

CHAPTER 5800

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

MATTERS OF METROPOLITAN SIGNIFICANCE

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5800.0010 PURPOSE.

Minnesota Statutes, section 473.173, requires that the Metropolitan Council adopt and put into effect rules establishing standards, guidelines, and procedures for determining whether any proposed project is of metropolitan significance. This chapter will be used in the review of all such projects. The purpose of this chapter is to assure that the total effect of a proposed project alleged to be of metropolitan significance is considered and the orderly and economic development of the area is promoted. It is not the council's intent to use this chapter to stop development, but rather to work out differences among parties and arrive at consensus.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0020 DEFINITIONS.

Subpart 1. **Scope.** As used in this chapter, the following terms have the meanings given them.

Subp. 2. **Adjacent governmental unit.** "Adjacent governmental unit" means all local governmental units and independent commissions whose jurisdiction includes or adjoins, in whole or in part, that of the governmental unit(s) in which the proposed project is located.

Subp. 3. **Affected governmental unit, state agency, or metropolitan agency.** "Affected governmental unit," "state agency," or "metropolitan agency" means all local governmental units, independent commissions, and state or metropolitan agencies whose legal rights, duties, or privileges may be substantially affected by a proposed project.

Subp. 4. **Bad faith.** "Bad faith" means a conscious and willful decision to act in a manner intending to mislead, deceive, or distort the truth, including but not limited to making a claim which one knows to be groundless or unfounded.

Subp. 5. **Chair.** "Chair" means the chair of the Metropolitan Council.

Subp. 6. **Commercial-agricultural area.** "Commercial-agricultural area" means those lands certified by local governments as eligible for agricultural preserves under the Agricultural Preserves Act, Minnesota Statutes, sections 473H.01 to 473H.18.

Subp. 7. **Comprehensive plan or local comprehensive plan.** "Comprehensive plan" or "local comprehensive plan" means a comprehensive plan of a local governmental unit as required by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act, Minnesota Statutes, sections 473.851 to 473.872.

Subp. 8. **Comprehensive sewer plan.** "Comprehensive sewer plan" means a plan required by the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission which describes the collection, treatment, and disposal of all sanitary sewage, including the installation, operation, and maintenance of on-site sewage disposal facilities.

Subp. 9. **Independent commission, board, or agency.** "Independent commission," "board," or "agency" means governmental entities with jurisdictions lying in whole or in part within the metropolitan area, including independent or special school districts whose administrative offices were located within the metropolitan area as of April 15, 1976, but not including the metropolitan agencies.

Subp. 10. **Land Use Advisory Committee or advisory committee.** "Land Use Advisory Committee" or "advisory committee" means an advisory committee established by the Metropolitan Council pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 473.853.

Subp. 11. **Local governmental unit or unit.** "Local governmental unit" or "unit" means any city, town, county, school district, special district, or other political subdivision or public corporation, other than a metropolitan agency, lying in whole or part within the metropolitan area.

Subp. 12. **Mainline.** "Mainline" means those lanes of a highway that carry through traffic.

Subp. 13. **Metropolitan agency.** "Metropolitan agency" means the Metropolitan Waste Control Commission, the Regional Transit Board, the Metropolitan Transit Commission, and other agencies as the legislature may designate.

Subp. 14. **Metropolitan area.** "Metropolitan area" means the area over which the Metropolitan Council has jurisdiction, including only the counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota excluding the city of Northfield, Hennepin excluding the city of Hanover, Ramsey, Scott excluding the city of New Prague, and Washington.

Subp. 15. **Metropolitan Council or council.** "Metropolitan Council" or "council" means the Metropolitan Council established by Minnesota Statutes, section 473.123.

Subp. 16. **Metropolitan Development Guide.** "Metropolitan Development Guide" means the comprehensive development guide prepared by the council to achieve the orderly and economic development of the metropolitan area.

Subp. 17. **Metropolitan highway.** "Metropolitan highway" means those highways identified in the Transportation Guide/Policy Plan to serve the region. They include both interstate freeways and major arterials.

Subp. 18. **Metropolitan system.** "Metropolitan system" means the regional airport, transportation, sewer, recreation open space, and solid waste facilities and plans for facilities outlined in the Metropolitan Development Guide.

Subp. 19. **Metropolitan significance review or significance review.** "Metropolitan significance review" or "significance review" means a review conducted by the Metropolitan Council according to this chapter.

Subp. 20. **Party.** "Party" means the requester, sponsor, and local governmental unit(s) in which the proposed project is located and any person whose legal rights, duties, or privileges may be substantially affected by a significance review who is admitted as a party by the significance review committee, administrative law judge, or council. The council will not be a party to a significance review except when it initiates the review.

Subp. 21. **Person.** "Person" means any individual, association, trust, partnership, joint venture, public or private corporation, metropolitan agency, local governmental unit, independent commission, state agency, government or governmental subdivision, unit, or agency other than a court of law.

Subp. 22. **Petition.** "Petition" means a document containing signatures submitted to the council according to the procedures for initiation of a significance review, which contains, at the time that the signatures are added, a description of what the petition is for, a reference to the metropolitan significance rules, and a brief summary of the reason for the petition.

Subp. 23. **Phased proposed project.** "Phased proposed project" means a proposed project which is divided into separate stages or segments, one or more of which may be of metropolitan significance.

Subp. 24. **Policy plan or guide chapter.** "Policy plan" or "guide chapter" means the Metropolitan Development Guide chapter adopted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 473.145, the policy plans for metropolitan agencies adopted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 473.146, the Recreation Open Space Development Guide/Policy Plan, adopted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 473.147, the Solid Waste Management Development Guide/Policy Plan, adopted pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 473.149, and amendments to any of these plans. These plans or chapters are incorporated by reference in this chapter. They are available through the Minitex interlibrary loan system and subject to frequent change. The policy plans or guide chapters referenced in any metropolitan significance review will be those in effect at the time the review is initiated.

Subp. 25. **Proposed project.** "Proposed project" means a project or action involving the construction, installation, establishment, siting, demolition, reconstruction, or improvement of any structure or facility, or the subdivision or drilling, extraction, clearing, excavation, or other alteration of any lands or waters, planned or proposed to be undertaken, in whole or in part within the metropolitan area, by any person.

Subp. 26. **Public agency.** "Public agency" means a local governmental unit, metropolitan agency, independent commission, state agency, or any government or governmental subdivision, unit, or agency other than a court of law.

Subp. 27. **Publicly subsidized.** "Publicly subsidized" means a direct expenditure or in kind contribution by a state, regional, or local governmental unit to a private project (one that is not publicly financed) for any purpose for which the governmental unit is not reimbursed; or a long-term loan by a state, regional, or local governmental unit to a private project. Public subsidy is determined by how the funds are used and not by the source of the revenues provided. Public subsidy includes, but is not limited to, the purposes in items A to E.

A. Construction of utility improvements without special assessment to the benefited properties of 20 percent or more of the total collective cost of the improvement.

B. Acquisition of property and site development, including demolition, clearance, and relocation together with transfer of title to the property to a private party at a price below the actual costs of acquisition and development.

C. Construction of private, on-site improvements including drainage facilities, site grading, parking, lighting, landscaping, and related improvements.

D. Construction or payment for construction of buildings to be used by one or more private parties for commercial or industrial purposes. Construction may include parking facilities, foundations, building construction, interior furnishings, equipment, and related costs.

E. Construction or reconstruction of a county state aid or state trunk highway improvement that is determined necessary to serve increased traffic from a major private project. Highway improvements may include roadway upgrading, bridges, overpasses, entrance and exit roadway improvements, and other improvements.

Public subsidy does not include land sold at market value but below the local governmental unit's cost of acquiring and preparing the land for sale.

Subp. 28. **Publicly financed facility.** "Publicly financed facility" means a facility where a governmental jurisdiction has an ongoing obligation to pay operating costs or debt service for the facility or the ultimate responsibility to pay off bonds should other revenue sources fail.

Subp. 29. **Requester.** "Requester" means any person requesting the initiation of a metropolitan significance review.

Subp. 30. **Review period.** "Review period" means the 90-day period for a metropolitan significance review which begins on the effective date of an order to commence a significance review and automatically terminates on the 90th day following unless a suspension or extension of the review period is authorized under part 5800.0100, subpart 1 or 5800.0140, subparts 4 and 6.

Subp. 31. **Service or serve.** "Service" or "serve" means personal service or service by first class United States mail, postage prepaid and addressed to the person or party at the last known address of the person or party. Service by mail will be complete upon the placing of the item to be served in the mail.

Subp. 32. **Sewer policy plan.** "Sewer policy plan" means a component of the local comprehensive plan which describes the areas to be sewered with public facilities and a schedule for providing service to them, existing flows and flow projections for the public sewer system, standards and conditions for the installation of private systems, and areas not suitable for public or private systems.

Subp. 33. **Sponsor.** "Sponsor" means any person proposing to undertake or develop a proposed project.

Subp. 34. **State agency.** "State agency" means the state of Minnesota or any agency, board, commission, department, or educational institution of the state.

Subp. 35. **Substantial.** “Substantial” is a relative term. It imports a considerable amount or value in opposition to that which is inconsequential or small, something serious as opposed to trivial, something essential, material, or fundamental.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366; 17 SR 1279*

5800.0030 STANDARDS FOR REVIEW.

Unless a proposed project is exempt, the chair of the Metropolitan Council must issue a preliminary finding of metropolitan significance if a proposed project may cause any of the effects listed in part 5800.0040. The same criteria will be used by the council when it makes the final determination of metropolitan significance following the council review process. A proposed project may be found to be of metropolitan significance only if it meets one or more of these criteria.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0040 CRITERIA TO FIND METROPOLITAN SIGNIFICANCE.

Subpart 1. **Generally.** For the purposes of parts 5800.0070 and 5800.0130, a proposed project listed in subparts 2 to 4 has metropolitan significance if the requirements of the applicable subpart are met.

Subp. 2. **Proposed project affecting a metropolitan system.** A proposed project affecting a metropolitan system has metropolitan significance if it:

A. May result in a substantial change in the timing, staging, and capacity or service area of local facilities in a council–approved local sewer policy plan or comprehensive sewer plan.

B. May result in a wastewater flow that substantially exceeds the flow projection for the local governmental unit as indicated in the Water Resources Management Development Guide/Policy Plan, Part 1. Sewage Treatment and Handling.

C. May require a new national pollution discharge elimination system permit or state disposal system permit or a substantial change to an existing permit.

D. May result in substantially less restrictive standards and conditions to be adopted for the installation or management of private on–site sewer facilities than those described in the comprehensive plan.

E. May have a substantial impact on the use of regional recreation and open space facilities or natural resources within the regional recreation open space system. Impacts on the use of recreation and open space facilities include but are not limited to traffic, safety, noise, visual obstructions (for example, to scenic overlooks), impaired use of the facilities, or interference with the operation or maintenance of the facilities. Impacts on natural resources include but are not limited to the impact on the level, flow, or quality of a facility’s water resources (lakes, streams, wetlands) and impact on a facility’s wildlife populations or habitats (migration routes, breeding sites, plant communities).

F. May preclude or substantially limit the future acquisition of land in an area identified in the capital improvement program of the council’s Recreation Open Space Development Guide/Policy Plan.

G. May substantially affect either the function of a metropolitan airport identified in the council’s Aviation Development Guide/Policy Plan or the land use within an airport search area.

H. Is substantially inconsistent with the “Guidelines for Land Use Compatibility with Aircraft Noise” contained in the Aviation Development Guide/Policy Plan.

I. May result in a substantial change to existing or proposed metropolitan highways, highway interchanges, or intersections with metropolitan highways, or to local roadways that have interchanges with metropolitan highways. Substantial changes to the mainline, interchanges, and intersections include an increase in volume that will overload the facility, or a difference in timing, design, or location from that indicated in the Transportation Guide/Policy Plan. Changes to local roadways include changes in timing, staging, volume, capacity, design, location, or functional classification.

J. May result in a substantial change in transit service or facilities inconsistent with the Transportation Guide/Policy Plan.

K. May have a substantial impact on the use of solid waste facilities identified in the Solid Waste Management Development Guide/Policy Plan. Impacts on the use of these facilities include, but are not limited to, disruption of planned facility staging, facility access, or other interference with the operation and maintenance of the facilities.

Subp. 3. **Proposed publicly subsidized project.** A proposed publicly subsidized project has metropolitan significance if it may threaten a publicly financed facility.

Subp. 4. **Proposed project affecting a local governmental unit.** A proposed project affecting a local governmental unit has metropolitan significance if it:

A. May have a substantial physical effect on a local governmental unit other than the local unit in which the proposed project is located. More specifically, a proposed project may be of metropolitan significance if it adversely affects existing or proposed land use or development in another local government with respect to traffic, stormwater runoff, ground-water pollution, air or noise pollution, increased security needs (police, fire) or other similar impacts.

B. May result in the substantial disruption of agricultural use in the commercial-agricultural area of a local governmental unit other than the local unit in which the proposed project is located.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0050 EXEMPT PROJECTS.

Subpart 1. **Generally.** The chair will not commence a metropolitan significance review if a proposed project falls in one or more of the exempt categories in subparts 2 to 5.

Subp. 2. **Local comprehensive plan exemption.** A proposed project that is consistent with a council-approved local comprehensive plan is exempt from review for metropolitan system effects. The council shall determine whether a proposed project is consistent for system effects with the local plan.

Subp. 3. **Previous approval.** Any proposed project of a metropolitan agency or the Metropolitan Airports Commission which is within an area of that agency's operational authority or which has been or will be subject to approval by the council as part of a regional policy plan; any proposed project which has been previously approved by the council in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 473.167; or any proposed project for which a final determination has been made in a metropolitan significance review is exempt from review unless the proposed project has been materially altered subsequent to the final determination.

Subp. 4. **Emergency project.** Any proposed project which must be immediately undertaken to prevent or mitigate an emergency is exempt from review. The following standards will form the basis for determining if an emergency exists:

(1) the degree to which the alleged emergency circumstances were foreseeable;

(2) whether alternate means can alleviate the emergency; and

(3) the probable effect of the proposed project in mitigating the emergency circumstances.

Subp. 5. **Minor alterations.** Any proposed project consisting exclusively of administrative or maintenance activity or a negligible improvement, expansion, or change of use or use intensity is exempt from review.

Subp. 6. **Vested rights.** Any proposed project for which 30 days have elapsed since a negative declaration on an Environmental Assessment Worksheet as described in part 4410.1700, or a determination of adequacy on an Environmental Impact Statement as described in part 4400.2800, or in the event no environmental review is required, any proposed project for which 30 days have elapsed since a local governmental unit has approved a plan amendment or rezoning to accommodate the proposed project is exempt from review. A met-

ropolitan significance review cannot be initiated on any proposed project where a sponsor has vested rights.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0060 INITIATION OF REVIEW.

Subpart 1. **By requesters.** A metropolitan significance review may be requested by:

A. a resolution from the unit of government in which the proposed project is located;

B. a resolution from an affected local governmental unit, school district, or other independent commission;

C. a petition signed by the smaller of the following: at least 5,000 residents of the metropolitan area 18 years of age or older, or that number of residents 18 years of age or older of an affected local governmental unit which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the number of persons who voted in that affected governmental unit during the most recently held state general election. The petition must designate at least one and no more than three persons to act as requesters on behalf of the petitioner;

D. a resolution or letter from a duly authorized executive officer or governing body of state agency;

E. a resolution or letter from a duly authorized executive officer or governing body of a sponsor; or

F. a resolution from an affected metropolitan agency.

Subp. 2. **By council.** The council may review proposed projects of metropolitan significance regardless of whether the council has received a request to initiate a review.

Subp. 3. **Information submission.** A request for review under subpart 1 must be accompanied by an information submission. The purpose of the information submission is to demonstrate an arguable claim of metropolitan significance. An information submission must contain the following:

A. the names and addresses of the requester, the sponsor, and the governmental unit(s) in which the proposed project is located;

B. a description of the proposed project including its planned character, location, function, use, and size;

C. a statement of the criteria contained in the appropriate subpart of part 5800.0040 which cause the proposed project to be of metropolitan significance, and a discussion of why it is not exempt; and

D. a statement of the effect the proposed project will have on metropolitan systems or existing or planned land use or development, or if publicly subsidized, the effects on a publicly financed facility, including the facts and opinion upon which the statement is based.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0070 PRELIMINARY FINDING OF METROPOLITAN SIGNIFICANCE.

Subpart 1. **Review of information submission.** Upon receipt of a request accompanied by an information submission, the chair must within ten working days examine the materials and make a preliminary finding of metropolitan significance based on the following requirements:

A. the request complies with and satisfies the requirements of part 5800.0060;

B. the significance review has not been requested in bad faith;

C. the information submission arguably demonstrates that a metropolitan system or existing or planned land use or development will be affected by the proposed project or that a publicly subsidized project has an effect on a publicly financed facility; and

D. the proposed project is not exempt.

After receiving a request to commence a metropolitan significance review, but before making a preliminary finding of metropolitan significance, the chair may meet with any of the parties and may request additional information.

Subp. 2. **Scoping of issues.** In the preliminary finding, the chair will identify which of the issues raised in the information submission are legitimate for significance review and specify any other issues which should be included in the significance review. Only these issues will be included in the scope of review at the public hearing, unless the significance review committee gives at least seven days notice before the public hearing to all parties that additional issues will be added to the scope of review. A description of the issues will be included with the notice.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0080 COMMENCEMENT AND DETERMINATION NOT TO COMMENCE.

Subpart 1. **Council initiation.** A significance review initiated by the council will commence on the day the council adopts an order to commence a significance review.

Subp. 2. **Initiation by requesters.** If the chair determines that the request complies with and satisfies the requirements of part 5800.0060, the chair will commence the significance review by issuing an order for commencement effective as of the date of the order. The order will include the chair's preliminary finding of metropolitan significance. If the chair decides not to commence a significance review, the chair must immediately inform the parties of the determination and basis for it.

Subp. 3. **Appeal.** Person(s) requesting a review, the governmental unit(s) in which the proposed project is located, and the sponsor may appeal the chair's decision not to commence the significance review to the council by submitting a written request within seven days following notification of the chair's determination. The council must review this request at a public hearing and either direct the issuance of an order for commencement or affirm the chair's decision.

Subp. 4. **Notice of commencement of significance review.** The council must serve notice of the commencement of a significance review on all parties, adjacent governmental units, metropolitan agencies, and the Land Use Advisory Committee within five days following the determination to commence a review. The notice will contain the order for commencement, the information submission or a summary of the submission, an order to the sponsor to suspend action on the proposed project, and a schedule for the metropolitan significance review. Notice that the significance review has been commenced will be published in the next following issue of the council bulletin, as described in Minnesota Statutes, section 473.247.

Subp. 5. **Review period.** The council will complete a metropolitan significance review within 90 days following commencement unless suspended or extended under part 5800.0100, subpart 1, or 5800.0140, subparts 4 and 6.

Subp. 6. **Implementation hold during review period.** Upon commencement of a metropolitan significance review, no person will commence site alteration on a proposed project until the council's issuance of a final determination concerning the proposed project or the expiration of the significance review period, whichever occurs first.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0090 SIGNIFICANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE.

Immediately following the commencement of a significance review, the chair will appoint a significance review committee composed of no more than seven or fewer than three individuals all of whom are members of the council or the Land Use Advisory Committee. The chair will appoint at least one council member and one Land Use Advisory Committee member to all significance review committees and will designate one of the review committee members to be the chair of the committee.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0100 REVIEW ALTERNATIVES.

Subpart 1. **Mediation.** The chair may determine that the proposed project under review is more suited to mediation than to a formal public hearing process and may suspend the met-

metropolitan significance review for up to 30 days to bring the parties together to resolve differences. The resolution of these differences will be outlined in a written agreement. The agreement must be signed by all parties and must be accepted by the council. If the parties do not reach agreement within the suspension period, the significance review will resume. Any party may appeal the chair's decision to use mediation by submitting a written request to the council within seven days following the chair's decision. The council must review this request and either direct use of the public hearing process or affirm the chair's decision.

Subp. 2. Public hearing process. Unless mediation resolves the differences among the parties, the significance review will include a formal public hearing.

Subp. 3. Use of an administrative law judge. At any time before beginning the public hearing, the significance review committee may decide to use an administrative law judge appointed by the Office of Administrative Hearings for conducting the public hearing. A hearing held by an administrative law judge will be conducted in accordance with the rules of the Office of Administrative Hearings for contested cases, parts 1400.5200 to 1400.8500, to the extent those rules are not inconsistent with the time periods and procedures specified in this chapter. The report of the administrative law judge appointed by the significance review committee will be transmitted to the review committee. The committee will review the report and may use it as a basis for developing committee findings and recommendations. Any party may make a request for delegation of responsibility to an administrative law judge.

Subp. 4. Phased proposed project. When undertaking a significance review of a phased proposed project, the council may consider the total project or any separate independently viable stage. In determining independent viability, the council will consider whether a particular stage is viable without subsequent development, the interrelationship between the stage and subsequent development and whether the stage would foreclose the option of making modifications to mitigate metropolitan system effects. Any significance review of a separate stage will not preclude subsequent significance review of other stages.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0110 STEPS IN HEARING PROCESS.

Subpart 1. Preliminary statement. Within 30 days after the review is commenced, the sponsor, the requester, and the governmental unit in which the proposed project is located must submit to the significance review committee or administrative law judge a preliminary statement containing information, facts, and opinions regarding the following:

- A. the applicability to the proposed project of part 5800.0030;
- B. the significance and effect of the proposed project on metropolitan systems or on local governments or, if publicly subsidized, the effects on a publicly financed facility; and
- C. the appropriate remedy.

In addition, the sponsor must indicate all other governmental reviews and approvals required in connection with the proposed project, and their current status.

Subp. 2. Submissions. The sponsor and the local governmental unit within which the proposed project is located must submit the following to the significance review committee or administrative law judge:

- A. copies of any information given by the sponsor to any local governmental unit required to approve the proposed project; and
- B. a copy of the findings, report, or determination made by the local government on the proposed project.

Subp. 3. Participation by nonparties. The significance review committee will decide the manner and extent of participation by persons other than the parties.

Subp. 4. Significance review report. At least ten days before the public hearing conducted by the significance review committee or the administrative law judge, council staff will prepare a written report on the proposed project. This report will not contain any findings or recommendations about the metropolitan significance of the proposed project. The report will be sent to all parties and made available to the public. Parties may submit statements

about the report to the significance review committee at any time before the close of the record of the public hearing. The report will contain:

A. a listing, including sources, of all information submitted to the committee or to the administrative law judge;

B. a description of the proposed project;

C. the criteria listed in part 5800.0040 that apply to the proposed project; and

D. a summary of the issues presented in each of the preliminary statements, including any disagreements regarding facts of the proposed project.

Subp. 5. Council information. The council may enter information related to the review of the proposed project into the record of the public hearing. This material and its authors will be subject to examination at the public hearing.

Subp. 6. Additional information. On its own initiative or at the request of a party, the significance review committee may request additional information from any party before the close of the public hearing. If a party does not reasonably comply with a request, the significance review committee may order that the subject matter of the information to be produced be considered established for purposes of the significance review in accordance with the claims of the party requesting the information or refuse to allow the party failing to produce the information to support or oppose designated claims or prohibit the party from introducing the designated information into the hearing record.

Subp. 7. Public hearing. The significance review committee or an administrative law judge appointed by the committee must hold at least one public hearing on the proposed project. Notice of this public hearing must be published in the council bulletin and served on all parties at least 15 days prior to the hearing. The public hearing must be conducted in a manner designed to protect the rights of all persons and parties and to ensure fundamental fairness. Public hearings conducted by an administrative law judge will be governed by parts 1400.5200 to 1400.8500. Public hearings conducted by the significance review committee will be conducted according to the council's hearing procedures as contained in Procedures for Adopting or Amending a Chapter of the Metropolitan Development Guide. This publication is incorporated by reference in this chapter. It is available through the Minitex interlibrary loan system and subject to frequent change.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0120 COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL.

Following the public hearing and the receipt of the report of the administrative law judge, if any, the significance review committee must adopt a committee report with findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations to the Metropolitan Council.

The committee's report will be based on information submitted before the close of the record of the public hearing. Committee members may use their experience, technical competence, and specialized knowledge in the evaluation of this information. In addition, the report may include comments on the consistency of the proposed project with council plans and policies.

The findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations of the significance review committee will be served on all parties and immediately transmitted to the council. All information and material considered by the significance review committee will be made available to council members.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0130 COUNCIL DETERMINATION.

Subpart 1. Consideration of findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations. The council will consider the committee report and all information submitted before the close of the record of the public hearing in making a final determination on the proposed project. The council may hold additional meetings to consider the proposed project or direct the significance review committee to conduct further specific significance review activity.

Subp. 2. Metropolitan council final determination. The council, after review and consideration of the metropolitan significance review committee's report, must adopt a final

determination including findings of fact, conclusions, and recommendations with regard to the metropolitan significance of the proposed project. The council must find that the proposed project is or is not of metropolitan significance, based on the conclusion that it does or does not cause one or more of the effects contained in the appropriate subpart in part 5800.0040. The council may also comment on the consistency of the proposed project with other council plans and policies. Lack of consistency with council plans and policies other than those listed in part 5800.0040 will not constitute a basis for a determination of metropolitan significance.

Subp. 3. **Proposed projects of metropolitan significance.** Upon a determination of metropolitan significance, the final determination also must indicate:

A. whether an amendment to a regional policy plan would eliminate the determination of metropolitan significance and further, whether the council intends to initiate an amendment to the affected policy plan to achieve consistency between its plan and the proposed project; or

B. whether the proposed project should be suspended for up to one year from the date of final determination. If the council orders a suspension, the order may contain conditions or modifications to the proposed project which, if complied with, would cause the council to eliminate the suspension; or

C. without ordering a suspension, how the proposed project could be modified to eliminate the determination of metropolitan significance.

Subp. 4. **Notice to parties.** Copies of the council determination will be served on all parties within seven days following its adoption.

Subp. 5. **Elimination of suspension.** The sponsor of any proposed project suspended by the council with conditions or modifications may request removal of the suspension based on meeting the conditions of the suspension. Upon receipt of a request for removal of the suspension, the council will hold a public hearing to consider the request. Parties to the significance review will be notified at least 15 days before the public hearing on the removal and given an opportunity to speak at the hearing concerning compliance with the conditions of suspension.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0140 PROCEDURAL OPTIONS.

Subpart 1. **Bad faith.** The council may dismiss with prejudice any significance review which it finds has been initiated in bad faith. This determination will not be made without allowing the parties to hear, rebut, and present evidence regarding the dismissal.

Subp. 2. **Withdrawal of review.** At any time during the conduct of a significance review, the requester or sponsor may request that the council withdraw the proposed project from significance review, setting forth the reasons for the request. If all the parties agree, the council may grant the request and allow a proposed project to be withdrawn from review.

Subp. 3. **Settlement.** The parties to a significance review may execute a settlement agreement with regard to the proposed project at any time before the issuance of a final determination. The agreement must be in writing, signed by all parties, and will be subject to acceptance or rejection by the council.

Subp. 4. **Suspension.** The council may suspend a significance review for not more than 90 days to allow the council to review a plan amendment for the proposed project under the provisions of the Metropolitan Land Planning Act. The council also may suspend a significance review for not more than 90 days to await the decision of a public agency whose authorization is required for the proposed project to proceed. In the event that the agency denies authorization for the proposed project, the council may dismiss the metropolitan significance review.

The sponsor and the requester may agree to suspend any of the time periods specified for a significance review. The agreement must be approved by the significance review committee. If the council initiates a significance review, the council and the sponsor may agree to suspend any of the time periods.

The council may suspend a significance review to await the submission of adequate supporting information.

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Subp. 5. **Review coordination.** When appropriate, the council will coordinate the significance review with other reviews, such as the environmental review process.

Subp. 6. **Extension.** At any time before the council determination, the significance review committee and the parties may agree to extend the review period in order to collect more information. The time extension must be specified in a written agreement between the committee and the parties. The council, acting on its own initiative, also may extend the time period of a significance review to await the submission of adequate supporting information.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*

5800.0150 JUDICIAL REVIEW.

A final determination adopted by the council and a determination by the council not to commence a significance review constitute final decisions by the council for purposes of judicial review.

Statutory Authority: *MS s 473.173*

History: *13 SR 2366*