



## Legislative Session Update

Today marks the completion of the third week of the 2023 legislative session. The consensus of many Capitol observers is that the legislative majorities are proceeding quickly on an array of significant bills. These include adult-use cannabis legalization, tax conformity, paid family and medical leave, and others. Legislative deadlines have been agreed to. The first deadline, in which committees must act favorably on bills in their house of origin, is Friday March 10. The second deadline in which committees must act favorably on bills that met deadline in the other body is Friday March 24. The third deadline in which committees must act favorably on appropriation and finance bills is Tuesday, April 4. There is no deadline for tax or capital investment bills.

Governor Walz will release his slate of budget recommendations to the Legislature next week. Metro Cities will publish those recommendations once they are released and will closely review them for any recommendations that pertain to cities.

Legislative updates on specific bills of interest to Metro Cities, as well as recently introduced bills, are below.

## IIJA Matching Funds Bill Scheduled for Floor Action

[HF 26 – Koegel](#) was heard and passed by the Ways and Means Committee on Tuesday. The bill authorizes MnDOT to use \$315.5 million the agency received from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). HF 26 is anticipated to be considered by the full Minnesota House of Representatives on Monday, January 23. Future authorizations, additional state appropriations for match requirements, and funding for local matches and technical assistance are expected in the weeks to come this legislative session. The Senate companion to HF 26, [SF 24 – Dibble](#), has not yet been heard in any committee.

In the Walz Administration's monthly statewide IIJA call, which Metro Cities attends, the director of MnDOT's Office of Sustainability and Public Health presented information on the agency's climate and resilience programs. The presentation covered three programs funded as a part of the IIJA. The National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program is both a formula and competitive grant program with the goal of building out EV charging corridors across the state and nation. The Carbon Reduction Program distributes funds to the Metropolitan Council and other MPOs with the intention of reducing transportation emissions from on-road highway sources. This funding requires the development of a carbon reduction framework and associated strategies. The PROTECT formula program provides funds to make surface transportation more resilient through planning and as well as improvements to existing infrastructure. There are competitive grants that cities are eligible to apply for as part of the PROTECT program. Statewide policy related to these three IIJA programs is being guided by the work of MnDOT's [Sustainable Transportation Advisory Council](#). Click [HERE](#) to view the MnDOT presentation materials.

This week's [House Sustainable Infrastructure Committee](#) included discussion regarding the needs of local units of government when applying for federal grant opportunities. The League of Minnesota Cities described their [Grant Navigator](#) program. City staff from Chaska and Chanhausen testified before the committee and shared what they see as the largest hurdles for local governments looking to develop application materials and compete for federal funding. It is

expected that some sort of technical assistance for local units of government will be included in the Governor's budget recommendation, which is due to be released next week.

Contact Mike Lund at [michael@metrocitiesmn.org](mailto:michael@metrocitiesmn.org) or 651-215-4003 with any questions.

### **Adult-Use Cannabis Heard in Judiciary**

[HF 100 – Stephenson](#), the bill legalizing the sale and use of cannabis in Minnesota, received its second hearing this week. The bill came before the House Judiciary Committee where testimony was limited to provisions within the committee's jurisdiction (data practices, civil penalties, forfeiture, expungement). After consideration of several amendments the bill was passed, as amended, and referred to the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of HF 100. The Senate companion, [SF 73 – Port](#) has not had a hearing yet.

Contact Mike Lund at [michael@metrocitiesmn.org](mailto:michael@metrocitiesmn.org) or 651-215-4003 with any questions.

### **Bill Amending Open Meeting Law Passes Committee**

[HF 198 – Koegel](#) was heard and passed by the House State and Local Government Committee on Thursday. Current law allows remote participation in public meetings up to three times per year for family or personal medical reasons. This medical exception can only be used during a state-declared emergency. HF 198 removes the language dealing with the state of emergency. Minnetonka Mayor Brad Wiersum testified in support of the bill. The committee discussed the open meeting law as well as the tensions between transparency and accessibility in the current law. The Senate companion, [SF 455 – Carlson](#), was introduced this week. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of HF 198. After passing unanimously, HF 198 was referred to the general register and awaits action on the House floor.

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### **Technical Tax Increment Financing Bill Passes Senate Taxes Committee**

On Wednesday, the Senate Taxes Committee heard and passed [SF 261](#)-Rest, that makes a number of changes to tax increment financing (TIF) laws. These include updating the definition of administrative expenses, defining pay-as-you-go contracts, clarifying limits on administrative expenses, clarifying expenditure limitations, calculating deficits, and updating the use of revenues for decertification, among other provisions.

Metro Cities and the League of MN Cities has worked with the Office of the State Auditor for several months on advised changes and this bill is the result of those efforts. Metro Cities provided written testimony in support of the bill. For a summary of the bill, click [HERE](#). The bill was sent as a stand-alone bill, to the Senate floor. The bill has not yet had a hearing in the House Taxes Committee. Contact Patricia Nauman at [patricia@metrocitiesmn.org](mailto:patricia@metrocitiesmn.org) with any questions.

### **Metro Transit Safety and Security**

Several representatives from Metro Transit came before the Metropolitan Council to deliver their quarterly report on the agency's Safety & Security Action Plan. The plan was developed following a Citizens League Transit Safety engagement effort and a Council-led Metro Transit Police Work Group.

The discussion began with some background information on the Safety and Security Action Plan followed by an update from Interim Police Chief Rick Grates. Chief Grates provided council members with recent data on calls for services, ridership, types of crimes occurring on the system, the frequency of code of conduct violations, and how officers are being deployed to tackle these issues. Chief Grates also provided recent MTPD activity around officer recruitment.

Metro Transit staff continued by offering some examples of how MTPD is implementing their Action Plan in the following areas:

- Improving Conditions on the System
- Training and Supporting Employees
- Engaging Customers and Partners

Click [HERE](#) to view the presentation materials, which contain more detailed policing data and information on specific action items found in the plan. Click [HERE](#) to view the full report for the Quarter 4, 2022 Update.

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### **Metropolitan Council Committee Approves LHIA Pilot Grants**

The Metropolitan Council's Community Development Committee (CDC) met on Tuesday and reviewed the [funding recommendations](#) for the Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) homeownership pilot program. This program provides funds to help communities achieve their affordable housing goals, with geographic choice and racial equity as two main scoring priorities. The program also elevates projects that are based on unique local needs, and the depth and length of affordability. Nine out of sixteen total applications were approved for funding, including Bloomington HRA, the city of Eden Prairie, the city of Chaska, the city of Golden Valley, Ramsey County CED, the city of Minneapolis, Roseville EDA, Washington County CDA, and the city of Richfield. There was a total of \$2 million and each project was capped at a \$300,000 award. The council hopes to fund the pilot for another year and/or make it an existing program in LHIA in the future.

The CDC also discussed the Livable Communities Act criteria updates. Overall, the council staff recommended keeping the framework intact with minor changes which were focused on clarity and consistency. Many of the revisions were plain language updates, clarifying intentions behind scoring items, and ensuring policy outcomes were focused on. Next, the CDC will approve these changes at their February 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, and on February 15<sup>th</sup> the changes will go to the full council for approval. You can see a detailed memo outlining the [suggested changes here](#).

Questions? Contact Ania McDonnell at [ania@metrocitiesmn.org](mailto:ania@metrocitiesmn.org).

### **Bills of Note**

[HF 337](#), Sencer-Mura/[SF 334](#), Mohamed: Bill requires the Metropolitan Council to ensure that bus operators must receive training on assisting persons with disabilities and mobility limitations.

[HF 372](#), Hollins/[SF 450](#), Gustafson: Bill requires a notice to the MPCA for products containing PFAS.

[HF 379](#), Bennett: Bill establishes the crime of unauthorized possession of a catalytic converter.

[HF 400](#), Howard: Bill modifies the class 4d property tax rate to 0.25 percent.

[HF 401](#), Hornstein: Bill defines micro mobility facilities and defines what advertisements are acceptable for such facilities. The bill makes several other miscellaneous transportation-related changes in law.

[HF 405](#), Quam: Bill establishes a microtransit rideshare program and a microtransit rideshare account.

[HF 410](#), Richardson/[SF 440](#), Morrison: Bill restores the Metropolitan Landfill Contingency Action Trust Account by transferring \$29,055,000 from the general fund.

[HF 413](#), Stephenson: Bill provides rebates for EV purchases and includes several other EV preference provisions.

[HF 438](#), Elkins: Bill authorizes counties to establish speed limits for county highways.

[HF 448](#), Johnson: Bill requires that peace officers be US citizens prior to receiving a license.

[HF 477](#), Wolgamott: Bill allows voters to join a permanent absentee voter list.

[HF 478](#), Novotny: Bill establishes the crime of carjacking.

[HF 480](#), Elkins: Bill appropriates \$500,000 to assist and train local governments on website accessibility.

[HF 489](#), Sencer-Mura / [SF 359](#) Mohamed: Bill creates a job skills training program for recently released inmates and appropriates money to the program.

[HF 522](#), Quam: Bill requires counties and cities to have written procedures that are available to the public and to provide notice of availability to the public.

[HF 538](#), Frazier: Bill requires the Peace Officer Standards and Training Board to revise the standards of conduct for peace officers.

[HF 552](#), Kotyza-Witthuhn: Bill prohibits PFAS in juvenile products.

[HF 558](#), Frederick: Bill defines early voting, requires municipal clerk's offices to remain open during certain hours before an election, changes the time at which ballot envelopes begin to be opened, and contains blank appropriation.

[HF 573](#), Daudt: Bill requires photo ID to register and vote, establishes provisional ballots, and contains several other elections provisions.

[HF 575](#), Daudt: Bill repeals prohibition on cities issuing more than one off-sale license to any one person or place.

[HF 597](#), Kraft: Bill establishes grant program to provide financial assistance to cities to address climate change.

[HF 626](#), Becker-Finn: Bill allows cities to require additional licensing for hotels.

[HF 635](#), Greenman: Bill prohibits the intimidation or interference of elections officials.

[SF 327](#), Dziedzic: Bill creates Open Access Connections voice mail services program to provide free phone services for homeless and low-income people in their search for affordable housing and to help those individuals find and keep jobs that will allow them to maintain their housing.

[SF 338](#), Koran: Bill prohibits cities from accepting certain contributions for elections expenses.

[SF 363](#), Jasinski: Bill regulates personal delivery devices equipped with automated driving technology. Includes some preemption language.

[SF 367](#), Champion: Bill creates the Mind the G.A.P.P. grant program and provides money. This program would work to improve the quality of life of unemployed individuals by improving their employment outcomes and developing individual earnings potential.

[SF 388](#), Dibble/[HF 444](#), Keeler: Bill creates a Homeless Youth program which would provide a variety of grant programs for supporting homeless youth and emergency shelter facilities.

[SF 411](#), Pappas: Bill provides reimbursement grants to local units of government for public safety personnel on authorized leave.

[SF 414](#), Howe: Bill dedicates 100% of the auto parts sales tax to transportation with 76% transferred to the HUTDF, 12% to the small cities assistance account, and 12% to the town road account.

[SF 455](#), Carlson/[HF 198](#), Koegel: Bill removes state of emergency requirement associated with the medical exception to the open meeting law.

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