

Zoning Preemption Bill Introduced in House

Legislation that would restrict fundamental city land use, planning and zoning authorities was introduced this week in the House, [HF 3256](#)-Elkins.

Metro Cities opposes the legislation, which creates statewide zoning and restricts several regional and local policy and funding processes and coordination. Many cities have shared concerns with legislators about the preemption provisions.

Metro Cities has long supported adequate state funding as well as adequate and flexible local tools that have demonstrable results in supporting homeownership by reducing barriers to housing, increasing housing construction, preserving existing homes, and providing housing stability. Many state programs are scalable based on funding and are tied to affordability and reducing homeownership disparities.

The bill was referred to the House State Government Finance and Policy committee. Contact Charlie Vander Aarde at charlie@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4001 with any questions.

State Revenues Update

The January state revenue review prepared by the MN Office of Management and Budget (MMB) shows net general fund revenues for the state were \$649 million, or 25%, above forecast. Receipts from corporate, sales and other taxes were above the forecast and individual income tax receipts were lower than the forecast. As with all monthly revenue updates, MMB cautions that results are preliminary. A complete budget and economic forecast will be released later this month.

Emergency Shelter Funding Passes Homelessness Division

The House Preventing Homelessness Division heard a proposal by the Division's Chair, Rep. Aisha Gomez [HF 3090](#), that would provide \$75 million from the state general fund to support shelter capital renovation and development. Cities are eligible grant applicants, as are counties, Tribal governments, nonprofits, and housing and redevelopment authorities. A grant may pay for total project expenditures or a specified project phase, up to \$10 million per project. The bill passed the division and is headed to the Human Services Finance and Policy committee. Contact Charlie Vander Aarde at charlie@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4001 with any questions

Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) Initiatives

The House Transportation Committee met on Monday to discuss the Minnesota Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program. In 2021 there were 498 fatalities on Minnesota roadways. 162 fatalities were speed-related crashes, a 116% increase from 2019. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) is attempting to address this problem through a variety of prevention and enforcement strategies and the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) is using federal funds to bolster enforcement efforts. OTS has developed a grant program to help local law enforcement agencies participate as well. A major component of the work relies heavily on public education and outreach. Click [HERE](#) to view the DPS slides.

The Toward Zero Deaths program was established in 2003 and was modeled after a program in Sweden that began in the late 1990s. TZD is a collaborative effort between MnDOT, MDH, and DPS that pulls together education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical & trauma services (EMT) in its effort to reduce roadway fatalities. In recent years TZD has emphasized building a culture of traffic safety as a priority. Presenters highlighted several engineering innovations including high tension cable median barriers, roundabouts, reduced crossing intersections, 6-inch edge lines, rumble strips, intersection constrictors, and more. Click [HERE](#) to view TZD program slides.

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

Peace Officer Recruitment Bill Sent to Senate Floor

[SF 2848 – Housley](#), as amended, was passed by the Senate Finance Committee on Thursday. The bill appropriates \$1 million to the Department of Public Safety to work with the POST Board on a marketing and advertising campaign promoting the importance of peace officers to recruit more individuals into the profession. The bill contains a requirement for the Commissioner of Public Safety to report back to the legislature on the use of funds, details on the marketing and advertising campaign, and the success of the campaign. The bill provides a \$1 million appropriation for the Pathway to Policing program with the goal of recruiting non-traditional candidates into law enforcement. The bill received its second reading on Thursday and awaits further action on the Senate floor. Other law enforcement recruitment bills are working their way through the Senate with committee hearings this week and additional hearings on the calendar next week. Click [HERE](#) to view a recording of Thursday's Finance Committee hearing.

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

Committee on Racial Justice Provides Update

During Monday's hearing of the Ways and Means Committee, members were provided an update on the Select Committee on Racial Justice and its recommendations for the 2022 Legislative Session. The committee previously released its final report in 2021. The committee's work focuses on disparities for Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities in Minnesota and the role government policies have played in perpetuating disparities. The report offered a set of recommendations for the legislature to help inform consideration of race and equity as legislators draft, debate, and enact policy. Click [HERE](#) to view the report.

For 2022, the committee has identified several initiatives and specific bills that would advance equity in the areas of economic development, housing, education, and health and human services. Click [HERE](#) to view slides that include details on where the Select Committee will focus their efforts in each issue area.

Legislature Reviews End of RentHelpMN Applications

The House and Senate Housing Finance and Policy committees heard from Minnesota Housing Commissioner Jennifer Ho on Tuesday on the agency's decision to close applications for the state's housing assistance program, RentHelpMN.

The program was established in 2021 and made its first payments in May to provide housing stability during the pandemic and was funded with federal dollars. The state had over \$500 million to distribute to applicants across the state. As of this week, the program received \$549 million in requests from over 101,000 applications. The program has paid more than \$380 million through

more than 86,000 payments. The bulk of requested assistance has been for rent payments (\$520 million) and energy (\$27 million).

Detailed information on RentHelpMN applications, payments, and assistance recipients can be found on the [program's dashboard](#). Commissioner Ho explained that applications surged in January and that the state applied for additional federal funds twice and was denied. Her [presentation to the House](#) is available here.

Legislation to fund additional housing assistance has been introduced and Metro Cities will monitor proposals. Contact Charlie Vander Aarde at charlie@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4001 with any questions.

Land Use Advisory Committee Announcement

The Metropolitan Council is seeking applicants for a vacancy on its Land Use Advisory Committee for District 7. District 7 includes Hennepin County, Robbinsdale and a large portion of Minneapolis. See [Council District Descriptions and Map](#). This appointment will fill the remainder of the term for this seat – until January 2023. Elected officials are eligible to serve on the Land Use Advisory Committee.

The Metropolitan Council's [Land Use Advisory Committee](#) provides advice and assistance to the Council on regional land use and comprehensive planning. The committee has 17 members. At least half of the members must be elected officials, and there must be a member from each Metropolitan Council district.

For more information about the committee and application process, visit the Council's [current committee openings](#) page. Priority will be given to applications submitted by Tuesday, February 22. Applicants will be asked to participate in a 10-minute, virtual interview with a selection panel before a final decision will be made.

If you have any questions, please contact Appointments Coordinator, Katie Driscoll (katie.driscoll@metc.state.mn.us, 612.964.6850).

Metropolitan Council PlanIt Courses

The Metropolitan Council's PlanIt News Blast provides resources regarding local planning. Updated information is below:

PlanIt Podcast: [Episode 41: GHG Emissions Inventory and Scenario Planning Tool](#). Staff at the Metropolitan Council, in partnership with academic institutions, have put together a tool to assist cities with planning on greenhouse gas emissions.

PlanIt Webinar: Tree Canopy Enhancement and Preservation, Thursday, February 24, 2022, from 12:00 - 1:00 pm. [Growing Shade](#) is an interactive resource to inform tree canopy enhancement and preservation. Met Council staff will demonstrate the need and applicability of the tool. Register [here](#).

LEED for Cities Local Government Leadership Program. [Apply for the LEED for Cities Local Government Leadership Program](#). Deadline to apply: **February 25, 2022.**

SolSmart. The Metropolitan Council has recognized the City of Woodbury as the 22nd Twin Cities community to be nationally recognized as a [SolSmart](#) community. Reach out to Cameran Bailey (cameran.bailey@metc.state.mn.us) if interested in enrolling in the SolSmart program. Visit the

Council's [Solar Community Resources](#) and [Solar Planning Resources](#) webpages for specific resources.

Bills of Note

[SF 2896](#), Benson/[HF 2732](#), Daudt: Bill establishes several voter ID measures for registration, absentee voting, and in-person voting. It also prohibits municipalities from accepting financial contributions for the purpose of paying expenses associated with conducting an election.

[SF 2898](#), Jasinski: Bill appropriates over \$35 million to purchase aircraft for the State Patrol.

[SF 2910](#), Housley: Bill requires safe accessibility training for transit operators.

[SF 2914](#), Bigham/[HF 3139](#), Edelson: Bill enhances the criminal penalty for fleeing or attempting to flee a peace officer in a stolen vehicle.

[SF 2915](#), Bigham/[HF 3140](#), Edelson: Bill enhances the criminal penalty for fleeing or attempting to flee a peace officer while operating motor vehicle in a reckless or grossly negligent manner.

[SF 2944](#), Housley: Bill creates a database to track the sale of used catalytic converters and makes that database available to law enforcement.

[SF 2956](#), Kiffmeyer/[HF 3233](#), Gruenhagen: Bill requires ballots to be printed on paper that includes a unique watermark.

[SF 2994](#), Johnson Stewart/[HF 2668](#), Morrison: Bill establishes a grant program to reimburse local law enforcement agencies for obtaining and replacing epinephrine auto-injectors.

[SF 3015](#), Eichorn: Bill appropriates \$5 million for grants to local law enforcement agencies to purchase body cameras. Priority must be given to agencies outside of the metropolitan area.

[SF 3017](#), Howe: Bill appropriates \$25 million to the small cities assistance program.

[SF 3058](#), Newman: Bill would require any federal funds received by the state from the IIJA be spent via direct appropriation by the legislature.

[SF 3073](#), Gazelka: Bill provides reimbursements to law enforcement agencies that have paid incentive bonuses to encourage individuals to become peace officers.

[SF 3074](#), Dibble/[HF 2994](#), Bernardy: Bill appropriates \$50 million to the active transportation program.

[SF 3076](#), Dibble: Bill requires the MnDOT commissioner to assume responsibility for the SWLRT by March 2022.

[SF 3080](#), Putnam: Unemployment trust fund replenishment and base tax rate freeze for employers.

[SF 3081](#), Newman: Bill allocates revenues from the tax on vehicle repair and replacement parts exclusively to fund roads.

[HF 3160](#), Hausman: Bill bonds for \$26 million for intercity passenger rail projects.

[HF 3180](#), Jordan: Bill prohibits PFAS in certain home and commercial furnishings.

[HF 3188](#), Huot/[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.

[HF 3202](#), Wazlawik: Bill requires disclosure by manufacturers of products that contain chemicals of high concern and prohibits the sale of products containing identified priority chemicals.

[HF 3219](#), Koegel: Bill adds two city engineers from the metropolitan district and one from outside of the metro district to the municipal state-aid screening board. The bill also makes changes to drone registration and insurance requirements. Other policy changes are included.

[HF 3220](#), Lippert: Bill allows installation and fee collection for electric vehicle charging stations at interstate rest areas.

[HF 3293](#), Novotny/[SF 2891](#), Johnson: Bill establishes a reimbursement program for use of force training.

[HF 3317](#), Davids: Bill prohibits automated speed enforcement.

[HF 3175](#), Boldon/[SF 3016](#), Howe: Modifies planning and zoning law for townships.

[HF 3210](#), Pinto: Bill expands existing programs to provide homelessness prevention assistance to families with minor children.

[HF 3244](#), Hausman: Bill appropriates \$500 million for housing.

[HF 3256](#), Elkins: Bill includes statewide zoning and local zoning preemption, changes to the Land Use Planning Act, and other residential development provisions.

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