



Anoka County-Blaine Airport ADVISORY COMMISSION

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METROPOLITAN AIRPORTS COMMISSION ANOKA COUNTY-BLAINE AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 3, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.
Blaine City Hall Cloverleaf Farm Rooms A & B (2nd Floor)
10801 Town Square Drive Northeast, Blaine, MN 55449

The meeting began at 4:10 p.m. 20 people were in attendance: 17 in person, 3 via Teams. A quorum of at least 3 User Members and 3 Public Members was established.

Members: J. Belany, Life Link III (via Teams); C. Daml, Northstar Flyers; K. Devries, Lexington; S. Erkel, East Bethel; C. Ford, Blaine (via Teams); M. Miller, Anoka County Aviation Association; D. Quimby, Lino Lakes; J. Reinert, Anoka County;

MAC Staff: R. Anderson; A. Cornolo; K. Gerads; D. Lafferty; J. Lewis; M. Ross;

Others: J. Krack; M. Rygg; J. Somer; E. Thorvig; J. Vossen (via Teams); R. Ziegler.

1. Welcome & Introductions

Co-Chair Erkel called the meeting to order at 4:10 p.m. She introduced herself and explained the meeting format and Teams protocols. She reviewed the public comment period as well as the goals and purpose of the Commission. Those present introduced themselves.

Ryan Anderson, Community Relations Manager, introduced **Alexa Cornolo**, MAC's new intern.

Co-Chair Erkel confirmed with the recording secretary that a quorum was present and opened discussion of the agenda. She explained that Topic 5.1, Stakeholder Spotlight, needed to be postponed due to speaker unavailability. She asked for a motion to approve the modified agenda.

Member Daml motioned and **Member Devries** seconded to approve the modified agenda. There was an opportunity for discussion, and a vote was taken. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Approved 9-2-2026

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2. Consent Items

2.1 Approval of Meeting Minutes: March 4, 2026

2.2 Aircraft Operations & Noise Complaints Quarterly Report

Co-Chair Erkel opened discussion of the consent agenda items. Regarding approval of the March 4, 2026, minutes, she indicated the minutes were provided in the meeting packet and asked if there were any requested edits. No members had comments or requested changes. She said the Aircraft Operations & Noise Complaints Quarterly Report was provided in the packet and asked if anyone had questions or discussion items. No members had comments or questions regarding the report at this time.

Member Devries motioned and Member Reinert seconded to approve the consent agenda items. There was an opportunity for discussion, and a vote was taken. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

3. Public Comment

Co-Chair Erkel introduced the public comment period. She confirmed that no speaker cards were provided. She explained that an opportunity for public comment is included in all Commission meetings. There were no comments at this time.

4. Business

Co-Chair Erkel opened the business agenda items and turned it over to **Michele Ross**, Director of Stakeholder Engagement, for presentation.

4.1 Long-Term Planning Update

Ross introduced herself and reviewed Long-Term Plan (LTP) development, which looks at a 20-year planning horizon and forecasts airport operations and needs out to 2045. Current facilities are reviewed, and projections are made for future needs and growth. She reviewed the process, including the Stakeholder Advisory Panel (SAP) and opportunities for public comment. The process is required by the FAA. The last LTP done for Anoka County-Blaine was in 2010. She noted the LTP does not authorize construction and is limited to on-airport property.

She discussed the goals and objectives of the LTP and reviewed the process and expected timeline. It is a lengthy process with completion expected in 2028. There are several SAP meetings and public open houses along the timeline. A preferred alternative will be developed and reviewed. FAA approval is required for the aviation forecast and final airport layout plan. The final plan is also reviewed by Met Council. She stated the LTP is a good opportunity to ensure the airport is ready for 2045. She then concluded her presentation and said she would be happy to answer any questions.



Member Daml inquired whether it was possible to look back at the 2010 LTP to see what projects came out of that process. She wanted to learn more about how the planning is implemented.

Ross and **Kelly Gerads**, Director of Reliever Airports, indicated they would circle back to provide specific information about implemented projects from the 2010 LTP.

Ross added that, because the LTP is just a snapshot, any growth projected may not occur as anticipated or funding may not be available, which can affect implementation of LTP projects.

Gerads noted that any projects seen around the airport were likely included in the 2010 LTP. She said not every project in the plan happens, but that most projects undertaken at the airport in recent years would have been a part of the last plan. She reiterated that they would review projects identified in the 2010 LTP to compare to projects that have been completed since then.

Member Daml asked if repair of broken equipment or paving of taxiways is included in the LTP or is under a different category of projects.

Gerads said those items become part of the capital program and that ongoing maintenance is performed to keep equipment and facilities safe and functional.

Co-Chair Erkel inquired if there were any further questions or comments, and there were none at this time.

4.2 Update on Anoka Airport Aviation Festival

Co-Chair Erkel said the festival committee has constituted a board and has a few volunteers, but they need more volunteers to accomplish what they hope to. She appealed to those present to help seek volunteers for the festival. She outlined general plans on trailers, signage, parking, food trucks, and vendors as had been discussed at the recent festival board meeting.

Member Daml asked if a date had been set.

Co-Chair Erkel said it is scheduled for the second Saturday of June in 2027 but that it is subject to change. She reiterated the need for volunteers and involvement to plan the festival.

5. Information

5.1 Stakeholder Spotlight

Co-Chair Erkel reminded the Commission that this item would be postponed to a future meeting.



5.2 City of Blaine Update

Co-Chair Erkel introduced **Erik Thorvig**, Blaine City Manager.

Thorvig thanked **Co-Chair Erkel** and the Commission for allowing him to give an update on Blaine. He reviewed the city's strategic priorities and the city council's specific goals. He said the airport is important for economic and business development. He stressed the importance of communication between cities and their residents. Blaine is growing but does not have a lot of undeveloped land left, so growth needs to be strategically managed. Current population estimates are just under 78,000. Met Council predicts that, by 2045-2050, Blaine will have between 85,000 and 90,000 residents. They are looking at ways to reinvigorate older parts of the city. He discussed planned and ongoing road construction, including extensive work on Highway 65.

Member Daml asked how road closures would be handled.

Thorvig said it would be done similar to the procedure used for Highway 10 in Anoka or Highway 169 in Ramsey, minimizing road closures.

Member Daml asked why a lane was not added as part of the construction, especially with expected population growth.

Thorvig answered that, with actual and projected traffic counts, another lane is not necessary at this time and that the removal of the stoplights should greatly improve traffic flow.

Co-Chair Erkel added and **Thorvig** confirmed that they are leaving space so that, should another lane be necessary in the future, they will have the ability to put in another lane in each direction.

Thorvig then discussed three development projects: the industrial park off 35W; development at Lexington Avenue and 125th for a new grocery store and other retail/restaurant uses, as well as potentially a fire station; and the project along 105th, which has been a focus of the city for the better part of ten years.

Regarding the 105th project, Blaine wants to provide experiential and retail opportunities for residents and those who come to the National Sports Center. A new Scheels store is starting construction this week and will open in the spring of 2028. There will be a stadium that will be home to a minor league baseball team and also will host year-round events. A full-service seven-story hotel is also planned and could be beneficial to the airport.



Member Reinert asked if the baseball team's name could be shared yet.

Thorvig could not yet share the name, but he indicated the team will be in the American Association, which has teams around the Midwest. He said the games will be exciting and affordable and a great family activity in the summer months.

Member Daml inquired about potential effects on the airport during baseball games and if temporary flight restrictions (TFRs) could impact flight activity. She said that could be a big deal for the airport. She explained what TFRs are.

Thorvig said he does not know the answer to that at the moment.

Member Daml inquired as to who might be a better person to ask.

Anderson did not believe that games in a stadium of the size being planned would trigger a TFR, but he said he would look into that further to make sure that was the case.

Thorvig explained it is a smaller stadium with about 3,500 seats, much smaller than CHS Field. He discussed further plans for Blaine in the next three to five years. He highlighted Asia Village, a new development in Northtown Mall that has many food and retail options, reinvigorating the space and attracting new customers to the area. He thanked the Commission and said he would be happy to answer any questions.

John Krack said it probably goes without saying that MAC is very on top of development and issues affecting their airports and that he would expect they would be good partners to work with over the long term to identify business targets and aviation opportunities and impacts.

Thorvig wondered from a business standpoint how best the business and aviation communities can work together.

Member Ford said it is important that the airport is part of the development discussion and process.

Member Daml agreed, noting businesses being ill-informed about the airport and lacking understanding could lead to pressure down the line to change operations or shut down.

Thorvig said he is unaware of any complaints about the airport coming from businesses. He noted that, personally, he loves to see the planes fly over, although he knows some residents complain.



Co-Chair Erkel thanked **Thorvig** for a great presentation and said that she would take the information back to her community. She encouraged others to do so as well.

5.3 Airport Manager Update

- **Construction**
- **Special Olympics**
- **Fly Neighborly Update**

Co-Chair Erkel stated that **Phil Tiedeman**, Airport Manager, was not present but had prepared slides for MAC staff to present.

Anderson said **Tiedeman** is on vacation and that **David Lafferty**, Community Relations Assistant Manager, would give updates on airport construction.

Lafferty reviewed 2026 construction plans, including the Rice Creek Watershed District ditch cleanout (completed March 2026); a MnDOT Aeronautics AWOS replacement project (work planned throughout 2026); gate controller replacement (fall 2026); Runway 9/27 edge lighting and PAPI replacement (November 2026 through July 2027); electrical vault building construction (October 2026); fence improvements (fall 2026); and crew quarter design and construction (fall 2026 through 2027). He gave further details about the plans and locations of the projects.

Member Daml asked about the precise location of the planned electrical vault building in relation to the tower and wash pad.

Anderson and **Gerads** confirmed it would not affect the wash pad.

Member Daml said it must not be a big building to be in that location.

Anderson believed that to be true and indicated he would ask **Tiedeman** to get a better diagram to illustrate the exact location of the building.

Member Daml mentioned that improvements to the crew quarters are needed.

Anderson agreed and stated they are excited to provide comfortable and functional space for staff, especially during overnights.

He then discussed the Special Olympics being hosted in the Twin Cities this month. As part of that, MAC is participating in a robust airlift bringing in over 3,000 athletes from across the country.



Textron Aviation is organizing the operation. The aircraft are being donated by private owners. The call sign will be “dove,” with the major arrival operation on June 19. Downtown St. Paul Airport (STP) is the primary arrival location. There will be much heavier than normal airspace use. Athletes will compete at the University of Minnesota as well as the National Sports Center, and Anoka County-Blaine Airport will be a backup airport if weather or other unanticipated complications arise. The primary traffic should be south of the metro. MAC is happy to be a part of this event and is looking forward to welcoming the athletes.

Member Daml asked how airport users are being notified. Flight schools should also be informed.

Anderson stated MAC is presenting to advisory groups and getting the word out. They ask that pilots avoid STP if possible on the arrival and departure days. He said 117 private jets were expected on June 19, with a landing approximately every three minutes. MAC will continue to communicate to pilots and stakeholders to inform them of the event.

Member Daml asked about dropoff procedures for the athletes.

Anderson described the plans for offloading passengers onto buses for transportation to sports facilities and housing. He said June 27, the main departure day, is not expected to be as congested as the arrival day.

He then gave an update on the Fly Neighborly program. MAC is working on outreach materials for Anoka County-Blaine Airport to help them easily disseminate the information to their pilot community and flight schools and has developed a digital guide. He noted that, because of turnover of instructors and students, outreach can be missed without frequent contact, so they hope the digital guide can be included in onboarding and be provided as a pilot resource to increase awareness and participation. They are working to roll out the digital guide this summer and hope to finalize the project in September. There are no changes to the Fly Neighborly guide, but work is being done to add animation and interactive elements in the digital format.

He concluded the airport update unless there were questions, and there were none at this time.

6. Members: Around the Room

Co-Chair Erkel opened a discussion for community events and announcements. She announced East Bethel’s Booster Day to be held July 18 and noted they need cars for the car show.

Member Reinert said Anoka County is considering expansion of its contract with Flock, a security surveillance company, to include camera drones. If approved, the proposal would include a drone



station in Anoka County that could include 12,000 flights per year. He discussed details of the program, but was unsure if it would be implemented.

Member Daml inquired as to the purpose of the drone camera surveillance.

Member Reinert indicated its use would be primarily for law enforcement.

Member Daml asked if the public was being informed and would have an opportunity to weigh in.

Member Reinert said he wrote an article to help disseminate the information.

There were no further member comments or announcements at this time.

Co-Chair Erkel asked MAC staff about any upcoming airport festivals.

Ross listed many summer events at MAC airports, including a Father's Day Fly-in Breakfast at Crystal Airport on June 21, an EAA Fly-in/Drive-in Breakfast at Anoka County-Blaine Airport on June 27, a Pan-O-Prog Lions Fly-In Breakfast at Airlake Airport on July 5, AirFair at Flying Cloud Airport on July 11, an EAA Fly-in Breakfast at Lake Elmo Airport on August 8, and Girls in Aviation Day at Flying Cloud Airport on September 19. She noted these events and more are listed on the website at <https://metroairports.org/events>.

Member Ford inquired about the fire protection plan for the airport and whether there had been training performed for emergency landings with the fire department.

Gerads said there is an ongoing relationship with the fire department and that the airport manager has regular contact with them. There has been training in the past. She was uncertain of exact plans for any future training.

Member Ford said he wanted information about what plan is in place for emergency management designed specifically around the airport.

Ross stated there is a memorandum of understanding with area law enforcement for response to the airport that outlines their response plan in the event of an emergency.

Co-Chair Erkel said there have been joint exercises with law enforcement and that they have plans and protocols in place for how events are handled.



Michael Rygg, Blaine Police Captain, added that as part of their field training program they go through the procedures in place for airport emergencies. Officers and firefighters are trained on staging areas, communication channels, and other safety protocols regarding airport response. He indicated that Chief Retka has maintained a plan in place for staging, response, HAZMAT concerns, etc., and that he communicates with the fire department as well.

Krack introduced himself and his work with the Reliever Airports Advisory Council and the Anoka County Aviation Association. He informed the Commission that EAA is putting together a Learn to Fly program to walk the public through the process of getting a pilot's license and inform them of opportunities in the aviation community. The program was presented recently at the airport. They are working through logistics of publicizing, but he expects more information will be forthcoming.

There were no further updates or announcements at this time, and **Co-Chair Erkel** thanked everyone for their participation.

7. Review 2026 Meeting Dates: *September 2 and December 2, 2026*

Co-Chair Erkel reviewed the remaining meeting dates for 2026: September 2 and December 2. It was confirmed that both meetings will be at 4 p.m. at Blaine City Hall.

8. Closing Remarks

Co-Chair Erkel thanked everyone for their attendance and said it was a very informative meeting.

Adjourn

Co-Chair Erkel adjourned the meeting at 5:21 p.m.

