

Governor's Blue-Ribbon Committee on Metropolitan Governance

The Governor's Blue-Ribbon Committee on Metropolitan Governance held its second meeting this past Monday. Members of the committee heard presentations by Metropolitan Council staff on the role and designation of the Council as the region's Federal Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), federal and state laws that provide the designation, and statutory and other considerations that would be required to modify the designation. The Council's status as the region's MPO goes back to 1973.

Any plan to re-designate the MPO would need to comply with federal laws and must have agreement from the largest city in the region, the governor, as well as local governments that comprise 75% of a region's population. Staff also presented information on the Council's functions as MPO and the role of the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). Staff further discussed the "3C's" planning process that requires input from local governments, federal and state agencies, transportation and transit providers, and citizens. MnDOT staff presented information on the structure and functions of MPOs in greater Minnesota.

Members discussed the work of the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and its processes, the need for additional federal funding, and what works or does not work with the current system. The next meeting is scheduled for October 12th at which time the committee will hear from the Office of the Legislative Auditor regarding their 2011 report on regional governance and transportation. Members will also discuss a history of transit and suburban opt out transit providers. The committee will also meet on October 26th and is planning to hear from interested parties, including Metro Cities.

Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) Update

The office of MN Management and Budget (MMB) recently issued a new FAQ document that contains new questions (#s 30-35) that address funding questions regarding transfers between units of government, including schools. Many cities have had CRF transfer requests from schools. Such transfers are allowed as long as expenditures meet federally established criteria. The document is linked here: <https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/crao/faqs-for-local-governments-as-of-sept-25-411pm.pdf>

The US Treasury Office also issued a new FAQ on September 21st. The new FAQ addresses payroll costs for public employees and reverses record keeping requirements sent in August. As such, the new guidance returns to original presumption guidance on these specific costs. Please see questions 63 and 70-72. [Treasury OIG- CRF FAQs September 2020 Updates pdf.pdf](#).

Metro Cities has been advocating for flexibility on the November 15, 2020 deadline for spending CRF funds by cities. As previously reported, MMB is granting two exceptions to the November 15th deadline, for certain payroll expenses and goods delayed due to supply chain disruptions. Metro Cities and other local government organizations recently provided a formal request to the Governor's administration to ask for additional flexibility on the deadline to allow expenses incurred but not paid by November 15, 2020 to be paid beyond November 15th, and before the federal December 30 deadline. We have learned that MMB will not recommend granting this

additional flexibility on the CRF funds. Please contact Patricia Nauman at 651-215-4002 or patricia@metrocitiesmn.org with any questions.

2021 Legislative Policies Update

Metro Cities' four policy committees completed the work of recommending Metro Cities' 2021 legislative policies, and the recommended slate of policies will be considered by the Metro Cities Board of Directors at their October 8th meeting, then forwarded to Metro Cities' full membership for adoption. The member policy adoption meeting will be held virtually at 4:00 pm on Thursday, November 19th. Stay tuned for additional details. Policies will be posted online following approval by the Board of Directors and in advance of the policy adoption meeting.

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