



## **Federal American Rescue Plan Funding and Webinar**

As Metro Cities has reported, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) was signed into law mid-March and provides \$350 billion in emergency funding for state, local, territorial and Tribal governments to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds will be distributed in two tranches, the first of which must be distributed no later than 60 days following enactment of the law.

Cities will need to have specific items in place before receiving money from the ARP State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund that Metro Cities has previously provided. **Metropolitan cities over 50,000** will receive payments directly from the U.S. Treasury. Cities need a **DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number and a SAM (System for Award Management) registration** to receive funds. Register here for a DUNS number

here: <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/> and a SAM here: <https://sam.gov/SAM/> Click here for more information: <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/New-to-SAM.gov-for-Financial-Assistance-April-2021.pdf> Registering for a SAM is FREE.

**Metropolitan cities under 50,000** in population will receive payments from the state, with funds distributed by population. Cities under 50,000 must also have a valid DUNS number to receive funds.

Federal guidance has not yet been released. As a reminder, Metro Cities will co-host a webinar with the League of MN Cities (LMC) on **Tuesday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm**. You can register here: <https://www.lmc.org/learning-events/events/league-events/2021-road-to-recovery-series-american-rescue-plan-act-funding-update/>. **Please note** that depending on the timing of federal guidance, this webinar may be postponed.

## **Legislative Updates**

With a little over two weeks remaining in the legislative session, some omnibus bill conference committees held first meetings this week, and others will begin meeting next week. Legislative leaders released guidelines on the format, frequency, and dates and time slots for conference committees. These include that a bill's first conference committee hearing will be chaired by the bill's house of origin and meetings will be limited to three hours. If a chair does not convene a hearing on the day that they hold the gavel, the gavel switches to the other chair at the end of the day. Hearings will be remote or hybrid depending on the chair's preference. Also, today the Senate Capital Investment Committee is holding its second hearing this session and is considering several bills. Capital investment committees are not bound by standard legislative committee deadlines. Below are specific bill updates:

### *Taxes*

The Senate passed its omnibus tax bill this week, HF 991 as amended, on a 39-25 vote. The Taxes Conference Committee's first meeting is scheduled for Monday, at 1:00 pm. Please click [HERE](#) for a summary of the Senate bill and [HERE](#) for a summary of the House bill. Metro Cities has provided summaries of the association's positions on provisions in both bills in previous newsletters.

Conferees: Representatives Marquart, Youakim, Her, Lislegard, Davids and Senators Nelson, Weber, Miller, Bakk and Rest.

### *Housing* ([HF 1077](#))

The conference committee is scheduled to hold its first meeting May 3. The eviction moratorium off ramp language differs in the bills. The Senate's proposal (same language as in [SF 1470](#)) is included in its omnibus bill while the House passed a standalone proposal, [HF 12](#) - Hausman. The Senate bill includes several pre-emption proposals opposed by Metro Cities.

Conferees: Representatives Hausman, Howard, Agbaje, Reyer, and Theis; and Senators Draheim, Duckworth, Dahms, Pratt, and Dziedzic.

### *Workforce and Business Development* ([SF 1098](#))

The conference committee met twice this week and reviewed same and similar policy language and compared spending proposals. The commissioners of DEED, Labor and Industry, and Bureau of Mediation Services testified. The comparison spreadsheet is [here](#) and policy comparison document is [here](#). The conference committee will next meet Monday and will take public testimony.

Conferees: Senators Pratt, Draheim, Housley, Rarick, and Eken; and Representatives Noor, Ecklund, L. Olson, Berg, and Hamilton.

### *State Government, Veterans and Military Affairs* ([HF 1952](#))

The State Government Conference Committee is scheduled to have its first hearing Monday, May 3 at 9:00AM. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the Senate language and [HERE](#) for a summary of the House language. Click [HERE](#) for access to comparison documents between the two versions.

Conferees: Representatives Nelson, M., Masin, Xiong, T., Greenman, and Nash; and Senators Kiffmeyer, Lang, Howe, Koran, and Carlson.

### *Public Safety* ([SF 970](#))

The Conference Committee for Public Safety bills is scheduled to begin hearings Monday, May 3 at 9:00 am. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the Senate language. Click [HERE](#) for the House language and [HERE](#) for the House summary.

Conferees: Senators Limmer, Mathews, Ingebrigtsen, Johnson, and Latz; Representatives Mariani, Becker-Finn, Moller, Frazier, and Miller.

### *Transportation* ([HF 1684](#))

The Conference Committee for [HF 1684 – Hornstein](#) is scheduled to begin hearings Monday, May 3 at 1:00 pm. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the House language. Click [HERE](#) for the Senate language and [HERE](#) for the Senate Summary.

Conferees: Representatives Hornstein, Koegel, Frederick, Elkins, and Petersburg; and Senators Newman, Jasinski, Howe, Osmeck, and Bigham.

### *Environment* ([SF 959](#))

The Conference Committee for [SF 959 – Ingebrigtsen](#), is scheduled to begin hearings on Monday, May 3 at 1:00 pm. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the Senate language. Click [HERE](#) for the House language and [HERE](#) for the House summary. Click [HERE](#) to access comparison documents.

Conferees: Senators Ingebrigtsen, Ruud, Eichorn, Tomassoni, and Westrom; and Representatives Hansen, R., Wazlawik, Morrison, Fischer, and Heintzeman.

### *Legacy Finance* ([HF 1079](#))

The Conference Committee for [HF 1079 – Lille](#) does not currently have a start date. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the House language. Click [HERE](#) for the Senate language. Click [HERE](#) to access comparison documents.

Conferees: Representatives Lillie, Jordan, Xiong, J., Huot, and Green; and Senators Ruud, Weber, Senjem, Lang, and Hawj.

## Senate Transportation Committee Hears Transportation Planning Bills

The Senate Transportation Committee heard two bills on an informational basis Friday morning. [SF 2375 – Pratt](#), moves the suburban transit providers under the Department of Transportation instead of the Metropolitan Council in the same way that MnDOT oversees Greater Minnesota Transit. The bill allows money from the Greater MN transit Account to be allocated to replacement service providers and compensates for increased demands on that account with adjustments to the allocation of revenues from the motor vehicle sales tax revenue. The eligibility criteria for the replacement service program and associated financial assistance remains largely unchanged. Advocates for the bill argue that this bill eliminates a conflict of interest where the Metropolitan Council is charged with allocating financial assistance to their direct competitors. Suburban transit representatives testified in support of the bill, while Metropolitan Council representatives expressed concerns, including that the bill does not address capital costs or ownership of the fleets for replacement providers by the Metropolitan Council.

[SF 2199 – Bigham](#), establishes the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Board within MnDOT and transfers current Metropolitan Council authority over long-range transportation planning and operations. The board would replace the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB), with members appointed in the manner as members of the TAB are appointed. This bill moves all transportation planning activities in the seven-county metropolitan area away from the Metropolitan Council and into MnDOT. If passed, the Council would only be responsible for the operation and capital maintenance of the transit system. Metro Cities provided testimony to express various concerns with putting a regional level system and funding under a state rather than regional agency. Both the Metropolitan Council and MnDOT testified in opposition to the bill.

## Recreational Cannabis Bill

[HF600 - Winkler](#) that would legalize recreational cannabis, passed the House Public Safety Committee [as amended](#). Testifiers from the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association and the Minnesota Sheriff's Association spoke against the bill and raised concerns about the potential increase in addiction rates and the possibility of children easily accessing cannabis. Traffic safety was also discussed because there is no roadside test for law enforcement if motorists drive under the influence of cannabis.

This is the bill's eighth committee stop. The Senate companion bill ([SF 757 - Franzen](#)), has not had a hearing. The bill was re-referred to Health Finance and Policy.

## Police Reform Discussions

The issue of policing reform continues to receive debate and discussion at the Legislature, and the Governor and several legislators spoke to the press this week. The Governor also [wrote](#) to the POST Board asking for support for specific proposals.

The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and members of the legislature held a press conference April 29, emphasizing the need for swift action on police reform legislation and encouraging the Senate to act on bills. Senator Gazelka has indicated that police reform bills will be considered as part of the conference committee process. Bills as part of the House public safety bill or moving as stand-alone bills include:

- Requiring Chief Law Enforcement Officers to report officer misconduct data to the POST Board ([HF 1374 – Frazier/SF 1252 – Champion](#)).
- The use of sign and release warrants ([HF 2539 – Long](#)).
- Establishing citizen oversight councils (House Omnibus and [HF 640 – Gomez](#)).
- Regulations on the maintenance and dissemination of body-worn camera footage ([HF 1103 – Thompson/SF 807 – Fateh](#)).

- Prohibiting civil and criminal liability immunity for peace officers ([HF 1104 – Thompson/SF 580 – Fateh](#))
- Prohibiting law enforcement from stopping drivers for certain vehicle equipment violations ([HF 2529 – Frazier/SF 2462 – Fateh](#)).

Both bodies have passed omnibus judiciary and public safety bills and the first Public Safety Conference Committee hearing is scheduled for Monday, May 3 at 9:00 AM.

### **DEED Coronavirus CDBG-CV Program: Call for Applications: Update**

As Metro Cities wrote about last week, DEED is accepting grant applications from cities for eligible activities that address community needs to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) through June 1, 2021. These activities include broadband development, public services, retrofitting/repurposing buildings and commercial rehabilitation. The program is being run through DEED's Small Cities Development Program (SCDP) under M.S. 116J.401 but all cities are eligible to apply.

The CDBG-CV Program is designed to help entitlement and non-entitlement communities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). Additionally, the state has established the following funding priorities by eligible activity: broadband development, public service, retrofitting buildings and commercial rehabilitation. The state produced a webinar last week with additional details. The slides from the [webinar are available here](#) and a [webinar recording is available here](#). More information is [available here](#) and [here](#).

### **Rental Assistance Application Process Open**

The state's new COVID-19 emergency rental assistance program, called RentHelpMN, is taking applications. The fund can provide up to 15 months of assistance going back to mid-March 2020. Renters can go to [RentHelpMN.org](#) to apply. Landlords will be able to enter property information into the portal and individuals can also request a paper application. 211 is available to answer questions Monday-Saturday 8am-8pm and translation services are available. The state is asking cities to help market the program to renters and landlords. [Sign up here for a toolkit](#). Each toolkit includes a community flyer, poster, social media posts, ads, text and email messaging, and is available in English, Somali, Hmong and Spanish.

### **Metro Cities Accepting Applications for TAB/TAC Opening**

Metro Cities is seeking candidates for an opening on the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that advises the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). The TAB qualifies the region for federal transportation funds and is a participant in the 3C transportation processes that affect transportation planning and funding in the metro region. Appointees must be department head level staff with an engineering, planning or public works background. Metro Cities' guidelines place priority on making the TAC balanced with respect to city size and geography. The Board also gives preference to those who agree to serve on Metro Cities Transportation Policy Committee. The Board seeks candidates who can commit to attending meetings.

The deadline for applications is Friday, May 14, 2021. Interested candidates should submit (1) a completed [questionnaire](#), (2) a letter of interest and (3) resume to Jennifer Dorn at [jennifer@metrocitysmn.org](mailto:jennifer@metrocitysmn.org) or by mail to Metro Cities at 145 University Avenue W, St. Paul, MN 55103.

### **2021 Metro Cities Policy Committees**

Metro Cities is preparing for 2021 policy committees and your participation is

encouraged! Meetings will be conducted remotely and will be held in July, August, and September. Four committees - Transportation and General Government, Municipal Revenues, Metropolitan Agencies, Housing and Economic Development. Committees will recommend legislative policies for 2022. Policy committees are open for participation by member city elected officials and staff. Committees and dates are on our [website](#). Additional information, including remote meeting access, will be posted as it becomes available.

Please be sure to sign up for the committee(s) you wish to attend, even if you have been on the committee in the past. This will help us keep our rosters current and accurate.

We look forward to seeing you this summer!

## **Bills of Note**

[HF 2567 - Agbaje](#) / [SF 2159 - Kunesh](#): Bill includes provisions for ranked-choice voting in elections for federal and state offices and authorizes jurisdictions to adopt ranked-choice voting for local offices.

[HF 2576 - Stephenson](#): Bill requires local units of government to establish a permitting process for targeted residential picketing and establishes a civil penalty.

[HF 2580 - Freiberg](#): Bill authorizes cities and counties to impose residency requirements for peace officers.

[SF 2474 - Chamberlain](#), [SF 2475 - Kiffmeyer](#): Bills prohibit the requirement of vaccine passports for COVID-19 immunization status.

[SF 2482 - Pratt](#) / [HF 787 - Garofalo](#): Bill establishes residential protesting as a crime.

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