

Reminder: EAB Grant Application Closes August 9

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.

Infrastructure Deal Reached

President Biden and a bipartisan group of U.S. Senators have arrived at an agreement on a \$550 billion infrastructure package. The comprehensive package provides funding for streets, bridges, public transit, passenger and freight rail, electric vehicle infrastructure, airports, ports, water infrastructure, broadband, and energy infrastructure.

The deal includes \$110 billion in new money for roads, bridge, and major projects and reauthorizes the surface transportation program for another five years. The bill also includes \$40 billion in funding for repair and replacement of bridges. \$17.5 billion for major projects will go toward those projects too large or complex for traditional funding programs.

The deal proposes significant investments in transit with \$39 billion in new money that can be used to modernize transit and improve accessibility. The surface transportation reauthorization also provides continued funding for existing transit programs benefiting systems around the country. Some of this money may be used to replace buses with zero emission vehicles, which remains a priority for the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit.

Other highlights from the bill include:

- \$11 billion for transportation safety programs to help state and local governments reduce crashes and fatalities.
- \$66 billion for passenger and freight rail investments. \$5 billion is for rail improvement and safety grants and \$3 billion is for grade crossing safety improvements.
- \$7.5 billion to build a national network of electric vehicle charging stations with a particular focus on rural, disadvantaged, and hard-to-reach communities.
- \$2.5 billion for zero emission school buses and \$2.5 billion for low emission school buses.
- \$1 billion in dedicated funding for infrastructure investments with the goal of reconnecting communities, i.e. the Reconnect Rondo I-94 land bridge.
- \$17 billion for port infrastructure and \$25 billion for improvements to airports.
- \$50 billion to build infrastructure that will withstand extreme weather events.
- \$55 billion for drinking water infrastructure with an emphasis on replacing lead pipes and dealing with contaminants such as PFAS.
- \$65 billion to provide high-speed broadband internet to the estimated 30 million Americans who live in parts of the country with no broadband infrastructure.

- \$21 billion for environmental remediation including money to clean up superfund and brownfield sites.
- \$73 billion to be put toward building a clean, resilient power grid.

This agreement provides historically high levels of infrastructure funding, but there is a long way to go before the bill is enacted, and an actual bill has not been written yet. The agreement simply represents the terms that all parties involved feel comfortable supporting. Other issues and debates, such as the debate over a proposed \$3.5 trillion budget package, may have an impact on the fate of the deal. Click [HERE](#) to read the fact sheet from the White House in full.

Metro Cities will monitor the situation in D.C. as it develops along with any potential implications for cities.

Metropolitan Council Adopts Wastewater Rates and Charges

This week the full Metropolitan Council adopted MCES' proposed rates. The new 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. Click [HERE](#) to view a presentation with more information on the rates and charges.

Updated Regional Forecast – Population and Employment Growth to 2050

The Metropolitan Council received an update on the region's [population and employment growth forecast](#) from research staff this week. The presentation followed the Council's release of its updated biennial regional forecast which now projects growth out to 2050. [Presentation here](#).

Local forecasts will be released in 2022-23, in advance of the next decennial planning cycle. Additionally, a forecast of households will be prepared once decennial 2020 data from the U.S. Census Bureau becomes available.

By 2050, the seven-county metropolitan region is expected to have four million residents. This is an increase of 818,000 residents from 2020. The racial and ethnic makeup of the region will continue to diversify. In 2020, the region was made up of 28 percent Black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) residents. The BIPOC share of the region's population is projected to increase to 39 percent in 2040 and 44 percent in 2050.

442,000 new jobs are expected between now and 2050. This includes net growth from several sectors, including US-born workers, foreign-born workers, teleworkers, and commuters from outside the metropolitan region, and second jobs for some workers. The forecast noted continued concerns of workforce shortages impacting the region's economic strength.

More information can be found at www.metrocouncil.org/forecasts

New Chair, Members Appointed to Livable Communities Advisory Committee

The Metropolitan Council appointed Maplewood Mayor Marylee Abrams as Chair and Elise Durbin from the Carver County CDA as Vice Chair to its Livable Communities Advisory Committee (LCAC). The LCAC reviews applications and recommends funding awards for the Livable Communities Demonstration Account and Transit Oriented Development grant programs. The LCAC has 15 members who are appointed by the Metropolitan Council and several members serve in a specific area of expertise.

Other appointments to the LCAC include:

Community Engagement (Community organizing, arts-based engagement, engagement strategy): Josie Shardlow – Community Engagement Manager with City of Brooklyn Park and Mala Thao – Philanthropic Advisor at the Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation.

Environment (Integration of natural and water resources in development, climate mitigation and adaptation, environmental justice): Vanessa Perry – Planning Director, Minnesota DNR

Development (Equitable development strategies, new development, redevelopment); Jamie Thelen – CEO, Sand Companies

Local government (Planning, economic or community development); Linnea Graffunder-Bartels – Senior Community Development Specialist, City of Oakdale

Transportation (Development relationship, transportation specialty, multimodal transportation): Darrell Washington – MnDOT, Office of Transit and Active Transportation, Transportation Program Supervisor

Site Design (Landscape architecture, land planning specialty, urban design, public space design); Bruce Chamberlain – Stanek, Principal and Mauricio Ochoa – Project Architect, DJR Architecture, Inc.

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