



Metro Cities Annual Meeting is April 24th -- Mark Your Calendar!

Please join us for Metro Cities' Annual Meeting next Wednesday, April 24th at 5:00 pm, at the Roseville Oval Skating Center Banquet Room. The meeting will feature Guest Speaker Tom Hauser, Chief Political Reporter for KSTP- 5, and will begin with a social hour with appetizers and cash bar. The event will conclude with a brief meeting to elect members and officers to the Metro Cities Board. RSVP to Jennifer Dorn at jennifer@metrocitiesmn.org. Elected city officials and staff are welcome! We hope to see you there!

Omnibus Bill Updates

Omnibus bills are continuing to move through the committee process in the House and Senate. Below are updates on omnibus bills and provisions in these bills of interest to Metro Cities.

Commerce and Cannabis

[SF 5301](#) (Klein) was heard in Senate Commerce Committee on Tuesday. This is the omnibus commerce and Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) budget and policy bill. SF 5301 was passed, [as amended](#), and referred to the Finance Committee. The bill includes language supported by Metro Cities that would require a license for individuals to sell scrap copper. The House Commerce bill, [HF 5295](#) (Stephenson) is expected to be heard on Wednesday 4/17.

Elections

[HF 4411](#) (Freiberg) was passed, as amended, and referred to the Ways and Means Committee on Wednesday morning. The bill moves funds from existing programs (the Voting Equipment Grant Account and local government drop box grants) to the VOTER account established in 2023. It establishes a Voting Rights Act cost sharing account for the purpose of reimbursing political subdivisions for presuit notice cost sharing expenses. It also authorizes cities to adopt ranked choice voting by ordinance, ballot initiative, or charter amendment. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill and [HERE](#) for a budget spreadsheet. [SF 4260](#) (Carlson) was passed by the Senate Finance committee on Tuesday. Click [HERE](#) for the summary of the senate bill and [HERE](#) for the spreadsheet.

Environment

[SF 2904](#) (Hansen), the omnibus environment policy bill, was passed, as amended by the [House language](#) with a vote of 72-58. The bill will now go to a conference committee to reconcile the differences between the House and Senate versions. The House and Senate omnibus environment finance bills were both heard for the first time on Tuesday.

[HF 3911](#) (Hansen), [as amended](#), contains funding for tree planting by cities and park agencies as well as a small bump in funding for the Lawns to Legumes program. The bill also contains changes in law regarding penalties and remedies for permit violations, including those permits held by cities. Click [HERE](#) for the associated supplemental budget spreadsheet. [SF 3887](#) (Hawj) is scheduled for mark up and passage out of the Senate environment committee on Thursday.

Housing

[SF 4158](#) – Port was heard in the Senate Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee. You can see the bill language [HERE](#), and a spreadsheet for the bill [HERE](#). Metro Cities [submitted a](#)

[letter](#) in support of the capital appropriation for Housing Infrastructure Bonds included in the bill of \$50 million. The bill was passed and referred to the Senate Finance committee.

[HF 4194](#) – Howard was heard as an informational hearing on Tuesday, all action and amendments will be taken on Wednesday, April 17th. You can see the bill language [HERE](#), and a spreadsheet for the bill [HERE](#). The bill contains language supported by Metro Cities, including a capital appropriation of \$50 million for Housing Infrastructure Bonds, and language that prohibits landlords from discriminating against a tenant based on their source of income. Finally, the bill includes language that would require first, second, and third-class metropolitan cities who are receiving local affordable housing aid to submit an annual report on their locally funded housing expenditures, to ensure that they are supplementing, not supplanting, their locally funded housing expenditures with the local affordable housing aid. Metro Cities [submitted a letter](#) to the committee providing support for items in the bill but encouraged the committee to consider a sunset date for the reporting requirement for locally funded housing expenditures, as these are onerous on local governments.

Economic Development

[HF 3449](#) – Hassan, the omnibus economic development finance and policy bill, will be heard in the Economic Development Committee on Wednesday. You can view the bill [HERE](#), and the spreadsheet [HERE](#).

[SF 5289](#) – Champion, the omnibus supplemental economic development budget bill, will be heard in the Senate Jobs and Economic Development Committee on Wednesday. You can view the bill [HERE](#), and the spreadsheet [HERE](#).

Human Services Policy

[SF 4399](#) (Fischer), the omnibus human services policy bill, was passed, as amended by the [House language](#) (from HF 4392) with a vote of 69 to 62. The House and Senate will convene a conference committee to reconcile differences between their bills. Both bills contain language opposed by Metro Cities that would exempt group homes and assisted living facilities with licensed capacities of six or fewer individuals from local rental licensing regulations.

Judiciary and Public Safety

[SF 4271](#) (Latz), the omnibus judiciary policy bill was passed, as amended, by the Senate judiciary committee and referred to the floor last Friday. The bill contains language that increases the sanctions on local governments (and officials) for violations of the open meeting law. [HF 5216](#) (Moller) was passed, as amended, by the House Public Safety committee on Tuesday and referred to the Ways and Means Committee.

Legacy Finance

[SF 5116](#) (Hawj) was passed, as amended, by the Senate Finance committee and referred to the floor on Wednesday morning. [HF 4124](#) (Lillie) is scheduled to be heard Wednesday. Both the House and Senate bills include just over \$3 million in supplemental funding for the metropolitan area regional parks and trails system.

State and Local Government

[HF 3431](#) (Klevorn), the omnibus state and local government finance and policy bill, was heard in committee on Tuesday morning. Amendments are expected to be considered and the bill passed out of committee to Ways and Means on 4/18. The current language repeals existing law that prohibits local governments from regulating the use of certain bags by merchants. The bill also includes problematic language requiring recipients of state funds via bonding or grant program to establish capital project replacement funds.

Transportation Finance

[SF 5284](#) (Dibble) is scheduled for a hearing on Wednesday, April 17th, where the committee will do a walkthrough of the bill. The bill includes \$15 million for the corridors of commerce program and \$10 million for the small cities assistance account. The bill contains several policy provisions of note including changes to the greenhouse gas mitigation language passed in 2023, local authority for the use of speed and red-light cameras, zero-emission transit buses procurement plans, language around scoping for BRT projects, and pedestrian mall authority of cities. The bill also transfers responsibility for large transit projects from the Metropolitan Council to MnDOT. The bill requires the Metropolitan Council to complete an annual financial report on all transportation revenues and expenditures.

[HF 5242](#) (Hornstein) is scheduled for a hearing on Thursday, April 18th. The bill (as amended by a delete everything amendment) includes \$9 million from the general fund for small cities. It also includes changes to the greenhouse gas mitigation language passed in 2023. Click [HERE](#) for more information on these proposed changes to the GHG law.

Uber/Lyft Bill Heard

[SF 4780](#) (Fateh) was passed, as amended, by the Senate Commerce Committee on Tuesday. The committee's jurisdiction only covered Section 1 of the bill, which deals with insurance. The [A10 amendment](#) adopted by the committee makes several changes to the insurance portions of the bill. Sen. Fateh told the committee that these changes are the result of continued conversations with drivers, TNCs, legislative leadership, and state agencies. After its passage, the bill was referred to the Judiciary Committee.

Click [HERE](#) for the Dept. of Labor and Industry's TNC Driver Pay Report and [HERE](#) for the recommendations that came out of the Governor's Committee on the Compensation Wellbeing, and Fair Treatment of Transportation Network Companies.

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

Senate Multifamily Pre-Emption Bill Remains in Committee

On Tuesday, the Senate State and Local Government Committee heard [SF 4254](#) – Port, a bill that was amended to include language that would pre-empt city authority and decision-making for multifamily residential developments. View the language [HERE](#). The bill would require cities to approve or deny a building permit request within 60 days, allows multifamily residential developments as a permitted use in any zoning district that allows for commercial uses, restricts height requirements for multifamily housing developments, and allows for affordable multifamily developments to exceed one or more maximum dimensional standards imposed by city zoning controls. Language in the bill does allow a city to establish local controls or ordinances to require that residential developments that replace commercial or industrial structures be mixed use and include at least the same square footage of commercial space as the previous structure, and undeveloped commercial spaces can similarly be required to be mixed use. However, the bill exempts blighted areas from those local controls or ordinances.

During the hearing, the bill was amended to:

- Extend the effective date from January 1, 2025 to June 1, 2025.
- Exempts multifamily residential developments in commercial districts from local controls and ordinances to preserve commercial space in which all of the residential

units are affordable to households with incomes that do not exceed 60 percent of the area median income.

Senator Heather Gustafson (DFL - Vadnais Heights) authored [an amendment](#) that removes the requirement that a city respond to a building permit request within 60 days, and removes the blighted area language. The amendment passed the committee with a 9-3 vote. The bill was then laid on the table.

Thank you to those city officials who reached out to legislators with concerns on this bill.

Please contact Ania McDonnell at ania@metrocitiesmn.org with any questions.

Metro Cities News is emailed periodically to Metro Cities member mayors, councilmembers, city managers/administrators, and city staff to keep officials and staff abreast of important metro city issues.

If you'd like to sign up to receive Metro Cities News, please email newsletter@metrocitiesmn.org and provide the following: Name, Title, Employer and Email address. Thank you!

Metro Cities (Association of Metropolitan Municipalities)
145 University Ave W, St. Paul, MN 55103-2044
Phone 651-215-4000 · Fax 651-281-1299 · www.MetroCitiesMN.org