



Legislative Committee of the Whole Agenda

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

November 4, 2025 - 10 a.m.

Council Chambers - Courthouse Room 300

ROLL CALL

1. **Agenda of November 4, 2025 is Presented for Approval** [2025-458](#)
Sponsors: County Manager's Office
Approve the agenda of November 4, 2025.
2. **Minutes from November 5, 2024 are Presented for Approval** [2025-459](#)
Sponsors: County Manager's Office
Approve the November 5, 2024 Minutes.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

3. **2026 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform** [2025-444](#)
Sponsors: County Manager's Office
 1. Approve the 2026 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform and recommend its submittal to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.
 2. Authorize Ramsey County representatives to work with members of the State Legislature and other interested parties to promote legislation reflective of the positions contained in the platform.
4. **2026 Ramsey County Federal Legislative Platform** [2025-445](#)
Sponsors: County Manager's Office
 1. Approve the 2026 Ramsey County Federal Legislative Platform and recommend its submittal to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.
 2. Authorize Ramsey County representatives to work with members of the U.S. Congress and other interested parties to promote legislation reflective of the positions contained in the platform.

ADJOURNMENT



Legislative Committee of the Whole

Request for Board Action

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102
651-266-9200

Item Number: 2025-458

Meeting Date: 11/4/2025

Sponsor: County Manager's Office

Title

Agenda of November 4, 2025 is Presented for Approval

Recommendation

Approve the agenda of November 4, 2025.

Legislative Committee of the Whole

Request for Board Action

Item Number: 2025-459

Meeting Date: 11/4/2025

Sponsor: County Manager's Office

Title

Minutes from November 5, 2024 are Presented for Approval

Recommendation

Approve the November 5, 2024 Minutes.

Attachments

1. November 5, 2024 Minutes.

Legislative Committee of the Whole Minutes

November 5, 2024 - 10 a.m.

Council Chambers - Courthouse Room 300

The Ramsey County Legislative Committee of the Whole met in regular session at 10:34 a.m. with the following members present: Frethem, McGuire, Reinhardt, Xiong and Chair Moran. Commissioner Ortega joined the board meeting remotely pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 13D.02, Subdivision 1(b). Also present were Ling Becker, County Manager.

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Ortega missed Roll Call, approval of the November 05, 2024 Agenda and approval of the November 14, 2023 minutes. He arrived at 10:41 a.m. and was present for the remainder of the meeting.

Present Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

1. Agenda of November 5, 2024 is Presented for Approval [2024-517](#)

Sponsors: County Manager's Office

Approve the agenda of November 5, 2024.

Motion by Moran, seconded by Frethem. Motion passed.

Aye: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

2. Minutes from November 14, 2023 are Presented for Approval [2024-516](#)

Sponsors: County Manager's Office

Approve the November 14, 2023 Minutes.

Motion by Xiong, seconded by Frethem. Motion passed.

Aye: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

3. 2025 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform [2024-486](#)

Sponsors: Policy & Planning

1. Approve the 2025 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform.
2. Authorize Ramsey County representatives to work with members of the Legislature and other interested parties to promote legislation reflective of the positions contained in the platform.

Motion by Reinhardt, seconded by Xiong. Motion passed.

Aye: Frethem, McGuire, Moran, Ortega, Reinhardt, and Xiong

4. 2025 Ramsey County Federal Legislative Platform [2024-488](#)

Sponsors: Policy & Planning

1. Approve the 2025 Ramsey County Federal Legislative Platform.
2. Authorize Ramsey County representatives to work with members of Congress and other interested parties to promote legislation reflective of the positions contained in the platform.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Moran declared the meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Legislative Committee of the Whole

Request for Board Action

Item Number: 2025-444

Meeting Date: 11/4/2025

Sponsor: County Manager's Office

Title

2026 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform

Recommendation

1. Approve the 2026 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform and recommend its submittal to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.
2. Authorize Ramsey County representatives to work with members of the State Legislature and other interested parties to promote legislation reflective of the positions contained in the platform.

Background and Rationale

On October 21, 2025, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners held a second workshop on the 2026 State and Federal Legislative Platforms. Government Relations staff presented an analysis of the upcoming state legislative session as well as proposed draft platform items for discussion by the members of the board.

In preparation for the review of the proposed platform by the Legislative Committee of the Whole, Government Relations staff have included in the latest draft suggested changes from the commissioners and further input from departmental and organizational leadership. The 2026 State Legislative Platform draft includes Ramsey County policy and funding priorities, bonding proposals and a statement of support for platforms of named organizations.

The Legislative Committee of the Whole reviews the draft 2026 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform and recommends its submittal to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners is scheduled to vote on final approval on both the state and federal legislative platforms on November 18, 2025.

County Goals (Check those advanced by Action)

☒ Well-being ☒ Prosperity ☒ Opportunity ☒ Accountability

Racial Equity Impact

Members of the Legislative Platform Advisory Teams, as well as Ramsey County leaders, considered the racial equity impacts of proposed legislative priorities as part of the input and review process. Most of the proposed items have direct impacts on racial equity, particularly those items that provide increased access to services or benefits specifically targeted to low-income individuals, families or communities, which disproportionately include more people of color and American Indians. These services or opportunities include improved access to health care, family support services, and stable housing. These efforts are reflected in the proposed top legislative priorities of the platform draft, which include measures to facilitate implementation of Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act, establishing a statewide homelessness funding program, modernization of the State's Health and Human Services systems, improvements in services to treat mental health and substance abuse, and improvements to public safety.

Community Participation Level and Impact

Government Relations has met with appropriate Ramsey County advisory committees to share the platform

development process and to gather input for the draft platform. Additionally, Government Relations continually engages with key stakeholder organizations and advocacy groups in the community. Staff will also hold Ramsey County legislative delegation meetings before the start of the 2026 Session to hear from legislators regarding issues of importance to Ramsey County communities.

☒ Inform ☒ Consult ☐ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

Fiscal Impact

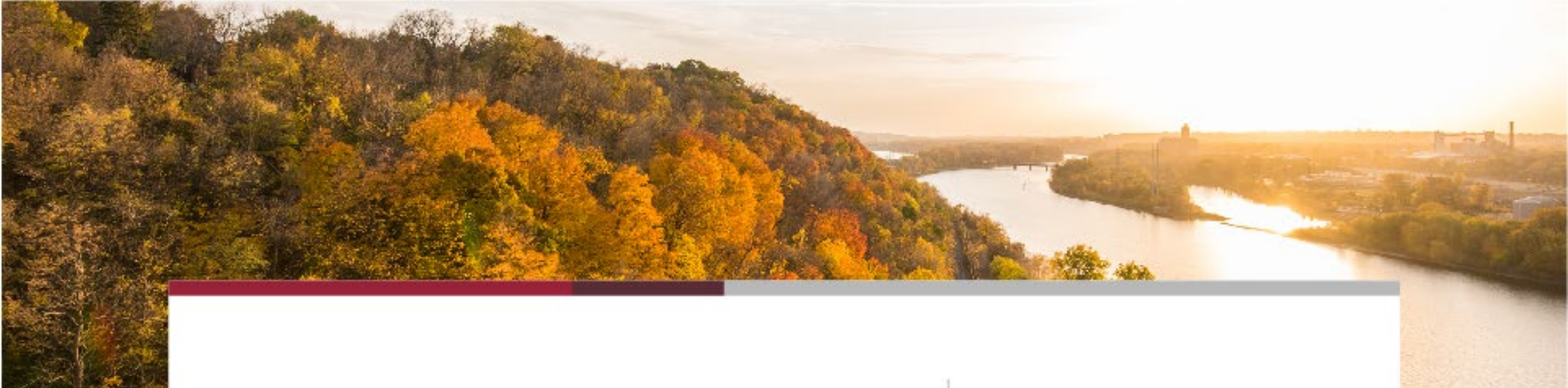
While 2026 is not a state budget year, some positions in the state platform may have financial implications that would require state and/or county appropriations if legislation were enacted. When there are implications for the current budget, necessary budget adjustments can be processed in accordance with administrative code and relevant board authorities; or through changes to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), depending on the specifics of the funding change.

Last Previous Action

None.

Attachments

1. Presentation
2. Draft 2026 State Legislative Platform



Proposed 2026 Legislative Platform Priorities

Legislative Committee of the Whole
November 4, 2025



Goals of This Presentation

The Legislative Committee of the Whole is requested to:

- Review and provide final input on draft 2026 state and federal legislative platforms.
- Vote to move draft platforms to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners for final approval on November 18.

Recap from October 21 Board Workshop

- Presented draft state legislative priorities and provided an overview of possible federal platform priorities.
- After the workshop, a follow-up memo provided more detail on proposed 2026 advocacy strategy (from board workshop slides) and federal platform (which we will discuss in more detail today).

Active Advocacy: Responding to Unprecedented Shifts

- NACo identified unprecedented shifts impacting local governments.
- The stakes have never been higher—we need new approaches and recalibrated responses that balance evolving responsibilities.
- Persistent property tax pressure.
- Our path forward:
 - Agility in adapting to changing conditions.
 - Opportunities to take ownership and to participate in emerging and urgent conversations.
 - Laying the right foundation to be ready for *any and all solutions*.
 - Balancing relationships while preserving our fiscal health.

Ramsey County's Overarching Themes in 2026

No new unfunded mandates.

Protect counties from further cuts.

Counties must be at the table for any service delivery change.

Reduce reliance on property tax.

The background of the slide is a scenic photograph. On the left, there is a dense forest with trees showing autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and green. To the right, a wide river flows, reflecting the bright light of the sun, which is positioned low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare and a warm, golden glow across the entire scene. The sky is a pale blue with wispy white clouds.

Proposed 2026 Legislative Platforms

Capital Improvement Requests (Bonding Items)

Top priority	Bonding Requests
!	Park at RiversEdge (\$20 million)
!	Aldrich Arena (\$8.5 million)



Pursue Items

Pursue means Ramsey County takes the lead works with the bill sponsor to get the bill jacketed and introduced. Ramsey County may co-lead with another partner. The issue mainly affects only the County and/or no other entity is leading. Requires a substantial investment of time and resources from the County.

Top priority	Proposed Platform Item
!	Establish Capitol Complex County Host Program (CCCHP) , a program similar to Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) for Ramsey County as host of the Capitol Complex.
!	Amend MN Statute 383A to clean up human resources language; to raise small business contract threshold to \$500,000; and to postpone or eliminate expiration of Environmental Response Fund.
!	Seek funding extension for the Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act (MAAFPCWDA).
!	Establish a statewide homelessness funding program , to be funded in the 2028-29 budget, that would provide ongoing, separate funding for counties and providers.
	Adjust funding allocation formula for vulnerable adult protection to balance resources between screened-in cases and referral volume more equitably.

Leading Advocate Items

- Another county, coalition, or association is pursuing the bill or leading opposition.
- As a **Leading Advocate**, Ramsey County provides active advocacy efforts but is not the primary lead.

Top priority	Proposed Platform Item
!	Preserve current reimbursement method for MnCHOICES assessments , to ensure sufficient funding for Ramsey County’s MnCHOICES division budget and staffing.
!	Enhance efficiencies in Home & Community-Based Services , where program changes have increased administrative burden, increasing pressures on workforce and wait times for residents.
!	Modernize state human services systems to better serve residents and reduce counties’ administrative burden.
!	Preserve or increase formula-based transportation funding for Ramsey County.
	Increase access to secure mental health treatment options in the East Metro to better address residents’ complex behavioral health needs.
	Allow local governments to restrict guns on properties they own , especially buildings.
	Allow a portion of state housing and homelessness funds to be used for administrative costs.
	Repeal 2028 sunset of Local Homeless Prevention Aid

Support Items

- Include some top priorities, though the County will play a less active role in advancing them.
- Time and resources are invested in **Support** items on an as-needed or as-requested basis.

Top priority	Proposed Platform Item
!	Address the comprehensive substance abuse, mental and behavioral health needs of the community, including youth and those with acute and/or complex needs.
!	Enhance public safety and reduce gun violence
!	Support the Catalyzing Underutilized Buildings (CUB) Tax Credit to encourage redevelopment efforts and to increase housing stock.
!	Protect counties from increased costs resulting from federal changes to SNAP and MA
!	Move MAAFPCWDA case review responsibility to state
	Address racial disparities in healthcare quality, access and outcomes, especially those likely to result from recent federal legislative changes that will cause residents to lose access to healthcare.
	Classify residential addresses of elected officials and government officials as private government data.
	Transition the special property tax refund to a property tax credit that is automatically calculated and issued
	Increase state allocations to 40% of Operations & Maintenance costs for regional parks and trails.
	Support legislation aligning with Climate Equity Action Plan
	Allow recovery of costs of special elections for state and federal offices.
	Expand the responsibilities of Office of Broadband Development to include Digital Opportunity

Priorities Led by Ramsey County Attorney's Office

RCAO would take the lead on the following items, supported by Ramsey County Government Relations.

Proposed Platform Item
Remove automatic cost-of-living adjustments for maintenance and child support orders in favor of routine reviews, as required by federal regulations, enhancing fairness & improving compliance.
Require employers to report new hires of 1099 independent contractors to DHS , which will help increase child support payments and enhance the fairness of child support orders.
Increase funds in the state auto theft fund for advanced prevention and intervention efforts.

Summary of All Top Priorities

County Role	Top Priorities
Pursue	Bonding for Park at RiversEdge
	Bonding for Aldrich Arena
	Capitol Complex County Host Program (CCCHP) for Ramsey County
	Amendments to MN Statute 383A
	Seek funding extension for MAAFPCWDA.
	Establish a statewide homelessness funding program
Leading advocate	Preserve current reimbursement method for MnCHOICES assessments
	Enhance efficiencies in Home & Community-Based Services
	Modernize state human services systems
	Preserve or increase formula-based transportation funding for Ramsey County
Support	Address substance abuse, mental and behavioral health needs
	Enhance public safety and reduce gun violence
	Support the Catalyzing Underutilized Buildings (CUB) Tax Credit
	Protect counties from increased costs resulting from federal changes to SNAP and MA
	Move MAAFPCWDA case review responsibility to state

Federal Platform: Broad Approach

- Defend against funding cuts and identify bipartisan legislative opportunities that we can support.
- Preserve flexibility so Ramsey County can be agile in responding to events as they occur, guided by the legislative themes.

No new unfunded mandates.

Protect counties from further cuts.

Counties must be at the table for any service delivery change.

Reduce reliance on property tax.

Proposed Federal Platform Items

Issue Area	Proposed Platform Item
Health and Human Services	Support legislation that would delay the implementation of federal changes to SNAP and Medicaid.
	Support efforts to change rule and/or statute to allow streamlining of MnCHOICES reassessments.
Workforce	Support re-authorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and sustained or increased funding for critical program areas such as WIOA Youth.
Emergency Management	Support increased, sustained and accessible funding for emergency management grants that are vital to Ramsey County's work.
Homelessness Assistance	Support increased, sustained and accessible funding for the Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grants homelessness assistance programs, as well as legislation that would simplify the administration of these programs.
Affordable Housing	Support legislation reauthorizing and fully funding the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) to allow increased federal support for county community development initiatives, affordable housing and economic revitalization efforts.
	Support legislation to reauthorize the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, to allow program flexibility for improved housing creation and preservation, and to authorize increased federal funding assistance for affordable housing development.
	Support increased funding for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance such as Housing Choice Vouchers and other tenant-based vouchers, which provide critical assistance to low-income renters.

Next Steps

November 18

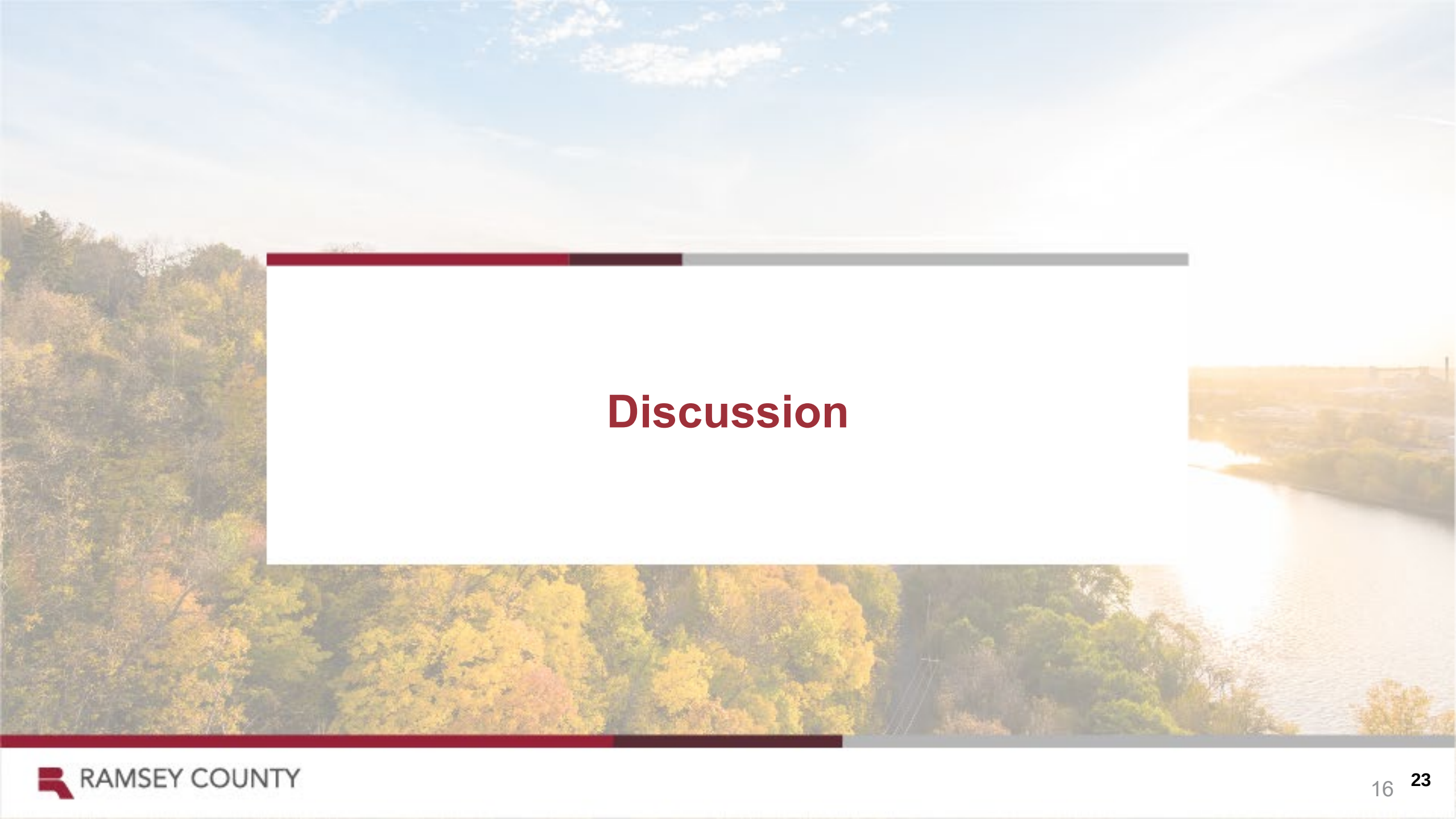
- County Board approves the state and federal platforms.

November – February

- Meetings with legislators and partners.
- Ramsey County Delegation Meeting (planned for December).
- Board presentation on Congressionally Directed Spending projects (January – February).

February 17

- 2026 Session begins.

The background of the slide features a scenic landscape. On the left, a dense forest of trees with yellow and orange autumn foliage covers a hillside. On the right, a wide river flows, reflecting the bright sunlight. The sky is a pale blue with wispy white clouds. A large, semi-transparent white rectangle is centered on the slide, containing the word "Discussion".

Discussion

Draft 2026 State Legislative Platform

Vision, Mission, and Goals

Vision

A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive.

Mission

A county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life.

Goals

Strengthen individual, family and community health, safety and well-being.

Cultivate economic prosperity and invest in neighborhoods with concentrated financial poverty.

Enhance access to opportunity and mobility for all residents and businesses.

Model fiscal accountability, transparency and strategic investments.



WELL-BEING



PROSPERITY



OPPORTUNITY



ACCOUNTABILITY

Legislative Themes in 2026

- No new unfunded mandates on counties.
- Protect counties from further cuts and cost shifts.
- Counties must be at the table for any service delivery change.
- Reduce reliance on property tax.

Capital Improvement Requests

Park at RiversEdge (\$20 million)

Aldrich Arena (\$8.5 million)

Legislative Top Priorities

Pursue	Bonding for Park at RiversEdge
	Bonding for Aldrich Arena
	Establish Capitol Complex County Host Program (CCCHP), a program similar to Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) for Ramsey County as host of the Capitol Complex.
	Amend MN Statute 383A to clean up human resources-related language; to raise small business contract threshold to \$500,000; and to extend/eliminate sunset on Environmental Response Fund (Phase 1).
	Seek funding extension for the Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act (MAAFPCWDA).
	Establish a statewide homelessness funding program, to be funded in the 2028-29 budget, that would provide ongoing, separate funding for counties and providers.
Leading advocate	Preserve current reimbursement method for MnCHOICES assessments, to ensure sufficient funding for Ramsey County's MnCHOICES division budget and staffing.
	Enhance efficiencies in Home & Community-Based Services, where program changes have increased administrative burden, increasing pressures on workforce and wait times for residents.
	Modernize state human services systems to better serve residents and reduce counties' administrative burden.
	Preserve or increase formula-based transportation funding for Ramsey County.
Support	Address the comprehensive substance abuse, mental and behavioral health needs of the community, including youth and those with acute and/or complex needs.
	Enhance public safety and reduce gun violence
	Support the Catalyzing Underutilized Buildings (CUB) Tax Credit to encourage redevelopment efforts and to increase housing stock.
	Protect counties from increased costs resulting from federal changes to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Medical Assistance (MA).
	Move MAAFPCWDA case review responsibility to the state.

Other Legislative Priorities

Pursue	Adjust adult protection funding allocation formula to a more equitable balance between screened-in cases and referral volume.
Leading advocate	Increase access to secure mental health treatment options in the East Metro to better address residents' complex behavioral health needs.
	Allow local governments to restrict guns on properties they own, especially buildings.
	Allow a portion of state housing and homelessness funds to be used for administrative costs.
	Repeal 2028 sunset of Local Homeless Prevention Aid
Support	Address racial disparities in healthcare quality, access and outcomes, especially those likely to result from recent federal legislative changes that will cause residents to lose access to healthcare.
	Classify residential addresses of elected officials and government officials as private government data.
	Transition the special property tax refund to a property tax credit that is automatically calculated and issued
	Increase state allocations to 40% of Operations & Maintenance costs for regional parks and trails.
	Support legislation aligning with Climate Equity Action Plan
	Allow recovery of costs of special elections for state and federal offices.
	Expand the responsibilities of Office of Broadband Development to include Digital Opportunity

Pursue indicates that these are typically issues that impact Ramsey County in a unique way. The County anticipates playing a leading role in advocating for these items and will invest substantial time and resources towards advocacy.

Leading Advocate indicates that Ramsey County provides active advocacy efforts but anticipates that another entity will play a leading role in advocating for the item.

Support indicates that Ramsey County anticipates that another entity or entities will play leading roles in advocating for these items. Ramsey County will invest time and resources towards advocacy only on an as-needed basis.

Ramsey County Support of Other Positions

In addition to the initiatives contained in this platform, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners generally supports the legislative recommendations of the local units of government within the county and organizations in which it holds membership, including, but not limited to:

- Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) and its associated professional organizations, including:
 - Local Public Health Association of Minnesota (LPHA)
 - Minnesota Association of County Social Services Administrators (MACSSA)
 - Minnesota Association of County Officers (MACO)
 - Minnesota Association of Community Corrections Act Counties (MACCAC)
 - Minnesota County IT Leadership Association (MCITLA)
 - Solid Waste Administrators Association (SWAA)
 - Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers (MACVSO)
- Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers (AMEM)
- Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)
- Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD)
- Minnesota County Engineers Association (MCEA)
- Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB)
- Minnesota Association of Assessing Officers (MAAO)
- Partnership on Waste and Energy (PWA)
- Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy (R&E)
- Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County (WIB)

The county board may choose to take a different position on individual items within the platforms of these and other organizations whose platforms they generally support. The county board may also consider additional positions in response to issues that emerge during the legislative session.

Legislative Committee of the Whole

Request for Board Action

Item Number: 2025-445

Meeting Date: 11/4/2025

Sponsor: County Manager's Office

Title

2026 Ramsey County Federal Legislative Platform

Recommendation

1. Approve the 2026 Ramsey County Federal Legislative Platform and recommend its submittal to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners.
2. Authorize Ramsey County representatives to work with members of the U.S. Congress and other interested parties to promote legislation reflective of the positions contained in the platform.

Background and Rationale

On October 21, 2025, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners held its second 2025 workshop on the 2026 State and Federal Legislative Platforms. Government Relations staff presented proposed draft platform items for discussion by the members of the board.

In preparation for the review of the proposed platform by the Legislative Committee of the Whole, Government Relations staff have included in the latest draft suggested changes from the commissioners and further input from departmental and organizational leadership. The 2026 Federal Legislative Platform draft includes Ramsey County policy and funding priorities and a statement of support for platforms of named organizations.

The Legislative Committee of the Whole reviews the draft 2026 Ramsey County Federal Legislative Platform and recommends its submittal to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners is scheduled to vote on final approval on both the state and federal legislative platforms on November 18, 2025.

County Goals (Check those advanced by Action)

☒ Well-being ☒ Prosperity ☒ Opportunity ☒ Accountability

Racial Equity Impact

Members of the Legislative Platform Advisory Teams, as well as Ramsey County leaders, considered the racial equity impacts of proposed legislative priorities as part of the input and review process. Most of the proposed items have direct impacts on racial equity, particularly those items that provide increased access to services or benefits specifically targeted to low-income individuals, families or communities, which disproportionately include more people of color and American Indians. These services or opportunities include improved access to health care, family support services, and stable housing.

Community Participation Level and Impact

Government Relations has met with appropriate Ramsey County advisory committees to share the platform development process and to gather input for the draft platform. Additionally, Government Relations continually engages with key stakeholder organizations and advocacy groups in the community.

☒ Inform ☒ Consult ☐ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

Fiscal Impact

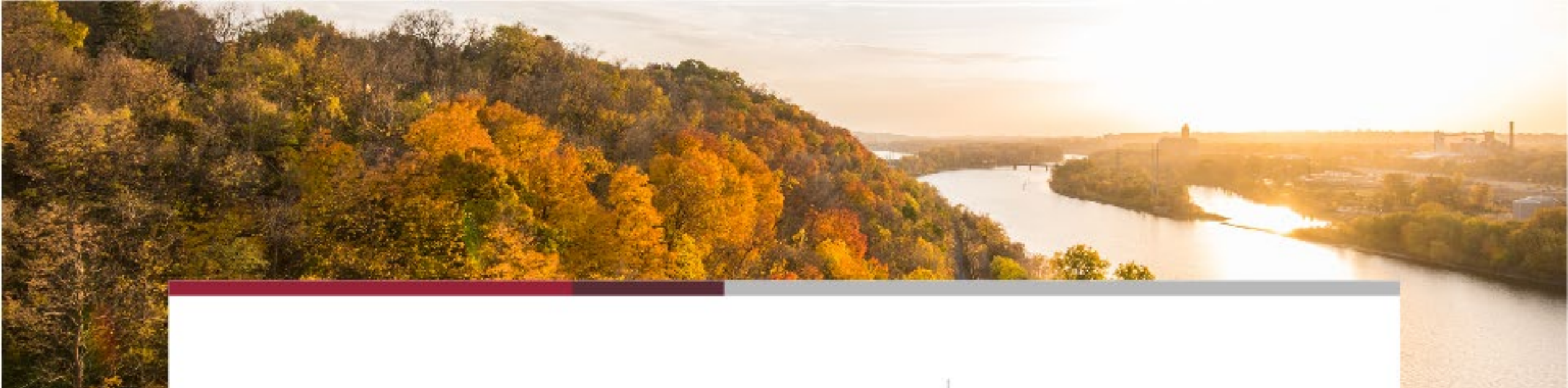
Some positions in the federal platform may have financial implications that would require state and/or county appropriations if legislation were enacted. When there are implications for the current budget, necessary budget adjustments can be processed in accordance with administrative code and relevant board authorities; through adjustment to the current fiscal county budget; or through changes to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), depending on the specifics of the funding change.

Last Previous Action

None.

Attachments

1. Presentation
2. Draft 2026 Federal Legislative Platform



Proposed 2026 Legislative Platform Priorities

Legislative Committee of the Whole
November 4, 2025



Goals of This Presentation

The Legislative Committee of the Whole is requested to:

- Review and provide final input on draft 2026 state and federal legislative platforms.
- Vote to move draft platforms to the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners for final approval on November 18.

Recap from October 21 Board Workshop

- Presented draft state legislative priorities and provided an overview of possible federal platform priorities.
- After the workshop, a follow-up memo provided more detail on proposed 2026 advocacy strategy (from board workshop slides) and federal platform (which we will discuss in more detail today).

Active Advocacy: Responding to Unprecedented Shifts

- NACo identified unprecedented shifts impacting local governments.
- The stakes have never been higher—we need new approaches and recalibrated responses that balance evolving responsibilities.
- Persistent property tax pressure.
- Our path forward:
 - Agility in adapting to changing conditions.
 - Opportunities to take ownership and to participate in emerging and urgent conversations.
 - Laying the right foundation to be ready for *any and all solutions*.
 - Balancing relationships while preserving our fiscal health.

Ramsey County's Overarching Themes in 2026

No new unfunded mandates.

Protect counties from further cuts.

Counties must be at the table for any service delivery change.

Reduce reliance on property tax.

The background of the slide is a scenic photograph. On the left, a dense forest of trees with yellow and orange autumn foliage covers a hillside. On the right, a wide river flows, reflecting the bright light of the sun, which is positioned low on the horizon, creating a strong lens flare and a warm, golden glow across the entire scene. The sky is a pale blue with wispy white clouds.

Proposed 2026 Legislative Platforms

Capital Improvement Requests (Bonding Items)

Top priority	Bonding Requests
!	Park at RiversEdge (\$20 million)
!	Aldrich Arena (\$8.5 million)



Pursue Items

Pursue means Ramsey County takes the lead works with the bill sponsor to get the bill jacketed and introduced. Ramsey County may co-lead with another partner. The issue mainly affects only the County and/or no other entity is leading. Requires a substantial investment of time and resources from the County.

Top priority	Proposed Platform Item
!	Establish Capitol Complex County Host Program (CCCHP) , a program similar to Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) for Ramsey County as host of the Capitol Complex.
!	Amend MN Statute 383A to clean up human resources language; to raise small business contract threshold to \$500,000; and to postpone or eliminate expiration of Environmental Response Fund.
!	Seek funding extension for the Minnesota African American Family Preservation and Child Welfare Disproportionality Act (MAAFPCWDA).
!	Establish a statewide homelessness funding program , to be funded in the 2028-29 budget, that would provide ongoing, separate funding for counties and providers.
	Adjust funding allocation formula for vulnerable adult protection to balance resources between screened-in cases and referral volume more equitably.

Leading Advocate Items

- Another county, coalition, or association is pursuing the bill or leading opposition.
- As a **Leading Advocate**, Ramsey County provides active advocacy efforts but is not the primary lead.

Top priority	Proposed Platform Item
!	Preserve current reimbursement method for MnCHOICES assessments , to ensure sufficient funding for Ramsey County’s MnCHOICES division budget and staffing.
!	Enhance efficiencies in Home & Community-Based Services , where program changes have increased administrative burden, increasing pressures on workforce and wait times for residents.
!	Modernize state human services systems to better serve residents and reduce counties’ administrative burden.
!	Preserve or increase formula-based transportation funding for Ramsey County.
	Increase access to secure mental health treatment options in the East Metro to better address residents’ complex behavioral health needs.
	Allow local governments to restrict guns on properties they own , especially buildings.
	Allow a portion of state housing and homelessness funds to be used for administrative costs.
	Repeal 2028 sunset of Local Homeless Prevention Aid

Support Items

- Include some top priorities, though the County will play a less active role in advancing them.
- Time and resources are invested in **Support** items on an as-needed or as-requested basis.

Top priority	Proposed Platform Item
!	Address the comprehensive substance abuse, mental and behavioral health needs of the community, including youth and those with acute and/or complex needs.
!	Enhance public safety and reduce gun violence
!	Support the Catalyzing Underutilized Buildings (CUB) Tax Credit to encourage redevelopment efforts and to increase housing stock.
!	Protect counties from increased costs resulting from federal changes to SNAP and MA
!	Move MAAFPCWDA case review responsibility to state
	Address racial disparities in healthcare quality, access and outcomes, especially those likely to result from recent federal legislative changes that will cause residents to lose access to healthcare.
	Classify residential addresses of elected officials and government officials as private government data.
	Transition the special property tax refund to a property tax credit that is automatically calculated and issued
	Increase state allocations to 40% of Operations & Maintenance costs for regional parks and trails.
	Support legislation aligning with Climate Equity Action Plan
	Allow recovery of costs of special elections for state and federal offices.
	Expand the responsibilities of Office of Broadband Development to include Digital Opportunity

Priorities Led by Ramsey County Attorney's Office

RCAO would take the lead on the following items, supported by Ramsey County Government Relations.

Proposed Platform Item
Remove automatic cost-of-living adjustments for maintenance and child support orders in favor of routine reviews, as required by federal regulations, enhancing fairness & improving compliance.
Require employers to report new hires of 1099 independent contractors to DHS , which will help increase child support payments and enhance the fairness of child support orders.
Increase funds in the state auto theft fund for advanced prevention and intervention efforts.

Summary of All Top Priorities

County Role	Top Priorities
Pursue	Bonding for Park at RiversEdge
	Bonding for Aldrich Arena
	Capitol Complex County Host Program (CCCHP) for Ramsey County
	Amendments to MN Statute 383A
	Seek funding extension for MAAFPCWDA.
	Establish a statewide homelessness funding program
Leading advocate	Preserve current reimbursement method for MnCHOICES assessments
	Enhance efficiencies in Home & Community-Based Services
	Modernize state human services systems
	Preserve or increase formula-based transportation funding for Ramsey County
Support	Address substance abuse, mental and behavioral health needs
	Enhance public safety and reduce gun violence
	Support the Catalyzing Underutilized Buildings (CUB) Tax Credit
	Protect counties from increased costs resulting from federal changes to SNAP and MA
	Move MAAFPCWDA case review responsibility to state

Federal Platform: Broad Approach

- Defend against funding cuts and identify bipartisan legislative opportunities that we can support.
- Preserve flexibility so Ramsey County can be agile in responding to events as they occur, guided by the legislative themes.

No new unfunded mandates.

Protect counties from further cuts.

Counties must be at the table for any service delivery change.

Reduce reliance on property tax.

Proposed Federal Platform Items

Issue Area	Proposed Platform Item
Health and Human Services	Support legislation that would delay the implementation of federal changes to SNAP and Medicaid.
	Support efforts to change rule and/or statute to allow streamlining of MnCHOICES reassessments.
Workforce	Support re-authorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and sustained or increased funding for critical program areas such as WIOA Youth.
Emergency Management	Support increased, sustained and accessible funding for emergency management grants that are vital to Ramsey County's work.
Homelessness Assistance	Support increased, sustained and accessible funding for the Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grants homelessness assistance programs, as well as legislation that would simplify the administration of these programs.
Affordable Housing	Support legislation reauthorizing and fully funding the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) to allow increased federal support for county community development initiatives, affordable housing and economic revitalization efforts.
	Support legislation to reauthorize the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, to allow program flexibility for improved housing creation and preservation, and to authorize increased federal funding assistance for affordable housing development.
	Support increased funding for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance such as Housing Choice Vouchers and other tenant-based vouchers, which provide critical assistance to low-income renters.

Next Steps

November 18

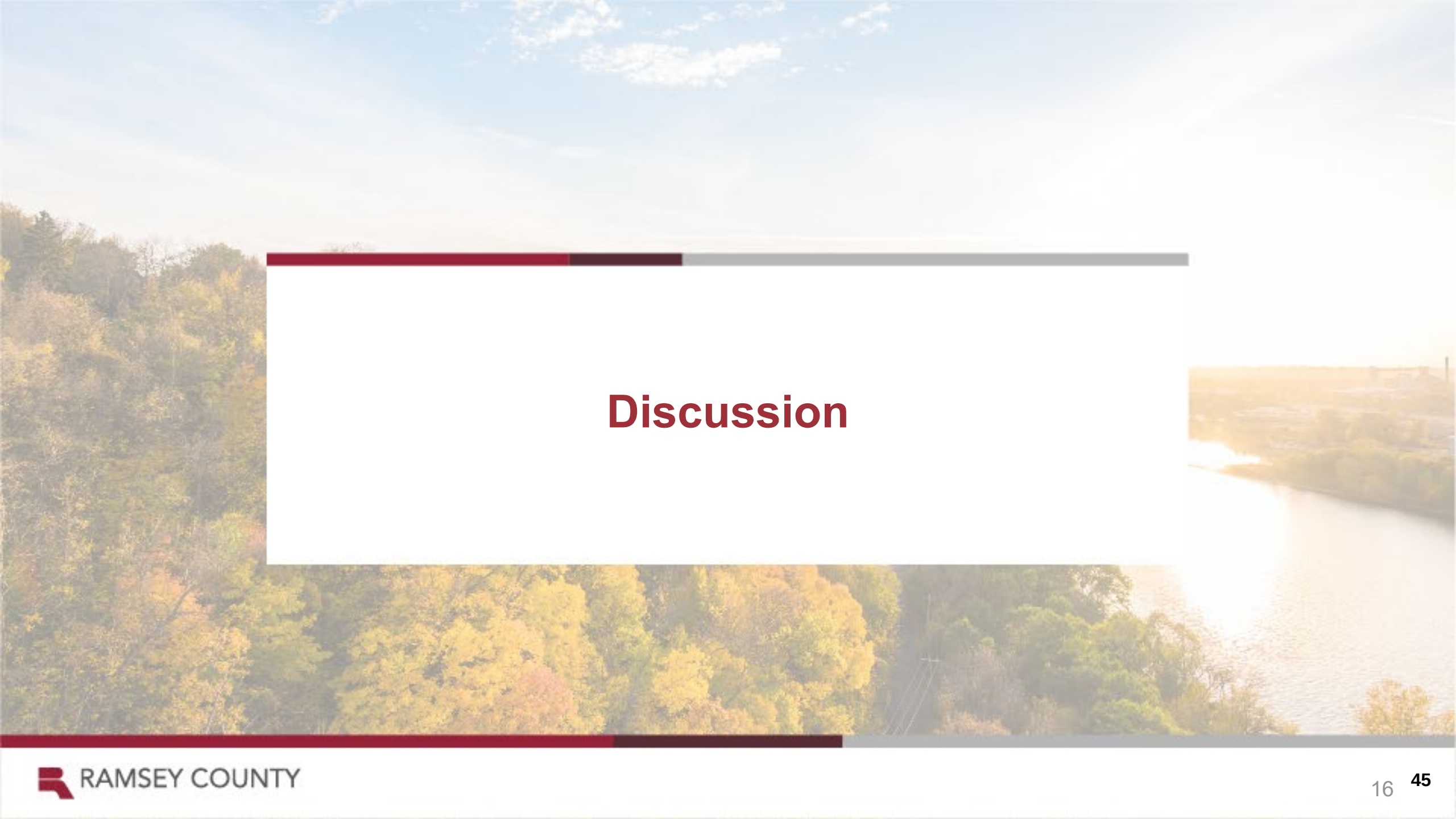
- County Board approves the state and federal platforms.

November – February

- Meetings with legislators and partners.
- Ramsey County Delegation Meeting (planned for December).
- Board presentation on Congressionally Directed Spending projects (January – February).

February 17

- 2026 Session begins.

The background of the slide features a scenic landscape. On the left, a dense forest of trees with yellow and orange autumn foliage covers a hillside. On the right, a wide river flows, reflecting the bright sunlight that creates a strong lens flare effect across the upper right portion of the image. A white rectangular box is centered over the image, containing the word "Discussion".

Discussion

Draft 2026 Federal Legislative Platform

Vision, Mission, and Goals

Vision

A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive.

Mission

A county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life.

Goals

Strengthen individual, family and community health, safety and well-being.

Cultivate economic prosperity and invest in neighborhoods with concentrated financial poverty.

Enhance access to opportunity and mobility for all residents and businesses.

Model fiscal accountability, transparency and strategic investments.



WELL-BEING



PROSPERITY



OPPORTUNITY



ACCOUNTABILITY

Legislative Themes in 2026

- No new unfunded mandates on counties.
- Protect counties from further cuts and cost shifts.
- Counties must be at the table for any service delivery change.
- Reduce reliance on property tax.

Legislative Top Priorities

Health and Human Services

- Support legislation that would delay the implementation of federal changes to SNAP and Medicaid.
- Support efforts to change rule and/or statute to allow streamlining of MnCHOICES reassessments.

Workforce

- Support re-authorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and sustained or increased funding for critical program areas such as WIOA Youth, ensuring continued access to employment and training programs, job supports, and high-wage employment opportunities.

Emergency Management

- Support increased, sustained and accessible funding for emergency management grants that are vital to Ramsey County's work.

Affordable Housing

- Support legislation reauthorizing and fully funding the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) to allow increased federal support for county community development initiatives, affordable housing and economic revitalization efforts.
- Support legislation to reauthorize the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), to allow program flexibility for improved housing creation and preservation, and to authorize increased federal funding assistance to support affordable housing development.
- Support increased funding for Tenant-Based Rental Assistance such as Housing Choice Vouchers and other tenant-based vouchers, which provide critical assistance to low-income renters.

Homelessness Assistance

- Support increased, sustained and accessible funding for the Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grants homelessness assistance programs, as well as legislation that would simplify the administration of these programs.

Ramsey County Support of Other Positions

In addition to the recommendations contained in this platform, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners generally supports the legislative recommendations of the organizations in which it holds membership, including, but not limited to: The National Association of Counties (NACo) and its associated professional organizations, not including any recommendations that are inconsistent with Ramsey County's values and strategic goals.