



Development of 2026 State and Federal Legislative Platforms

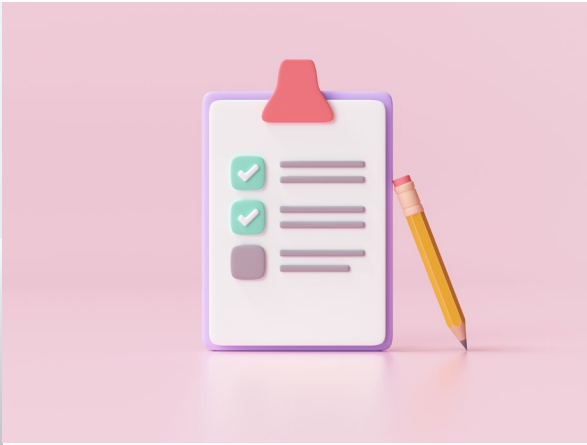
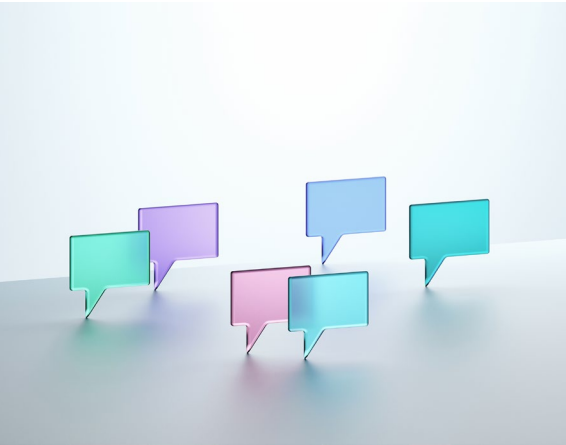
September 23, 2025



Legislative Platform Development: Then and now

	Last time (2025 session)	This time (2026 session)
Session start	Jan 14, 2025	Feb 17, 2026
Biennium year	Budget year	Policy and bonding year
What to expect	State fiscal pressures, special elections, late start in House	State and federal fiscal pressures, positioning for mid-term elections
Starting point	Built off previous year's platform.	Started from scratch with full re-evaluation of old platform items; development of new items.
Development process	Departments completed proposal form; GR met with directors and SMEs to discuss proposals. Met with commissioners 1:1.	Cross-departmental Legislative Platform Advisory Teams (LPATs) developed platform items collaboratively. Met with commissioners 1:1.
Final approval	Nov 19, 2024	Nov 18, 2025 (planned)

Legislative platform development and approval



Framework for 2026 Legislative Priorities

Legislative platform development has been guided by the same priorities that framed the budget process:



Legislative Platform Advisory Teams (LPATs)

- Nine teams based on specific legislative areas.
- Bring together cross-departmental leaders and SMEs with Government Relations, Racial and Health Equity Administrators, and Policy & Administrative Strategy.
- Collaborate to identify priorities for legislative platforms.
- Coordinate review and approval of platform items.
- Prepare GR staff to advocate knowledgeably for platform items.

Legislative Platform Advisory Teams



Themes in 1:1 Discussions with Commissioners

(in no particular order)

**Reforming County
Program Aid (CPA)
formula**

**Payment in Lieu of
Taxes (PILT) for
Ramsey County**

**Economic
development,
supporting local and
small business,
workforce
development**

**Defending against
state and federal
cuts and cost shifts**

**Protecting people
from federal actions**

Affordable housing

**Shelter and
supports for those
experiencing
homelessness**

**Human Services
technology
modernization**

**Social services,
mental health, and
child welfare**

Food insecurity

Bonding priorities

**Building broader
coalitions**

Community and Partner Engagement (So Far)

Ongoing engagement strengthens connections for future work.

- Cross Sharing Partner Work Group
- Ramsey United
- Community Advisory Councils
- Heading Home Ramsey
- Ecolab's Homelessness Roundtable
- Association of Minnesota Counties
- Ramsey County legislators
- City of Saint Paul
- Hennepin, Scott & Washington counties
- More to come...

Affordability

**Medicaid and
SNAP cuts**

Homelessness

**Downtown
issues**

Bonding projects

Mental health

Transportation

**Need for
improved
systems and
processes**

**Provider
workforce
shortages**

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.

CPA formula fix and PILT for Ramsey County.

Top Issues So Far

- HHS systems modernization
- HHS cuts and cost shifts
- County Program Aid and PILT
- Revisions to MN Statute 383A
- Enhancing efficiencies and ensuring appropriate funding method for Home and Community-Based Services.
- Mental health, gun violence, and local control
- Public safety
- Downtown revitalization
- Homelessness
- Transportation funding defense

Advocacy Strategy

Government Relations engages with legislators and partners like AMC throughout the year. For the 2026 Session, we will need:

- A tight focus on the most critical legislative priorities, and what is urgent and realistically achievable—less is more.
- An emphasis on supporting county responsible services.
- Strong commissioner engagement with legislators.
- “Hot topic” presentations for legislative delegation pre-Session.
- Leveraging partnerships wherever possible.
- Engage in Special Session (mental health, local control) if it happens.

Commissioner Engagement and Next Steps

Steps	Date
Meetings with Legislative Committee chair and co-chair	Ongoing
Individual meetings with commissioners	July 29 – September 17
1 st Board Workshop	September 23
2 nd Board Workshop	October 21
Legislative Committee of the Whole	November 4
Final Board approval (REVISED)	November 18

Platform Development Timeline

July	August	September	October	November - December
<p>Engaged with organizational leadership</p> <p>Launched LPATs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin weekly meetings • Begin development of platform items <p>Community and partner engagement</p>	<p>Continued LPAT meetings</p> <p>Update Legislative Committee chair/co-chair</p> <p>Continued community and partner engagement</p>	<p>Sept 17: GR presents draft platform to Executive Team</p> <p>Sept 23: 1st Board Workshop</p> <p>Work with Legislative Team and organization leaders to finalize platform recommendations.</p> <p>Continued community and partner engagement</p>	<p>Work with Legislative Team and organization leaders to finalize platform recommendations.</p> <p>Oct 21: 2nd Board Workshop</p> <p>Continued community and partner engagement</p>	<p>Nov 4: Legislative CoW reviews platform draft and makes recommendations</p> <p>Nov 18: Final board approval of state platform</p> <p>Nov 19: Approved draft to Communications</p> <p>December: Legislative delegation meeting on platform</p> <p>Continued community and partner engagement</p>

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