

\$841.4 Million in Federal Coronavirus Relief Funds to be Distributed to Local Governments

Governor Walz announced Thursday that \$841.4 million from the state's share of Federal CARES Act funds would be distributed to local governments that have eligible costs related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The distribution and formula used are consistent with SF 47-Rosen that was considered during the legislative session. Metro Cities strongly supported a distribution of \$841.4 million to local governments to assist with COVID-19 expenses during the regular and special legislative sessions.

The Department of Revenue (DOR) sent a communication Thursday to local government officials with information on how to apply for the funding. Local governments must submit a certification form by email; forms will be accepted until September 15, 2020. Information on how to apply, required forms, the amount you are eligible to receive, and links to federal guidance on allowable expenses can be found on their website at: <https://www.revenue.state.mn.us/coronavirus-relief-fund-local-governments> . The certification form is in PDF format and can be filled out online. The certification form will require a signature by the city's Mayor or Administrator/Manager.

Cities will need a SWIFT supplier ID. If you have but do not know your SWIFT number, the certification form will not be rejected but you will need to obtain this ID if you do not currently have one.

A link to a PDF document on the new federal guidance FAQ is [HERE](#). Please note that a local government's share of FEMA costs, workers' compensation and public health costs are eligible expenses for funding.

Payments will be distributed on a schedule provided on the DOR website, with several certification deadlines over the next few months. Payments will be issued 6-8 business days following each deadline. The timing of payments depends on when certification forms are submitted. Certifications received by 5:00 pm today, June 26, will receive payment on the first day payments are distributed. Today marks the first day of the certification schedule.

Local governments will need a federal DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number, a tool used by the federal government to determine how funds are flowing. The Department of Revenue is requesting that any local government that does not have a DUNS number to apply for one within 30 days of receiving funds. Also, any city that expends more than \$750,000 of federal funds in its fiscal year is required to have a single audit. Any funds not incurred by a city by November 15, 2020 must be returned to the city's home county.

The DOR is encouraging city officials to direct questions on eligible expenses or processes to work through your local government organizations, including Metro Cities. **Please direct any questions to Patricia Nauman at 651-215-4002 or patricia@metrocitiesmn.org . I will work to get prompt answers and/or clarifications to questions.** The federal guidance is broad and may change. The Department of Revenue will plan to issue a set of FAQs and will provide updated information over the coming months. In addition, the DOR and MMB will roll out a new website that should be 'live' next week. The League of MN Cities is also planning a training webinar for next Wednesday.

Stay tuned for additional information, and again, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Metropolitan Council Releases Draft TPP for Public Comment

The Met Council has approved release of the draft Transportation Policy Plan (TPP) for public comment. The comment period began June 25th and will be open through August 10th. The TPP plays a central role in the regional transportation planning process and is updated every four years. See the draft [HERE](#). The TPP is being updated to better conform with federal planning deadlines. The draft includes updates to incorporate the results of planning and corridor studies, changes to major projects, updated data and the inclusion of studies to measure the impacts of COVID-19 on the transportation system. Met Council staff has said that while COVID-19 has been acknowledged in this draft, a future amendment to the TPP to incorporate COVID-19 impacts to the transportation system will be included when impacts are more fully understood. Travel Behavior Study participants are also being re-surveyed to better understand how the virus has changed travel. This information is likely to be available in late 2021.

The Met Council also approved a public hearing that will be held July 27th at 4:00 pm. To view the staff presentation, click [HERE](#). For information on submitting comment, click [HERE](#). Questions? Please contact Steve Huser at steven@metrocitiesmn.org.

MCES Wastewater Rate Update

The Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) recently held two remote budget webinars. MCES staff provided information on the rate setting process and wastewater capital improvement needs and stated that the proposed municipal wastewater charge (MWC) is proposed to increase by 2% for 2021. The Sewer Availability Charge (SAC) is proposed to remain flat for 2021-22.

Staff will present proposed rates to the Metropolitan Council Environment Committee at their July 14th meeting and the Council will consider the proposed rates at their July 22nd meeting. To access a recording of the webinar, as well as presentation slides and a question and answer document, click [HERE](#).

Questions regarding the wastewater rate can be directed to Anna Bessel at 612-205-6454 or anna.bessel@metc.state.mn.us.

MCES has also announced that wastewater treatment plant tours that had been scheduled for this fall have been cancelled due to COVID-19.

Senate Announces Plans for Oversight Committee

In a press conference held Thursday morning, Senate Majority Leader Paul Gazelka announced plans to form a committee to investigate the crimes and riots occurring in the days following the killing of George Floyd. The committee is interested in hearing from executive branch officials and others about decisions made in response to the civil unrest. The committee is interested in information on the police stand down at the 3rd precinct, the mobilization and use of the National Guard, and the removal of the Christopher Columbus statue at the State Capitol. Senator Scott Newman will chair the committee and the first meeting will be held July 1. More information is expected to be announced soon, including the committee membership and proposed testifiers. Majority Leader Gazelka confirmed that DFL members will be part of the committee.

The announcement prompted written responses from both the Senate DFL and House POCI

Caucus. Senate DFL Leaders said that they have not been consulted on the creation of the committee and that no DFL members have been asked to participate.

Responses also stated that the Legislature should focus on police reform and accountability. Click [HERE](#) for the Senate DFL statement. Click [HERE](#) for the POCI Caucus statement.

During the press conference, Senator Gazelka answered questions about a future special session and the work that remains after the conclusion of the first special session. The Majority Leader and Speaker Hortman are engaged in ongoing discussions over a potential compromise on a law enforcement reform package. The chairs of the Capital Investment Committees are continuing to work toward a bonding bill. Senator Gazelka was asked about COVID-19 aid to local governments. He spoke about the importance of this money for local communities hit hard by COVID-19 costs.

Click [HERE](#) for a recording of Thursday's press conference.

Small Business Assistance Grant Applications Now Open Through July 2

DEED released the application for businesses seeking state relief for impacts related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds were appropriated by the legislature in the June special session.

The funds can be used for working capital to support payroll expenses, rent, mortgage payments, utility bills, and other similar business expenses dating back to March 1, 2020.

Applications are now being accepted through 5 p.m. Thursday, July 2. Small businesses that have experienced hardship because of COVID-19 can review the eligibility criteria and apply if qualified. Additional information on eligibility, frequently asked questions, upcoming webinars and the online application link are on DEED's website at mn.gov/deed/relief. DEED has also posted translations of the program information and application questions in Español, Hmoob and Somali.

Businesses with 50 or fewer full-time employees are eligible. Half of the funds will go to businesses in the seven-county Twin Cities metro area and half to businesses in Greater Minnesota. To be eligible, businesses must have a permanent physical location in Minnesota and be majority owned by a permanent resident of Minnesota.

A randomized, computer-generated lottery process will be used to select eligible businesses to receive awards. All awards will be disbursed and administered by qualified local and regionally based nonprofit agencies. The selection process will be conducted by DEED in consultation with the Minnesota Lottery and will be observed by an independent third party.

Federal CARES Act Funding Webinars Posted

GREATER MSP is working with Met Council on a document that will qualify the region for [Federal EDA CARES Act funding](#). \$1.5 billion was allocated to EDA and is now open for competitive grants for projects that respond to the impact of COVID-19. Eligible entities include cities, counties, higher ed institutions, nonprofits, and other state subdivisions.

Two recent webinars are now posted online for cities interested in learning more:

[Webinar 1](#)

[Webinar 2](#)

The Metropolitan Council is scheduled to adopt a comprehensive economic development strategy, called the Regional Economic Framework (REF) later this summer. Metro Cities will continue to

monitor and respond to the draft REF. Contact Charlie Vander Aarde at charlie@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-366-7564 with any questions.

Metro Cities' Policy Committees

Metro Cities is preparing for its 2020 policy development process, 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. Whether you are new to the process or have participated in a committee in the past, your participation is welcome and encouraged. **To sign up, click [here](#)**. Please note: Due to site maintenance the registration form will be unavailable from 8am – 8pm on July 3rd.

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*

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