



Metropolitan Council Committee Recommends Amending Density Policy

On Tuesday, the Metropolitan Council Community Development Committee voted to recommend Imagine 2050 policy plans and public comment reports for Land Use, Regional Parks and Trails, and Housing. The committee also adopted local forecasts through 2050.

The committee heard a [presentation](#) from Council staff on policy plans and key changes to plans following the fall public comment period. Council members had robust discussion regarding the proposed density for communities designated as Suburban Edge, for which the proposed plan requires a density of four units per acre, an increase from the current policy of three units. After considerable discussion, members voted on a proposed amendment to have the policy remain at three units, which failed. The committee then voted on a second proposed amendment to lower the requirement to 3.5 units. The amendment passed on a 4-3 vote. The Committee then voted to recommend policy plans as amended, to the full Council.

All draft policy plans will be considered by the Council on Wednesday, February 12th. View documents discussed at the meeting [HERE](#).

Staff also provided a preview of the draft 2025 fund distribution plan for the Livable Communities Act (LCA) programs. Staff shared that the plan includes minor changes for 2025, including a decreased minimum score for the pre-development program, scoring on net tax capacity in the policy development program, removing the match requirement in the policy development program, and redistributing some points in the homeownership program. View the presentation [HERE](#). The fund distribution plan is scheduled to be presented to the CDC for a vote on February 3rd, and to the full Council on February 12th.

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

Local Transportation Revenue Discussed in House Committee

The House Transportation Committee held a hearing on Wednesday to discuss [HF 5 – Joy](#), which among other things, repeals new transportation revenue sources passed in 2023 and reallocates the revenue from the metropolitan regional sales tax for transportation. The bill halts the indexing of the gas tax, which reduces the amount of revenue going into the Highway User Tax Distribution Fund.

HF 5 also repeals the retail delivery fee, which is one of two sources of revenue for the Transportation Advancement Account (TAA). To account for less revenue in the TAA, the revenue from the motor vehicle rental tax is put toward the TAA and both the small city and larger city accounts are given a larger percentage, which results in higher annual distributions for cities of all sizes. The small cities assistance account has its percentage of the TAA increased from 27% to 34% and the larger cities assistance account has its percentage increased from 15% to 23%. Reallocating the motor vehicle rental tax revenue from the HUTD to the TAA does result in a small decrease to the Municipal State Aid Streets.

Metropolitan counties are removed from the TAA and are instead given a larger proportion of the metropolitan regional sales tax revenue, taking from the Metropolitan Council's allocation. The

Council's portion of the sales tax is decreased from 83% to 74% and the metropolitan counties have their portion increased from 17% to 26%. Click [HERE](#) to view a budget spreadsheet document comparing funding amounts under HF 5 to current law. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill.

Metro Cities testified at Wednesday's hearing to reiterate the importance of the TAA revenues for cities of all sizes and that what cities want most is stable, predictable funding for local street construction and maintenance. While HF 5 does result in slight increases for cities, the state's transportation system as a whole will see less ongoing revenue if the bill passed into law.

The bill also includes a provision exempting all Social Security benefits from the state individual income tax and a requirement that the Department of Public Safety conduct an analysis of the motor vehicle registration tax. HF 5 was passed by the Transportation Committee and referred to Taxes.

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

Metro Cities Webinar on Adult-Use Cannabis Rulemaking Updates, Local Impacts

Metro Cities will host an online forum for city officials and staff next **Friday, January 31st from 9:00 am – 10:00 am** to hear from the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) on updates for adult-use cannabis, with a focus on impacts to local government.

Topics will include:

- Highlights from the recent update to the Local Government Handbook.
- Latest rulemaking activities.
- OCM's process for coordinating retail registrations by local governments.
- Proposed budget or policy recommendations for the 2025 legislative session.

The webinar will include presentations by OCM staff, and time for Q/A. Please RSVP to Jennifer Dorn at jennifer@metrocitiesmn.org. A meeting link and information will be provided in advance of the meeting.

Bills of Note

[HF 11](#), Baker: Bill delays the implementation of the MN Paid Leave Law by one year.

[HF 13](#), Bliss: Bill eliminates the duty to retreat before using reasonable force in defense of self or others.

[HF 14](#), Robbins/[SF 39](#), Howe: Bill establishes a moratorium on light rail expenditures until the SWLRT (Green Line Extension) begins revenue operation.

[HF 16](#), Rymer: Bill prohibits immigration law enforcement noncooperation ordinances and policies.

[HF 26](#), Novotny: Bill makes funding for Peace Officer Training Assistance Philando Castile Memorial Training Fund ongoing (\$6 million per year).

[HF 69](#), Harder: Bill requires that peace officers be United States citizens.

[HF 70](#), Witte: Bill makes the use of sign and release warrants optional.

[HF 84](#), Koznick: Bill requires the METC to request approval to discontinue Northstar passenger rail operations.

[HF 85](#), Koznick: Bill establishes performance requirements and conditional termination of the Northstar commuter rail line.

[HF 90](#), Schomacker/[SF 386](#), Weber: Bill appropriates money for public safety radio grants.

[HF 96](#), Quam: Bill changes the date of the state primary to the same date as the presidential primary.

[HF 97](#), Quam: Bill establishes a pilot program to issue grants to local law enforcement agencies to purchase equipment to respond to active shooters in schools.

[HF 98](#), Quam: Bill provides restitution for public agencies and victims affected by the reporting of a fictitious emergency.

[HF 126](#), Quam: Bill classifies election judge party affiliation as public data.

[HF 127](#): Quam/[SF 314](#), Koran: Bill prohibits the acceptance of a municipal ID for state or federal services.

[HF 129](#), Engen/[SF 323](#), Coleman: Bill modifies the crime of fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle.

[HF 141](#), Novotny: Bill eliminates the Public Safety Advisory Council.

[HF 142](#), Duran: Bill prohibits local units of government from disarming peace officers who are in good standing.

[HF 144](#), Duran: Bill establishes the crime of fleeing in a motor vehicle and failing to obey certain traffic laws.

[HF 147](#), Stier: Bill removes requirement that a vehicle be unoccupied when law enforcement attach a tracking device, it also authorizes the expanded use of these devices.

[HF 148](#), Stier: Bill establishes a reimbursement program for use of force training.

[HF 155](#), Robbins: Bill authorizes local governments to prohibit the sale of certain cannabis products and the operation of certain cannabis businesses.

[HF 157](#), Robbins/[SF 555](#), Limmer: Bill authorizes city attorneys to file delinquency petitions for certain offenses committed by a juvenile, to prosecute certain offenses when a county attorney declines to prosecute, and to issue administrative subpoenas in certain cases.

[HF 159](#), Anderson, P.H./[SF 304](#), Lang: Bill appropriates funding for Minnesota Made Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Alternative grants through the Department of Employment and Economic Development.

[HF 174](#), Koznick: Bill appropriates funding for small business growth acceleration and requires a report.

[HF 176](#), Swedzinski: Bill provides an exemption for construction materials used for road construction or repair if purchased by contractors.

[HF 183](#), Swedzinski: Bill modifies exemption provisions for construction materials by certain contractors and adds a refund provision.

[HF 219](#), Fogelman/[SF 179](#), Jasinski: Bill prohibits MnDOT from reducing travel lanes, constructing a boulevard, or land bridge on I94 between Minneapolis and St. Paul.

[HF 221](#), Fogelman/[SF 74](#), Jasinski: Bill prohibits inclusion of highway spending for nonhighway purposes in governor's budget.

[HF 224](#), Fogelman: Bill makes prior active transportation account transfer onetime.

[HF 231](#), Stier: Bill adds a heightened penalty for the crime of fleeing a peace officer in a motor vehicle.

[HF 240](#), Anderson, P./[SF 250](#), Rarick: Bill prohibits expenditures for the NLX passenger rail project.

[HF 272](#), Anderson, P./[SF 252](#), Jasinski: Bill requires a cost-benefit analysis for proposed guideways.

[HF 273](#), Koznick/[SF 72](#), Jasinski: Bill amends project assessment criteria and mitigation activities for VMT requirements.

[HF 278](#), Quam: Bill classifies election judge party affiliation as public data.

[HF 304](#), Zeleznikar: Bill raises the surcharge amount for all-electric vehicles.

[SF 279](#), Lang: Bill modifies public water inventory revision process.

[SF 283](#), Lang: Bill temporarily prohibits modifications to the public water inventory.

[SF 285](#), Jasinski: Bill prohibits MnDOT from requiring local cost share for certain project components including any costs incurred within a trunk highway right-of-way and those costs necessitated because of the project.

[SF 286](#), Jasinski: Bill prohibits expenditures for the ReConnect Rondo project.

[SF 288](#), Jasinski/[HF 241](#), Anderson, P.: Bill directs appropriated funds away from Passenger Rail to the Corridors of Commerce program if federal funds are not granted by a certain date.

[SF 289](#), Abeler/[HF 222](#), Fogelman: Bill appropriates \$250 million in bond proceeds for the local road improvement program and \$150 million for the local bridge program.

[SF 291](#), Jasinski: Bill amends project assessment criteria for VMT requirements and authorizes EV and zero-emission bus technology as mitigation activities.

[SF 295](#), Coleman/[HF 223](#), Fogelman: Bill appropriates \$15 million in bond proceeds for the transportation economic development program.

[SF 366](#), Bahr: Bill clarifies employment status of election judges.

[SF 379](#), Wiklund: Bill establishes a state-funded county and city cybersecurity grant program.

[SF 387](#), Gustafson: Bill establishes public safety aid for local and tribal governments appropriates \$300 million on a one-time basis.

[SF 390](#), Pappas: Bill bonds for \$10 million for the safe routes to school program.

[SF 393](#), Nelson: Bill bonds for \$10 million for the safe routes to school program.

[SF 394](#), Jasinski: Bill appropriates \$153 million from the general fund for state match funding to the federal IIJA.

[SF 397](#), Jasinski: Bill directs revenue from blackout special license plates to the Highway User Tax Distribution fund.

[SF 416](#), Eichorn: Bill modifies the homestead market value exclusion for certain years and provides a temporary increase in property tax refund amounts.

[SF 420](#), Eichorn: Bill limits the annual residential valuation increase to three percent of the previous year's assessment value.

[SF 467](#), Mathews: Bill prohibits local bans on new natural gas hookups.

[SF 479](#), Jasinski: Bill accelerates the dedication of auto parts sales tax revenue to transportation purposes.

[SF 480](#), Housley: Bill bonds for \$100 million for the corridors of commerce program.

[SF 491](#), Housley: Bill repeals the metropolitan regional sales and use tax for housing.

[SF 505](#), Mohamed: Bill relates to contract for deed and modifies the definition of investor seller.

[SF 535](#), Koran: Bill prohibits counties, municipalities, and school districts from accepting certain contributions for election expenses.

[SF 536](#), Lucero: Bill provides a refundable exemption for construction materials used for residential housing.

[SF 559](#), Lucero: Bill prohibits the charging of fees for homeowners to remove certain restrictive covenants.

[SF 560](#), Lucero: Bill requires the commissioner of labor and industry to establish a cost-per-square-foot valuation of residential buildings for purposes of setting building permit fees by municipalities.

[SF 564](#), Hauschild: Bill raises the revenue threshold requiring cities to perform annual audits.

[SF 585](#), Kupec: Bill extends the five- and six-year rules for certain TIF districts outside of the metropolitan area, and removes income restrictions for housing districts outside of the metropolitan area.

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