

Saint Paul Downtown Airport



DAAC

St. Paul Downtown Airport Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.
644 Bayfield Street, St. Paul, MN 55107
St. Paul Downtown Airport (STP) Terminal Building

Call to Order

A regularly scheduled meeting of the St. Paul Downtown Airport Advisory Council (DAAC) was held Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at the STP Terminal Building. In attendance were:

Representatives: J. Carroll, St. Paul Flight Center; J. Fure, District 17; L. Gregg, Best Jets (via Teams); J. Gadiant, National Guard; L. Hinsperger (via Teams); R. Horkey, District 5 (via Teams); A. Jerve, St. Paul (via Teams); P. Martineau, At-Large Airport User; T. Rehkamp, Hubbard; B. Weiss, Hubbard (Alternate);

MAC Staff: R. Anderson; K. Gerads; D. Lafferty; J. Lewis; B. Peterson; M. Ross; K. Skogquist;

Other: M. Brito, S. Hageman; R. Ziegler

1. Introductions & Roll Call

Chair Fure called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. and verified with the recording secretary that a quorum was established. There were 20 participants: 16 in person and 4 via Teams.

2. Consent Items

a. Approval of Meeting Minutes: April 15, 2025; May 20, 2025; September 16, 2025

b. Q1 2026 Aircraft Noise Complaints and Operations Summary

Chair Fure explained that the consent agenda items were outlined in the packet and would be voted on together. He asked if there were comments, questions, or requested changes to any of the items. There were none at this time.

Representative Rehkamp motioned and Representative Gadiant seconded to approve the consent agenda items. There was a call for any further discussion, and there was none. A vote was taken. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Approved 10-20-2026

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3. Business Items

a. Chair and Vice Chair Elections

Chair Fure explained the election procedure. He indicated that duties of the Chair were displayed on the screen and in the meeting packet. He asked for nominations for Chair.

Representative Rehkamp nominated Chair Fure. Chair Fure accepted the nomination and asked if there were any other nominations. There were none. A vote was taken, and Chair Fure was elected as Chair by unanimous vote.

Chair Fure asked for nominations for Vice Chair, and duties of the Vice Chair were displayed on the screen and included in the meeting packet.

Representative Rehkamp nominated Vice Chair Gregg. Chair Fure asked if Vice Chair Gregg would accept the nomination, and he did. Chair Fure asked if there were any other nominations. There were none. A vote was taken, and Vice Chair Gregg was elected as Vice Chair by unanimous vote.

b. Approval of 2026-2027 Work Plan

Chair Fure introduced the topic of the Work Plan and explained voting procedures. The proposed Work Plan was displayed on the screen, and the floor was opened for questions, comments, or modifications. There was no further discussion at this time.

Representative Rehkamp motioned and Representative Martineau seconded to approve the 2026-2027 Work Plan. There was a call for any further discussion.

Representative Rehkamp commented that the Work Plan was in line with the history and purpose of the group.

Chair Fure inquired as to any further discussion, and there was none at this time.

Chair Fure called for a vote, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

4. Information Items

a. STP Long-term Plan Update

Chair Fure introduced **Michele Ross**, Director of Stakeholder Engagement, to present.

Ross introduced herself and briefly reviewed the process and history of the long-term plan update. She noted that all Representatives were invited to participate as Stakeholder Advisory Panel (SAP) members and acknowledged that there had been some issues with notification. She thanked all those who participated in the open house. She discussed the



creation of the long-term plan, which kicked off last year, when they worked to identify issues, speak with tenants, review projections for future operations and needs, and gather information for a 2045 forecast which requires FAA approval and is now complete.

Ross noted that as information is gathered, potential alternatives can be evaluated for airport needs related to development and investment. Within the SAP and at the public open house, alternatives were reviewed, including shortening the primary runway, closing crosswind and secondary runways, and development of out-of-hangar space. They are working to develop a preferred alternative. The next steps will be approval by the MAC board of the draft plan and then a period for public comment, a public open house, and then a finalized plan to go to the Metropolitan Council. Stakeholders have expressed that shortening of the primary runway is a big concern, and MAC is working with the FAA to find alternatives and minimize any primary runway reduction if possible. They will continue to work through the process and update the SAP as soon as more information is available.

Representative Weiss inquired as to the rationale for shortening of the primary runway.

Ross explained that the current runway runs into the river Runway Safety Area (RSA) zone, which cannot be in a river area where aircraft are not protected, as that is against FAA guidelines. MAC continues to work to develop bids and opportunities for plan modifications on this if possible and noted they have received good feedback from tenants on this issue.

Representative Weiss asked what the rationale is for eliminating the safety crosswind runway.

Ross explained that the FAA only supports runways with a certain number of operations and that, when runways are used infrequently, they review opportunities to close them to avoid FAA non-support and to better address other facility needs. Closure of lesser-used runways can create possibility for hangar development, allow for incorporation of a full parallel taxiway, or other potential benefits. She indicated that closing both runways was unlikely, but that they are looking at all options to best serve the airport and its stakeholders.

Representative Gadiant asked how potential construction or servicing on 1432 could be impacted if 1331 was not an option in the future, noting recent construction, and asked regarding the lifespan of runway pavement.

Blaine Peterson, Airport Manager, said runways have an approximate 20-year minimum lifespan, although it can last much longer.

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Ross agreed that looking at future construction and maintenance is a factor when looking at potential runway closures.

Chair Fure asked if there were further comments or questions, and there were none.

b. Airport Manager Update

Mr. Peterson provided updates on upcoming construction, including the CBP building, airport road fencing, Taxiway B edge lighting, and A2 and A3 taxiway reconstruction. He reviewed the upcoming work, including expected timelines for the projects. Regarding the CBP building, he noted that utility connections are being made, wall and roof work are continuing, and that the hope is to open the building in late summer or fall. He discussed the fence along the airport road on which they are replacing the foundational wall and fence above. He said this will be done in the August/September time frame.

Taxiway B edge lighting will be worked on in two phases in August and September, with each phase being about ten working days. Currently there are sections that do not have edge lighting and others that have older edge lighting, all which will be updated with new LED lights. He noted that more information would be coming in newsletters regarding the project. Construction on Taxiways A2 and A3 are planned to occur together. They are working to finalize the schedule and bids, and more news will be provided after the preconstruction meeting and as the schedule is codified.

Chair Fure asked if there were any questions regarding the construction plans.

Representative Carroll asked if there were any expected closures related to the fence project.

Peterson stated they do not anticipate any closures and that, if any did occur, they would expect them to be short.

Representative Martineau inquired as to the drilling aspect of the CBP building project.

Peterson said that the heating of the building is geothermal and that the drilling was related to that. He indicated that, being so close to the river, it took a while to navigate the science of proper drilling in the area.

Representative Martineau asked how deep the drilling was.

Peterson thought approximately 40 feet, but was not sure what that number represented and thought that might be the location where an artisanal well was hit and not total depth. He said he would look into that and find the answer.



Peterson then discussed plans for the Special Olympics arrivals and departures. The arrival date is June 19, where 122 planes will bring in approximately 500 athletes. This will be roughly an operation every 3 minutes between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., so they are urging tenants to consider this as they plan operations. Departures will occur June 27. He added that operations will be focused on the east side of 1432 and that Textron Aviation is the corporate sponsor who will be handling the traffic along with Signature Aviation on the Momentum ramp. He indicated that more information would be coming in the newsletter.

Representative Martineau asked about the transport plans for the athletes once at the airport and who would be handling that.

Ross said that Textron is arranging buses for ground transportation.

Representative Martineau inquired if such activity would occur out of Gate J.

Peterson indicated that the aircraft will be shut down on the Momentum apron and that athletes will get out and go through the hangar and out that gate to buses. He stated that there would be special IDs and passes given out to those who need to be in that area and that it would be blocked off for the general public. He noted that airlines like Delta, United, and American donated volunteers to help for arrival and departure days.

Chair Fure asked if there were any further questions, and there were none.

c. Annual STP Sound Study Plan (2026)

Ryan Anderson, Community Relations Manager, introduced himself and reviewed plans for the annual STP Sound Study. He explained that the study looks at a consecutive seven-day period each year using the FAA's latest noise model. The modeling is very accurate and flexible and avoids any issues with equipment or weather. Last year the study was done in May to avoid construction impacts, but MAC has proposed conducting the 2026 study in August, which is historically when the study has been done. Keeping the timing similar to prior years maximizes consistency in the results from year to year. The study is planned to occur August 16 through 22. Results from the study will be presented at the October meeting.

Chair Fure asked if there were any questions, and there were none.

d. Tenant Update

Chair Fure opened the discussion and asked if any tenant members had updates or questions.



Representative Martineau inquired on behalf of Sean Hageman if the long-term plan topic regarding hangar development anticipated hangars being built by private parties or MAC hangar development.

Ross noted that the long-term plan is not specific to that level but looks at the potential needs of airport users in the future. She asked if **Kelly Gerads**, Direct of Reliever Airports, or **Peterson** had further input.

Gerads briefly introduced herself and her role. She said MAC has never been in the business of developing hangars and that she does not see that changing in the future.

Sean Hageman introduced himself as an airport tenant and inquired regarding state funds available for hangar development for airports but not private individuals. He added hangar development and rental could be a good source of revenue for the airport as hangar space is limited and can be hard to come by.

Gerads stated that MAC is aware of the state loan program available for airport sponsors and that anything could happen in the future. She said she is uncertain of what the demand is at Minnesota airports but that it is something that could be looked at.

Chair Fure asked if that topic would be addressed in the long-term plan or a different process.

Ross said that the long-term plan provides more of an overall structure and does not include specifics on the design of future projects. She noted that shorter or more medium-term needs are assessed and designed during other processes.

Chair Fure asked if it is something that the Council could consider advocating for or opposing or whether or not it is not something that they could influence.

Gerads indicated it would be a business decision outside of the long-term plan as part of a separate process.

Representative Martineau recalled previous efforts to privately develop hangars but that there were lending issues with areas in the floodplain. With the long-term plan, maybe they could avoid that circumstance and open some doors to hangar development.

Representative Rehkamp asked what the current hangar vacancy rate is.

Peterson said it is not high, but that there is vacant land at the airport, although not a lot.

Gerads stated there are currently vacant hangar spaces controlled by tenants but none controlled by MAC. She added that there is not a long waiting list for construction of hangars.

Representative Carroll remarked that he had talked to Dillon Paul at Signature who said they have the ability to develop more hangars but no market as of yet. They have discussed possible development in the event of a runway closure.

Peterson noted this was a good segue for **Carroll** to introduce himself and give further information on the St. Paul Flight Center.

Representative Carroll introduced himself and his history with St. Paul Flight Center (SPFC). He explained that they are a full-service FBO who has been at the St. Paul Downtown Airport for 35 to 40 years. He discussed their services and capabilities. He is excited for the opportunity to work as general manager of the FBO and to see how they can grow. He stated that St. Paul Downtown Airport has a great history, great base tenants, and that he anticipates a lot of good yet to come at the airport.

He talked about an upcoming event SPFC will be hosting the Flying 99s for a fly-in on May 30. There will be an open house with discovery flights. The open house will be at the 300 hangar, and they expect approximately five aircraft to be present.

Jennifer Lewis, Community Relations Coordinator, introduced herself and gave further information regarding the North Central Section of the Flying 99s and the upcoming event, which has a goal of introducing adult women to aviation. She stated the kickoff event will be hosted by SPFC because they wanted a partner who could help in giving people a positive experience with a great facility and supportive environment.

Carroll added that there will be refreshments, airport tours, and an education table with information about MAC, the 99s, and SPFC. He has recently become a pilot and said he enjoys talking to people about aviation and the pilot training process.

Peterson gave kudos to SPFC and the Flying 99s for sharing their passion for aviation.

Chair Fure asked if there were any further tenant updates, and there were none at this time.

5. Public Comment Period

Chair Fure opened the public comment period and reviewed procedures for public comment.

Miguel Brito with the West Side Community Organization (WSCO) introduced himself and

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indicated he had a number of questions. He asked what happens with the noise studies, what the past studies have shown, and if he could obtain copies of the last couple studies. He also asked when the last study was done regarding air pollution at the airport. He inquired regarding how much the airport generates in tax revenue and what the airport property tax costs are, and he also asked how community members would go about joining the DAAC. He said he was hoping to learn more about the process and get involved and inquired how best to get his questions answered.

Chair Fure asked **Anderson** to address the inquiries.

Anderson thanked **Mr. Brito** for coming to the meeting and for his questions. He indicated that the noise studies are public and that he could direct him to where he could find those or email them to him directly. He explained that the studies are informational and conducted as a commitment of the airport with surrounding communities but that no specific action is taken in response to the studies. He did not know the dates of the last air pollution assessment, but said it was likely a federal or state project and that he could go back and find the most recent study to provide. Regarding tax revenue, he noted that the latest economic impact study is getting outdated and that they are looking to complete a revised one, so he could not give specific numbers regarding tax revenue generated to the local economy by the airport or the cost to residents.

Mr. Brito clarified that his question was what property tax the airport pays.

Anderson said they are a state corporation and public entity and therefore not subject to tax.

Gerads added that, although the airport itself does not pay property tax, each tenant at the airport does and that Ramsey County would be a good source for that information.

Vice Chair Gregg indicated his tax cost for airport fire service alone exceeded \$200,000.

Chair Fure asked if anyone had further comments to add. He explained the process to become part of DAAC and how WSCO could work to appoint a representative to the Council.

Lewis confirmed that understanding to be correct.

Mr. Brito said he would connect with **Anderson** regarding the studies and thanked everyone for their answers.

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Chair Fure made sure all **Brito's** questions were answered, thanked him for his participation, and inquired if there were any further public comments. There were none at this time.

6. Member Announcements

Chair Fure asked if any members present in person or online had announcements.

Mr. Hageman invited everyone to a hangar grand opening at Airlake on April 25. He indicated there would be Young Eagles flights, refreshments, hangar tours, and that all are welcome.

Chair Fure asked if there were any further announcements, and there were none at this time. He then reviewed the next scheduled meeting: October 20, 2026. He asked if anyone had anything else to discuss, and there was nothing further at this time.

7. Adjourn

Chair Fure adjourned the meeting at 3:46 p.m.

