

Minneapolis–Saint Paul International Airport via Unsplash



Metropolitan Airports Commission

MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Project Summary

Since 2019, Verdis Group has partnered with the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC), which owns and operates the Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and six reliever airports, to align and integrate sustainability enterprise-wide. What began as foundational work to set 2030 emissions, water, waste, and engagement goals has evolved into comprehensive implementation where people across the organization participate in what they help create.

Using a living systems framework that treats organizational change as emergent rather than imposed, we facilitated participatory workshops, interviews, and a collaborative planning process that helped MAC leadership establish their ambitious 2030 sustainability goals. Our approach recognizes that sustainable change happens when diverse perspectives shape both direction and implementation.

We have helped cultivate the conditions for the MAC's sustainability ecosystem to thrive. Today, we support the facilitation of the collaborative strategy and tactical implementation of the Executive Sustainability Committee (ESC) and the four working groups: emissions, water, waste, and engagement. Through intentionally designed annual workshops with cross-functional dialogue, we've helped build relationships that transcend departmental silos, connecting 70+ staff to shape sustainability strategy.

Our services have included annual action planning design, Net Zero Pathway management, climate vulnerability assessments for all MAC airports, sustainable procurement guidelines with Scope 3 emissions guidance, and ongoing data refinement. While the MAC was briefly without a sustainability manager, we filled that role during the transition.

With the living systems approach, the MAC has embraced long-term thinking and piloting new approaches while maintaining strategic alignment. We continue advising on actions to strengthen the MAC's adaptive capacity to stay ahead of the curve on climate action and resilience.



SERVICES PROVIDED

- Change Management
- Organizational Alignment
- Living Systems Framework
- Strategic Sustainability Planning
- Sustainability Project Implementation
- Sustainability Governance
- Climate Vulnerability Assessment
- Net Zero Pathway
- Sustainable Procurement
- Annual Workshop Design & Facilitation
- Sustainability Office Support

PROJECT DETAILS

Date: 02/2019 - 2026+

Partner:

[Kathleen Allen and Associates](#)

Relevant Links:

[2025 Annual Sustainability Report](#)

Challenges

1. The MAC set ambitious 2030 sustainability goals that necessitated a clear roadmap.
2. Siloed efforts were limiting progress.
3. As new priorities emerged, the MAC needed support navigating more complex areas including climate resilience, sustainable procurement, and employee and tenant engagement.

Solutions

1. We helped form four working groups tasked with creating detailed roadmaps, including the Net Zero Pathway, with clear steps to achieve the MAC's 2030 sustainability goals. We provide annual action planning facilitation to guide ideation, prioritization, and ownership of strategies.
2. To strengthen interconnectedness and unlock progress, ESC sponsors are assigned to priority projects. Annual sustainability workshops bring the ESC and working groups together, accelerating collaboration and decision-making.
3. We conducted climate vulnerability assessments for all MAC airports, are developing sustainable procurement guidelines, including purchased goods and services Scope 3 emissions, and continue providing technical expertise to integrate these efforts with existing sustainability work.

Leading Change

The living systems framework provides foundational language for communication and consensus-building across the MAC. Over 70 staff across all MAC divisions now actively participate in sustainability projects—engaged through facilitation practices that honor diverse perspectives and create space for emergent solutions. This participatory approach has generated measurably increased support for sustainability efforts enterprise-wide, with staff reporting they 'understand how to influence change' and feel ownership beyond the core sustainability team.

What began as cultivating the soil and creating conditions for success is now bearing fruit. The shift from alignment to implementation exemplifies successful organizational change management: engaging people as active participants created the distributed leadership necessary for enterprise-wide transformation. Strengthened relationships between the ESC and working groups have accelerated change and innovation. The MAC has strengthened the long-term thinking essential for climate action, integrated sustainability into their purpose and core values, and demonstrated leadership in sustainable aviation fuel. Their [2025 Annual Sustainability Report](#) showcases significant progress, positioning the MAC as a model for systematic, enterprise-wide sustainability integration in the aviation industry.

“Verdis Group helped us better align our sustainability efforts with our corporate strategy and set stretch goals at an enterprise level. With Verdis Group’s help, we’ve made tremendous progress in a short period of time.”

Brian Ryks, CEO

Sustainability in Aviation

The aviation industry faces increasing pressure to decarbonize operations and build climate resilience. Airports must navigate evolving regulations, emerging technologies like sustainable aviation fuel, and complex Scope 3 emissions from tenants and partners. Successfully integrating sustainability requires not only technical expertise but also organizational change management that empowers decentralized action while maintaining strategic alignment.

We look forward to combining our knowledge of the aviation industry with our deep expertise in change management and sustainability action planning to co-create purposeful change at your organization.