



Please Join Us! First Webinar on Regional and Local Planning is Next Week

Metro Cities will host a three-part webinar series with Metropolitan Council staff, to give an overview of local comprehensive planning and its context within a regional framework. The webinars are open to all elected officials and staff and designed for a broad audience. The series will cover the Metropolitan Council's role in regional planning, intersections of regional and local plans, and resources for communities in preparing comprehensive plans. The three webinars are one hour and will be held over the noon hour.

- ***Foundations of Regional Planning: March 12, 12:00-1:00 pm.***
- ***Comprehensive Planning in A Regional Context: April 9, 12:00-1:00 pm***
- ***Technical Assistance for Comprehensive Planning: May 7, 12:00-1:00 pm***

To register, email Jennifer Dorn at jennifer@metrocitiesmn.org. Meeting access and other information will be sent in advance.

Metro Cities Annual Meeting – Mark Your Calendar!

Metro Cities will hold its Annual Meeting on Wednesday, April 15th at 5:00 pm at the Roseville Oval Skating Center Banquet Room. The meeting will feature a social hour starting at 5:00 pm, and *Trisha Kirk, Managing Director of the Guthrie Theater*, as our guest speaker. A brief business meeting to elect Metro Cities Board officers and members will follow. More information to follow! RSVP to Jennifer Dorn at jennifer@metrocitiesmn.org.

Interested in a Seat on the Metro Cities Board?

The Metro Cities Board of Directors will have openings for terms beginning July 1. The 19-member Board is comprised of elected and appointed officials and must be balanced by city size and population. The Board oversees Metro Cities' operational budget, strategic goals, and legislative policies and appoints municipal officials to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). A nominating committee will meet in March to recommend officers and members for election at the April annual meeting. Interested applicants must submit a resume, cover letter and completed [application](#). For more information contact Patricia Nauman at patricia@metrocitiesmn.org. The deadline to apply is March 16, 2026.

Informational Hearing on Local Preemption Bill Held in House

On Tuesday, the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee held an informational hearing on HF 3895 - Igo, a housing related bill that contains significant preemption over local decision-making. View the bill language [HERE](#). This bill is similar to bills that have been considered in recent years.

Metro Cities continues to remain opposed to this legislation, and provided a letter to the committee [HERE](#). Thank you also to Bryan Bear, City Administrator- City of Hugo and a member of the Metro Cities Board of Directors, for testifying on behalf of Metro Cities, and to Jim Hovland, Mayor-City of Edina, for his testimony on the legislation.

Metro Cities continues to meet with legislators to share concerns, provide feedback, as well as to discuss the areas of the bill that have particular intersections and potential conflicts with regional requirements for comprehensive plans. We are continuing to encourage cities to reach out to your local legislators on the significant local considerations and effects of the proposed legislation.

Please reach out to Ania McDonnell or Patricia Nauman if you have any questions. You can reach Ania at ania@metrocitiesmn.org and Patricia at patricia@metrocitiesmn.org.

House Local Government Committee Hears HOA Preemption Bill

On Monday, the committee heard HF 2614 - Mekeland, which would preempt local governments from conditioning the approval of residential building permits on the creation of a homeowner's association (HOA), or the inclusion of any service, feature, or common property necessitating a homeowner's association. There is a provision which would allow for a local government to require the maintenance or insurance of common elements; however, this does not cover stormwater management. You can view the bill language [HERE](#). The bill passed the committee and was sent to the House Housing Finance and Policy Committee. Similar HOA preemption language is contained in HF 3895 - Igo as described earlier in the newsletter. Metro Cities continues to have concerns with this bill in that it does not provide for cities to manage potential fiscal and infrastructure considerations, including for stormwater management. We will continue to monitor this bill and language as it is further considered.

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

Senate & House Hear Housing Infrastructure Bond Funding Bills

This week, the House and Senate Housing Committees both heard bills that provide for an additional \$200 million in Housing Infrastructure Bonds. Housing Infrastructure Bonds are the most flexible tool for developing and preserving affordable housing. Metro Cities submitted letters in support of the bills.

[HF 3806](#) - Howard was heard by the committee and laid over in the Housing Committee for the potential inclusion in an omnibus housing bill. [SF 3839](#) - Port was heard in the Senate Housing Committee and was passed and sent to the State Capital Investment Committee.

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

Bills Restricting Corporate Ownership of Single-Family Housing Heard

This week, the House and the Senate heard bills to restrict the corporate ownership of single-family housing to further encourage homeownership for residents.

In the House, HF 2687- Agbaje was heard. View the bill language [HERE](#). This bill restricts private equity companies from owning fifty or more single-family homes. The bill exempts local governments, land trusts, the owner of a home licensed under chapter 245D, and nonprofits, among others. The bill was discussed and laid over.

In the Senate, SF 3173 – Boldon was heard. View the bill language [HERE](#). The committee also adopted an [amendment](#) which takes into account assisted living facilities with fewer than five dwelling units, as well as residential programs with fewer than five dwelling units licensed under chapters 245A and 245D. There appears to be bipartisan support for the concept, but not agreement on the current form of the bill. The bill was sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee and then will return to the Senate Housing Committee for more discussion.

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

House Committee Considers Autonomous Vehicles

The House Transportation Committee debated [HF 3513](#) (Koznick) at their meeting on Wednesday. The bill establishes a regulatory framework for autonomous vehicles (AV). Section 17 of the bill prohibits cities from imposing any local regulations regarding the operation of autonomous vehicles, automated driving systems, and on-demand vehicle networks. Metro Cities submitted testimony opposing this preemption while encouraging more engagement with local governments as the bill continues to be worked on.

There were 17 amendments posted for the bill and a long list of testifiers. Waymo, an autonomous vehicle rideshare company, testified in support of the bill, along with some disability rights advocates and other organizations making the case for the exciting opportunities this technology will bring to the state of Minnesota. Others raised concerns about the lack of wheelchair accessible vehicles offered by companies like Waymo or the potential risks to members of the public traveling by bike or on foot. At least one member of the committee voiced concerns over the impact Avs may have on transit.

Ultimately, the committee failed to get through all of the amendments and the bill lacked the votes to pass out of the Transportation committee. Hearings on this topic are expected in the Senate, potentially as soon as next week. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill.

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

Proposed Sales Tax Constitutional Amendment Targeting Affordable Housing

The Senate debated [SF 2621](#) (Mohamed) which creates a constitutional amendment that increases sales tax by 3/8ths of one percent. The tax would create \$400 million dollars on an annual basis to support the Homeownership opportunity fund, community and household stability fund, and rental opportunity fund establishment. Metro Cities testified with a letter of opposition, click [HERE](#) for further information. Senate Health and Human Services will be the next stop for SF 2621.

Bills to Study Federal Immigration Enforcement Impacts Heard

[SF 3695](#) – Port would provide one-time funding for a nonpartisan entity to study the impact of the federal immigration enforcement operation. This study would attempt to quantify the economic impacts for the state, childcare providers and other businesses, counties, cities, school districts, and others that have been impacted. The bill was heard in the Senate State and Local Government Committee. The companion bill, [HF 3480](#) – Howard was heard in the House State Government Committee but not did advance.

Bill to Provide Emergency Rental Assistance Aid Heads to Senate Floor

A bill to provide for one-time emergency rental assistance aid for counties and Tribal governments was heard in the Senate this week. [SF 3596](#) – Port would provide for \$35.2 million to counties and \$4.8 million to Tribal governments. The bill was heard in the Senate Taxes Committee and the Senate Finance Committee. Next, the bill will head to the Senate floor.

TAC Advances Regional Solicitation and Active Transportation Package

At their [March meeting](#), the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) voted to advance the Regional Solicitation, Active Transportation Solicitation, and Highway Safety Improvement (HSIP) Solicitation following the close of the public comment period. The motion included a few changes based on comments received, and one change added during the TAC's discussion of the business item.

Alterations resulting from comments received over the last several weeks include:

- Changes for applications for safety projects to use data from 2021-2025 as opposed to 2020-2024.
- Changes to the Active Transportation Complete Streets scoring criterion added “agencies or organizations without roadway ownership or jurisdiction may include the community’s local ordinance or policy where the project is located and describe how the project would support advancing complete streets in this community.”
- Changes to the Access to Key Destinations scoring criterion for Local Bike Facilities as part of the Active Transportation solicitation.

The final motion included an additional change to increase the max award for TDM to be \$1 million. Some concerns remain over the maintenance requirements for projects funded with Active Transportation dollars, especially for smaller local governments. There was discussion over the pros and cons of limiting the number of submittals for Active Transportation dollars. Click [HERE](#) for a recording of this month’s TAC meeting.

The TAB is expected to take up the Regional Solicitation, Active Transportation Solicitation, and Highway Safety Improvement (HSIP) Solicitation at their meeting this month, with full Metropolitan Council approval slated for April 2026. The goal is to have a call for projects in late Spring, scoring in the Summer/Fall, and selection of projects by TAB around the end of the year.

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

Bills of Note

[HF 3279](#), Howard/[SF 2621](#), Mohamed: Bill creates a constitutional amendment increasing the sales tax rate by three-eighths of one percent and dedicating the receipts for three housing opportunity funds.

[HF 3396](#), Davids: Bill establishes a property tax task force to investigate property tax increases while presenting ways to increase transparency in local government budgeting.

[HF 3403](#), Kozlowski/[SF 3596](#), Port: Bill provides aid for counties and Tribal governments through onetime emergency rental assistance aid.

[HF 3818](#), West: Bill modifies the definition of true party of interest to exclude municipal cannabis stores.

[HF 3845](#), Quam/[SF 4128](#), Koran: Bill establishes a system for provisional balloting.

[HF 3856](#), Tabke: Bill prohibits government entities from using automated license plate readers.

[HF 3882](#), Virnig: Bill makes technical and streamlining changes to Metropolitan Council programs and removes redundant Metropolitan Council and regional development commission review of certain city housing finance programs.

[HF 3883](#), Freiberg/[SF 4137](#), Johnson Stewart: Bill makes changes to the makeup of MAWSAC.

[HF 3884](#), Lee, K./[SF 4136](#), Johnson Stewart: Bill adds Tribal governments as eligible recipients of certain Metropolitan Council grant programs.

[HF 3895](#), Igo/[SF 4123](#), Port: Bill limits the zoning authority of local governments over certain housing types.

[HF 3902](#), Igo/[SF 4044](#), Nelson: Bill modifies eligible recipients for Minnesota housing tax credit contributions and repeals the credit sunset.

[HF 3903](#), Igo/[SF 4043](#), Nelson: Bill modifies eligible recipients for the Minnesota housing tax credit contributions and requires a set-aside for credit allocations.

[HF 3926](#), Rehm/[SF 3988](#), Dibble: Bill contains several MnDOT policy proposals.

[HF 3934](#), Cha/[SF 3884](#), Housley: Bill appropriates over \$1 million for PFAS monitoring in the east metropolitan area.

[HF 3943](#), Johnson, P.: Bill authorizes a housing redevelopment authority to partner with state colleges and universities on housing projects and extending construction warranties to the projects.

[HF 3951](#), Igo/[SF 4171](#), Port: Bill provides for submetered utility service final billing for vacating tenants.

[HF 3962](#), Fischer: Bill establishes a PFAS management protocol.

[HF 3966](#), Jones: Bill authorizes certain transit and bicycle related parking enforcement through use of transit obstruction camera systems.

[HF 3973](#), Coulter/[SF 4155](#), Boldon: Bill repeals deadlines for establishment of special service districts and housing improvement districts.

[SF 4006](#), Westlin: Bill makes several changes to election law.

[SF 4010](#), Johnson Stewart/[HF 3513](#), Koznick: Bill creates a regulatory framework for autonomous vehicles.

[SF 4035](#), Frentz/[HF 3808](#), Myers: Bill limits common interest community late fee charges, requires requiring associations to adopt policies on fines and collections, and requires disclosures.

[SF 4037](#), Clark/[HF 3625](#), Jones: A bill for an act relating to local government; repealing alternative approval process for certain zoning procedures for first class cities.

[SF 4051](#), Jasinski: Bill requires payment of certain local government utility costs related to trunk highway construction out of the trunk highway fund.

[SF 4055](#), Dibble/[HF 3728](#), Koegel: Bill establishes requirements on trunk highway system maintenance and expansion.

[SF 4080](#), Koran/[HF 3587](#), Gordon: Bill requires election judges assisting voters outside of a polling place to handle only one voted ballot at a time.

[SF 4085](#), Koran/[HF 3724](#), Davis: Bill prohibits political subdivisions from establishing or enforcing ranked-choice voting.

[SF 4102](#), Boldon: Bill prohibits private equity company ownership of single-family homes and provides for attorney general enforcement.

[SF 4103](#), Boldon: Bill prohibits restrictions on a tenant's ability to participate in a class action and provides civil remedies.

[SF 4104](#), Boldon: Bill increases the duration for a landlord's duty to furnish heat to September through May.

[SF 4105](#), Boldon: Bill provides tenants with a right to repair violations in a residential rental unit, requires a notice, and permits a tenant to make deductions from rent.

[SF 4122](#), McEwen/[HF 3748](#), Jordan: Bill appropriates \$250 million from the general fund for lead service line replacement.

[SF 4126](#), Johnson Stewart/[HF 3945](#), Hollins: Bill establishes a greenhouse gas pollution recovery program.

[SF 4127](#), Koran/[HF 3499](#), Gordon: Bill exempts firefighters from Minnesota Paid Family Leave Law.

[SF 4163](#), Jasinski: Bill repeals provisions related to the transportation greenhouse gas emissions impact assessment.

[SF 4169](#), Johnson Stewart: Bill modifies the tax on electricity sold as vehicle fuel.

[SF 4176](#), Fateh/[HF 3924](#), Feist: Bill limits state and local government participation in federal civil immigration enforcement efforts.

[SF 4182](#), Mohamed: Bill permits local moratoriums on evictions based on nonpayment of rent.

[SF 4186](#), Coleman/[HF 3785](#), Dippel: Bill modifies definitions and registration requirements for motorized bicycles and motorcycles powered by electric motors.

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