

**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES
CITY OF INVER GROVE HEIGHTS**

City Council Chambers – 8150 Barbara Avenue
Thursday, September 25, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Goodman called the Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Sara Goodman (Chair)
Nick Ruiz (Vice-Chair)
Jon Wallerick
Marjorie Savage
Tracie Killion
Ted Trenzeluk
Nichole Boehmke

Commissioners Absent: Patti Mikulski
Kevin Sethre

Staff Present: Liz Kramer, Environmental Specialist

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Savage, Second by Ruiz, to Approve the Agenda as Published.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion Carried.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Minutes of the August 28, 2025, Environmental Advisory Commission Meeting.

Motion by Boehmke, Second by Trenzeluk, to Approve the Minutes as Published.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

5. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Metropolitan Airports Commission Noise Oversight Committee Update.

Michele Ross, Director of Stakeholder Engagement at the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC), presented updates on flight trends and the Noise Oversight Committee (NOC) work plan updates.

MAC Background Information

The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) is a public corporation that was created by Minnesota in 1943 to promote safe, efficient, and economical air commerce in the region. MAC also seeks to minimize environmental impact and noise hazards.

MAC is governed by a 15-member board, with a Chair and some Commissioners appointed by the Governor (Minneapolis and St. Paul Mayor's appoint one Commissioner each). Inver Grove Heights is in District H and is represented by Commissioner Yodit Bizen.

MAC owns and operates Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport (MSP) as well as six general aviation airports within a 35-mile radius of downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul.

MSP is the 18th busiest commercial airport in the U.S. based on passenger volume. It is a joint civil-military airport – as home to the Air Force Reserve Command's 934th Airlift Wing and the Minnesota Air National Guard's 133rd Airlift Wing.

MAC currently has over 800 employees and departments for Police, Fire, Emergency Dispatch, Building Inspection, Planning & Development, Maintenance, and Finance. MAC is funded by rents and fees paid by airport users, not by local income taxes or property taxes.

MSP Passengers and Operations Background Information

- 16 airlines (Delta's second largest hub)
- 9 provide international service
- Over 37 million passengers in 2024 (7% increase from 2023 -- 94% of pre-COVID total)
- 132 non-stop domestic destinations
- 35 non-stop international destinations (two new non-stop destinations, Rome and Copenhagen, were added in May 2025)

MSP Recent Facility and Airfield Improvements

- Terminal 1:
 - (2016 - 2025) Operational Improvements Program
 - Expansion and modernization of all levels in the pre-security areas of Terminal 1, including:
 - Larger security checkpoints
 - Centralized escalators
 - Additional exits
 - More efficient baggage claims areas
 - (2023 - 2025) Airport Modernization Program
 - Largest interior makeover of concourses since Terminal 1 opened in 1962
 - Updated flooring and lighting
- Terminal 2:
 - (2024 - 2027) North Expansion project will add 168,000 sq. ft. on the north end of Terminal 2, including:
 - Two new airline gates
 - More concession spaces
 - New restrooms
 - Additional support facilities for airlines and tenants
 - Future project: Terminal 2 South Expansion

MSP Recent Technology Changes and Recognitions

New customer relationship management tools are available:

- MSP Reserve: book spot in security line
- Reservable parking via app or website

New technology for expediting Customs/Border Patrol/Transportation Security Administration processes in use:

- Biometrics
- Facial Recognition

Accessibility Enhancement Accreditation (Airports Council International)

- New talk-to-text platform in use for gate announcements
- On-demand American Sign Language interpretation available
- Accessible restrooms

- Hidden Disabilities Program (sunflower lanyards)

Customer Satisfaction Award (J.D. Power)

- #1 in Customer Satisfaction for 2nd year in a row

Roles and Responsibilities of Aviation Stakeholders in Noise Oversight

- U.S. Congress
 - Creates laws regulating aviation entities (Federal Aviation Administration, FAA)
- Federal Aviation Administration
 - Regulates airports, pilots, and aircrafts
 - Air Traffic Control directs aircraft into and out of MSP
- Airlines
 - Operate flights based on demand
- Metropolitan Airports Commission
 - Maintains airport roads, runways, taxiways, airport buildings, etc.
 - Works with airlines and neighboring communities to minimize negative impacts
 - MSP Noise Oversight Committee (established 2002)
 - Forum for discussion and making recommendations to the MAC Board
 - Consists of:
 - 6 Community Representatives
 - Seven smaller cities, including Inver Grove Heights, are represented by a single At-Large member
 - Current At-Large representative: Burnsville Public Works Director Mark Ray
 - 6 Airline Industry Representatives
 - Bimonthly meetings (Third Wednesday, 1:30 p.m.)
 - Upcoming listening session: October 22, 6:00 p.m.
 - Opportunity for the public to provide input on the 2026 annual work plan

The Noise Oversight Committee is charged with identifying MSP noise issues, providing policy recommendations to MAC regarding airport noise issues, and monitoring compliance with established noise policy.

MSP Operations Updates

Operations peaked at MSP in 2004 and 2005 and slightly declined after carrier mergers, then held steady until the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In recent years, operations have increased, though not yet to 2019 levels.

Most overflights of the Inver Grove Heights area occur on the south parallel runway (30L arrivals, 12R departures). Last year, when the north parallel runway was closed, traffic was on the south parallel runway higher than normal; this year, it has been lower overall (partially due to a construction-related closure).

There has been a slight decrease in the number of complaints from Inver Grove Heights residents in 2025 compared to 2024, probably partially due to the temporary closure of the south parallel runway. 20 households in Inver Grove Heights submitted 5,044 complaints. Most of the complaints (86%) came from two households.

Commissioner Wallerick clarified that one household is responsible for 78% of the 5,044 complaints. Ms. Ross confirmed that.

Commissioner Wallerick inquired as to how complaints can be submitted. Ms. Ross stated that they can be submitted online, via phone, and via email. People can request to be contacted about their complaint. If people contact EAC Commissioners with noise complaints, MAC is happy to connect with them and provide information.

Commissioner Wallerick inquired about a potential increase in long-term traffic due to the two new gates in Terminal 2. Ms. Ross stated that accommodating anticipated growth was part of MAC's long-term planning.

Commissioner Killion questioned whether repeated complaints negatively affect home valuation. Ms. Ross stated that she was not aware of repeated complaints impacting home valuation. Complaint information is kept private, but there is an annual Noise Contour Report as part of MAC's noise mitigation program (which determines households that are eligible for sound insulation). There is no app for logging complaints, but the browser-based Flight Tracker can be used to submit a complaint.

Commissioner Killion commented that military planes are louder than commercial flights and asked about noise reduction efforts. Ms. Ross stated that military planes recently underwent a retrofit of propeller blades (four-blade to eight-blade), which reduced cockpit noise by over 20 decibels. Military planes tend to fly lower and fly in pairs, so they are more noticeable.

Commissioner Killion inquired if the military planes tend to use one runway over the others. Ms. Ross stated that military planes, like commercial planes, are assigned runways by Air Traffic Control based on wind and weather conditions and destination.

Commissioner Ruiz stated that he lived close to the south parallel runway and asked about efforts to work with the two households that submitted the majority of the complaints. Where he lives, there is a regularly scheduled 4:30 a.m. arrival that is loud enough to sometimes wake him up. Ms. Ross stated that a metric called day/night average sound level (DNL) is used to determine eligibility for sound mitigation. MAC's program provides mitigation at and above the 60 day/night average sound level, which exceeds the federal requirement of 65. Any home with 60 DNL or higher for 3 consecutive years might be eligible for additional sound mitigation. Mitigation is not provided in response to complaints. Commissioner Ruiz suggested that with such a high percentage of complaints coming from one household, there might be something else going on.

Ms. Ross stated that an aircraft uses a narrow path to approach the runway, so for some residents, the repetitiveness of the noise is an issue. Aircraft use a 3% glide path when arriving; there is no regulation on aircraft altitude for departure/takeoff.

Commissioner Savage expressed appreciation for the presentation and asked whether there was an online attendance option for the October listening session and inquired as to how it was advertised.

Ms. Ross stated that people could join the listening session virtually via Microsoft Teams. The event has been advertised via an opt-in email newsletter.

Commissioner Trenzeluk inquired as to what the complaints were about. Ms. Ross stated that she did not have specific data on the specifics of the complaints but could look; complainants can indicate whether it is the number, time, or type of aircraft that is causing their concern and is correlated to flight data to match them to specific planes.

Commissioner Trenzeluk stated that the noise level at his house has significantly decreased over the 30 years he has lived there and expressed appreciation for that and inquired about the second largest air carrier (after Delta). Ms. Ross stated that it is Sun Country.

Commissioner Trenzeluk inquired about potential future carriers at MSP. Ms. Ross stated that she was not aware of any firm plans.

Commissioner Trenzeluk inquired about issues with congestion at the arrivals level of MSP. Ms. Ross suggested several possibilities for avoiding traffic at the arrivals level: using the Silver Ramp parking area, picking up people from the departures level, or using the cellphone waiting lot. It is important to check the flight arrival time in advance to minimize waiting time at the airport.

Commissioner Boehmke questioned if the sound mitigation efforts have been effective. Ms. Ross stated that the mitigation program has had a very high satisfaction rate in past surveys. Some areas received 5-decibel reduction packages; other past work resulted in 20-decibel reductions. MAC has also acquired some homes built in high-noise contour areas. To be eligible, homes need to have been built before 2007.

Commissioner Boehmke inquired as to whether it was possible to discern whether complaints were due to South St. Paul airport flights versus MSP flights. Ms. Ross stated that the correlation system can determine the best possible match. It is rare for complaints to concern aircraft coming in or out of South St. Paul. Complaints do sometimes come in about helicopters; regardless of the source, NOC tries to help people understand the source of their concern.

Commissioner Killion inquired about eligibility for the mitigation program. Ms. Ross stated that the home must be older than 2007 and located in a city that is part of the consent decree (Minneapolis, Eagan, Richfield, etc.). When the noise contour applies to a different city, that city can then decide if they want to participate in the consent decree.

Commissioner Wallerick inquired if any areas of Inver Grove Heights are in the noise contour areas. Ms. Ross stated that there are currently none.

Environmental Specialist Kramer questioned whether the distribution of complaints was typical. Ms. Ross stated that it is a consistent pattern; the top 10 households that file complaints make up about 60% of the complaints for MSP and other airports.

Ms. Ross also introduced Ryan Anderson, Technical Advisor for NOC and Manager of Community Relations at MAC, as a contact person.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

7. COMMISSIONER AND STAFF COMMENTS

Commissioner Killion asked about the scheduling of a Work Session.

Environmental Specialist Kramer stated that a Work Session would be scheduled shortly.

Commissioner Trenzeluk reminded the EAC that airport noise falls within the purview of the EAC per the City charter.

Commissioner Wallerick commented that West St. Paul has a free tree program and recommended that the City investigate whether funds are available to offer that for IGH residents.

Environmental Specialist Kramer thanked the attendees of the Commissioner Appreciation Dinner. The Annual Clean-Up Day is coming up on September 27th from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Various items will be collected for a fee in the Public Works Facility parking lot (appliances, batteries, carpet/padding, electronics,

exercise equipment, furniture, light bulbs, mattresses, hoses, propane tanks, scrap metal, heavy-duty tires, etc.). Certain items will be free to drop off (clothing, accessories, shoes, textiles in good condition; bicycles; light-duty tires without rims, etc.) other items have a fee. Construction/demolition debris and household hazardous waste will not be accepted. There will also be free confidential paper shredding in the City Hall parking lot. The website ighmn.gov/recycle has more details on the recycling of various items.

8. ADJOURN

Motion by Savage, Second by Ruiz, to adjourn the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Will Clashe, Recording Secretary