services. Met Council continually evaluates actions and

program opportunities that can positively improve rider's experiences, like the introduction of Metro micro service, Transit Linke On-Demand pilot, and the Metro Mobility Premium On Demand program.

Housing Data Goal 2

Housing Data Goal 2: More people with disabilities will have safe, accessible, affordable housing of their choice

Housing Data Goal 2A focuses on the Metropolitan Council (MetC). It states: MetC wants to collect data about disabled people's experiences with housing services. This will help MetC identify program strengths, areas for improvement, and ideas to make services better.

The Metropolitan Council agency team updated this goal and strategies based on this feedback. They shared:

The Metropolitan Council added a new goal area: "MetC will explore what safe, accessible, affordable housing means to people living with disabilities." The Metropolitan Council will also explore implementing additional follow-up with voucher holders that do not use their voucher to learn the reasons why, in hopes information to improve the program for participants.

Additional topics shared by community

- Additional barriers to transportation access: Community members said the state must address disparities based on other identities held by people with disabilities. These identities can include race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, language, and more.
- Minnesotans with disabilities consistently highlighted transportation as a cross-cutting barrier affecting access to health care, employment, and community life.
- Across all four [goals], there is a pattern of emphasizing system adjustments (training, studies, platform development, pilots) instead of requiring measurable, enforceable accessibility and reliability outcomes.
- Missing integration of modern mobility options (including emerging on-demand and autonomous services) under accessibility rules.

Metropolitan Council did not change their goals or strategies based on this feedback. The agency team shared:

While the Metropolitan Council did not change goals or strategies, it added information based on the central themes of accountability for system outcomes and transparency. Other areas of comments relate to broader work within the state to address disparities, while recognizing accessible and available transit services are a key strategy to add. The Council is working with MnDOT, transit providers, and others to monitor the progress, promise, and potentials risks of

emerging technologies. These are not developed to the point of readiness for goals or strategies but pilot efforts may inform future goal development.