

Metropolitan Council Approves Release of Regional Solicitation

At their meeting on April 22, the Metropolitan Council voted to release the applications for the 2026 Regional Solicitation, the Active Transportation solicitation, and the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) solicitation. The Regional Solicitation process just underwent a redesign, which typically occurs every 10 years.

Approximately \$240 million in federal funds are expected to be available for the Regional Solicitation. The call for projects will run from May 7th to June 25th. The Active Transportation Solicitation spends money from the metropolitan regional sales tax, where 5% of the Metropolitan Council's portion of the tax revenue is dedicated for this purpose. HSIP is a competitive solicitation conducted by the Minnesota Department of Transportation for projects intended to achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on public roads.

Metro Cities is co-hosting a training on these funding opportunities Friday, April 24th, the recording of which will be made available for any interested city officials or staff.

Click [HERE](#) to view the Regional Solicitation Application, [HERE](#) to view the Active Transportation Application, [HERE](#) to view the HSIP Application, and [HERE](#) to view the Regional Solicitation Public Comment Report. Click [HERE](#) to view a recording of the meeting. Contact Mike Lund at michael@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4003 with any questions.

Star Tribune Commentary on Pre-emption Bills

A commentary by several metropolitan and greater Minnesota mayors was published Friday in the [Star Tribune](#). The commentary was a counter point to a commentary published in early April supporting housing related local pre-emption bills. The mayors' commentary emphasizes the importance of local decision making to address local housing needs, as well as not passing statewide mandates that would undermine local efforts.

Legislative Session Enters Final Weeks

Last week marked the third committee deadline for the Legislature, and this week, schedules were filled primarily with committee meetings of floor sessions and committees not subject to committee deadlines, namely Finance, Ways and Means, Taxes, Rules and Capital Investment Committees. Earlier this week, Governor Walz outlined his priorities for the rest of the session, signaling a desire for joint supplemental budget targets, and bills addressing safety, infrastructure and education. Senate Majority Leader Murphy also spoke this week to the Capitol press corps to outline the priorities for the Senate majority caucus, which include addressing safety and security, health and human services, gun violence prevention, and federal immigration enforcement impacts. She also noted that passage of a capital investment bill continues to be a focus for all caucus leaders.

Bill Increases Penalties for Impersonating a Peace Officer

[HF 3404](#) (Klevorn) was passed unanimously by the House of Representatives on Thursday the 23rd. The bill increases the penalty for impersonating a peace officer from a misdemeanor to a felony with a maximum prison sentence of two years. Penalties are increased to a felony with a maximum prison sentence of five years if someone impersonates a peace officer to gain access to certain buildings, directs someone to act or refrain from acting, or if the individual violates provisions related to vehicle lights and sirens or if they are operating a vehicle marked with “police.” Penalties are increased if the individual is possessing a firearm while impersonating a peace officer and additional penalty enhancements are included for anyone committing a crime while impersonating an officer. Finally, the bill requires a peace officer licensed in Minnesota to identify their employer, name, and identification number. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill. The Senate companion, [SF 3735](#) (Hoffman) has not yet been brought for a vote on the Senate floor.

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

Bill Creates Task Force on Housing Taxes and Fees

On Thursday, the Senate heard [SF 4749](#) – Weber, a bill which would create a task force on housing taxes and fees. This task force would study and analyze the impact of state, county, and local taxes, fees, and exactions on the cost of housing development and preservation, and requires a report on its findings by February 15, 2027, to legislative committees with jurisdiction over housing and taxes. The task force would include one member that represents cities. The bill was passed and sent to the Senate Finance Committee.

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

Housing Infrastructure Bonds

This week, the Senate Capital Investment Committee heard [SF 3839](#) – Port, which authorizes \$200 million in Housing Infrastructure Bonds. Funding for Housing Infrastructure Bonds is also included in the Senate Housing Finance and Policy omnibus bill, as the funding for these bonds may be included in either the Housing bill or a potential bonding bill. Metro Cities [submitted a letter](#) in support of the funding for HIBs in this bill. The bill was laid over in the committee.

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

Manufactured Home Parks Bill

On Tuesday, the Senate passed [SF 2691](#) – Boldon, as amended, on a vote of 35-31. The bill, referred to as the “Manufactured Home Park Bill of Rights,” addresses rental increases, notices of rental increases, fees for delinquent rent, and other provisions.

For more information click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill. The bill has not yet been considered in the House.

Omnibus Bills

With just a few weeks left to go in the legislative session, the House and Senate are working to pass omnibus supplemental budget and policy bills in various forms. As of now, it is not entirely clear how the House and Senate plan to reconcile differences between various omnibus supplemental budget and policy bills. The Minnesota Senate is packaging various omnibus bills together and sending other omnibus bills on their own to the Senate floor. With a tie of 67-67 in the House, there is less clear direction on which bills will have bipartisan support to be passed off the House floor, and how those will be reconciled with Senate bills. Legislators have indicated they are focused on three key areas: HCMC hospital, anti-fraud bills, and bonding. Below are some specific updates from action this week on various issue areas.

Elections

[SF 4223](#) (Westlin), the Senate omnibus elections policy bill was passed, as amended, by the Senate with a vote of 34 to 33. The bill increases penalties for individuals violating state statute on intimidation and interference with the voting process. The bill contains several provisions regarding financial disclosures and potential conflicts of interest for candidates and local officials. It addresses a desire from legislators to redact home addresses and other identifiable information for candidates and public officials.

Regarding elections administration, the bill amends the requirements for the designation or notice that a full-time city clerk will administer absentee voting. The bill requires that the municipality must determine whether the municipality's office will be designated to administer in-person absentee voting starting on the 46th day before the election or early voting starting on the 18th day before the election. The bill includes language providing that for a municipality already designated to or that has already given notice of the intent to administer absentee voting, the municipality and county must come to an agreement by June 12, 2026, and notify the secretary of state whether the municipality will administer absentee voting for the 46 days or 18 days before election day in the 2026 state primary. The bill also changes the requirements for when a local canvassing board must meet to give local jurisdictions the ability to meet as a canvassing board without having to schedule a special meeting. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill as it came to the Senate floor.

The House companion, [HF 4243](#) (Freiberg), was passed out of committee, but remains the as-introduced version of the bill (has not been amended to take on provisions as a House omnibus bill for elections).

Environment

[SF 4214](#) (Hawj), the Senate omnibus environment bill was heard and laid over by the Finance committee. The bill includes language extending a previous appropriation for the Metropolitan Council's community tree planting grants and for planting trees in metropolitan parks (until June 30, 2027). Provisions will be included in the Senate's Supplemental Finance bill (HF 2433). Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the Senate environment provisions and [HERE](#) for the associated budget spreadsheet. The House environment committee did not pass an omnibus bill out this session.

Public Safety and Judiciary

[SF 4760](#) (Latz), the Senate omnibus public safety and judiciary policy bill was passed, as amended, by the Senate with a vote of 52 to 13. The bill does not contain any major provisions of note for cities. The House companion, [HF 3990](#) (Novotny) was passed out of committee but has not yet been voted on by the full House.

The Senate Finance committee took relevant pieces from several bills (SF 4067, SF 4167, SF 3988, and SF 4059) and amended them into [SF 3432 as a Safety & Security package](#). This package of provisions contains supplemental appropriations for the Judicial Branch, Dept. of

Public Safety, Attorney General, Dept. of Administration, and the Legislature. Some of the appropriations relate to enhanced security at and around the Capitol complex. Click [HERE](#) for the associated budget spreadsheet.

The House omnibus public safety finance bill, [HF 1082](#) (Moller) was passed, as amended, by the Ways and Means Committee on April 23rd and now awaits action on the House floor. The bill contains a small amount of additional funding for the Philando Castile Memorial Training Fund, which reimburses local police departments for state-mandated training courses that address use of force, crisis response, conflict management, and cultural diversity. HF 1082 was [amended](#) to include language regarding what qualifies as “killed in the line of duty,” for public safety officers. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the bill and [HERE](#) for the associated budget spreadsheet.

State and Local Government

[SF 4555](#) (Xiong), the Senate omnibus state and local government policy bill was passed, as amended, by the Senate with a vote of 35 to 32. The bill requires a public contracting agency to provide certain information to a contractor or subcontractor regarding payment by the agency, upon written request from the contractor or subcontractor. This information must be delivered within seven calendar days of receiving the request for information. This language came from SF 1714 (Johnson-Stewart). The omnibus bill also allows municipalities to fund construction of thermal energy networks as “public improvements and waterworks” through special assessments and general obligation bonds.

SF 4555 was amended on the floor to prohibit city officials from entering into nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) for the development of data centers. The bill was further amended to ban NDAs by city municipalities for any projects related to land development, economic development, or any project or program financed with public dollars. Another amendment requires public hearings and disclosure of certain information regarding data center projects. Finally, the bill was amended to exempt racing facilities from nuisance claims. The House companion for this bill, [HF 4366](#) (Klevorn) was passed out of committee and is waiting for floor action, but the bill is not an omnibus bill and only deals with public television station block grant eligibility.

Transportation

[SF 3988](#) (Dibble), the Senate omnibus transportation finance and policy bill was heard in the Senate Finance committee on Wednesday the 22nd. Some provisions of note for cities include:

- Allowing trunk highway funds to be used to relocate utilities, which was recommended by MnDOT’s cost participation work group to help ease the burden on local agencies.
- Establishing a program at MnDOT to support improvements to commercial truck parking.
- Extending a previous trunk highway fund appropriation of \$4.8 million for truck parking safety projects.
- Several regulations regarding e-bikes and e-motos.
- Modifying the definition of killed in the line of duty for the purposes of the public safety officer and survivor benefit to include death resulting from exposure to certain diseases sustained in the line of duty. This change applies retroactively from February 1, 2020.

The Finance committee moved some provisions from SF 3988 into the [Senate’s Safety & Security](#) package. Other provisions will later be added to the Senate’s Supplemental Finance bill (HF 2433). The House transportation committee did not put together an omnibus bill this session.

Housing

[HF 1141](#) – Howard, the omnibus housing finance and policy bill, was heard on Wednesday in the House Ways and Means committee. The bill contains an additional \$100 million in Housing Infrastructure Bonds, as well as \$150,000 in additional funds for the Housing Education Counseling and Training Program (HECAT). Metro Cities submitted written testimony in support of these provisions. The bill uses interest earnings from Minnesota Housing Finance Agency to pay

for various provisions in the bill and includes policy language that directs how Minnesota Housing Finance Agency spends and uses interest earnings on funds. The bill was passed and sent to the House floor.

Also this week, the Senate Finance committee heard [SF 203](#) – Port, the omnibus Housing finance and policy supplemental bill. This bill contains an additional \$50 million in housing infrastructure bonds, and Metro Cities submitted a letter in support of the funding. The bill contains policy language that directs how Minnesota Housing Finance Agency spends and uses funds, including interest earnings on legislatively appropriated funds, as well as how the agency reports on spending. The bill was passed and sent to the Senate floor.

Regional and Local Planning Foundations Webinar Series and Additional Webinar

Metro Cities is hosting four webinars with Metropolitan Council staff on local comprehensive planning and its context within a regional framework. They are open to all elected officials and staff and geared toward a broad audience. The next webinar is Thursday, May 7th from 12:00 – 1:00 pm. An additional webinar has been added for June, with more information to follow. If you have not yet registered and would like to attend, please email Jennifer Dorn at jennifer@metrocitiesmn.org. Details for the next two webinars are below:

-Technical Assistance for Comprehensive Planning: May 7, 12:00-1:00 pm

-Understanding Land Use Review at the Council: June 11, 12:00-1:00 pm

Shared Mobility Summit This Summer

The Minnesota Shared Mobility Collaborative will be hosting a one-day summit on **Wednesday, June 3 from 8:30AM to 2:30PM**. The summit will explore the state of shared mobility across Minnesota. Featuring speakers from around the state, this event will offer an opportunity for shared mobility leaders, operators, advocates, and policymakers to connect and learn from each other's experiences. The full agenda (available below) will include presentations on the state of shared mobility across the U.S. and Minnesota; discussions on operations, policy, and funding; and an engagement opportunity to contribute to Minnesota's Statewide Shared Mobility Plan.

Agenda

- 8:30AM: Welcome and Morning Refreshments
- 9:00AM: Imagining the Future of Shared Mobility Across Minnesota
- 10:15AM: Break
- 10:30AM: Funding and Policy Panel
- 11:30AM: Introduction to Minnesota Statewide Shared Mobility Plan
- Noon: Lunch
- 1:00PM: Operations Showcase Lightning Presentations
- 2:15PM: Closing

There is no cost for this event, but space is limited and registration is required. Click [HERE](#) to register. [Visit the summit web page](#) for more information, including details on venue access by transit and car.

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

Sign Up! 2026 Metro Cities Policy Committees

Metro Cities 2026 policy committee process will begin in July and your participation is encouraged. Committees will recommend the association's legislative policies for 2027. 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!

Bills of Note

[HF 5020](#), Rehrauer/[SF 4915](#), Pha: Bill restricts local government regulations of certain residential developments by religious organizations.

[HF 5048](#), Vang/[SF 5034](#), Pha: Bill appropriates funding for an analysis of the statewide economic impact of increased immigration enforcement in Minnesota and requires a report.

[HF 5058](#), Howard: Bill imposes penalties under the Local Affordable Housing Aid and Statewide Affordable Housing Aid programs for cities that impose moratoria on new residential developments.

[HF 5068](#), Agbaje: Bill appropriates funding for the local public housing program and authorizes the sale and issuance of state bonds.

[SF 5176](#), Putnam: Bill establishes a cooperative development grant program.

[SF 5177](#), Putnam: Bill establishes a tax credit for employer-provided child care expenses.

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