

Governor Walz Activates National Guard

On Thursday, 5/28 Governor Walz signed [Executive Order 20-64](#). The order comes in the wake of protests in Minneapolis and St. Paul this week following the death of George Floyd. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) is already activated for the COVID-19 response and will coordinate any support to Minneapolis, St. Paul and surrounding communities as the situation unfolds.

Governor's COVID-19 Briefings

Below are highlights from this past week's briefings from Governor Walz and his administration. See the state's [COVID-19 web page](#) for the latest specific health data.

Saturday, 5/23

Governor Walz stated that beginning on May 27, places of worship can open at 25% occupancy if they adhere to social distancing and other public health guidelines. Click [HERE](#) for details on Executive Order 20-62. The Department of Health and the Department of Employment and Economic Development has issued [detailed guidance](#) on the Executive Order.

Wednesday, 5/27

The briefing began with comments from Governor Walz, Lt. Governor Flanagan, Attorney General Ellison and Department of Public Safety Commissioner Harrington on the death of George Floyd. The Governor also announced the signing of [Executive Order 20-63](#). The order officially moves the state into [Phase II of the Stay Safe MN](#) plan. These changes were previewed by the administration [last week](#).

The administration is continuing to target congregate care facilities for testing but making testing accessible to the wider population is another important goal. Minnesota is still climbing up its curve and certain areas of the state are beginning to come up against issues of hospital capacity. The administration is prepared to stand up temporary emergency facilities should they be required.

Metro Cities COVID-19 Survey Responses

Thank you to the many city officials who responded to recent informal surveys conducted by Metro Cities. The intent of the surveys was to gather information on city responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, with focuses on city revenues, housing, economic development, and infrastructure. The survey responses are important and useful to Metro Cities' as the association advocates for city needs resulting from the pandemic, at the federal, state and regional levels of government. Summaries of the responses to the surveys can be found here: [City Finances and Revenues Survey Summary](#); [Housing, Economic and Community Development Survey Summary](#); [Transportation and Infrastructure Survey Summary](#).

Metropolitan Council Establishes Internal Housing Work Group

The Metropolitan Council has established an internal [Housing Work Group](#) made up of four Councilmembers. Council Chair Charlie Zelle, presenting his appointments to the work group at the May 27 meeting of the Council, explained that the group will provide a forum for Council members to work with Council staff on a number of items and provide a report and recommendations by the end of 2020.

The work group's charge has four items: implement the strategies as identified in the Council's Housing goals, guide the Council's work in evaluating the Livable Communities Act programs, guide the Council's work in addressing homelessness, and identify emerging housing issues for the Council's consideration.

The four Councilmembers appointed to the work group are Robert Lilligren, Chair; Reva Chamblis; Judy Johnson; and Molly Cummings.

While the work group is advisory in nature and does not have formal policymaking authority, it will issue a report and recommendations by the end of the year. The report will at a minimum include these items: progress on the implementation of strategies identified in the Council's Housing goals, evaluation of the Livable Communities Act programs for consideration for the 2021 Fund Distribution Plan, report on emerging housing issues and recommendations on action steps to take, and evaluate and make recommendation for continuation of the Housing Work Group with an identified set of items to address, if appropriate.

The Council did not indicate if the work group will meet publicly, solicit input from cities and other housing stakeholders, or release a draft report prior to the final report. Metro Cities will work to monitor the work group, provide feedback, and respond to the report in a manner consistent with its policies. Contact Charlie Vander Aarde at 651-366-7564 or charlie@metrocitiesmn.org.

Minneapolis Federal Reserve Hosts Covid-19 Webinar

The Minneapolis Federal Reserve and Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota hosted a webinar Tuesday featuring health and economic experts to discuss the pandemic and future policy responses to it. The webinar was moderated by NBC's Tom Brokaw and included keynote speaker Sir Jeremy Farrar, Director of Wellcome Trust. A panel discussion was organized by Minneapolis Fed President Neel Kashkari. Other participants included:

- Katherine Baicker, Ph.D., Dean, U of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy
- Julie Louise Gerberding, M.D., MPH, Executive Vice President, Merck & Company Inc., and former Director, Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Margaret Hamburg, M.D., Foreign Secretary, National Academy of Medicine, and former Commissioner, Food and Drug Administration
- Michael Osterholm, Ph.D., MPH, Director, Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy, University of Minnesota
- Lawrence H. Summers, Ph.D., Charles W. Eliot University Professor and President Emeritus, Harvard University, and former Secretary of the U.S. Treasury

Click [HERE](#) for a link to a recording of the webinar.

2020 Metro Cities Policy Committees

Metro Cities is preparing for its 2020 policy committees and your participation is encouraged. Meetings will be conducted remotely. Four policy committees will meet in July, August and September; see below for committees and schedules. Policy committees are open for participation by member city elected officials and staff, and a form to sign-up can be found on the Policy Committees page of the website. Whether you are new to the process or have participated in a committee in the past, we welcome your participation.

Remember:

- Committees will meet either Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday in the morning from 9:00-11:30 am or the afternoon from 1:00-3:30. Committees and dates are listed below and on our [website](#). Additional information, including remote meeting processes and access, will be posted on these pages as it becomes available.
- Please be sure to sign up for the committee(s) you wish to attend. This will help us keep our rosters current and accurate.
- Again, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, meetings will be conducted virtually.

We look forward to seeing you this summer! More information to follow.

[Transportation & General Government](#)

Mondays: July 20, August 17, September 21 / 9-11:30a.m.

*Chair: **Jason Gadd**, Mayor, Hopkins*

[Municipal Revenues](#)

Tuesdays: July 21, August 18, September 22 / 9-11:30a.m.

*Chair: **Patrick Trudgeon**, City Manager, Roseville*

[Metropolitan Agencies](#)

Wednesdays: July 22, August 19, September 23 / 9-11:30a.m.

*Chair: **Gary Hansen**, Councilmember, Eagan*

[Housing & Economic Development](#)

Wednesdays: July 22, August 19, September 23 / 1-3:30p.m.

*Chair: **Bryan Hartman**, HRA Program Manager, Bloomington*

Metro Cities News is emailed periodically to Metro Cities member mayors, councilmembers, city managers/administrators, and city staff to keep officials and staff abreast of important metro city issues.

If you'd like to sign up to receive Metro Cities News, please email newsletter@metrocitiesmn.org and provide the following: Name, Title, Employer and Email address. Thank you!