

2026 Metro Cities Policy Committees Begin July 27

Metro Cities 2026 policy committees will begin meeting soon, and your participation is encouraged! Committees will recommend the association's legislative policies for 2027. Participation is open to city elected officials and staff. 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!

Federal Housing Bill Becomes Law

The 21st Century Road to Housing Act became law on July 11th after passage by the Senate and House in late June. The bipartisan housing bill contains measures intended to address the shortage of affordable housing and focuses on incentives and partnerships with local governments.

The law creates a \$200 million annual competitive grant program for local governments that demonstrate measurable increases in housing supply; streamlines requirements for manufactured housing development; allows for construction of new affordable housing as an eligible use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and ties some CDBG funding to housing production. The bill updates the HOME Investments Partnership program for the first time in 30 years. The HOME program is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed to create affordable housing for low-income households. The new law also creates a pilot program through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to support state, local and tribal whole-home repair programs.

The law has some focus on local zoning practices, where it sets into place a requirement for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to assemble guidelines and best practices to share with states and local governments as potential models for updated State enabling legislation or state agency procedures to support various updates to local zoning frameworks. These guidelines will be developed in the next few years and be available as a resource to state and local governments. There is a clause noting that HUD should not use these guidelines as an opportunity to take an adverse action against any state or locality for not adopting a guideline or best practice.

The law restricts the purchase of new single-family homes by large institutional investors that directly or indirectly own at least 350 single-family homes. It also requires these investors to provide HUD with information about what city and state their investment homes are located in. There are various other policies included in the bill beyond those noted here. View the language of the law [HERE](#).

Local Road Improvement Solicitation Opens in September

The 2026 Local Road Improvement Program (LRIP) solicitation will open on September 1, 2026 and close on November 5, 2026. This program will make \$50 million in general obligation bonds available to counties, cities, townships, and tribal governments for eligible road improvement projects.

The MN Department of Transportation is hosting three informational webinars to discuss the program. Those webinars will take place:

- Tuesday, August 18 from 11AM to 12PM
- Wednesday, August 19 from 1:30PM to 2:30PM
- Thursday August 20 from 3PM to 4PM

Click [HERE](#) to view more information about LRIP, including a solicitation guide and information on projects applied for in 2025.

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

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