



Metro Cities Policy Committee Process Starts Next Week

Next week marks the beginning of Metro Cities' policy committee process, with four policy committees scheduled to meet. Please click [HERE](#) for a committee schedule and information. If you have not signed up and would like to participate, please contact Jennifer Dorn at Jennifer@metrocitiesmn.org. We look forward to working with you this year to develop and recommend the association's 2022 legislative policies!

State Revenue Update

The July revenue and economic update from the state office of MN Management and Budget (MMB) shows revenues to the state well above the most recent overall forecast from February 2021, with general fund receipts for the year now at 11.2% more than what was forecast. State revenues for the final quarter of 2021 were 28.7% higher than forecast. Click [HERE](#) for the recent update. As with all monthly updates, results are preliminary.

Metropolitan Council Committee Adopts Wastewater Rates and Charges

MCES Director of Finance Ned Smith recently presented wastewater rate proposals at two customer webinars and discussed MCES' proposed rates on Tuesday with the Metropolitan Council's Environment Committee, which adopted the rates unanimously. The proposed rates include a 4.0 percent increase in the wastewater charge, 5.4 percent increase in the industrial strength charge, around a 4 percent average increase in industrial permit fees, and no increase in the sewer availability charge. This item will be before the whole Metropolitan Council on July 28. Click [HERE](#) to view a recording of the committee hearings and [HERE](#) to view the rates and charges presentation slides.

EAB Grant Application Open

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has opened its process for local governments to apply for grant funding under the new \$1.6 million appropriation for emerald ash borer management. Cities can apply through **Monday, August 9** and may request a maximum amount of \$100,000. A 25% local match is required. Grants can be used to remove ash trees, replace new trees, conduct tree inventories, and develop management plans. The DNR has put together an [FAQ](#) that includes links to application instructions and other materials. Completed applications must be submitted to ucf.dnr@state.mn.us by August 9 and applicants will be notified by Monday, August 30 if they have been awarded a grant.

Contact Mike Lund at michael@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4003 with any questions.

RentHelpMN Dashboard Available

Minnesota Housing has made data related to its rental assistance program available on a dashboard. The site, <https://www.mnhousing.gov/renthelpmn-dashboard>, provides information on applications by county, applications by area median income, and total assistance paid.

With the end of the eviction moratorium forthcoming, here are additional tools for residents: [Frequently Asked Questions and Answers](#) ([Hmong](#), [Spanish](#), and [Somali](#)) Download a [diagram of the eviction moratorium timeline for important dates](#). ([Hmong](#), [Spanish](#), and [Somali](#))

State Accepting Applications for Task Force on Shelter

The state is now accepting applications for the Task Force on Shelter through the Secretary of State's Open Appointments process. Anyone who is interested can apply here: <https://commissionsandappointments.sos.state.mn.us/Agency/Details/289>.

The recently enacted Housing bill established a new Task Force on Shelter. The task force will convene in August and work until August 2022 to develop standards for the provision of shelter and examine the need for, and feasibility and cost of, establishing state oversight of shelter. The group is required to examine existing shelter policies and practices in shelters of all types, engage stakeholders, and make recommendations to the legislature regarding standards that will strengthen the shelter system and ensure that shelters have the ability and resources to provide safe and appropriate shelter services to those in need. You can read the enabling legislation [here](#).

The Task Force is comprised of 24 members. Eighteen members will fill seats that include people who have experienced homelessness, shelter providers, local government representatives, and others. Remaining members will be filled by the Commissioners of Human Services, Health, Corrections, Transportation, Public Safety, and Veterans Affairs or their designee.

Applications are being accepted online through the Secretary of State's open appointments site. [Click here](#) to view requirements and to submit an application. To apply without a computer, please contact Elizabeth Dressel, 651-248-5548. An additional set of questions will be emailed to applicants once they complete the application. Questions can be directed to Elizabeth Dressel, elizabeth.dressel@state.mn.us.

A review of applications will begin on July 26 and appointments to the Task Force will be made the first week of August. The first meeting is tentatively scheduled for Friday, August 13 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and will be held online.

Redevelopment Applications through DEED

The Brownfields and Redevelopment Unit of DEED is soliciting applications for grant funding for redevelopment projects through the Redevelopment Grant and Demolition Loan Programs. Metro Cities advocated for redevelopment grant funding in the 2021 session. Approximately \$2 million is available this round. [Call for Applications](#) The deadline for applications is **4:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 1, 2021**. (This grant round is in lieu of the August 1, 2021 round.)

Proposals must be submitted to the Department of Employment and Economic Development, Economic Development Division, Brownfields and Redevelopment Unit, 1st National Bank Building, 332 Minnesota Street, Suite E200, St. Paul, MN 55101-1351. Three sets of application documents are required for each project (one original on paper, one additional set on paper and a third on a flash drive). They must be submitted by the deadline to be considered for funding.

DEED 2021 Legislative Session Webinar Recording Available

For those interested in viewing a Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) 2021 session review webinar, a [recording is now available](#) on DEED's YouTube page.

DEED Deputy Commissioner Kevin McKinnon will present legislative outcomes, including community access to \$150 million for local projects, to Metro Cities' Housing and Economic Development Policy Committee on July 21.

Transportation Alliance Hosts Federal Funding Discussion

The Transportation Alliance convened a group of transportation stakeholders and experts to discuss potential infrastructure plans being debated in Washington and how they might impact Minnesota. The Alliance's Executive Director provided an overview of current proposals including a multi-year reauthorization of the FAST Act, bipartisan Senate framework, and House Republican plan. The accompanying [slides](#) compare proposals and what (if any) committee action has taken place. MnDOT discussed department priorities and what congressionally directed spending (earmarks) are involved in the various proposals.

Several individuals representing local government weighed in on what they see as the biggest opportunities and challenges at the federal level with respect to transportation and infrastructure investment. Among the speakers were Wayne Sandberg of Washington County and the National Association of County Engineers, Anne Finn from the League of Minnesota Cities, and Steve Bot from the City of St. Michael and the I-94 Coalition. A recurring theme was the need for strong partnerships among all levels of government to get a potentially historic investment package enacted. If a recording of this event becomes available, Metro Cities will provide it through this newsletter.

Contact Mike Lund at michael@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4003 with any questions.

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.

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