

Date: Nov. 25, 2025
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Nov. 25, 2025, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota.

Commissioners appointed to canvassing boards for House District 47A special election

The Washington County Board of Commissioners made appointments to the Washington County Canvassing Board Nov. 25 for the State House of Representatives District 47A special primary election and special election.

Commissioner Karla Bigham, District 4, and Commissioner Michelle Clasen, District 5, were appointed to be on the Washington County Canvassing Board for the special primary election that would be held on Tuesday, Dec. 16, 2025, if necessary. The canvassing board meeting would be held at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2025, in the Board Room on the fifth floor of the Washington County Government Center.

Commissioner Clasen and Commissioner Stan Karwoski, District 2, were appointed to the Washington County Canvassing Board for the special election on Tuesday, Jan. 27, 2026. The canvassing board meeting will be held at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2026, in the Board Room on the fifth floor of the Washington County Government Center.

The Washington County Canvassing Board reviews and certifies the election results. This board is made up of the county auditor, the court administrator of the district court in the county, the mayor of the most populous municipality in the county (Woodbury), and two members of the County Board.

Contact: Amy Stenftenagel, Property Records and Taxpayer Services Director, 651-430-6182

County Board approves Natural Resources Block Grant for soil and water programs

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved a Natural Resources Block Grant (NRBG) from the Minnesota State Board of Water and Soil Resources Nov. 25.

The block grant totals \$170,720 in funds to assist in the implementation of programs designed to protect and improve water resources in 2026 and 2027.

The block grant comprises the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Shoreland, Local Water Management, Wetland Conservation Act, Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS), and fiscal year 2026 Minnesota Pollution Control Agency SSTS Program Grants.

Contact: Stephanie Souter, Public Health and Environment Senior Community/Environmental Health Program Manager, 651-430-6071

County approves transfer of former Woodbury license center property

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the transfer of the former Washington County Woodbury License and Service Center property at 2150 Radio Dr. to the City of Woodbury on Nov. 25.

The site was originally conveyed to Washington County in 1983 under an agreement with the City of Woodbury for use as a license and service center. In 2025, the county opened a new public service facility, the Central Service Center, at 1261 Woodlane Dr., replacing the Woodbury location.

Under the original 1983 agreement, the county was required to sell the property back to the city, excluding the land value, when it was no longer used as a service center.

In 2023, Washington County and the City of Woodbury approved an amendment to that agreement. The amendment recognized the city's investment in infrastructure improvements outside the Central Service Center property — including pedestrian connections and related improvements — as equal in value to the existing facility. Those contributions serve as payment in place of a cash transaction for the property transfer.

Contact: Sharon Price, Public Works Senior Right of Way Specialist, 651-430-4391

County Board holds public hearing on proposed Lodging Ordinance #221

The Washington County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing Nov. 25 on the county's Lodging Ordinance #221.

The county is proposing revisions to the current Lodging Establishment Ordinance #181 to include statutory references to state law and to advance efforts to prevent human trafficking and sex trafficking from occurring in lodging settings within Washington County.

The proposed ordinance revisions will:

1. Update and simplify defined terms used throughout the ordinance.
2. Require that establishments be licensed if they are advertised for use.
3. Adopt the Minnesota Sex Trafficking Prevention Training requirements and apply them to all licensed establishments.
4. Permit the county to offer annual ordinance training and require attendance by establishment staff.
5. Require closure of parts of establishments that are impacted by an imminent health hazard.
6. Require that an establishment develop and implement a sex trafficking prevention plan when recommended by law enforcement.

One member of the public spoke during the public hearing.

Contact: Caleb Johnson, Public Health and Environment Senior Community and Environmental Health Program Manager, 651-430-6680

County Board holds public hearing on 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan

The Washington County Board of Commissioners conducted a public hearing Nov. 25 to receive comments on the county's five-year capital improvement plan, or CIP.

No members of the public spoke during the hearing. Comment letters were received from Stillwater Township, West Lakeland Township, and the cities of Afton, Cottage Grove (2), Forest Lake, Hastings, Hugo, Lake Elmo, Marine on St. Croix, Oakdale, Scandia, St. Paul Park, and Woodbury. The comments will be entered into the record of the hearing.

The county released its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2026-2030 in early October. After comments on the plan are received, the board will consider adopting the plan, along with the county's 2025 budget, Dec. 16.

Capital improvement planning is one of the fundamental building blocks in the county's budget and financial management. The CIP establishes a guide for making capital investment decisions in a logical, deliberate, and accountable manner.

The 2026-2030 CIP includes just more than \$493.8 million in community investment — including a proposed \$40 million bond sale in 2027 — across 105 projects or programs. The CIP outlines plans to maintain current infrastructure and includes projects for new roadways, buildings, and park facilities to address a growing county population and service demands.

The investments in the CIP help keep roadways safe, facilities efficient and effective, and provide amenities that serve the needs of county residents. The five-year plan calls for 69% of the funds to be spent on roads and bridges, 27% on public facilities, and 4% on parks and land. The CIP also plans for the maintenance of 296 miles of county highway, along with separated trails, intersections, signs, culverts, and roundabouts.

Funding sources for the CIP include intergovernmental revenue — meaning funds coming from other levels of government — as well as the county's transportation tax and wheelage tax, and bond proceeds.

Projects planned to be completed in 2026 are included in the 2026 countywide budget, as well as the CIP.

The county maintains 4,800 acres of parkland, with 75 miles of trails and five beaches. The five-year CIP includes more than \$17.6 million in investments through 16 plans and projects in the county's parks. Those include:

- Hardwood Creek Regional Trail extension
- Big Marine Park Reserve improvements
- Lake Elmo Park Reserve facility improvements
- Lake Elmo Park Reserve single-track trail
- Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park lighted trails

The five-year CIP includes \$132.2 million in planned investments for 21 public facilities projects and programs in the county. Plans include funding for:

- Public Works South Shop maintenance facility construction
- R.H. Stafford Library improvements
- Park Grove Library remodel project
- Central and South Yard Waste sites

- Electric vehicle charging stations
- Countywide facility improvements

The five-year CIP includes \$343.8 million in planned investments for 68 road and bridge projects and programs across the county. These projects and programs include:

- County Highway 50 corridor studies and intersection improvements in Forest Lake.
- County Highway 27 corridor expansion project from Interstate 694 to County Highway 12 in Mahtomedi.
- Highway 36/Lake Elmo Avenue (County Highway 17) interchange project in Lake Elmo.
- County Highway 16 corridor safety and pavement preservation projects in Woodbury.
- County Road 19A to 100th Street Realignment Project in Cottage Grove.

Contact: Wayne Sandberg, Public Works Director, 651-430-4339

County Board holds public hearing on updates to Transportation Sales Tax project eligibility list

The Washington County Board of Commissioners held a public hearing to consider an update to the eligibility list associated with the county transportation sales tax (CTST) Nov. 25.

The updates to the eligibility list include the addition of funding for the development and construction of county road and bridge projects. Eligible projects are limited to those formally designated by the County Board through an adopted project eligibility list. The board is considering adding the County Road 19A/100th Street Realignment Project to the CTST Eligibility List.

State law authorizes counties to implement a transportation sales and use tax to support transportation-related projects. Counties may impose a transportation sales tax of up to 0.5% on taxable retail sales, as well as an excise tax of \$20 per motor vehicle purchased from a retail seller within the county. Revenues generated through this tax must be dedicated exclusively to capital costs for transportation projects and/or transit operating expenses.

No members of the public spoke during the public hearing.

The board will consider adopting the updated list at its Dec. 16 meeting.

Contact: Frank Ticknor, Public Works Deputy Director, 651-430-4319

County Board approves 2026 fee schedule

The Washington County Board of Commissioners approved the county's revised fee schedule for 2026.

The fee schedule includes several updates for county fees for 2026. Changes to the fee schedule are in response to updates to state legislation and guidance from state departments that determine eligibility for services.

Other fee changes were made to align the fees with the cost of processing an application or providing services.

New to the fee schedule are electric vehicle charging station initial hook-up fees and charging rates, and added fees for digital passport photos.

According to state law, county fees may be assessed:

- To record, file, certify, or provide copies of any instrument, document, or paper.
- For service provided by any county office, official, department, court, or employee.

Fees must have a reasonable relation between the fee and the cost of providing the service.

The board conducted a public hearing on the proposed fee schedule Nov. 18.

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