

## **2022 Legislative Session Begins**

The 2022 legislative session began at noon Monday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. Below are several pieces of information, including stated legislative priorities, deadlines for bills, and other information, as the session gets underway.

### *Senate and House Meeting Protocols*

This session, the House will hold committee meetings virtually, and members will meet in person for floor sessions, with a virtual option for members. The Senate will operate in a hybrid fashion, with committee meetings and floor sessions in person and virtual options available for members and the public. See additional information on protocols in the article on local advocacy in this newsletter.

### *Legislative Deadlines*

The joint deadlines agreed to by the House and Senate leadership for hearings on bills are as follows:

- The first deadline is March 25, 2022.
- The second deadline is April 1, 2022.
- The third deadline is April 8, 2022.

The Easter/Passover break is set to begin April 9 and continue through Monday, April 18.

### *Governor's Supplemental Budget Recommendation*

Last week, Governor Walz released his supplemental budget recommendations. The [list by priority area can be found here](#) and more [detailed budget recommendations by agency here](#). The proposal includes a mix of one-time and ongoing spending. One of the largest spending items would provide \$700 million in taxpayer rebates to Minnesotans. There is also a proposal to pay back a \$1 billion federal loan and to refill the unemployment insurance trust fund.

Other highlights from the Governor's recommendations include:

- Over \$400 million for housing, including \$100 million for preserving naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH)
- \$170 million for broadband development
- Over \$100 million for child-care capacity and stabilization
- Over \$650 million to provide non-federal matching funds as a part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)
- \$200 million for the Blue Line Light Rail Extension
- Nearly \$300 million for aid to local government public safety expenses, distributed based on city population
- Sales tax exemption for building, construction, reconstruction materials, supplies and equipment for buildings and facilities by local governments and nonprofits
- \$54 million for adaptation action and water storage grants to local governments

Click [HERE](#) for a more complete list of city related provisions.

### *Legislators Outline Priorities*

This is not a budget setting session for the Legislature. The November Budget and Economic Forecast anticipated a \$7.8 billion surplus for the state. Legislators and the Governor this session will likely consider various proposals that address the surplus, but the Legislature is not required to act on the surplus funds this year. The next complete budget forecast will be released later this month.

### *House DFL*

The House DFL has introduced plans that are focused on economic security, public safety, and education. As part of an economic security plan, the House majority plans to work on paid sick and safe time, frontline worker bonus pay, expanding broadband access, and affordable housing. Public safety has emerged as a priority for all four caucuses. The House DFL has introduced a \$100 million public safety package that emphasizes crime prevention and community policing. HF 2724 has already received several informational hearings this session. Regarding education, the House DFL plans to address costs of childcare, resources for English language learners, teacher recruitment, and tuition freezes at Minnesota State colleges and universities.

### *House GOP*

The House GOP is expected to focus efforts on ongoing tax relief to Minnesotans. Even-year legislative sessions are also typically bonding years and because capital investment bills require a three-fifths majority vote, some collaboration is required between the majority and minority caucuses to pass a bill out of the House. As is the case with the other caucuses, the House GOP is expected to place an emphasis on public safety this session.

### *Senate GOP*

The priorities for Senate Republicans can be divided into three broad categories. The first is economic relief for Minnesotans. Specifically, the Senate majority is calling for tax relief for families, the elimination of the tax on social security, and tax credits for parents. A second area of focus is community safety and support for law enforcement, including recruitment and stricter penalties for crimes. Finally, the caucus is interested in pursuing several education-related goals to increase literacy and give parents a larger role in the education of their children.

### *Senate DFL*

The Senate DFL intends to focus on accelerating the state's economic recovery and advancing equity for communities of color. This could include tax cuts for families, seniors, and small businesses and support for workers looking for training and employment. Crime prevention and public safety funding are key areas of focus for the Senate minority, including community policing. The caucus is also prioritizing access to affordable care and mental health resources, strong schools, affordable housing, and climate change solutions.

### *Legislative makeup in House and Senate*

#### *Senate*

The Senate is run by a Republican majority, with 33 Republican members, 32 DFL members and two Independent members. The Senate has new leadership this session. Senator Jeremy Miller (Winona) is Majority Leader, Senator Melisa Lopez Franzen (Edina) is Minority Leader, and Senator Dave Osmeck (Mound) is Senate President.

#### *House*

The House is run by a DFL majority with 70 DFL members, 59 Republicans and five members of the New Republican Caucus. Leadership remains the same this session with Speaker Melissa Hortman (Brooklyn Park) and Minority Leader Kurt Daudt (Crown).

#### *Announced Retirements*

17 sitting legislators have announced retirements. This includes eight senators (6 DFL, 2 GOP) and nine representatives (7 DFL, 2 GOP). Nine sitting legislators have announced their intention to run for other offices including governor, state senate, and county offices. A [full list](#) of current legislators not seeking re-election or running for another position has been compiled by the Legislative Reference Library.

#### *Local Advocacy at the Capitol*

City officials are encouraged to stay in touch with local legislators this session as bills affecting cities are considered, and on individual city bills and issues.

#### *How to Contact Your Legislator*

Phone calls, emails, and texts are all effective ways to contact legislators with session restrictions on in-person meetings. While some legislators may schedule in-person meetings in the Capitol or Minnesota

Senate Building, the State Office Building which is used by House members is closed to the public. In-district meetings may be your better option to see a legislator in-person.

### *Legislative Staff*

Legislative staff are a highly valuable resource. Every legislator has a legislative assistant to whom you can relay messages and ask questions. Committee chairs also employ committee assistants who help run committees and schedule bills for hearings.

### *Action Alerts*

During the session, Metro Cities may request city officials to reach out to their legislators on a specific bill or issue. These are usually timely requests for action within 24 hours. Many legislators value hearing directly from their cities and learning what they think on a specific bill or topic. Metro Cities targets these action alerts to specific cities, specific legislators, on specific bills that are scheduled for a hearing or vote.

### *What to Include*

If you speak with a legislator, it can be helpful to follow up in writing. Many cities create one-pagers or talking points they can share with a legislator who can access these city resources when needed. Sharing your city's unique perspective on how legislation or a budget item would impact local residents, businesses, property taxpayers, and others, helps shape legislation and inform debate and legislative activity. Metro Cities also makes resources and background information available to cities.

If you have questions about how to contact your legislator, please reach out directly to Metro Cities staff. Your voice is important at the Capitol and assists Metro Cities' efforts to best represent cities in the metropolitan region.

## **House Committees Preview Housing Funding Requests**

The House Capital Investment and Housing Finance & Policy committees heard from Minnesota Housing Commissioner Jennifer Ho this week who discussed how the [agency's housing programs](#) are tailored to meet various needs and also highlighted the administration's proposals for this session. She told legislators the latest round of the state's funding awards were oversubscribed fourfold. This means for every award that was made, three other applications were denied. The [administration is proposing](#) \$250 million in housing infrastructure bonds as well as \$60 million in general obligation bonds for publicly-owned housing. Metro Cities is advocating for a robust bonding bill for housing, to allow cities to access funds to meet a range of locally-defined housing needs and [submitted a letter](#) to that effect.

## **Public Safety Plan Receives Informational Hearings**

A series of informational hearings were held for [HF 2724 – Frazier](#), the \$100 million public safety plan unveiled last week. The bill includes \$100 million in public safety resources. Specifically, it calls for \$40 million in community safety grants, \$22 million for local community policing grants, \$22 million in crime investigation grants, \$10 million for opiate epidemic response grants, and \$2.5 million for body cameras. There is permissive civilian oversight council language in the bill.

Tuesday's hearing focused on Article 1 of the bill which includes the creation of the Office of Public Safety Innovation. This office would be responsible for operating grant programs, identifying "target areas" for funding, and promoting community-led intervention and restorative programs. Article 1 also has a \$40 million appropriation for community safety grants. Law enforcement agencies are not eligible for community safety grants.

Thursday's hearing focused on Article 2 and Section 4 of Article 3. Article 2 describes criteria for the \$22 million in local community policing grants. Recipients must use half of the money for foot patrols and the remaining half must be used to support partnerships with community groups (i.e., crisis-response teams, co-responder models, or community violence prevention programs). Chief Hoyt from New Hope testified before the committee and shared the success of a local embedded social worker program. New Hope shares a social worker with the cities of Crystal and Robbinsdale. Article 2 also includes \$22 million in crime investigation grants which can be used to hire detectives or investigators assigned to homicides or nonfatal shootings. This money can also be put toward evidence-processing technology or equipment and victims' services resources. Finally, Article 2 includes \$2.5 million for body cameras. These grants require a

50% local match and come with a requirement that local agencies adopt specific body camera use policies, which are laid out in the bill.

Article 3, Section 4 establishes a Task Force on Alternative Courses to Peace Officer Licensure, which is intended to aid recruitment efforts, increase diversity in the profession, promote education and training in community policing models, and make future funding recommendations to the legislature.

Friday's hearing covered the remainder of Article 3, which contains the bulk of the bill's changes to law enforcement policy. Most of the discussion revolved around the broad topics of transparency and accountability. Specifically, the release of body camera footage and the POST board's ability to act in cases of alleged police misconduct even if the officer has not been convicted of a crime.

Click [HERE](#) to view a summary of the bill. Contact Mike Lund at [michael@metrocitiesmn.org](mailto:michael@metrocitiesmn.org) or 651-215-4003 with any questions.

## **Senate Proposal to Address Law Enforcement Recruitment**

In a press conference on Thursday morning Senate Majority Leader Miller announced a "Creating Opportunities in Public Safety" or C.O.P.S. package of bills with the goal of recruiting more individuals into law enforcement careers. The package includes a total of \$65 million to bolster recruitment efforts across the state. [SF 2848 – Housley](#) appropriates \$1 million dollars for the Dept. of Public Safety to carry out a public awareness campaign to highlight law enforcement as a noble and rewarding career path. [SF 2847 – Jasinski](#) proposes \$1 million be allocated to the Pathways to Policing program to support the recruitment of non-traditional candidates for law enforcement positions. Another bill introduced by Sen. Jasinski allocates \$20 million for the Workforce Scholarship Program to increase enrollment in associate degree programs in law enforcement. Sen. Eichorn's \$20 million proposal would provide grants to students pursuing law enforcement degrees. For newly hired officers, [SF 2846 – Chamberlain](#) provides \$2.5 million in tuition reimbursements once they have put in one year of work with a law enforcement agency. Finally, Sen. Gazelka is proposing that \$20 million be made available for bonuses for newly hired police officers.

## **Model Resolution on Housing & Development**

Metro Cities, in cooperation with League of Minnesota Cities, is urging cities to consider adopting a model resolution supporting the authority of local elected officials and city staff to make land use decisions in their community.

This model resolution is in response to proposed legislation that would preempt important and long-standing municipal authorities in land use, planning, and zoning. One proposal, expected to be introduced next week, would eliminate a city's ability to stage growth, adopt its locally-determined zoning code, and plan for infrastructure necessary to support development.

[More information](#) and the [model resolution](#) can be found here. Please advise Metro Cities staff [charlie@metrocitiesmn.org](mailto:charlie@metrocitiesmn.org) and LMC [advocacy@lmc.org](mailto:advocacy@lmc.org) of your advocacy efforts. And share your resolution with your legislators, to let them know your support of preserving local decision-making authorities.

## **Transportation Hearing on IJJA**

The House Transportation Committee heard from a variety of testifiers on the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IJJA). Minnesota is expected to receive \$4.8 billion over five years in Federal Highway formula funding for roads and bridges. The law also makes billions available in competitive grants for bridges, Safe Streets for All, transit, and more. For more background on the IJJA click [HERE](#). The Transportation Alliance testified before the committee and broke down funding numbers further to provide a glimpse of what amounts (above base) the state can expect to receive in formula funds in each fiscal year through FY 2026. Click [HERE](#) to view the Transportation Alliance slides and [HERE](#) to see the other submitted testimony.

To maximize the amount of federal funds, Minnesota will need to be prepared with matching funds. This is true for formula funding as well as the discretionary grant programs included in the IJJA. Another

complication is that much of the funding for the IIJA has not yet been appropriated by congress. The federal government is operating under a Continuing Resolution set to expire on February 18. Some of the funds have been released, but the majority need an appropriations bill before being sent out to states. Finally, the Biden administration released a [guidebook for state and local governments](#) to help them navigate the IIJA and its new and existing programs.

Click [HERE](#) to view a recording of the Transportation Committee hearing. Contact Mike Lund at [michael@metrocitiesmn.org](mailto:michael@metrocitiesmn.org) or 651-215-4003 with any questions.

## **MHFA Announces Consolidated RFP Selections**

Minnesota Housing has announced its [funding selections](#) from the 2021 consolidated RFP. The awards include single family and multifamily projects for new construction, rehabilitation and preservation.

The awards total \$266 million which will assist over 4,600 homes across Minnesota. As noted above, dozens of projects did not receive funds due to demand and needs far outstripping supply of state funds. Single family housing was a priority of the 2021 legislature and these awards include grants and loans that will serve 322 households across the state through building new affordable homes, preserving existing homes, and providing financing for low- and moderate-income families to purchase homes.

## **Introduced Bills of Note**

[HF 2695](#), Reyer/[SF 2603](#), Duckworth: Bill requires certain percentages of projects funded with housing infrastructure bonds to result in physically and sensory accessible units.

[HF 2867](#), Huot/[SF 2851](#), Lang: Bill expands eligibility for soft body armor reimbursement grants.

[HF 2873](#), Hanson: Bill authorizes a rail transitway feasibility study in a corridor from St. Louis Park to Savage.

[HF 2874](#), Hanson: Bill repeals the moratorium on activities related to the Dan Patch commuter line.

[HF 2877](#), Richardson: Bill appropriates \$1.6 million for peace officer autism training.

[HF 2880](#), Hausman: Bill authorizes a spectrum of housing policies and funding to meet locally defined housing needs.

[HF 2906](#), Wazlawik: Bill prohibits PFAS in cosmetics products.

[HF 2907](#), Wazlawik: Bill prohibits PFAS in cookware products.

[HF 2910](#), Moller: Bill authorizes the expanded use of tracking devices during stolen vehicle investigations.

[HF 2952](#), Wazlawik: Bill prohibits PFAS in ski wax products.

[HF 2977](#), Jurgens/[SF 2883](#), Weber: Bill establishes a local law enforcement reimbursement account and aid program to reimburse local governments and other states for expenses in responding to unplanned or extraordinary public safety events.

[HF 2994](#), Bernardy: Bill appropriates \$50 million to the active transportation program.

[HF 3024](#), Boldon: Bill makes changes to the statutes governing early voting.

[HF 3035](#), Hornstein/[SF 2676](#), Dibble: Bill requires the legislative auditor to conduct a special review of aspects of the SWLRT project.

[HF 3075](#), Wazlawik: Bill requires notices of products containing PFAS.

[HF 3076](#), Wazlawik: Bill prohibits PFAS in apparel products.

[HF 3097](#), Daudt: Bill requires those registering on election day to cast provisional ballots.

[HF 3118](#), Vang: Bill repeals the authority of private citizens to make arrests.

[HF 3143](#), Agbaje/[SF 2587](#), Duckworth: Bill expands eligible use of housing infrastructure bonds; regulates issuance of housing infrastructure bonds.

[HF 3150](#), Swedzinski: Bill deposits \$27.7 million from the taxes collected from the sale of motor vehicle repair and replacement parts and provides for ongoing deposits to the highway user tax distribution fund (HUTD).

[SF 2573](#), Gazelka: Bill establishes the crime of carjacking.

[SF 2576](#), Gazelka: Bill requires convicted individuals serve the mandatory minimum sentence for certain crimes.

[SF 2656](#), Coleman: Bill authorizes local units of government to regulate the placement of certain level III predatory offenders within their communities.

[SF 2673](#), Limmer: Bill requires convicted individuals serve the mandatory minimum sentence for certain crimes.

[SF 2712](#), Bakk/[HF 2784](#), Urdahl: Bill appropriates money for a small city municipal facility improvement program.

[SF 2745](#), Putnam: Bill appropriates money to provide reimbursements to state and local law enforcement agencies that have paid incentive bonuses to encourage individuals to become peace officers.

[SF 2776](#), Dzedzic: Bill prohibits retaliation against peace officers who intercede against or report on use of excessive force.

[SF 2779](#), Draheim/[HF 2737](#), Youakim: Bill appropriates \$500,000 to develop training focused on dementia and Alzheimer's disease for local law enforcement agencies.

[SF 2796](#), Limmer: Bill appropriates \$750 thousand for Metro Transit violent crime enforcement team.

[SF 2841](#), Limmer: Bill requires county attorneys to report the reason for dismissing charges.

[SF 2843](#), Osmek: Bill enhances the criminal penalty for the theft of a vehicle when that vehicle is used to commit another crime.

[SF 2844](#), Coleman: Bill increases the penalty for fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle.

[SF 2846](#), Chamberlain: Bill establishes a grant program to reimburse education expenses for peace officers.

[SF 2847](#), Jasinski: Bill provides funding for pathway to policing reimbursement grants.

[SF 2848](#), Housley: Bill appropriates money to promote importance of and recruit peace officers.

[SF 2891](#), Johnson: Bill establishes a reimbursement program for use of force training.

[SF 2892](#), Duckworth: Bill appropriates \$5 million in grants to local law enforcement for body cameras.

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