



February 8, 2024

Dear Chair Zelle, and Members of the Metropolitan Council:

Metro Cities, representing the shared interests of cities in the metropolitan region before the Legislature, Executive Branch and Metropolitan Council, appreciates the opportunity to comment regarding the action by the Community Development Committee on February 5th with respect to the draft 2024 Livable Communities Act fund distribution plan. These comments are being provided in advance of this item being considered by the full Council next week.

Metro Cities appreciates the recent in-depth discussions by members of the Community Development Committee regarding LCA participation and program concerns. However, Metro Cities respectfully but strongly opposes pausing 2024 funding for the Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD) programs, that was acted on by the committee this week.

Metro Cities strongly supports the Livable Communities Act (LCA) programs and has long supported having programs be accessible to cities across the region, and flexible to accommodate a range of projects, in keeping with state statutes governing the LCA. Metro Cities also supports ongoing efforts to promote LCA program participation. Metro Cities has periodically participated in advisory groups and task forces to examine Livable Communities programs and has sought input from both LCA participant and non-participant cities in examining LCA programs and levels of local participation.

Cities across the region participate in the LCA under established and expected timelines and processes. An indefinite pause in funding for certain LCA programs for 2024 creates uncertainty for LCA-participating cities and the LCA programs going forward and may inadvertently disrupt local housing and development projects for which funds could be sought. Metro Cities is also concerned that this action was taken without a timeline or specific plan for addressing concerns with the programs.

Metro Cities has a longstanding practice of supporting periodic 'looks under the hood' of regional programs, including the Livable Communities Programs. Metro Cities' policies stipulate that consideration of any LCA changes must include the participation of metropolitan city officials. We stand ready to work with Metropolitan Council members, staff, and city officials in this work. Such work can and should occur while maintaining the 2024 funding distribution for LCA programs.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let me know if you need any further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patricia Nauman".

Patricia Nauman
Executive Director
Metro Cities