

2026 Federal and State Legislative Priorities and Positions

Brooklyn Park 
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2026 State Legislative Priorities and Positions

City of Brooklyn Park

Overview

Brooklyn Park works together with its partners to support proposals for new legislation in Minnesota designed to strengthen the community. The following list of legislative priorities and positions constitute Brooklyn Park’s legislative agenda for the 2026 legislative session.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

I. Brooklyn Park Bio-Tech Innovation District

Background

In the 2024 Legislative session, legislators designated nearly 250 acres of land in the northwest part of the community as the Brooklyn Park Bio-Tech Innovation District. This was further supported through the addition of Special Legislation in 2025 to apply a Redevelopment TIF District (26 years). This District seeks to capitalize on the strong presence of existing bio and med-tech companies in Brooklyn Park with a mixed-use development that is envisioned to be a regional economic hub that will be home to over 10,000 jobs, 3,000 housing units and other community amenities.

Position

To achieve the development goals of the District the city is seeking flexibility in the usage of the tax increment financing tool, workforce development resources to support career pipelines for the future jobs in the District, and capital investment resources (\$4.5M) to support expanding water supply lines from the east side of Highway 169 to the west side of Highway 169 within the District. State investments in these areas will create jobs, reduce the financial impact to our residents, and increase the tax base in this area. The increased tax base and jobs will directly benefit the State of Minnesota, and continue to position Minnesota as a global leader in the med and bio-tech spaces.

The City is requesting \$4,500,000 in capital bonding dollars to aide in the extension of City Water and trunk mains to the west side of US Highway 169. This funding will help reduce the cost of development in the Bio-Tech area as well as the supporting land uses to the north, helping to make this area even more attractive to new development.

Finally, to help build the pipeline to the future Life Sciences Workforce, the City is requesting \$1,000,000 in Workforce Development Grants to help sustain our existing Workforce Development efforts. This would be a one-time allocation to replace an expiring allocation.

II. Northwest Regional Sports Facility

Background

The Brooklyn Park Community Activity Center was originally built in 1983 to serve the northwest suburbs as a hub for hockey and banquet/meeting activities. Over the years, the need for recreation amenities in the area has expanded from hockey to filling the gap for indoor court activities like basketball, volleyball and pickleball. Currently, the City of Brooklyn Park and the Northwest Metro is underserved with a lack of available multi-use gymnasium space.

Position

Requesting an up to \$11M bond issuance to add multi-court flexible gym space that could be used for basketball, volleyball, pickleball, etc. for the northwest metro and would allow for the preservation of the existing two ice arenas to serve the region. In 2024, the Minnesota Legislature provided greater flexibility for a \$5M 2023 Legislative investment for a possible ice rink conversion project to add gym space.

III. Brooklyn Boulevard Revitalization

Background

The market often times fails to produce the types of development that our community is seeking. This can lead to undeveloped land sitting idle for years and being unproductive from a property tax standpoint. Examples of this would include the area of Brooklyn Boulevard between Regent and Zane as well as the Brooklyn Boulevard Station Area along the Blue Line Extension. This area is experiencing a high rate of retail vacancies and lack of private reinvestment.

Position

The City is revising its Brooklyn Boulevard Plan and Vision. As such, the City does not have a legislative ask for this area in 2026 but will bring back in future years.

IV. Congregate Care Facilities

Background

Brooklyn Park has experienced a significant increase in congregate care facilities over the last 5 years. While many congregate care facilities are well managed, some have disproportionately been high users of our public safety (police and fire) resources that have diverted those resources from other public safety needs. In some cases, these properties have not been well maintained and have become very challenging properties for neighborhoods. Lastly, in the 2024 Legislative Session, the state legislature removed city's ability to license and inspect these facilities to ensure life safety measures were being kept up to code.

Position

We are requesting that local rental licensing authority be restored to ensure the life safety elements of these properties are maintained and the residents are safe. We are additionally requesting that the density and volume of congregate care facilities in our community be regulated similar to how it's done in the cities of the first class to relieve the current burden on our public safety resources.

V. Public Safety Aid

Background

Over the last five years, the country, state, and region have experienced a significant fluctuation in certain types of violent crimes, especially those involving guns and crimes against persons. The City of Brooklyn Park has disproportionately been affected by these crime trends. Repeat offenders of these types of crimes has also been cited as a growing concern. This has led to increased loss of life and injury, decreased livability of neighborhoods, and led some businesses and residents to leave or consider leaving our city. In 2023, the Minnesota Legislature did provide some one-time resources and competitive grant opportunities to support crime prevention strategies. In addition, Brooklyn Park public safety officials have seen a disproportionate increase in mental health related calls placing unusual demands on services that include specialized training and specialized staffing needs.

Position

The City of Brooklyn Park supports legislative efforts and funding strategies that financially supports on an ongoing basis violence prevention, intervention and interruption work that addresses the geographic areas most impacted by criminal activity, including measures to ensure offenders of violent crimes are held accountable. We also support mental health investments and rehabilitative resources and strategies that support proven alternative approaches for youth and young adults involved in low-level criminal activities that may not be best served by the traditional criminal justice system. We also support the funding and use of alternate response teams that respond to mental health related calls, providing improved services to residents with those needs, and reducing the burden on police officers responding to traditional police calls. Additionally, we support strategies to address the underlying root causes of community violence including economic and housing stability, educational opportunity, health security, etc.

VI. Water Supply Infrastructure

Background

Brooklyn Park is the 6th largest city in Minnesota with over 86,000 residents. The city's water is sourced through a shallow aquifer that is some of the hardest water in the metro area and recently has been found to contain per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). This hard water and PFAS contaminated water causes significant issues within our community.

Brooklyn Park operates 17 well pumps to provide water to the residents and businesses in our community. Two of those wells have tested over the threshold of 4 parts per trillion for PFOS. As a result, the City has taken one of those wells offline and is closely monitoring the other well. The City needs to take action in order to continue to provide safe and reliable drinking water to our community. We are currently studying the issue and expect to bring a recommendation for action to the City Council sometime in 2026. That plan of action will very likely come with a capital cost of \$50 to \$70 million plus millions in annual operating costs. This is on top of the City's desire, and associated capital and operating costs, to provide softened water to all residents in Brooklyn Park.

Hard water requires residents to have home water softening units. Unfortunately, many of our low-income residents cannot afford to install these systems in their homes. By not having water softening units in their homes, the hard water prematurely degrades appliances like water heaters, dishwashers, and leads to buildup in the internal piping of

homes. Having to replace these appliances causes significant financial strain on our residents. Providing a city-wide softening plant at cost of approximately \$40 million plus additional operating costs of \$2 million to \$3 million will dramatically improve the water quality going to homes, reduce damage to piping and appliances, and eliminates the need for home water softening equipment. Potential treatment for PFAS in our water supply could cost upwards of \$70 million to construct and millions more per year to operate.

Providing either one of these treatment processes, softening or PFAS removal, will be a significant cost burden to residents and businesses; doing both is very likely not an option without funding support.

Position

The State needs to recognize the long-term magnitude of the PFAS issue. More and more communities are testing positive for various types of PFAS in their water sources. New, continued and reliable funding sources must be provided by the State to help communities respond to this contaminant.

The state has historically supported water treatment because it directly benefits low-income residents and improves the lives of our community. Brooklyn Park will explore all state and federal funding to support this important development.

VII. Blue Line Extension Light Rail Project

Background

The Blue Line Extension Light Rail Transit (BLE) Project will extend the existing light rail line from Target Field in Minneapolis through four communities (Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal and Brooklyn Park) to Oak Grove Parkway, locating five stations in Brooklyn Park. Bringing LRT to the northwest suburbs will improve mobility and access to jobs and will ensure the northwest portion of the region remains competitive.

Position

The City of Brooklyn Park supports policies, laws, and funding (federal, state, regional and local) to finalize planning and move to the construction and operation phases of the BLE project. Additionally, we support efforts around anti-displacement of businesses and residents that may be impacted by the construction and establishment of the line.

VIII. Local Government Aid

Background

Local Government Aid is a mechanism the state uses to offset local costs using state resources. The current formula to allocate these dollars arguably favors the central cities in the Metro Area, and the older small communities and regional centers of the state. As an example, Duluth received over \$35M in 2024, while Brooklyn Park received less than \$1M. Both cities have similarly modest tax bases and nearly the same population size. In 2023, the LGA formula reduced the state's allocation to Brooklyn Park from roughly \$1.45M in 2022 to \$0 in 2023. In the 2023 Legislative session the formula was modified and Brooklyn Park received roughly \$900,000 in 2024.

Position

Brooklyn Park supports a position that state aids to local governments must remain a stable, reliable and sustainable funding source now and into the future. Brooklyn Park also believes the LGA formula should be adjusted to better account for a local government's ability to pay and related costs of core services. There is currently a significant imbalance in how the formula works relative to need and ability to generate local revenues.

IX Intensive Residential Treatment Services Reallocation

Background

The City of Brooklyn Park has a disproportionately high number of congregate care facilities compared to nearly all other communities in the state. To help address the resulting needs, the City has established a Community Health Unit consisting of five social workers, one paramedic, one nurse, and a police detective, all operating out of the police department.

During the 2025 legislative session, Brooklyn Park asked legislators for assistance in addressing the significant impacts this disparity has on local public safety services. The concentration of congregate care facilities has led to lower levels of care for many residents. In response, legislators appropriated \$563,000 to the City for an Intensive Residential Treatment Services (IRTS) facility.

Position

The funding allocated for an IRTS facility is not helpful to the City for several reasons. Approximately 30% of IRTS beds statewide remain unused at any given time. Additionally, these facilities have proven ineffective for many individuals, as participation is voluntary and clients frequently decline placement due to strict rules. The amount appropriated is also far below what is required to establish and operate a new IRTS facility.

The City of Brooklyn Park is requesting that the allocated funds be redirected to the Community Health Unit to help offset staffing costs and support continued high-quality services for residents living in congregate care settings.

LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

I. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The City of Brooklyn Park, with our rich racial, ethnic and demographic diversity, is committed to supporting local, state and federal policies and investments that advance the goals of eliminating racial and economic disparities in areas such as housing, employment, transportation, health care, safety, etc., and works towards a more inclusive economy. Many of the detailed policies advocated for in this document strive to achieve these goals.

II. Transportation Infrastructure

Investments in transportation infrastructure can often result in multiple benefits to a community, a more efficient and safer multi-modal transportation system and a stimulus for economic growth. In addition to state funding to support the municipal state aid road network,

two specific projects that have the potential to be impacted by legislative actions include improvements to highway 252 and the Blue Line Light Rail extension project.

- **Trunk Highway 252**

Background

Highway 252 provides a vital high speed / high volume link between Minneapolis and the northern suburban areas. The congestion and safety issues experienced at the at-grade signalized intersections along the four mile corridor rank among the worst in the state under both categories. TH 252 also acts as a barrier between the portions of our community on each side of this high volume / high speed facility, separating the west side from the Mississippi River and the east side from schools, businesses and recreational facilities. The City of Brooklyn Park is currently working with the City of Brooklyn Center, Minneapolis, MnDOT and Hennepin County to upgrade highway 252 to a freeway while maintaining or enhancing transit service along the corridor and providing safer, more comfortable grade separated crossings of TH 252 for pedestrians and bikes.

Position

In the 2018 Legislative Session, partial funding was granted for conversion of highway 252 to a freeway with construction expected to start in 2025 or shortly thereafter. This project has been delayed as a more thorough Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) of the reconstruction options are being considered. The City seeks to work with project partners to secure the additional funding necessary for this project to advance to construction. In addition, the local communities along the line may have some shared financial responsibility for the costs to improve the interchanges and any local roads that would be impacted by the project. The City supports expanded access to federal, state, regional and county grant dollars that would alleviate the local taxpayer burden for these costs. The City also supports the investment in temporary safety measures until final design and construction is complete.

- **East – West Busing Connections**

Background

As a community of 86,000 plus residents our public transportation needs have far outpaced the services provided in our city. While some bus services exist within Brooklyn Park, most are oriented to bringing people in and out of the community, mainly running north - south, versus mobility within the community.

Position

The City of Brooklyn Park supports resources and change in service delivery models that provides east – west busing services to our residents without reducing the services that exist today.

Below is the City's response to Metro Transit's Network Now Plan.

- Additional connectivity and frequency from our eastern border, especially east of Highway 252, to the City of Maple Grove retail hub should be provided

- A better defined ‘mobility hub’ at the Starlite Center (West Broadway and Brooklyn Boulevard) as a connection hub to Maple Grove’s service provider should be added, even in the interim until the Blue Line Extension is constructed
 - Metro Transit should also consider expanding the service area for Metro Micro to allow connectivity between Brooklyn Park and Maple Grove, and not rely on Maple Grove’s service
 - Additional connectivity and frequency with the Zanewood Teen Center should be established
 - The system should have a better Highway 252 loop or at least add additional/better sited stop locations
 - A priority should be placed on additional stops along the express route at Zane Avenue and West Broadway
 - Additional ‘last mile service’ should be provided to add connectivity to the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park, including a safe and comfortable mobility hub for transfer to last mile service
 - The plan should articulate future routes and connections supporting the City’s future BioTech Innovation District north of Highway 610 and west of West Broadway
- **Increase Municipal State Aid (MSA) to Cities**

Background

The City has 55 miles of MSA streets. Many of these streets have degraded prematurely realizing pavement life spans of 15-20 years instead of 30 years before needing overlays (resurfacing). Over the next five years, we have funding needs of over \$30 million on our MSA streets, but we are only scheduled to receive about half of our needs or approximately \$15 million. MSA funds are also used for cost participation on County and State roadway projects. This further reduces the amount of money we have to spend on our own State Aid roadways.

Position

The City believes funding for local roadways should be increased in order to double current State Aid funding levels to help cities address street repair needs and premature street degradation on MSA as well as local streets. Providing funding outside of MSA sources, such as increases to the Larger Cities Assistance Account, would allow cities to use that funding for local streets. Cost participation on county and state projects should also be reduced or eliminated so that more funding is available for roadway needs on City owned facilities.

III. Sustainable Government Funding

The City of Brooklyn Park’s financial position and property tax burden on businesses and residents are greatly influenced by actions taken at the state legislature. Historically, legislative changes to various funding formulas, aids, and imposition of statutory limits have impacted the City’s ability to predict state sources of income, created unexpected community-level budget challenges, and resulted in increased tax burden on local taxpayers. Brooklyn Park supports efforts for more stable and predictable revenue sources and the reduction of the local property tax burden.

- **Levy Limits**

Background

Brooklyn Park advocates maintaining reliable, sustainable funding for desired city services and having the ability to control city levies at the local level. Enacting levy limits would remove this control from the City Council and may lead cities to adopt higher than desired tax levies in the short-term to maintain future levy capacity.

Position

Brooklyn Park supports a position that control of local levies remain at the local level.

- **Park Fee for Redevelopment**

Background

Currently, state law allows for collection of a park dedication fee to support the establishment and improvement of parks within a community when a parcel is initially subdivided for development. Fees are not currently allowed when that parcel is redeveloped. Brooklyn Park currently has a limited amount of greenfield development remaining. With significant redevelopment forecast in the future, it would be beneficial to the ongoing improvement of the park and trail system to allow the collection of fees in both development phases.

Position

Propose amending the state law allowing for park dedication fees to be collected for the initial development and redevelopment of parcels.

- **Public Safety Benefit Account Reimbursement**

Background

In recent years, there has been an increase in police officers leaving their professions for medical-related reasons. The ongoing liability of contributing toward departing public safety employees' health insurance costs until retirement is a significant burden on our local taxpayers. The state created a short-term fix for this situation by agreeing to cover 100 percent of these costs, but not a long-term commitment.

Position

Support fully funding the Public Safety Benefit Account on an ongoing basis to reimburse employers for providing continued health insurance to police officers and firefighters injured in the line of duty and dependents of those killed.

- **Fiscal Disparities**

Background

Due to infrastructure development (airports, highways, light rail, etc.) and other economic stimuli, certain parts of the Metropolitan Area are at a greater advantage for economic development and tax base growth. The Fiscal Disparities program was designed to distribute a portion of this growth to cities that don't have the same economic advantages. This distribution of value serves to mitigate

the property tax disadvantage to those communities.

Position

Brooklyn Park supports the Fiscal Disparities program and would support changes to stabilize the benefits of the program to metropolitan cities.

- **Sales Tax Exemption**

Background

The process for using the sales tax exemption on construction materials is complicated, burdensome and risky to contractors and cities. While we understand that the exemption automatically applies to public safety facilities, it does not automatically apply to other types of city facilities.

Position

Brooklyn Park supports the simplification of the current sales tax exemption for construction materials on local projects. Absent the State simplifying process, the City will request an exemption on sales taxes for specific projects.

- **Ability to apply Franchise Fees to Internet Service Providers**

Background

Our local public and community media company, CCX, and many like them around the country, have long been funded with cable franchise fees. As subscribers for cable have fallen, the revenue to sustain CCX has decreased significantly. This trend threatens the long-term viability of these types of media companies. CCX has asked member cities to support the following position.

Position

The City of Brooklyn Park supports legislation authorizing cities to franchise broadband/internet service providers (ISPs) in the public right-of-way and to collect franchise fees from these providers. Broadband Franchising will allow a city to require equal access to the same quality of broadband service throughout a city, to require reasonable build-out and system upgrades of broadband systems, to require uniform pricing and other customer service requirements, as well as other public benefits. Furthermore, the City supports the use of franchise fees on broadband or other dedicated funding to support local community television, which has seen declining funding from cable franchise fees and public, educational, and governmental (PEG) access fees as consumers switch to internet-based streaming over traditional cable tv service.

- **Brooklyn Park and Hennepin County Assessing**

Background

In the spring of 2024, Hennepin County made the decision to end their financial contracts with cities they provide assessing services for. They are continuing to provide the assessing services but are not requiring the cities to compensate the

county. For the cities that have their own assessing staff, Minneapolis, Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, St. Louis Park, Edina, Maple Grove, Brooklyn Park, and Bloomington this results in the tax payers of those communities paying for not only their own assessing services, but also assessing services for the other cities that receiving assessing services from the County.

Position

The City of Brooklyn Park supports actions by the County or Minnesota Legislature that resolves this double taxation situation while preserving Brooklyn Park's ability to retain its own assessing staff.

V. Youth

▪ **Out-of-school Time**

Background

High-quality afterschool and summer learning programs provide hands-on learning experiences that narrow the opportunity and achievement gaps, build critical 21st century skills, and support working families by ensuring their children are safe and engaged in learning outside of school. Minnesota needs to ensure a bright future for our young people and our state by investing in afterschool programs to expand access for all young people. This would include adequate resources for transportation needed to ensure all students can participate in after school activities. Minnesota has one-time investments in afterschool programs through the Afterschool Community Learning Grant. This one-time funding should be made permanent. Additionally, existing funding for Targeted Services should be adjusted and tied to the per pupil formula; providing students increased access to academic supports.

Position

Establish new state resources to provide competitive afterschool program grants. These funds would prioritize programs primarily serving youth below 185 percent of the federal poverty line (youth eligible for free and reduced-price lunch).

▪ **Youth Mental Health**

Background

Our youth and young adults have experienced a pronounced and pro-longed amount of trauma in recent years given issues such as COVID-19, racial tensions, increase in crime, and financial hardship. Through our work with the Reimagine Black Youth Mental Health initiative we have learned that Young people's mental health is supported through ensuring that youth are safe at all times. Specifically, we need new ways of addressing community gun violence, racism and bias in schools and exposure to harm online. To ensure each young person thrives in Brooklyn Park we must address systemic and community issues that disrupt their wellbeing.

Position

Support resources that make existing mental health systems more accessible and culturally responsive, and support community driven solutions for mental health and well-being.

IV. Voting and Governance Laws

▪ Voting

Background

In recent years, the state has changed voting rules that have reduced barriers to voting for residents. This includes the 46-day absentee voting timeline before an election by eliminating the requirement to provide an excuse to vote absentee. Additionally, the state now has in place fixed dates for when an election can take place, a specific day in the following months – February, April, May, August and November. These rules apply to both special and general elections.

Position

Brooklyn Park requests that the state consider changes to current voting requirements that place an undue financial burden on cities due to the 46-day absentee voting window. The city asks that municipalities be allowed to offer either 46 days of absentee voting or 18 days of early voting/direct balloting for both regular and special elections. Brooklyn Park believes the 46-day absentee period could be shortened while still meeting the intended goals of the original legislation.

Brooklyn Park would also like the state to consider changes that allow for a more efficient and timely election process to fill vacancies on local boards or the City Council, rather than limiting special elections to the currently mandated dates in February, April, May, August, and November.

V. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

Background

EAB was discovered in Brooklyn Park in August 2017 and is expected to spread through the city as well as all of Minnesota over the next few years. There are more than 4,500 city owned ash trees and thousands more on private property. Removing and replanting these trees would cost more than \$4,000,000. Chemical treatment of ash trees is an option but is expensive (\$200 per tree every two years) and a long-term commitment. Untreated trees will die.

Position

The EAB epidemic is a state-wide problem and a threat to the forest system in Minnesota. The City requests the state legislature provide funding for cities to address the removal and replanting of trees to maintain a healthy and diverse forest system.

VI. Public Safety

- **Mental Health Resources to Support Community Need**

Background

Brooklyn Park's Police and Fire Departments have seen a growing incidence of mental health-related calls in recent years. These calls range from the most serious of violent crime situations to simple requests of coordinating mental health services for residents in need. We are currently deploying both a co-responder and alternate response model to respond to mental health related calls. A vast majority of the simple requests are coming from employees of group homes that are either insufficiently trained or do not have the resources to deal with their clients' needs. We receive thousands of these 911 calls per year that simply do not belong in the law enforcement arena.

Position

Brooklyn Park encourages the state to not only support local (city and county) public safety and social service entities in providing additional mental health resources to meet the need, but additionally to more meaningfully examine how can we rethink the mental health systems that are too often failing our residents. We additionally support stricter licensing of group home providers so that proper training of their staff is completed, and sufficient and proper resources are dedicated and available for the needs of their clients and to support better compensation for the professionals providing client services.

VII. Projects Leading to Regional Assets

- **Capital Support for Fencing Consortium**

Background

Over 30 public entities, including Brooklyn Park, have agreed to form a Fencing Consortium Joint Powers Agreement. The intent of the Fencing Consortium is to provide anti-scale fencing within hours, not days, around potentially impacted government building(s) in response to a critical incident. The goal of the anti-scale fencing is to de-escalate the potential tensions and try to reduce/eliminate the non-tangibles associated with civil unrest

Position

State funding to support this multi-agency emergency response and training effort will result in the purchase of anti-scale fencing which will not only considerably reduce the on-going cost to Brooklyn Park and Fencing Consortium members (improving equitable access to this de-escalation tool), but also allow for multiple facilities to have fencing at the same time.

VIII. Local Control

- Retail Food Licensing and Inspection – Support continued retail food licensing and inspection delegation to cities and counties from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) and Health (MDH) under a new agreement that builds a better local-state partnership. Related, we encourage the Minnesota Departments of Agriculture and Health to consolidate and simplify retail food delegation agreements to increase efficiency.

IX. Homeowners' Associations

- Homeowners Association (HOA) Reform

Background

Brooklyn Park is home to a significant number of homeowner associations (HOAs). In recent years, there have been a growing number of complaints reported to City officials regarding disputes between HOAs and residents within HOAs. Examples of issues that have arisen include lack of transparency by HOAs to using HOA by-laws in punitive and manipulative ways. Local government has minimal ability to resolve many of the disputes that arise given the laws that govern HOAs are established by the State of Minnesota.

Position

Brooklyn Park recommends monitoring recent legislation establishing an HOA Ombudsman in the Department of Commerce before suggesting additional legislation.

X. Development and Tax Base Growth

Background

The City strives to ensure the development of vacant and under-utilized parcels brings tax base growth that allows the city to sustain quality of life and city services while improving regional equity. State resources are needed to assist in attracting this desired and needed development, which would include higher densities that support economic vitality and community amenities.

Position

- Approve special adjustments to TIF regulations that will provide for increased resources for critical development areas – BioTech Innovation District and Brooklyn Boulevard
- Invest in the proposed Brooklyn Park Bio-Tech Innovation District concept
- Stable and secure funding sources for economic development are critical to the community's long-term success. The State should support economic development funding and continue to enhance local development tools.
- Increase resources for the Mainstreet Program and modify the program to include acquisition as an eligible use, remove funding cap and reduce match, and allow cities to participate.
- Increase strategies and financial resources to support anti-displacement of small businesses

- Continue competitive funding for the Minnesota Investment Fund and the Job Creation Fund, including focus on local hiring and hiring of BIPOC.
- No changes that would further restrict the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to accomplish the community's development/redevelopment objectives.
- Changes to the TIF statute that treat energy efficient and/or alternate energy technologies, sustainable site design and other "green" development alternatives as qualified development costs.
- The extension, clarification, and broadening of the Opportunity Zone and New Markets Tax Credit programs to further encourage and incentivize investment in these areas.
- Change to the TIF statute to allow use for re-habilitation of existing buildings and other displacement prevention initiatives.
- Change to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Workforce Development Fund and associated programs to focus on employer engagement and workforce development strategies that specifically seek to close the wage and employment gap for communities of color.
- Change to DEED programs that provides appropriate training for employers to increase their cultural competency and encourages employers to be employers of choice for BIPOC.

XI. Neighborhood Vitality

Background

Aging housing and infrastructure in areas with declining private investment strains local government resources and threatens to destabilize neighborhoods. The State of Minnesota needs to continue to take actions that provide the tools necessary to manage areas of disinvestment. While this problem requires additional resources, the State can take policy actions to alleviate some of the local impacts without stressing the State's budget.

Position

- Increase flexibility of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) pooling for specialized uses, such as housing rehabilitation.
- Eliminate regulatory language that creates barriers to using the funds to reinvest in areas of disinvestment.
- Secure state and federal resources and provide financing tools for cities to help pay for costs associated with neighborhood reinvestment.

XII. Economic Inclusion

Background

The City is committed to advancing policies and programs that specifically advance populations who have historically had unequal access to the economic benefits and opportunities in our community. The State of Minnesota should support efforts to acknowledge this unequal access and reverse it. Specifically, the following policies should be considered:

Position

- Support anti-displacement investments and initiatives for the BLRT project to prevent direct displacement as well as economic displacement of lower

income community members and cultural communities (see the attached coordinated proposal)

- Add Brooklyn Park as an eligible area in the Promise Act legislation, which would open up funding for grants and/or loans to businesses, non-profit organizations, and developers in communities that have been adversely affected by structural racial discrimination, civil unrest, lack of access to capital, a loss of population or an aging population, or a lack of regional economic diversification.
- Support for BIPOC and local community members to become developers to keep and grow wealth in the community, preferencing local and BIPOC developers in funding formulas for development subsidy programs
- Support for BIPOC and local community members to access financing to purchase and improve residential and commercial investment properties in their community, similar to the NEON Commercial Loan Program in North Minneapolis
- Create more protections for tenants within commercial properties, with a focus on small lower-income businesses who are at greater risk of displacement.
- Requirements in state economic development subsidy programs for local and BIPOC hiring Increase workforce training funding options for local solutions including state funding for youth and adult workforce development programs with a priority on high unemployment census tracts.
- Continue funding for the Job Skills Partnership, DEED youth and adult workforce programs, youth employment programs and other workforce training programs administered by the state that led to jobs that provide a living wage and benefits and help address racial disparity gaps in employment and educational attainment.
- Establish innovative workforce programs and partnerships that foster workforce readiness, including state funding for youth and adult programs, the Minnesota State University System, and DEED Workforce Centers and its programs.
- Create a payroll tax credit for job training programs that invest in employees.

XIII. Improved Multi-Modal Transportation Access and Mobility

Background

Capturing the full economic development potential of new development and redevelopment in Brooklyn Park requires improved transportation investments in the region. Mobility is a major barrier to access to opportunities for many of our residents.

Position

- *Provide State resources to leverage the federal funding for the METRO Blue Line Extension LRT (BLRT) project, which will bring five LRT stations to Brooklyn Park.*
- *Increase funding and maximum grant award amount for the Transportation Economic Development (TED) Program or similar programs to support strategic infrastructure investments that promote economic development.*
- *Add east-west bus connections and suburban circulator routes for better transit mobility.*
- *Increase funding for regional and local trail connections, especially in aging neighborhoods*

that lack connectivity, to improve pedestrian and bike connections within and across communities.

- *To support and expand bike and ped facilities, provide additional funding for Active Transportation initiatives for Cities.*

XIV. Support Career Pathways in High Demand, High Wage Professions

Background

Brooklyn Park promotes the growth of the manufacturing, IT, and healthcare sectors within the community and throughout the state. These sectors provide an excellent opportunity for future economic growth and employment and should continue to be supported. Brooklyn Park supports programs that provide incentives for business to expand and continue to contribute toward increasing economic competitiveness for the state.

Position

- Continue and expand investment tax credits and other tax incentives for investing in the life science, medical device, and precision manufacturing, healthcare, and IT industries.
- Continue and expand venture capital funding pools for emerging companies.
- Modify Tax Increment Financing (TIF) pooling uses to support manufacturing, IT, and healthcare investments in communities with high poverty and/or unemployment

XV. Affordable Housing

Background

Housing affordability and stability is a growing concern within the community, especially at the 30% Area Median Income (AMI) level. With the rising cost of housing, many of our residents are priced out or housing cost burdened. In addition, efforts need to be focused on reducing racial disparities in homeownership and housing cost burdens. More resources for getting pipelined affordable and attainable housing projects in the suburbs approved is critical in furthering opportunities and access to suburban communities for low- and moderate-income households.

Position

- Policy that results in better oversight of Homeowners' Associations.
- Reduce barriers to and promote fair housing and equal opportunity.
- Increase tax-exempt bond allocation to maximize and expand the development of affordable housing opportunities within the pipelined affordable housing projects in the suburbs.
- Increase investment in the preservation of existing Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing through re-habilitation and long-term affordability programs, including expansion of TIF for this purpose.
- Consider a statewide mixed- income housing policy to increase the number and dispersion of affordable housing in the state and provide resources through Minnesota Housing to develop such housing.
- Expand the project-based Housing Choice Voucher program regionally to support 30% AMI housing.
- Expand TIF to allow use for 30% AMI housing at a smaller percentage than the 20

percent of each project (i.e., 10% affordable at 30% AMI being eligible)

- Consider “just cause” eviction changes at state level
- Increase resources for programs and services for people experiencing homelessness

XVI. Other areas of support

- Poverty – Brooklyn Park and a growing number of other suburbs have an expanding share of the metropolitan area’s residents living in poverty. Historically, state recognition and resources to address poverty have been focused on Minneapolis and St. Paul. Recognition and resources to combat poverty should be focused on all concentrated areas of poverty, not just in the urban core.
- Active and Engaged Seniors – Brooklyn Park is committed to promoting age-friendly policies that prioritize resources and services that meet the needs of older adults to ensure they can live healthy, engaged, and independent lives. A key component of this strategy is expanding mobility and transportation options to better connect aging residents with essential services and community activities.
- Affordable access to Broadband Internet Services – Brooklyn Park supports the state and federal efforts that encourages private and public investments making broadband internet accessible and available to all residents.
- Clean Energy and Addressing Climate Change - Locally and globally, we are seeing the negative impacts of climate change on our built and natural systems. Brooklyn Park has been a leader in addressing these impacts through efforts such as the installation of the largest city-led solar installation in the state. Brooklyn Park supports efforts to reduce the impacts of climate change and provide the resources and supports at the state, local and individual levels to continue making strides that will slow and hopefully reduce the impact of climate change.
- Emergency Assistance – The state needs to review the criteria for when resources can be distributed for individuals that are in need of emergency assistance. This is focused on Residents and Businesses are unjustly displaced by public policy or predatory landlord practices.
- Policy Partners – Brooklyn Park’s partner organizations have advanced several additional legislative proposals that would enhance the livability, economic vitality, and financial condition of the city. While not identified as the city’s top priorities, Brooklyn Park may support these initiatives as well.

2026 Policy Partners

- Metro Cities
- League of Minnesota Cities
- Economic Development Association of Minnesota
- Urban Land Institute Minnesota
- Minnesota Housing Partnership
- National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
- Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association

- Mpls Regional Chamber
- North Metro Mayors
- Connect Blue Line Now Coalition! and Blue Line Coalition
- Center for Economic Inclusion
- Center for Urban and Regional Affairs at the University of Minnesota

2026 Federal Legislative Priorities and Positions

City of Brooklyn Park

Overview

Brooklyn Park works together with its partners to support proposals for new legislation in Washington DC designed to strengthen the community. The following list of federal priorities and positions constitute Brooklyn Park's federal agenda for 2026.

I. Pathways to citizenship

Background

Approximately 25 percent of Brooklyn Park residents were born outside the United States. Over the years, shifting federal immigration policies have left many of these individuals facing uncertainty and fear about their ability to remain in the country. This uncertainty has impacted not only their lives but also their families and communities.

Position

The City of Brooklyn Park supports initiatives aimed at providing a pathway to citizenship for residents and others across the country who do not currently have permanent legal status. Ensuring that these individuals can secure stable, long-term residency will help strengthen communities and provide security for families.

II. Blue Line Light Rail Transit

Background

The Blue Line Light Rail Transit (BLRT) Extension Project will extend the existing light rail line from Target Field in Minneapolis through four communities (Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal and Brooklyn Park) to Oak Grove Parkway, locating five stations in Brooklyn Park. Bringing LRT to the northwest suburbs will improve mobility and access to jobs and will ensure the northwest portion of the region remains competitive.

Position

The City of Brooklyn Park supports policies, laws, and funding (federal, state, regional and local) to finalize planning and move to the construction and operation phases of the BLRT extension project.

III. Housing Policy and Resources

Background

Access to quality affordable housing is a growing problem in the nation impacting the stability of families in Brooklyn Park. Federal housing policies have a huge impact on the availability of affordable housing through programs and funding mechanisms that impact housing construction, housing rehabilitation, and homeowner lending. Data show

households of color experience significantly lower homeownership rates and have more difficulties in finding quality affordable rental housing.

Position

The City supports programs and policies that result in a mixed-income approach. The City feels that it has taken on a larger share of the affordable housing need for the Region and the State. Our focus is on integration with affordable housing units integrated into market rate projects and neighborhoods. Resources should be refocused on these mixed-income projects and only utilized when projects can demonstrate an actual financial gap need. Finally, much of our affordable housing needs and priorities are not the production of new affordable housing, but reinvestment in aging affordable housing needing upgrades and retrofits.