



Legislative Session Begins Tuesday, January 14th

The 2025 legislative session begins next Tuesday, January 14th. This is a budget setting year for the Legislature. With no 2024 capital appropriations bill, demand for a bonding package remains high. The state's Budget and Economic Forecast when it is released in late February will serve to inform and guide the Governor and Legislature on budget and spending decisions for the next biennium. The November budget forecast showed a relatively small surplus, with reduced revenues and a potential structural imbalance for the budget in the next biennium.

The Senate, which previously had a 34-33 split with a DFL majority, is now tied at 33-33, following the death of Senator Kari Dziedzic in December. The vacant Senate District 60 seat will be filled via special election on January 28th.

Following the November election, the House was tied 67-67, and members had begun to discuss a power sharing arrangement. However, the newly elected member in House District 40B resigned following a court ruling on his residency, resulting in a split of 67 GOP and 66 DFL members. A special election is scheduled for January 28th to fill this seat. Depending on a judge's ruling regarding destroyed ballots in the House District 54A seat, another special election could follow. Given these circumstances, House members have put discussions regarding power sharing on hold. Sixty-eight votes are required for passing bills, which raises questions on how legislative processes and issues will be addressed when the session begins.

2025 Metro Cities policies were adopted by the full membership in November and the Metro Cities Board of Directors adopted 2025 legislative priorities, which will be published in a legislative preview article next week. Metro Cities will again publish a "Bills of Note" in the weekly newsletter and will provide ongoing updates and information of pertinence and interest, as the session begins.

Office of Cannabis Management Updates

Public Comment Period for Rules Opens on January 13

On Monday, January 13, OCM will publish in the State Register a notice of intent to adopt expedited rules. That notice will trigger a 30-day public comment period, which starts the same day and closes at 4:30 PM on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. Members of the public can submit comment in support of or in opposition to the proposed expedited rules and any part or subpart of the rules. Comments can be submitted via the [Office of Administrative Hearings Rulemaking eComments website](#). Click [HERE](#) for more information on OCM rulemaking activities.

Local Governments Asked to Provide Contact Information

OCM is asking local governments to provide contact information and create an account in their licensing software system to help facilitate the local retail registration process outlined in statute. Click [HERE](#) to view the OCM's registration webpage.

New Interim Director for OCM

Charlene Briner has stepped down as Director at the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM). OCM General Counsel Eric Taubel will serve as interim director.

Local Government Guidance Updated

The OCM has updated its guidance for local governments. This version of the [Guide for Governments on Adult-Use Cannabis](#) includes more information on the anticipated licensing process and the roles for local governments, resources for the licensure and regulatory processes, and new guidance related to compliance checks and hemp-derived products enforcement.

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

Resilient Communities Project: Deadline is April 15

The Resilient Communities Project (RCP) is accepting applications from local government agencies in Minnesota for 2025-2026 partnerships. **April 15 is the priority deadline** for projects to begin in September 2025. This University of Minnesota program seeks to help local governments advance community sustainability, equity, and resilience.

The program has helped government entities address a broad range of local issues by providing technical assistance, generating new ideas and perspectives, and bringing community voices into the conversation. Projects in the seven-county metropolitan region are eligible for matching funds from the Metropolitan Council for RCP projects that implement elements of locally adopted 2040 comprehensive plans.

Click [HERE](#) for more information on the program and links to apply.

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