



Metro Cities Annual Meeting – Mark Your Calendar!

Metro Cities will hold its Annual Meeting on Wednesday, April 23rd at the Roseville Oval Skating Center Banquet Room. The meeting will feature a social hour starting at 5:00 pm, followed by *Star Tribune* Publisher Steve Grove as our guest speaker, and a brief business meeting to elect Metro Cities Board officers and members. RSVP to Jennifer Dorn at jennifer@metrocitiesmn.org. Please join us – we hope to see you there!

Bill Modifying Trunk Highway Funds Advances

The Senate Transportation Committee met Wednesday to discuss [SF 817](#), Fateh (DFL – Minneapolis), the trunk highway appropriations bill that would add in additional community-preferred alternative analysis to large transportation projects. Nancy Daubenberger, Commissioner for MnDOT, provided testimony against the bill. Several individuals and organizations testified in support of the bill. Committee members raised concerns about costs of the bill and its broad language. SF 817 was ultimately passed, as amended without recommendation and referred to the State and Local Government committee in a 6-5 roll call vote.

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

Regional Sales Tax Revenue Bill Heard

The House Transportation Committee heard [HF 2234](#), Anderson (R – Forest Lake) on Wednesday. The bill modifies the use of funds by metropolitan counties from the Transportation Advancement Account (TAA) and regional transportation sales tax. Specifically, the bill sets a minimum of 58.5 percent for transportation system repair and roadway replacement, along with eliminating restrictions on adding traffic capacity. It sets a maximum of 41.5 percent for remaining uses which include active transportation, corridor safety studies, and transit readiness. The chair opted to lay the bill over in the Transportation committee after discussion on whether it should be referred to the Elections and Government Operations committee.

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

Local Housing Trust Fund Bills Heard

On Tuesday, the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee heard [HF 1548](#) – Kozlowski (DFL-Duluth) that would allow housing and redevelopment authorities to establish local housing trust funds. Metro Cities [submitted a letter](#) in support of the bill. It was later added to the Housing policy bill, as explained below in the omnibus bill section of the newsletter.

Additionally, the House Taxes Committee heard [HF 1159](#) – Youakim (DFL-Hopkins) which would allow for a city to allocate unobligated increment from a tax increment financing district and transfer them to a local housing trust fund. This legislation would also increase the percent that is permitted to be elected for the amount of expenditures for activities located outside of the district

from ten percent to fifteen percent. Metro Cities [submitted a letter](#) in support of the bill. The bill was laid over for the possible inclusion in an omnibus housing bill.

Contact Ania McDonnell at ania@metrocitiesmn.org with any questions.

Bill Related to Planned Unit Developments Heard

On Wednesday, the House Housing Committee heard [HF 933](#) – Nash (R-Waconia) which in part states that a city must not require a planned unit development agreement in lieu of a proposed residential development if the proposed development complies with existing city ordinances or subdivision regulations, or qualifies as a conditional use. The bill was laid over in the committee.

Contact Ania McDonnell at ania@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4001 with any questions.

Omnibus Bills

Adult-Use Cannabis

[HF 1615](#) (Stephenson), the omnibus adult-use cannabis bill was passed, [as amended](#), by the House commerce committee on Thursday 4/3. Language found in Article 2 authorizes municipalities to hold both a lower-potency hemp business license and an adult-use cannabis retailer license. Many cities that are interested in opening a municipal cannabis store also operate a municipal liquor store selling the hemp-derived beverages that have been legal for the last few years. HF 1615 was referred to the Ways and Means committee. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill.

The Senate adult-use cannabis bill, [SF 2370](#) (Dibble) was passed, [as amended](#), and sent to the floor on Tuesday, 4/1. This bill was [amended](#) to include the same allowance for municipalities to hold both license types.

Elections Policy

[HF 1378](#) (Freiberg), the omnibus elections policy bill was passed, [as amended](#), and referred to the floor on Wednesday, 4/2. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill, as amended. Sec. 3 streamlines the process by which employees of residential facilities vouch for the residence of those living at the facility in order to register on election day. Sec. 7 permits a municipality operating a designated absentee voting location to provide that location for only the 18-day early voting period instead of the full 46-day absentee voting period. This section also gives cities the ability to opt out of the responsibility to administer absentee and early voting, leaving it to their county. Sec. 9 includes notice requirements for the designation of additional polling place locations. Sec. 21 requires local election officials post a notice at a closed polling place location for each special, primary, and general election until a presidential election or redistricting has occurred. The bill contains several other provisions regarding the processing of ballots, including a requirement that county auditors develop a chain of custody plan to be used in all elections.

The Senate policy bill, [SF 2384](#) (Westlin) is scheduled to be heard and passed out of committee on Thursday, 4/3.

Human Services Policy

[SF 2443](#) (Hoffman), the omnibus human services policy bill was passed, [as amended](#), and referred to the floor on Wednesday, 4/2. The [DE amendment](#) adopted in committee contained language regarding separation requirements for newly licensed residential programs and assisted living facilities with licensed capacities of six or fewer residents.

Almost immediately after the DE amendment was adopted the committee unanimously voted to orally amend the relevant sections dealing with anti-concentration standards out of the bill. The

House policy bill, [HF 2115](#) (Schomacker), was passed, [as amended](#), and sent to the floor on Thursday, 4/3. This bill did not contain any separation, rental ordinance, or notification requirement language for group homes.

Local Government Policy

[HF 2098](#) (Freiberg), the omnibus local government policy bill was passed, [as amended](#), by the elections and government operations committee and referred to the floor on Wednesday, 4/2. This includes changes to parts of Minnesota law that deals with investigation or complaint data that is made public and the definition of “public official” (including those working for the Metropolitan Council) in that context. The House bill also contains language regarding public notice requirements for cities when no qualified newspaper is available (Art. 1, Sec. 3). The bill contains language that requires cities to provide a copy of the attorney general’s landlord-tenant guide to landlords being issued a rental license or having a license renewed (Art. 1, Sec. 6). Finally, [an amendment](#) was offered that would have prohibited cities from establishing minimum parking mandates. This amendment was ultimately withdrawn from consideration.

Public Safety Policy

[HF 1354](#) (Moller), the omnibus public safety policy bill was passed, [as amended](#), and referred to the floor on Tuesday, 4/1. Section 8 of the bill authorizes cities to conduct federal background checks for individuals applying for a local license to operate a massage business. The standalone bill, HF 286 (Perryman), was unanimously passed by the House this session and its Senate companion is waiting for vote on the Senate floor.

Housing Finance and Policy

This week, the Senate Housing and Homelessness Prevention Committee heard the Omnibus Housing Finance bill in committee. [SF 2298](#) – Port (DFL-Burnsville) [as amended](#) includes base funding for the Economic Development and Housing Challenge program and for the Homebuyer Education, Counseling, and Training (HECAT) program. The bill provides \$2 million to the Community Based First Generation Homebuyer Downpayment Assistance Program and makes it a standing program. Metro Cities submitted a letter in support of funding for programs included in the bill. The bill cuts \$10 million from the Community Stabilization (NOAH) program that was set aside for 2024-2025 for single-family housing. You can view a detailed funding spreadsheet of the bill [HERE](#). The committee plans to hear amendments and further discussion about the bill during Thursday’s committee hearing.

On Wednesday, the House Housing and Finance Policy Committee assembled a policy bill, [HF 2309](#) – Rehrauer (DFL-Coon Rapids), which was [amended](#) to include language that allows for HRAs to establish local housing trust funds. The policy bill passed the committee and was sent to the House floor.

Deadline for Tree Planting Grants

The Metropolitan Council was directed by the legislature in 2024 to establish a tree planting program to provide grants to cities, counties, townships, and implementing agencies. Eligible uses of funds from this program include the removal and planting of shade trees on public land, the replacement of trees lost to pests, disease, and storms, and other activities that increase resiliency in our region’s community forests. The legislation passed in 2024 prioritizes projects related to emerald ash borer impacted trees and projects located in environmental justice areas (using the supplemental demographic index). **The application window closes on April 18.** The Metropolitan Council will approve and grant funding agreements with successful applicants this Summer. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the program.

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

Transportation Funding Opportunities

Corridors of Commerce Readiness

MnDOT has begun accepting nominations for project readiness funding through the Corridors of Commerce program. 10% of Corridors of Commerce funds are made available in each fiscal year for planning, scoping, predesign, preliminary engineering, and environmental analysis. \$22 million carried over from FY2023 to be used for 2025 Readiness Advancement Activity. Click [HERE](#) for more information on the eligibility for these funds.

Minnesota Statute lays out how Corridors of Commerce funding must be allocated between metro projects, metro connector projects, and regional center projects. Based on current program funding, no funds are available for metro projects (located within, on, or directly adjacent to an area bounded by marked I-494 and I-694). Metro projects outside of the I-494 and I-694 beltway are still eligible to apply as Metro Connector Projects. The nomination process for these readiness funds **will continue until April 25**.

Safe Streets and Roads for All

The Department of Transportation has released the fiscal year (FY) 2025 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the [Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\)](#) program. SS4A is comprised of two types of grants. Planning and Demonstration Grants are used to develop, complete, or supplement an Action Plan, as well as carry out demonstration activities that inform an Action Plan. Planning and Demonstration Grants are used to develop, complete, or supplement an Action Plan, as well as carry out demonstration activities that inform an Action Plan. The NOFO is posted on [Grants.gov](#). The deadline for applications is **June 26, 2025, at 5:00PM**.

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Bills of Note

[HF 2948](#), Engen: Bill repeals the single-occupancy vehicle tolling and reallocates fee revenue elsewhere.

[HF 2962](#), Baker/[SF 3141](#), Frentz: Bill makes paid family leave optional for small employers and modifies the definition of family members who would qualify for it.

[HF 2966](#), Agbaje/[SF 3175](#), Boldon: Bill creates a statewide landlord database and creates a civil penalty for a failure to register with the statewide landlord database.

[HF 2973](#), Elkins: Bill modifies the sales tax rate to 7% and modifies the definitions under which cities can receive aid.

[HF 2974](#), Stephenson/[SF 3221](#), Hoffman: Bill requires landlords to make apportioned and submetered utility service bills for residential buildings due not less than 31 days from the date of bill issuance.

[HF 2987](#), Smith: Bill creates fair lending requirements for cannabis businesses.

[HF 3007](#), Fischer: Bill requires city officials to notify the MPCA of any proposed project that would consume more than 250,000 gallons of water per day or 100,000,000 gallons of water per year regardless of the permitting status.

[HF 3027](#), Gomez: Bill allows political subdivisions to enact a general sales tax.

[SF 3118](#), Jasinski/[HF 1744](#), Stier, Bill expands use of tracking devices authorized for fleeing motor vehicles.

[SF 3134](#), Mitchell: Bill requires the TAB to spend \$15 million of the regional sales tax revenue for active transportation as a grant to the University of Minnesota for suicide prevention improvements to the Washington Ave Bridge.

[SF 3140](#), Draheim: Bill requires a report on the first-generation homebuyers down payment assistance fund.

[SF 3173](#), Boldon/[HF 2687](#), Agbaje: Bill restricts corporate entities from owning single family homes but provides an exemption for local governments and non-profits.

[SF 3199](#), Pha: Bill restricts local governments from regulating residential developments by religious organizations.

[SF 3200](#), Pha/[HF 2618](#), Bahner: Bill requires plain-language explanations for condo associations and homeowners associations, and appropriates funding for the creation of a guide to explain the laws governing common interest communities and homeowners associations.

[SF 3222](#), Fateh: Bill requires transportation cumulative impact analyses.

[SF 3233](#), Johnson Stewart: Bill establishes a road funding alternatives task force.

[SF 3253](#), Bahr: Bill prohibits outgoing officials from voting on new municipal debt obligations.

[SF 3280](#), Johnson Stewart/[HF 2859](#), Acomb: Bill allows local units of government to adopt a speed limit ordinance for electric-assisted bicycles within business districts.

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.

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