



2024 Metro Cities Policy Committees

Metro Cities 2024 policy committee process will begin in July. Committees will recommend the association's legislative policies for 2025. Participation is open to member city elected officials and staff, and committee descriptions and dates are on the [website](#). Please be sure to [sign up](#) for the committee(s) you wish to attend. This will help us keep rosters accurate. We look forward to seeing you this summer.

Legislature Quickly Approaching Date of Adjournment

The 2024 legislative session is quickly approaching its final adjournment date of Monday, May 20th. Several omnibus bills have passed conference committees, and others have passed off one or both floors. Several other bills remain outstanding, including a capital investment bill. Legislative activity will be highly fluid over the next few days. Metro Cities will issue weekend bill updates through the association's X account @MetroCitiesMN.

Omnibus Bill and Conference Committee Updates

Taxes

The Taxes Conference Committee most recently met on Monday. At its meeting last Saturday, the committee adopted several same and similar positions and discussed and heard testimony on provisions in the bills relating to local sales taxes. Metro Cities provided testimony in support of repealing the moratorium on local sales tax proposals, allowing cities to impose a local sales tax without legislative approval, and preference for the Senate language, which is more expansive in defining eligible projects. See Metro Cities' May 10th newsletter for links to a side-by-side summary of the House and Senate tax bills.

Capital Investment

Discussions and actions have continued on capital investment bills this week, with separate bills for projects funded with general obligation bonds or the state general fund, with the latter bill comprised primarily of proposed local projects. The House capital investment bills passed the Ways and Means Committee and were sent to the House floor, where they are scheduled for debate Saturday. Senate capital investment bills were heard in the Finance Committee on Thursday and tabled. The bills were presented by Senate and House Capital Investment Chairs Pappas and Lee, and do not yet reflect a final capital investment bill agreement.

Adult-Use Cannabis

The conference committee report for HF 4757 (Stephenson/Port) was adopted by the committee this week. Conferees included Representatives Stephenson, Hanson, J., Kozlowski, Frazier, West, and Senators Port, Pha, Frentz, Maye Quade, and Xiong. Discussion began with a [delete everything amendment](#) and several technical amendments. The report was then amended to include [language](#) from the omnibus commerce supplemental budget bill. Until this action, those provisions were part of an entirely separate conference committee. Among those provisions moved into this conference committee report is the language from the senate commerce bill

related to the sale of scrap copper wire. The conference committee report will be posted [HERE](#) when it is finalized.

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

Elections

The conference committee report for HF 4772 (Freiberg/Carlson) was passed by the House this week, with a vote of 70-63. The report was subsequently passed by the Senate with a vote of 34-33. Conferees included Representatives Freiberg, Greenman, and Vering, and Senators Carlson, Westlin, and Boldon. The committee was given the authority to negotiate on elections finance provisions that were also carried in a separate bill. The report contains several provisions of note for cities including a requirement for cities and counties to establish temporary polling locations on or near colleges or universities if the school or student organizations requests one. There is a \$200,000 appropriation for the secretary of state to reimburse cities and counties for costs associated with this provision.

The report also requires any city administering absentee voting to use a .gov domain for their website by 2026. Finally, HF 4772 contains the Minnesota Voting Rights Act, which prohibits voter suppression and vote dilution. The MVRA language includes a presuit notice process for assertions of suppression or dilution to be sent to local governments. The language includes steps cities could be required to take to correct violations and reimbursement costs for those bringing a MVRA case to a city or county. Click [HERE](#) to view the conference committee report and [HERE](#) to view the budget spreadsheet.

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

Environment and Natural Resources

The conference committee for HF 3911 (Hansen/Hawj), the omnibus environment supplemental appropriations bill was adopted this week. The report contains items of note for cities including \$800,000 in additional funding for the Lawns to Legumes Program, \$3.188 million for community tree planting grants in the metropolitan area, and \$1.4 million for tree planting specifically in metropolitan regional parks. Conferees included Representatives Hansen R., Pursell, Finke, Jordan, and Heintzeman, and Senators Hawj, McEwan, Morrison, Boldon, and Nelson. Click [HERE](#) to view the conference committee report and [HERE](#) to view the budget spreadsheet.

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

Human Services Policy

The conference committee report for SF 4399 (Hoffman/Fischer) was passed by the Senate on May 13 with a vote of 60 to 7. The conference committee report was passed by the House on May 15 with a vote of 126 to 0. The bill, as passed by both bodies, contains 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. Conferees included Representatives Fischer, Frederick, and Baker, and Senators Hoffman, Mann, and Utke. Click [HERE](#) to view the conference committee report. [Chapter 108](#) was signed by the Governor on May 16.

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

Jobs and Economic Development

The Jobs and Economic Development conference committee met Friday and adopted a conference committee agreement on [SF 5289](#). View the agreement spreadsheet [HERE](#), and a policy comparison summary [HERE](#). The bill includes technical changes to the Innovative Business Development Public Infrastructure Grant program, as well as technical changes to the Job Creation Fund program. The bill redirects \$3 million from the Job Creation Fund to PROMISE Act Grants in the seven-county metropolitan area. The conference committee adopted an [amendment](#) that increases the amount the Commissioner of DEED can transfer between the Job Creation Fund and the Minnesota Investment Fund to meet business demand, from \$2 million up to \$5 million in a fiscal year. The adopted conference committee report will head to the House and Senate floors next.

If you have any questions, please contact Ania McDonnell at ania@metrocitiesmn.org.

Judiciary and Public Safety

[HF 5216](#) (Latz), the omnibus judiciary and public safety supplemental appropriations bill, was passed as amended this week by the Senate with a vote of 50 -17. An amendment was adopted that would make body camera data public if the subject of the data is a public official (a legislator, governor, constitutional officer, or commissioner of a state agency). Other amendments adopted impose or increase penalties for fleeing an officer, being in a stolen vehicle, obstructing traffic, and reporting a fictitious emergency to weaponize emergency response from police. There are no conference committee meetings scheduled yet for public safety.

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

Tenant Protections

The omnibus tenant protections agreement bill was heard in a joint House and Senate conference committee earlier this week. View the full bill text [HERE](#), and an overview of provisions included in the bill [HERE](#). The bill includes provisions that protect a tenant's right to call for police or emergency assistance for mental health or health crises, protects a tenant's right to organize, allows for a tenant to use an individual taxpayer identification number (ITIN) in lieu of a social security number (SSN), and provides tenant remedies for new construction delays, among other provisions. During the meeting, an amendment was made to the bill that would remove the disclosure of fees provision in section number 8 of the agreement. The bill was amended to adjust the effective dates for the provision related to protecting victims of domestic violence to begin 30 days after the bill enactment, and for the rest of the provisions of the bill to be effective January 1, 2025. The effective dates were updated to allow time for landlords and others to learn about the new policies before they go into effect.

The conference committee report has yet to be heard on the House or Senate floors.

If you have any questions, please contact Ania McDonnell at ania@metrocitiesmn.org.

Transportation/Housing/Labor

The conference committee for HF 5242 (Hornstein/Dibble), the omnibus transportation, housing, and labor supplemental appropriations bill, met for the last time on Wednesday night. Conferees included Representatives Hornstein, Nelson, M., Howard, Tabke, and Petersburg and Senators Dibble, Port, McEwen, Morrison, and Limmer. The full conference committee report will be posted [HERE](#) when it is finalized.

Transportation

Funding provisions of note in the transportation articles include:

- \$3 million for greenhouse gas emissions analysis.
- \$800,000 for greenhouse gas MPO grants.
- \$11.35 million for the small cities assistance account.
- \$4.8 million for truck parking and safety improvements in the metropolitan area.
- \$1.2 million for the Lights On grant program.
- \$15 million in Trunk Highway Bonds for State Road Construction.
- \$15 million in Trunk Highway Bonds for the Corridors of Commerce Program.

Click [HERE](#) for the conference committee agreement budget spreadsheet.

The final transportation agreement includes amended language authorizing the establishment of a traffic safety camera pilot program (to take place in the cities of Minneapolis and Mendota Heights). The agreement also includes changes to last year's greenhouse gas emissions impact assessment language including the move from a project-by-project assessment to a portfolio approach and the establishment of a technical group which will include local government representation. The language contains authorization for cities to establish pedestrian malls within their right-of-way. The contents of [HF 4025](#), which would establish a MN Advisory Council on Infrastructure was amended into this bill by the conference committee. The report also authorizes cities to use funds from the small cities assistance account and the larger cities assistance account for debt service.

Several provisions in the bill relate to transit and the Metropolitan Council. The language requires MnDOT to provide staff and project assistance to the Council for large transit projects in the future. There are new reporting requirements for the Council and metropolitan area counties on the uses of regional sales tax revenues and the Council is required to produce an annual report to the legislature on their transportation expenditures and revenues. The bill contains amended language clarifying how ADA improvements and other BRT project elements should be scoped and paid for and policy language regarding the transition to a zero-emission bus transit fleet.

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

Housing

On Tuesday, the Transportation, Housing, and Labor conference committee adopted language for the housing portion of the omnibus bill. View the language [HERE](#).

The bill:

- Requires a report on section 42 low-income senior housing tax credit rental housing
- Requires cities receiving local affordable housing aid to report annually on their locally funded housing expenditures, and requiring cities to supplement, not supplant their locally funded housing expenditures with the aid
- Reduces the Housing Challenge Program funds by \$15 million and reallocates the funds to other programs
- Reallocates funds for the Community Stabilization Program to specific programs
- Contains language that exempts comprehensive plans for cities of the first class in the metropolitan area from the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (MERA), and states that comprehensive plans shall not constitute conduct that causes or is likely to cause pollution, impairment or destruction under MERA

- Exempts all city comprehensive plans in the metropolitan area from being subject to the requirements of chapter 116D, a provision which requires environmental impact statements
- Prohibits landlords from discriminating against a tenant based on their use of federal, state, or local government rental assistance, including section 8 housing vouchers

During the meeting, an [amendment](#) was adopted that removes the section that would prohibit landlords from discriminating against a tenant based on their use of federal, state, or local government rental assistance.

The bill does not include preemption language, nor language that would take away a city's authority to require aesthetic mandates.

If you have any questions, please contact Ania McDonnell at ania@metrocitiesmn.org.

Call for Applications for the Redevelopment Grant and Demolition Loan Programs

Applications are open for the Redevelopment Grant and Demolition Loan Programs through Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The Redevelopment Grant Program supports communities with redevelopment projects, particularly new parties with site redevelopment. The Demolition Loan Program supports local governments with the acquisition and removal of vacant blighted structures where there is potential for future development, but is hindered by severe blight, public safety concerns, and/or hazardous conditions.

Applications are due by August 1st, 2024. You can view the call for applications and instructions to apply [HERE](#).

Bills of Note

[SF 5523](#), Klein/HF [5466](#), Kozlowski: Bill modifies the class rates for manufactured home parks.

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