



Metro Cities' 2025 Legislative Policies Adopted

Metro Cities' 2025 legislative policies were adopted by the association's membership at the Policy Adoption Meeting on Thursday, following adoption of policies by the Board of Directors in October, and recommendations by four legislative policy committees. Thank you to all city officials who attended the policy adoption meeting and/or participated in the policy committee process this year. Your participation is important and appreciated.

A special thank you to policy committee chairs Mike Thompson-Public Works Director, Plymouth, Gary Hansen-Councilmember, Eagan, Heather Butkowski-City Administrator, Lauderdale and Dana Hardie-City Manager, Victoria for your work in chairing the committees, and to Heidi Nelson-City Administrator, Maple Grove, for presenting policies at the policy adoption meeting on Thursday.

Livable Communities Program Report Receives Discussion

On Monday, the Metropolitan Council's Community Development Committee (CDC) heard a third and final presentation on a review of the Livable Communities Act programs. This [presentation](#) and [report](#) were provided by consultants hired to review the Livable Communities Act programs. Consultants shared their findings that included historical data, survey results, interviews with CDC members, and engagement with city officials. Consultants shared that geographic distribution is a key tension and highlighted that LCA programs are valued, competitive, and under-funded.

The consultants suggested minor changes for 2025, while suggesting that the Council engage stakeholders and consider more substantial changes for the 2026 fund distribution plan. Changes suggested for 2025 include creating a unified LCDA-Development and LCDA-TOD application and adding bonus points for communities applying that have not applied recently.

Potential changes for 2026 include aligning LCA programs with Imagine 2050 policy, assessing the allocation of LCDA by community designation, assessing the need for an affordable housing preservation pilot, implementing a 2-year fund distribution plan, and exploring greater alignment with MN Housing's consolidated RFP. These suggestions can be found starting on page 38 of the report. Consultants also suggested more frequent outreach to cities. Generally, proposed changes are intended to make LCA programs easier to understand, applications more streamlined and less time-consuming, and to enable projects in smaller and suburban cities to effectively compete for funds.

Council members discussed the report and whether geography should be more directly addressed in the programs and what barriers could be eliminated to enhance participation. Metro Cities will continue to monitor the discussions, and any recommended changes for the program in 2025.

Transit Funding Allocation Policy

Metropolitan Council staff presented an information item on the Council's Transit Funding Allocation Policy at Wednesday's Committee of the Whole meeting. This policy will set the basis for further updates in the next few years and will include details on the allocation of regional sales tax funding, federal funding, and requirements for coordinated regional transit systems. MTS Director Charles Carlson provided Metropolitan Council members some background information on the region's transit system as well as a few key updates from the 2023 state transportation bill which established the regional sales tax for transportation, provided capital funding for METRO projects, and relieved counties of their responsibility to fund transitway operating and capital maintenance costs.

The funding allocation policy includes the following guiding principles:

- Maintain transit assets in a state of good repair.
- Sustain existing and future operations of the METRO system and the regional bus system.
- Invest in expanding regional transit service.
- Innovate and improve transit, including by funding required uses in state law.

A major work product that informs allocation decisions is the Council's long-range financial forecast of revenues and expenditures. These forecasts use a 25-year time horizon and are updated annually.

Another critical piece of this policy describes the way funds are allocated to replacement service (suburban) providers. For 2025, the Council will use an interim funding allocation based on the share of 2023 regional ridership for each transit service (\$17 million of the 2025 sales tax collections). An ongoing allocation policy for these providers will be developed and implemented effective 2026.

This item will come before the Transportation Committee on November 25 and the full Metropolitan Council on December 11. Click [HERE](#) to view the presentation slides from Wednesday's meeting and [HERE](#) to view some additional information on this proposed policy.

SMC Quarterly Convening: Winter 2024

The Minnesota Shared Mobility Collaborative is holding its quarterly convening on **Thursday, December 12**. The event will be held virtually via Zoom from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM. [This convening will focus on new research about shared micromobility](#). North American Bikeshare and Scootershare Association's Membership & Engagement Director Laura Mallonee will share information from NABSA's [5th Annual Shared Micromobility State of the Industry Report for North America](#). The only report of its kind for North America, this report demonstrates shared micromobility's continued viability and strength as an important mode in the public transportation ecosystem.

Active transportation (defined as walking, rolling, and biking to reach destinations) inherently supports public transit success since over 90 percent of transit riders begin and end their trips using these modes. [Accessibility Observatory](#) Director Eric Lind will share recent findings that

demonstrate how enhancing the infrastructure for safe active travel can improve the usefulness of transit, as well as how integration of bicycles, e-bikes, and shared micromobility with public transit is crucial for expanding accessibility and encouraging multi-modal travel behaviors.

The webinar is free to attend, but [registration is required](#). Once you have registered, you will receive an email confirmation with a Zoom link. The link should not be shared with others; it is unique to you.

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

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