

Hennepin County

# 2025~~6~~ Federal Legislative Priorities and Platform

As approved February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026



March 2025

[hennepin.us](https://www.hennepin.us)



# Here together. For the better.

In Hennepin County, we have:

## A superior transportation system

Hennepin County builds roads, bridges and transit lines, and is served by freight and passenger rail, shipping, an international airport and more.

## Healthcare innovation

From Hennepin Healthcare, a level one trauma center, to dozens of medical based companies spread across the county, we drive healthcare innovation. Hennepin Healthcare System's partnerships with the researchers at the University of Minnesota and other healthcare incubators across the county are a source of medical innovation that benefits the entire world.

## Access to capital

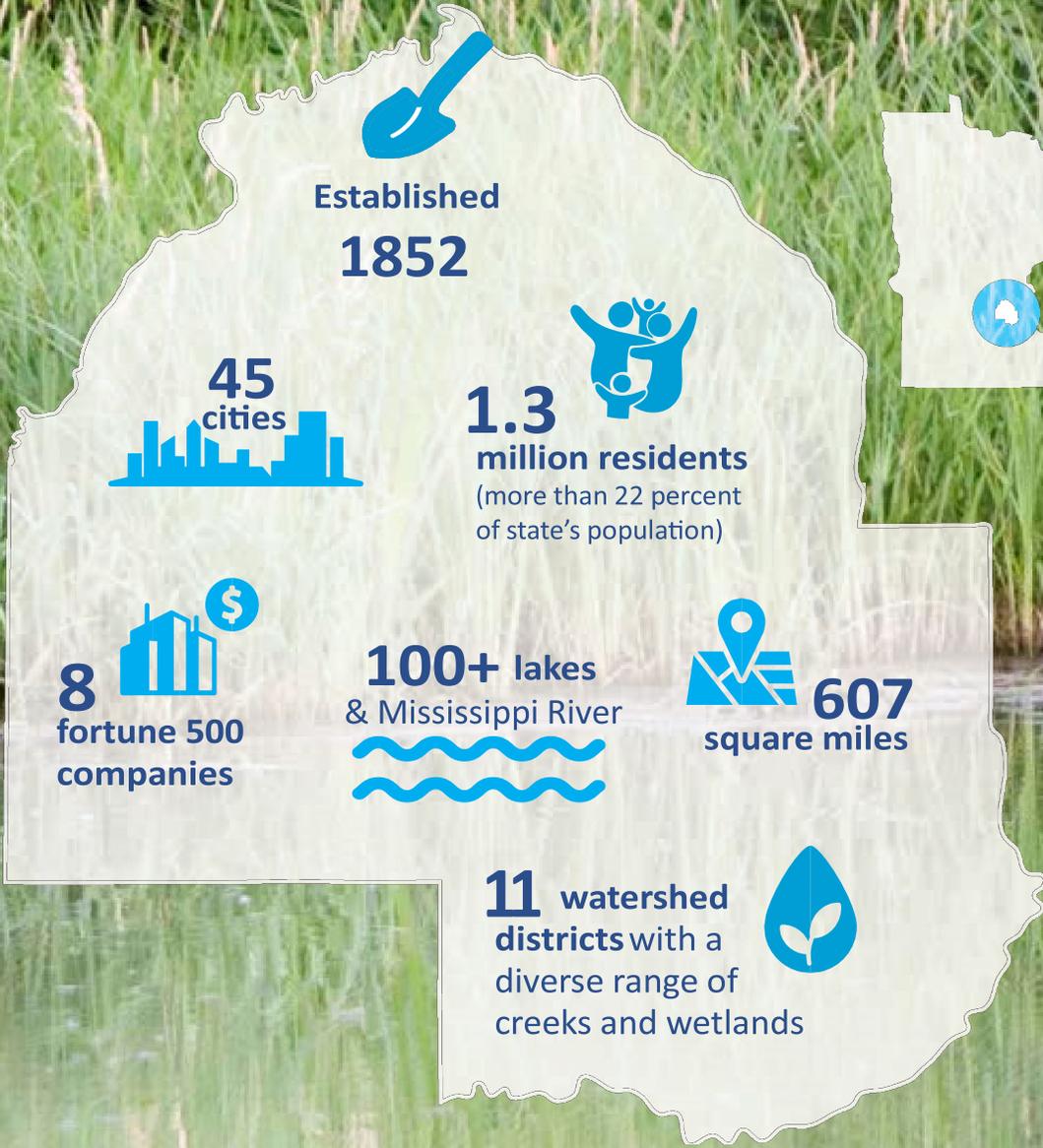
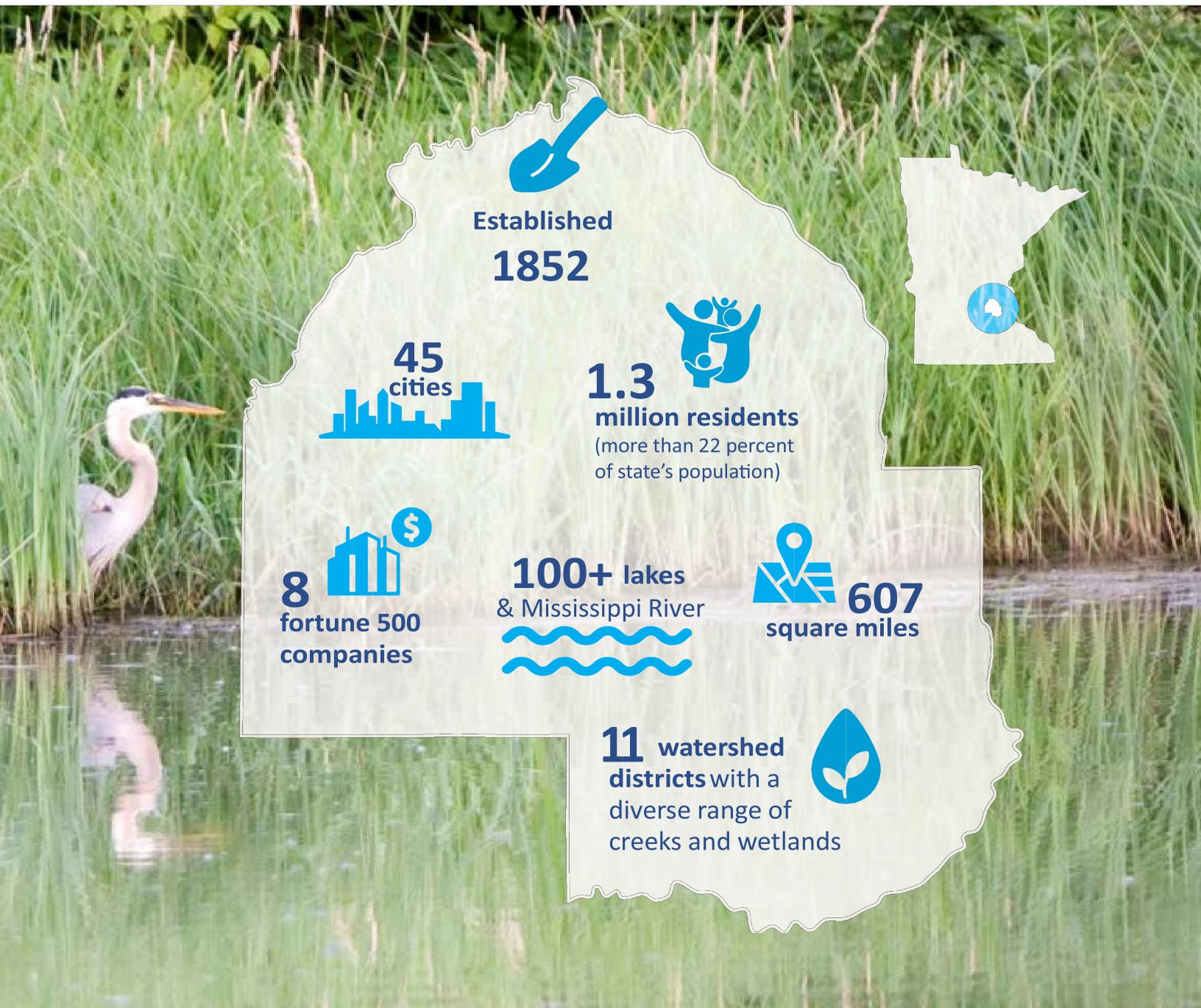
Businesses under \$1 million in revenue in the Twin Cities region access up to \$800 million in loans every year.

## Financial stability

Hennepin County has an estimated GDP of \$129 billion and has maintained a AAA credit rating since 1977.

As a global hub of commerce and a national center for health care delivery and innovation, our relationship with the Federal Government has local, regional, and national significance.

**A thriving Hennepin County is important to the country.**



# Platform policy priorities

## Health and human services

Encourage innovation and recognize racism as a public health crisis in addressing complex health and human services problems; and recognize public health crises through prevention. Maximize partnerships among federal, state, county, and private funders to support sustainable models of health and wellness

## Safety net health services

Address racism as a public health crisis by ensuring access to meaningful and affordable healthcare and promoting the financial vitality of safety net systems, like Hennepin Healthcare System, in the context of federal reforms to publicly funded healthcare programs

## Housing

Leverage limited resources more efficiently and seek additional investments to advance stable, safe, and dignified housing for individuals and families and reduce disparities

## Meaningfully re-build the federal/county partnership

Hennepin County believes government functions best when the county has strong federal partners who respect the Constitution and the protections it affords all residents. Working with elected officials and career nonpartisan staff has been a cornerstone. Hennepin County remains committed to data- and research-informed best practices that lead to better outcomes for residents. Without this partnership, the county will be unable to continue service delivery as it currently does at a level needed for residents to succeed. The county urges the federal government to restore critical county and healthcare funding to preserve and protect the fiscal and health care stability of, as well as the financial viability of safety-net systems for Hennepin County and its residents.

# ~~Platform direct~~ Congressionally

- Blue Line extension (Bottineau LRT) — \$20 million
- ~~Washington Avenue Bridge — \$5 million~~
- Addiction Medicine Center of Excellence — Hennepin Healthcare System — \$5 million

**directed funding priorities**

# Climate and environment

Protect the environment and conserve resources



Support legislation and administrative policies that protect the environment, conserve resources, build equity and resiliency, and promote adaption to the impacts of climate change. Promote and support laws and programs that will help achieve the county's Climate Action Plan, Zero Waste, and Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions goals

# Climate and environment

- Support federal investment and partnership to protect natural resources and enhance community forests to mitigate the effects of climate change, reduce air pollution, sequester carbon, and respond to the loss of trees due to emerald ash borer and other invasive pests and pathogens
- Continued federal support for the funding and redevelopment of brownfields
- ~~Support federal investment in technologies that address climate change and increase renewable energy production, including geothermal, hydrogen, wind, solar, and renewable natural gas~~
- Support federal investment and adoption of policies that reduce transportation carbon emissions and support pathways toward miles travelled reductions
- Support federal investment and adoption of policies that accelerate a zero waste future including, pass national extended producer responsibility policies, establish labeling and design standards, reduce single use plastics and toxics in materials, reduce climate impacts from landfilling, funding infrastructure that aid in solutions for waste and food waste prevention and management
- **Support policies and investments to protect critical environmental ecosystems and improve water quality, including a priority placed on preventing and managing aquatic invasive species.**

# Elections

Support federal funding for county elections operations



Ensure every eligible voter has access to free, fair, secure, and accurate elections, administered with high trust and integrity

# Elections

- Support federal funding for county elections operations, including election security, equipment, software, staffing, voter education and outreach, communications, and election materials translation
- Support a federally mandated and standardized early voting period
- Support the expansion of jurisdictions required to provide elections materials in multiple languages and modalities in order to improve understanding of elections, increase accessibility for voters who speak a language other than English, and improve voter participation
- **Support continued authority of state and local governments to administer elections. Oppose efforts to restrict free and fair elections via Executive Order or legislative action.**

# Health and human services

Improve outcomes for all residents



Encourage innovation and recognize racism as a public health crisis in addressing complex health and human services problems. Maximize partnerships among federal, state, county, and private funders to support sustainable models of health and wellness

# Health and human services

- Protect the fiscal stability of the county as well as the health and economic well-being of our residents by supporting efforts to mitigate the harmful impacts of HR 1, including reducing costly new administrative burdens and programmatic cuts to critical county-administered programs such as SNAP, Medicaid, and waived services.
- Oppose further cuts and changes and advocate to protect and restore funding to Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP and other federal, state, and county partnerships that would reduce or eliminate services for residents
- Make permanent COVID-19 pandemic-related waiver authority **permanent** for health and human services programs, including reimbursement for all telehealth modalities and continuous eligibility to promote coverage and increase access to healthcare
- Maximize state flexibility under Medicaid to encourage innovation in the delivery of care that improves overall population health and rewards efficiency in both adult and juvenile systems
- Advance funding models that recognize the unique needs and service models within Children’s Mental Health that require a robust array of Behavioral Health strategies and support for families
- Support interventions to address critical public health needs such as unsheltered homelessness, emergency preparedness, HIV/infectious diseases, mental health, suicide prevention, violence prevention, **gun safety**, opioids and other substance use disorders, food insecurity, **gender affirming care**, and maternal and child health
- Ensure individual and community health by safeguarding science-based vaccine access and policy.
- Stabilize the hemp-derived THC market in order to effectively regulate and advocate for necessary changes to the industry while avoiding negative criminal legal system involvement.
- Support and promote comprehensive and accessible reproductive care and sex education. Oppose efforts to restrict access to reproductive healthcare

- Eliminate federal barriers to data sharing so that local governments can better support care coordination and efficient service delivery **while protecting resident data and privacy**
- ~~Support elimination of the Medicaid exclusion for all pre-adjudicated persons under supervision by the criminal legal system. Support state flexibility in the Medicaid program to cover such individuals regardless of the status of their charges or sentence~~
- Support resource allocation and policies that fully integrate medical and behavioral health services and provide patient-centered, **community culturally** responsive care
- **Reduce regulatory burdens (e.g., Institution of Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion, data sharing limitations) that compromise services for people experiencing mental illness** ~~before they become involved in the criminal legal system~~
- Adequately fund continued direct federal investment for protection of older adults to maximize partnerships among federal, state, and county agencies to build an effective and sustainable Adult Protective Services program
- Support expanding allowable services covered by the Family First Preservation Services Act to include **community culturally** responsive services
- ~~Reduce administrative burdens, eliminate time limits, and increase access to SNAP~~
- Support elimination of barriers to reduce annual requirements for maintaining home and community-based service access for people with disabilities or older adults with disabling but stable conditions

# Housing and community development

Support safe and stable housing



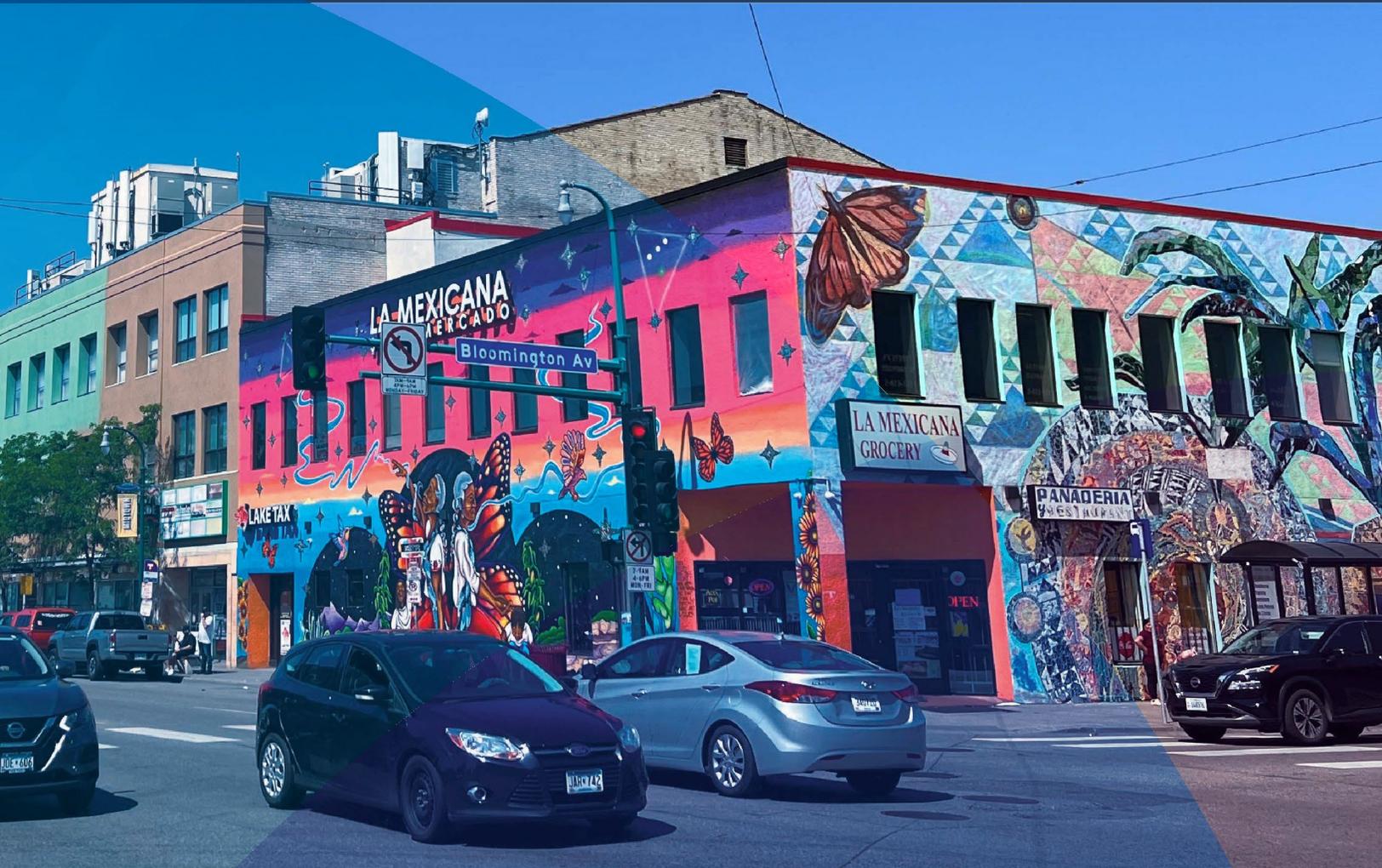
Support the full continuum of affordable housing options,  
including for homebuyers and renters

# Housing and community development

- Increase federal funding for rental assistance and affordable housing investments that enable veterans, seniors, persons with disabilities, foster youth, and low-income working families to secure safe, stable housing as a foundation for employment, health, and self-sufficiency, reducing long-term costs while supporting our most vulnerable citizens. Expand Section 8, increase funding for CDBG, HOME, and Housing Trust Fund, and increase allocation authority for LIHTC. ~~for programs that assist households with very low incomes, veterans, the elderly, foster youth, and people with disabilities to afford accessible, dignified, decent, safe, and sanitary housing. In particular, significantly expand the Section 8 program and housing finance programs~~
- Restore and protect funding for, and protect the people served by, critical county funding streams such as CDBG, HOME and HUD’s Continuum of Care.
- Support investments in proven, housing-focused homeless response efforts that make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring while reducing long-term cost to federal, state, and local governments. ~~efforts to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring, including expanded funding for a housing-focused homeless response system~~
- Enact comprehensive housing legislation that meaningfully increases the supply of affordable housing and reduces barriers to rental affordability for working families, seniors, veterans, and vulnerable populations.

# Justice and equality

Ensuring equal protection



Ensure all residents receive equal protection under the law.

Equip government to protect, defend, and enable everyone's ability to live freely and achieve their human potential

# Justice and equality

- Support comprehensive immigration reform that creates pathways to citizenship, authorizes employment for new arrivals, addresses workforce development opportunities, provides access to healthcare and education, and supports **safe**, fair and equitable interface with local public safety agencies.
- Oppose efforts to reduce or restrict access to **due process or** the social safety net for immigrants, and eliminate barriers to refugee resettlement.
- Support and adequately fund essential safeguards for the voting rights of all citizens, including no-excuse in-person and mail-in early voting, and automatic voter registration. Oppose efforts to restrict access to voting
- Support equal protection in law and federal regulations for all LGBTQI persons in housing, employment, healthcare/human services, education, and public accommodations
- Support federal efforts and funding for digital **opportunities equity** to ensure all residents have access to affordable and reliable high-speed broadband choices, computing devices, training, and internet-safety skills. Partner with the Schools, Health, and Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition and other allies to support policy strategies and additional funding to **eliminate disparities address inequities** that persist, including affordability issues, language barriers and skill gaps

# Law, safety and justice

Protect public safety



Support criminal justice, mental health and sentencing reforms that reduce racial disparities, advance proven diversion strategies and facilitate reentry back into the community

# Law, safety and justice

## **Support criminal justice, mental health and sentencing reforms that ~~reduce racial~~ eliminate disparities, advance proven diversion strategies and facilitate reentry back into the community**

- ~~– Reduce regulatory burdens (e.g., Institution of Mental Disease (IMD) exclusion, data sharing limitations) that compromise services for people experiencing mental illness before they become involved in the criminal legal system~~
- Support efforts to ensure federal enforcement agents perform their duties without violating the right to due process, privacy, access to legal counsel, and other Constitutional protections. Create a mechanism for the safe reporting of suspected civil rights violations by federal enforcement agents and protect the state and county’s abilities to investigate violations of state and federal law.**
- Support continued federal investment in local re-entry programs and other initiatives critical to reducing adult and juvenile involvement in the criminal legal system
- Encourage and reward state and local collaborations that reduce barriers to employment, housing, and behavioral health services, and support successful reintegration of individuals into the community
- Provide federal support for evidence-based practices before, during, and after initial contact with the juvenile and adult criminal legal systems
- Support full funding for programs authorized under the Violence Against Women Act, Victims of Crime Act, and other federal programs supporting the victims of crimes

# Safety-net health services

Ensure access to health-care services for all



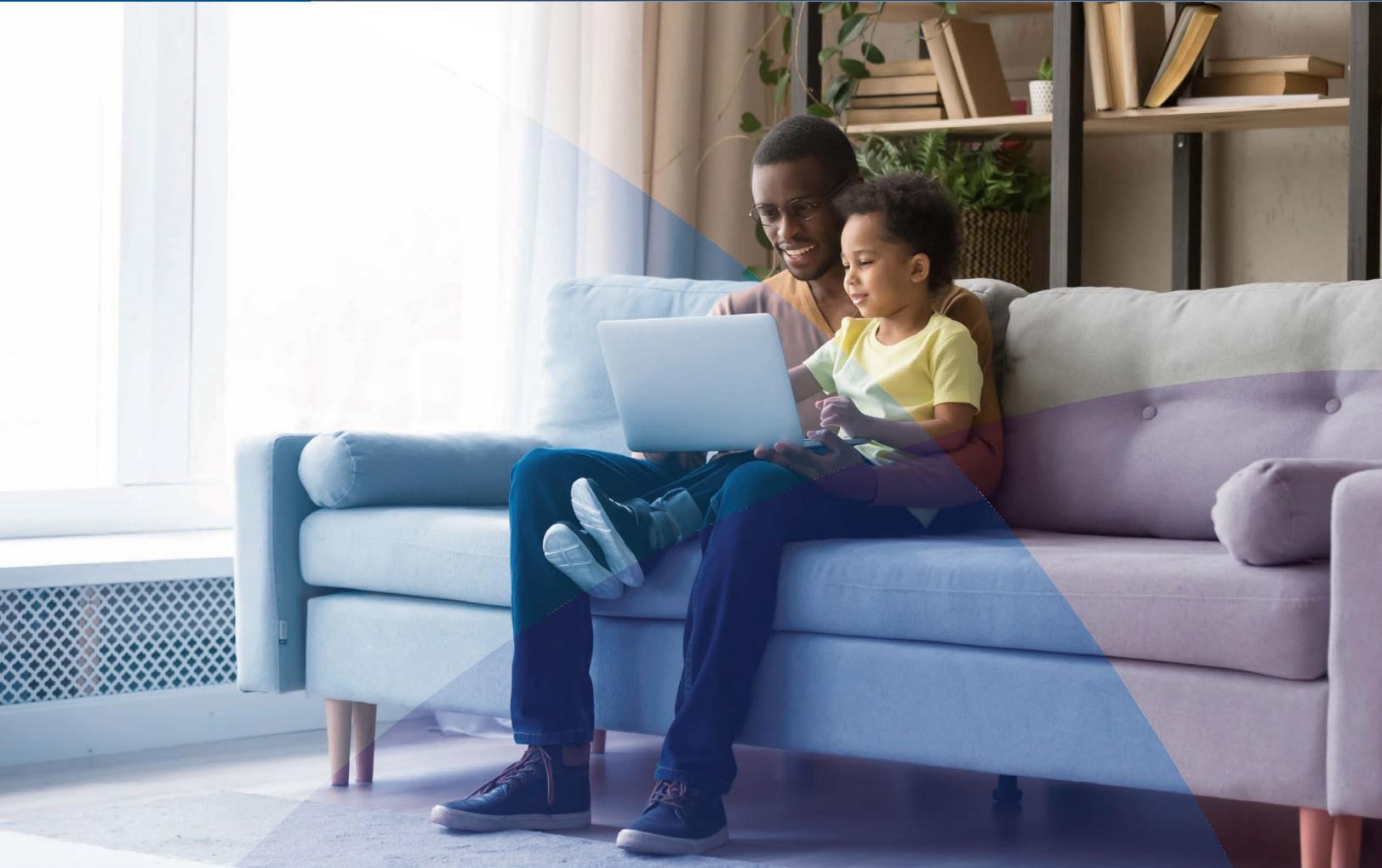
Address racism as a public health crisis by ensuring access to meaningful and affordable healthcare and promoting the financial vitality of safety-net systems, like Hennepin Healthcare System, in the context of federal reforms to publicly funded healthcare programs

# Safety-net health services

- **Support the state’s safety-net health system’s ability to continue providing life-saving care to all Minnesotans by efforts to minimize harm from federal changes to Medicaid** ~~By and protecting~~ critical funding streams and payments ~~to safety-net providers~~, including the 340B Drug Pricing Program, Graduate Medical Education, Medicaid direct payments, and supplemental payments for Medicare and Medicaid.
- Promote the long-term financial vitality of safety-net systems ~~by aligning federal reimbursement with the cost of care,~~ by supporting payment methodologies in both Medicaid and Medicare that recognize the challenges of caring for a disproportionate share of medically and socially complex patients
- Promote the health of our patients by protecting and expanding meaningful health insurance coverage, access to life-saving prescriptions, and investments in medical research and academics, mental health, maternal health, including healthcare for birthing people, and child and adolescent health

# Taxes

Assure flexibility to serve our residents



Support federal tax policies to leverage local investment in infrastructure, housing, and services

# Taxes

- Support continued tax-free status of municipal bonds and private activity bonds. Restore local government authority to advance refund tax-exempt bonds (authority was eliminated in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017)
- Preserve and strengthen the Low-Income Housing, Federal Historic, and New Markets tax credit programs
- **Oppose legislation that shifts cost-burden from long-established federal programs to local property tax payers**

# Transportation

Strengthen the long-term value of neighborhoods and communities



Sustain and strengthen the federal-state-county partnership that supports the nation's roads, bridges, transit, and rail systems. Ensure Minnesota's transportation infrastructure supports a 21st-century economy and vibrant, active communities

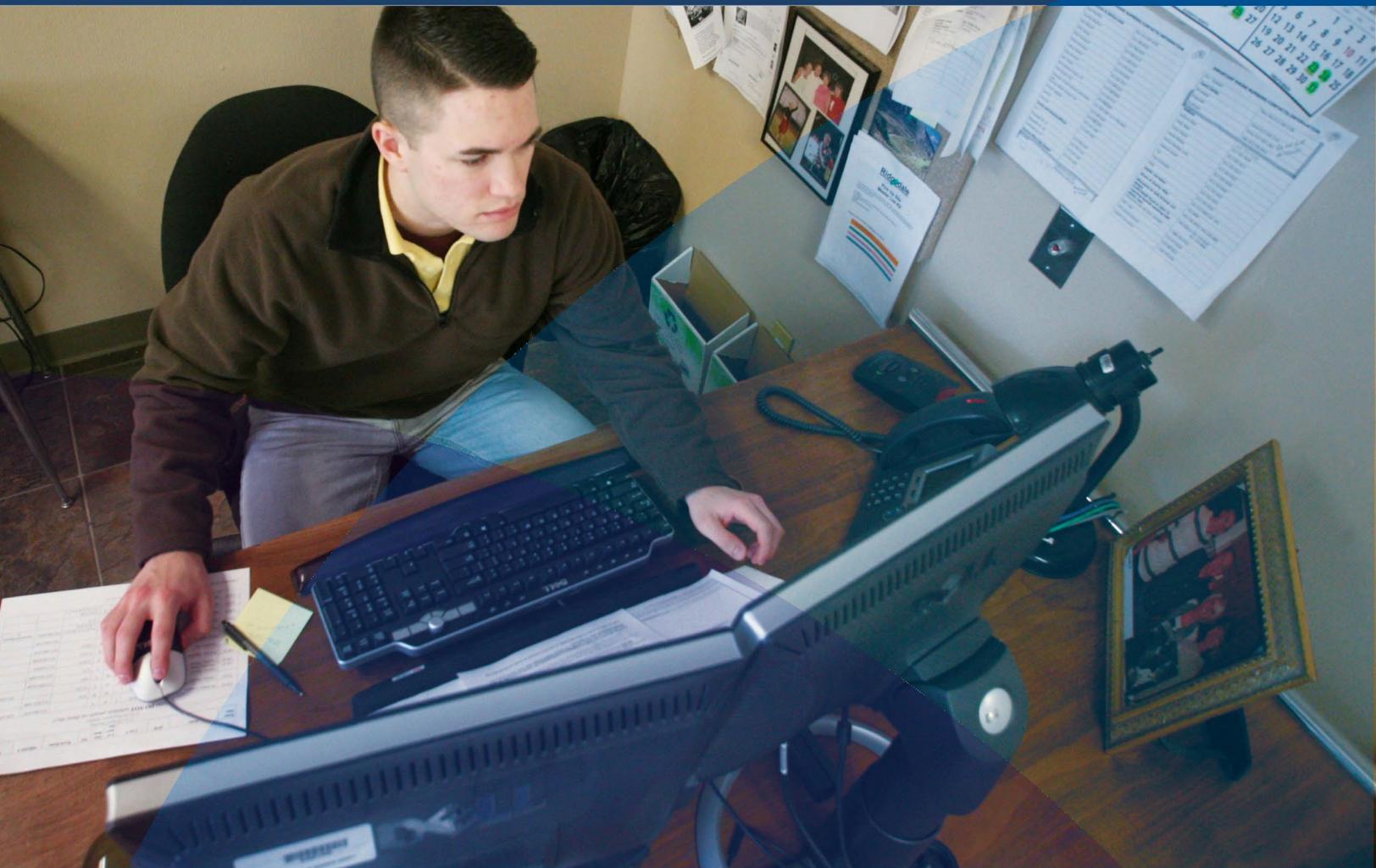
# Transportation

- Increase infrastructure investment through new sources of revenue and support continued federal partnerships in projects such as the Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program
- Support key investments:
  - Green Line extension (Southwest LRT)
  - Blue Line extension (Bottineau LRT)
  - Highway 55 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)
- Support infrastructure funding at levels authorized in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act

- Support anti-displacement efforts to ensure current residents, small businesses, and cultural institutions are able to benefit from infrastructure and investment

# Workforce development

Meet the future workforce needs



Meet the future workforce needs of Hennepin County and other employers and address persistent disparities by connecting well-trained and qualified individuals to high-demand jobs in our region

# Workforce development

- Support full funding for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), but without the 50% training requirement for the Adult and Dislocated Worker program
- Support regional sector-based partnerships providing career pathways to promote economic inclusion, address employment and income disparities, and meet industry hiring needs
- Support efforts to raise and protect wages **and increase opportunities for competitive employment** for residents at the lowest income levels to reflect regional costs of living

# Hennepin County Board of



**Jeffrey Lunde**  
District 1, IGR Co-Chair  
612-348-7881  
jeffrey.lunde@hennepin.us



**Irene Fernando**  
District 2, Chair  
612-348-7882  
irene.fernando@hennepin.us



**Marion Greene**  
District 3  
612-348-7883  
marion.greene@hennepin.us



**Angela Conley**  
District 4, IGR Co-Chair  
612-348-7884  
angela.conley@hennepin.us



**Debbie Goettel**  
District 5, Vice Chair  
612-348-7885  
debbie.goettel@hennepin.us



**Heather Edelson**  
District 6  
612-348-7886  
heather.edelson@hennepin.us



**Kevin Anderson**  
District 7  
612-348-7887  
kevin.anderson@hennepin.us

A-2400 Government Center, Minneapolis, MN 55487-0240

## Commissioners

612-348-3081

### County Administration

A-2303 Government Center, Minneapolis, MN 55487-0233

~~David J. Hough~~ **Jodi Wentland**

County Administrator

612-348-7574

county.admin@hennepin.us

---

## Intergovernmental Relations

A-2305 Government Center, Minneapolis, MN 55487-0235

612-348-3233

Liz Young

Director

Cell: 612-559-0447

liz.young@hennepin.us

Liz Doyle

Deputy Director

Cell: 612-801-6075

elizabeth.doyle@hennepin.us

Wanda Cannon

Public Policy Manager

Cell: 612-559-6510

wanda.cannon@hennepin.us

Brennan Furness

Public Policy Manager

Cell: 612-235-0938

brennan.furness@hennepin.us

Kirk Pederson

Public Policy Manager

Cell: 612-432-0447

kirk.pederson@hennepin.us

Akolade Gbadamosi

Public Policy Manager

Cell: 612-471-8783

akolade.gbadamosi@hennepin.us

Meg Montgomery

Public Policy Manager

Cell: 612-801-6459

megan.montgomery@hennepin.us

---

## Hennepin Healthcare System

701 Park Avenue, S6.107, Minneapolis, MN 55415

Susie Emmert

Senior Director, Advocacy and Public Policy

Cell: 651-278-5422

susie.emmert@hcmcd.org

Jessica Oaxaca

Advocacy Engagement Manager

Cell: 507-828-8604

jessica.oaxaca@hcmcd.org

---

# Hennepin County Board of Commissioners

A-2400 Government Center  
300 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, MN 55487-0240  
612-348-3081

[hennepin.us](http://hennepin.us)

