

## **Special Session Update**

Today marks one week since the special session began. The session has been marked by debates on several significant bills including police reform, community assistance following the civil unrest, and federal funding for local governments for COVID-19 expenses. See below for specific items of interest to Metro Cities and follow Metro Cities via twitter @MetroCitiesMN for additional updates.

## **Federal CARES Act Funding and Local Government Distribution**

Earlier this week, as reported in Metro Cities' [6/17/20 News](#), the Senate passed SF 47-Rosen, which distributes \$841.4 million to local governments for COVID-19 expenses from the Federal Coronavirus Relief Fund (FCRF). Metro Cities supports an \$841.4 million distribution. Today, the House passed SF 47, with several amendments addressing supplemental budget recommendations of the Governor. The bill passed on a 77-55, mostly partisan vote, and was sent back to the Senate. Several members of the House minority objected to the amendments added to the bill as it was debated, first in the House Ways and Means Committee, and then on the House floor. Its fate at this point is not certain.

Metro Cities sent a legislative alert earlier this week encouraging city officials to express support for this funding with your local legislators and continues to encourage city officials to make these contacts. Contact Patricia Nauman at 651-215-4002 or email: [patricia@metrocitiesmn.org](mailto:patricia@metrocitiesmn.org) with any questions.

## **House Passes Public Safety Reform Bill**

The House passed [SF 104 - Mariani](#), a public safety reform bill. This bill was amended to include language from three public safety reform bills (House Files 1, 92, and 93). To view a previous newsletter article on these proposals, click [HERE](#).

SF 104 includes \$1.9 million to local governments, to offset costs for those with law enforcement agencies with 50 or more sworn officers, that would be mandated to create Community Relations Councils. The bill was amended to clarify that the provision allowing cities to adopt residency requirements for law enforcement officers would apply to those hired after July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. An amendment was also added to provide training for peace officers to learn more about the need to intercede if they witness a fellow peace officer using excessive force. An amendment to preempt cities from disbanding or defunding their law enforcement agencies without an agreement from another agency to provide law enforcement services was considered but not adopted.

Some members voiced concern about the bill's statewide approach. Supporters of the bill stated the bill addresses concerns that are experienced by people across the state. The bill passed 71-59 and has been sent back to the Senate for consideration.

## **TAB Approves Draft TIP for Public Comment**

The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) approved a draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for public comment. The TIP is a four-year list of federally funded transportation projects required for all metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). The TIP must include all projects

funded with federal transportation funds along with all regionally significant projects. Federal regulations require that a TIP be developed at least every four years and the Metropolitan Council revises its TIP every year in conjunction with the Minnesota Department of Transportation's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The comment period will run from June 24th to August 9th. To view the draft TIP, click [HERE](#).

Comments can be shared with the Met Council Transportation Committee at their virtual meeting on July 13th at 4:00 pm. Comments can also be submitted in the following methods:

- Mail: Metropolitan Council, 390 Robert St. N., St. Paul, MN 55101
- E-mail: [info@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:info@metc.state.mn.us)
- Public Comment Line: 651-602-1500

## **MHFA QAP Public Comment Period Open**

Minnesota Housing is soliciting comments for its allocation plan for Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). The 2022-2023 Qualified Allocation Plan is available for public review and comment.

You can view the 2022-2023 QAP [Summary of Proposed Changes here](#), proposed [2022-2023 Housing Tax Credit Qualified Allocation Plan here](#) and [proposed 2022-2023 Self-Scoring Worksheet](#) here.

**The formal comment period closes July 22 at 5:00 p.m.** Presentation and final action on the 2022-2023 QAP is expected to occur at Minnesota Housing's board meeting in late fall, 2020.

### *Public Comment & Engagement*

Join a Monday, June 22 webinar from 12-1:30 p.m. with Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers and Minnesota Housing Partnership, a co-sponsored discussion with Minnesota Housing. [Registration information here](#).

Participate in a public hearing on Tuesday, July 14 from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Public hearing via conference call. Dial-In toll-free number: 1.888.742.5095, Conference Code: 603-415-8008. You may register in advance for this meeting via email at [HTC.MHFA@state.mn.us](mailto:HTC.MHFA@state.mn.us).

If you would like to comment by phone, you may call Nicola Viana at 651.296.8277.

Send comments to: [HTC.MHFA@state.mn.us](mailto:HTC.MHFA@state.mn.us), by phone at 651.296.8277, or by mail to Attn. Tamara Wilson, Minnesota Housing, 400 Wabasha Street North, Suite, 400, St. Paul, MN 55102

## **Metropolitan Council Discusses Joining Climate Tracking Group**

The Community Development Committee discussed plans for the Metropolitan Council to join a global climate leadership effort at its June 15 meeting. Staff presented how the Council would engage in a three-year commitment with The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM).

Council staff explained how the Met Council applied in April 2019 to commit to GCoM as a Metro-Scale Climate Leader, a pilot program by GCoM, but the Council was unsuccessful at that time. Since then, GCoM approached the Council to offer the same opportunity. Several other U.S. regions are currently enrolled in the pilot program, including the Chicago Metropolitan Region, Kansas City Region, and the Metropolitan (DC) Region.

With this commitment, the Council would pledge to develop, formally adopt, and report on the following:

- a. A community-scale greenhouse gas (GHG) emission inventory
- b. An assessment of climate hazards and vulnerabilities
- c. Ambitious, measurable, and time-bound target(s) to reduce/limit greenhouse gas emissions
- d. Ambitious adaptation vision and goals, based on quantified scientific evidence when possible, to increase local resilience to climate change
- e. Ambitious and just goal to improve access to sustainable energy
- f. Plan(s) to address climate change mitigation / low emission development, climate resilience and adaptation, and access to sustainable energy, including provisions for regular (annual or biennial) progress reports

Council staff explained the GCoM commitment does not require any new Council projects or initiatives. The Council would pledge to complete several tasks, many of which the Council is developing, has underway, has already completed, or is part of current work plans.

At the CDC meeting, it was explained several cities are participating in similar activities through Green Step Cities. Any direct Council engagement with cities on this initiative was not defined.

More information on the program and the Council's potential involvement can be found [here](#) and [here](#). The full Council is expected to vote on the proposal June 24.

### **Safety Plan Template for Re-opening Critical Sector Businesses**

DEED and Labor and Industry have provided guidance on safely reopening Minnesota workplaces. Non-Critical Sector businesses and employers must develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan prior to reopening. Businesses must ensure the plan is evaluated, monitored, executed, and updated under the supervision of a designated Plan Administrator. Employers must ensure the plan is posted at all of the business's workplaces in readily accessible locations that will allow for the plan to be readily reviewed by all workers, as required. Plans are not required to be submitted to the state for approval.

By June 29, Critical Sector businesses are also required to develop and implement a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan. This includes cities. For COVID-19 Preparedness Plan templates, please visit [dli.mn.gov/updates](https://dli.mn.gov/updates).

DEED has also prepared [industry-specific guidance documents](#) for businesses to aide in the development of their COVID-19 Preparedness Plans. For additional information or assistance in developing a plan, businesses can contact MNOSHA Workplace Safety Consultation at 651-284-5060 or [OSHA.consultation@state.mn.us](mailto:OSHA.consultation@state.mn.us).

### **Small Business Relief Grants Program to Begin Accepting Applications on June 23**

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) announced the Minnesota Small Business Relief Grants Program, which was approved by the Minnesota Legislature last week and signed by Governor Tim Walz on Tuesday, will begin accepting applications June 23.

This program will provide \$10,000 grants to small businesses that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses with 50 or fewer full-time employees are eligible. Half of the funding will go to businesses in the metro and the other half to greater Minnesota.

The application period will begin on **Tuesday, June 23 and close at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 2** to fulfill the 10-day period required by the law. A randomized, computer-generated lottery process will be used to select eligible businesses that will receive awards. All awards will be administered by qualified local and regionally based nonprofit agencies, and the grant funds can be used for working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility bills, and other similar business expenses.

To be eligible, businesses must have a permanent physical location in Minnesota and be majority owned by a permanent resident of Minnesota. Businesses must be able to demonstrate hardship as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. Additional eligibility requirements and application information can be found online at DEED's [Small Business Relief Grants page](#).

### **EVENT: City Information Session on Federal CARES Act Funding Opportunity – June 25**

Cities are invited to participate in GREATER MSP's Information Session series on applying for federal EDA CARES Act Funding.

In this second Information Session, GREATER MSP will discuss the Regional Economic Framework (REF), the regional economic development strategy document that cities can attach to a project application to EDA. GREATER MSP, Met Council, and the Center for Economic Inclusion will provide an update on the REF and more details about how you can view the draft document, and provide input, in the coming weeks.

Darrin Fleener, regional representative with the Economic Development Administration, will give an overview of EDA's process to evaluate projects when they are being considered for federal funding. He will also be available to answer questions about the EDA's CARES Act Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). This session will be recorded and will be publicly accessible afterwards.

**Thursday, June 25, 2020**

**11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.**

[Register here](#)

*Resources to prepare for the Information Session*

[Part I Information Session recording](#)

[Part I Information Session Presentation](#)

[Snapshot of the Regional Economic Framework](#)

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**Metro Cities (Association of Metropolitan Municipalities)**  
145 University Ave W, St. Paul, MN 55103-2044  
Phone 651-215-4000 · Fax 651-281-1299 · [www.MetroCitiesMN.org](http://www.MetroCitiesMN.org)