

## 2024 Transportation & General Government Committee Members

Name	Title	Organization
<b>Kristin Asher</b>	Public Works Director	Richfield
<b>Michelle Basham</b>	Economic Development & Housing Director	Brooklyn Park
<b>Josh Berg</b>	Councilmember	Elko New Market
<b>Kissy Coakley</b>	Councilmember	Minnetonka
<b>Marc Culver</b>	City Engineer	Brooklyn Park
<b>Inderia Falana</b>	Government Relations Representative	Minneapolis
<b>Jesse Farrell</b>	City Engineer	Oakdale
<b>**Anne Finn</b>	IGR Director	League of MN Cities
<b>Thomas Fletcher</b>	Mayor	Greenwood
<b>Gary Hansen</b>	Councilmember	Eagan
<b>Sean Hayford Oleary</b>	Councilmember	Richfield
<b>Debra Heiser</b>	Engineering Director	St. Louis Park
<b>Steven Huser</b>	Government Relations Representative	Minneapolis
<b>**Craig Johnson</b>	IGR Representative	League of MN Cities
<b>**Beth Johnston</b>	IGR Representative	League of MN Cities
<b>Dan Kealey</b>	Councilmember	Burnsville
<b>Brad Larson</b>	City Administrator	Savage
<b>**Daniel Lightfoot</b>	IGR Representative	League of MN Cities
<b>Brent Mareck</b>	City Manager	Carver
<b>Amáda Márquez Simula</b>	Mayor	Columbia Heights
<b>Mary McComber</b>	Mayor	Oak Park Heights
<b>Hugo McPhee</b>	Deputy City Manager	Burnsville
<b>Justin Miller</b>	City Administrator	Lakeville
<b>Alyssa Nelson</b>	Assistant City Manager	Victoria
<b>Heidi Nelson</b>	City Administrator	Maple Grove
<b>Loren Olson</b>	Senior Government Relations Representative	Minneapolis
<b>**Hannah Pallmeyer</b>	Government Affairs Liaison	Metropolitan Council
<b>Chelsea Petersen</b>	Assistant City Administrator	Shakopee
<b>Eric Petersen</b>	IGR Director	St. Paul
<b>Nick Peterson</b>	City Engineer	St. Paul
<b>Mark Ray</b>	Public Works Director	Burnsville
<b>Andy Reiff</b>	Councilmember	Victoria
<b>Dan Ruiz</b>	Public Works Director	Brooklyn Park
<b>Dave Shoger</b>	Public Works Director	Victoria
<b>*Michael Thompson</b>	Public Works Director	Plymouth
<b>Katie Topinka</b>	IGR Director	Minneapolis
<b>**Owen Wirth</b>	IGR Representative	League of MN Cities

<b>Patrick Trudgeon</b>	City Manager	Roseville
<b>Wally Wysopal</b>	City Manager	Fridley
<b>Nyle Zikmund</b>	City Administrator	Mounds View

\*Committee Chair

\*\*Guest/Non-City Official

August 19, 2024

**TO:** Transportation & General Government Policy Committee Members  
**FROM:** Michael Thompson, Public Works Director, City of Plymouth  
**SUBJECT:** Meeting Notice and Agenda

***Monday, August 26, 2024***  
***9:00 am – 11:30 am***  
***Hybrid Meeting: Lake***  
***Superior Room/LMC Building***  
***Or***  
***Join Zoom Meeting:***

◆ Thank you for agreeing to be a policy committee member!

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Attached are the materials for the second Transportation & General Government Policy Committee meeting. Please take the time to review the policies and come with your ideas and suggestions.

**AGENDA**

1. Call to order. (Michael Thompson, Chair)
2. Approval of minutes for the July 29, 2024 meeting.
3. **Presentations:** Metro Transit, Lesley Kandaras, General Manager  
Suburban Transit Association (STA), Erik Hansen, Executive Director of SouthWest Transit
4. Review policy Committee Memo. (Mike Lund, Metro Cities Staff)
5. Discussion of policies and suggested modifications.
  - a. Policies with no recommended changes.
  - b. Policies with suggested changes from staff or committee members.
6. Discuss additional suggestions for policies, and issues for future consideration.
7. Other business.
8. Adjourn. (11:30 a.m.)

*Future Committee Meetings:*  
**Monday, September 23, 2024**

**Transportation & General Government**  
**Minutes for Meeting of July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2024.**

Present: Steve Huser, Michael Thompson, Tom Fischer, Tom Fletcher, Heidi Nelson, Hannah Pallmeyer, Katie Topinka, Patricia Nauman, Mike Lund, Ania McDonnell, Jennifer Dorn, Dan Kealey, Gary Hansen, Alyssa Nelson, Mark Ray, Josh Berg, Justin Miller, Brad Larson, Kristin Asher, Brent Mareck, Wally Wysopal, Dan Ruiz, Chelsea Petersen, Inderia Falana, Loren Olson, Sean Hayford-Oleary, Deb Heiser, Amada Marquez Simula, Beth Johnston, Anne Finn.

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 am by Chair Thompson.

Chair Thompson asked members to introduce themselves.

Ms. Nauman reviewed policy committee protocols and processes.

Mr. Lund provided an overall legislative update, and staff reviewed policies and legislative updates for the General Government policies. Mr. Hayford Oleary stated he supported the people over parking act and urged nuance in messaging. Ms. Nelson asked about GG-29, local units government compliance checks. With respect to housing and land use issues, Ms. Nelson added that there is a backlog of MHFA projects, they are city supported projects that there are not dollars for. Further discussion.

Chair Thompson called for a brief recess and called the meeting back to order at 10:07am.

Regarding GG-6, Mr. Fletcher said there is no representation for people who are building and developing. Ms. Asher added that cities are limited with uses of a right-of-way. Mr. Lund said we can take a look at this language and discuss before the next meeting. Ms. Asher stated that cities cannot be more restrictive than the state building code, we are looking at ways to maintain rights-of-way. Further discussion.

Mr. Lund reviewed Transportation policies and updates. Mr. Larson stated that laws pertaining to notifications in newspapers need to be modified, as many cities are losing local papers. Mr. Lund stated we don't have policy language, but staff can look into this issue, review the League's policy, and bring back for discussion. Mr. Huser stated that the city of Minneapolis would like to look at public safety aid money, PTSD reimbursement money, elections – pop up sites for universities. Mr. Lund replied that he will come with policy edits to the next meeting. Chair Thompson added that MnDOT has a lack of funding for city sidewalks/trails.

Chair Thompson moved to a presentation from Bethany Brandt-Sargent (Met Council, Senior Planner) and Jed Hanson (Met Council, Senior Planner) on the Transportation Policy Plan Update (TPP). Mr. Hanson presented on Regional Plan Elements, Regional Vision, Regional Values, Regional Goals, 2050 TPP Working Groups, 2050 TPP Content. Ms. Brandt-Sargent presented on Policies and Actions. Mr. Hanson moved to investment plans, highway investment plan, mobility, planned transit investments, transit investment opportunities and next steps. The speakers opened it up for questions. Mr. Lund asked if staff could provide more detail on what the state is doing to fund these opportunities. Ms. Brandt-Sargent added we established the merit criteria, IJJA has been more developed, and staff needs to continue to identify needs. Mr. Hanson

said the plan will be available online August 1. Mr. Fischer asked if the PowerPoint is available. Mr. Lund will send out the PowerPoint to members. Chair Thompson thanked the speakers for their presentation.

Chair Thompson moved to agenda items 7 and 8. Ms. Falana stated that having group homes exempted from local rental licenses regulations with fewer of six residents is a concern, and Minneapolis is not in favor of this law. On GG-11 she said we need to provide more funding to residents. For GG-19 this is a priority.

Mr. Petersen stated that on public safety, St. Paul is having conversations about fencing for publicly owned buildings and suggested inviting suburban police chiefs to speak. He also noted GG-28: the open meeting law for some updates. Mr. Petersen also stated looking at GG-3 that addresses weapons on city property. Ms. Nelson added TP-1 Road & Bridge funding, could Metro Cities get behind a transparency component, where are MnDOT dollars going and funding, an annual report. Chair Thompson agrees. Ms. Asher added could we include the local dollars to make these projects happen. Mr. Lund added that local governments wanted to highlight local cost shares. Chair Thompson added that this may be more of city/metro issue with cost share versus counties. Mr. Huser stated that if we received this information, we could better advocate for cities getting this money.

Mr. Fletcher added how is transit adapting after the pandemic, is the metro sales tax money available or already spent.

Mr. Lund asked the committee to email him and the chair about policies, speakers or a discussion.

Chair Thompson thanked everyone for joining the meeting and Metro Cities for their work.

Chair Thompson adjourned the meeting at 11:32am.

August 19, 2024

**To: Metro Cities Transportation and General Government Policy Committee**  
**From: Mike Lund, Government Relations Specialist**  
**Re: August 26<sup>th</sup> Policy Committee Memo**

Enclosed are materials for the second meeting of the Transportation and General Government Policy Committee on **Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM**. The committee will begin with presentations from Lesley Kandaras, General Manager at Metro Transit and Erik Hansen, Executive Director at SouthWest Transit.

Below are policies with suggested draft language for the committee to consider. Also noted are policies without proposed changes at this time that may be considered for approval if committee members so choose. In addition to minor non-substantive or technical changes, staff has suggested that two policies be combined, and that two others be eliminated following legislative action in 2024.

<b>General Government</b> (Policies <b>without</b> recommended changes at this time.)	
GG-1	Mandates, Zoning & Local Authority
GG-2	City Enterprise Activities
GG-3	Weapons on City Property
GG-4	911 Telephone Tax
GG-5	800 MHz Radio System
GG-6	Building Codes
GG-7	Administrative Fines
GG-10	Statewide Funding Sources for Local Issues with Regional Impact
GG-12	Pollinator Habitat Resources
GG-13	Regulation of Harmful Substances and Products
GG-14	Water Supply
GG-15	Private Well Drilling Restriction Authority
GG-16	Organized Waste Collection
GG-19	Regulation of Massage Therapists
GG-20	Peace Officer Arbitration Reform
GG-27	Race Equity
GG-28	Open Meeting Law

<b>General Government</b> (Policies <b>with</b> suggested changes.)	
GG-8	Residential Programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Language suggested by city of Elko New Market.</i></li> <li>• <i>Language suggested by city of Richfield.</i></li> </ul>
GG-9	Annexation: <i>Staff suggested change.</i>

GG-11	Urban Forest Management Funding: <i>Language suggested by city of Minneapolis.</i>
GG-17	Utility Franchise Fees, Accountability and Cost Transparency: <i>Hold for meeting 3</i>
GG-18	Election Administration: <i>Staff suggested changes.</i>
GG-21	Public Safety Training and Resources: <i>Language suggested by city of Minneapolis.</i>
GG-22	School Resources Officers: <i>Staff suggests deleting this policy.</i>
GG-23	Street Racing: <i>Staff suggests merging this policy with GG-24.</i>
GG-24	Carjacking: <i>Staff suggests merging this policy with GG-23.</i>
GG-25	Copper and Other Metal Theft: <i>Staff suggests deleting this policy.</i>
GG-26	Emergency Medical Services: <i>Staff suggested changes.</i>
GG-29	Adult-Use Cannabis: <i>Staff suggested changes.</i>

<b>Transportation</b> (Policies <b>without</b> recommended changes at this time.)	
TP-5	Highway and Bridge Turn Backs & Funding
TP-6	“3C” Transportation Planning Process: Elected Officials’ Role
TP-7	Electronic Imaging for Enforcement of Traffic Laws
TP-8	Transportation Network Companies and Alternative Transportation Modes
TP-9	Airport Noise Mitigation
TP-10	Funding for Non-Municipal State Aid (MSAS) City Streets.
TP-12	Municipal Input/Consent for Trunk Highways and County Roads
TP-13	Plat Authority
TP-14	MnDOT Maintenance Budget
TP-15	Transit Taxing District
TP-16	Complete Streets

<b>Transportation</b> (Policies <b>with</b> suggested changes.)	
TP-1	Road and Bridge Funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Language suggested by city of Plymouth.</i></li> <li>• <i>Language suggested by city of Maple Grove.</i></li> </ul>
TP-2	Regional Transit System: <i>Staff suggested change. Hold final approval for meeting 3.</i>
TP-3	Transit Financing: <i>Hold final approval for meeting 3.</i>
TP-4	Street Improvement Districts: <i>Staff suggested changes.</i>
TP-11	County State Aid Highway (CSAH) Distribution Formula: <i>Staff suggested changes.</i>
TP-14	MnDOT Maintenance Budget: <i>Staff suggested changes.</i>

We look forward to seeing you on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

1 **GG-1 MANDATES, ZONING & LOCAL AUTHORITY**

2 To serve their local citizens and communities, city officials must have sufficient local control and  
3 decision-making authority. Metro Cities supports local decision-making authority and opposes  
4 statutory changes that erode local authority and decision making.

5 Minn. Stat. § 462.357, subd. 1, provide cities authority to regulate and set local ordinances for  
6 zoning. Metro Cities supports existing state laws that provide for this authority.

7 Metro Cities supports statutory changes that give local officials greater authority to approve or  
8 deny variances to allow flexibility in responding to the needs of the community. Metro Cities  
9 also supports the removal of statutory barriers to uniform zoning ordinance amendment  
10 processes for all cities, regardless of city size classification.

11 Metro Cities opposes the imposition of legislative mandates that increase local costs without a  
12 corresponding state appropriation or funding mechanism. Unfunded mandates potentially  
13 increase property taxes and impede cities’ ability to fund traditional service needs.

14 To allow for greater collaboration and flexibility in providing local services, Metro Cities  
15 encourages the removal of barriers to coordination between cities and other units of  
16 government or entities.

17

18 **GG-2 CITY ENTERPRISE ACTIVITIES**

19 Creation of an enterprise operation allows a city to provide a desired service while maintaining  
20 financial and management control. The state should refrain from infringing on this ability to  
21 provide and manage services for the benefit of a local community and residents.

22 Metro Cities supports cities having authority to establish city enterprise operations in response  
23 to community needs, local preferences, or state mandates, or that help ensure residents’ quality  
24 of life.

25

26 **GG-3 WEAPONS ON CITY PROPERTY**

27 Cities should be allowed to prohibit handguns and other weapons in city-owned buildings,  
28 facilities, and parks and to determine whether to allow permit-holders to bring guns into  
29 municipal buildings, liquor stores, city council chambers and city sponsored youth activities. It is  
30 not Metro Cities’ intention for cities to have the authority to prohibit legal weapons in parking  
31 lots, on city streets, city sidewalks or on locally approved hunting land.



32 Metro Cities supports local control to prohibit or restrict the possession of dangerous weapons,  
33 ammunition, or explosives on local government-owned or leased buildings and land.

34

35 **GG-4 911 TELEPHONE TAX**

36 Public safety answering points (PSAPs) must be able to continue to rely on state 911 revenues to  
37 pay for upgrades and modifications to local 911 systems, maintenance and operational support,  
38 and dispatcher training.

39 Metro Cities supports state funding for technology and training necessary to provide the  
40 number and location of wireless and voice over internet protocol (VoIP) calls to 911 on  
41 computer screens and transmit that data to police, fire and first responders.

42

43 **GG-5 800 MHZ RADIO SYSTEM**

44 Metro Cities urges the Legislature to provide cities with the financial means to obtain required  
45 infrastructure and subscriber equipment (portable and mobile radios) as well as funding for  
46 operating costs, since the prime purpose of this system is to allow public safety agencies and  
47 other units of government the ability to communicate effectively.

48 Metro Cities supports the work of the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board (previously the  
49 Metropolitan Radio Board) in implementing and maintaining the 800 MHz radio system so long  
50 as cities are not forced to modify their current systems or become a part of the 800 MHz Radio  
51 System unless they so choose.

52

53 **GG-6 BUILDING CODES**

54 Thousands of new housing units as well as commercial and industrial buildings are constructed  
55 annually in the metropolitan area. The State Building Code (SBC) sets statewide standards for  
56 the construction, reconstruction, alteration, and repair of buildings and other structures  
57 governed by the code. A building code provides many benefits, including uniformity of  
58 construction standards in the building industry, consistency in code interpretation and  
59 enforcement, and life- safety guidance.

60 Metro Cities supports an equitable distribution of fees from the Construction Code Fund, with  
61 proportional distribution based on the area of enforcement where fees were received. Metro  
62 Cities further supports efforts by the state, cities, and builders to collectively identify

63 appropriate uses for the fund, including education, analysis of new materials and construction  
64 techniques, building code updating, building inspector training, and development of  
65 performance standards and identification of construction “best practices.”

66 Metro Cities supports including the International Green Construction Code as an optional  
67 appendix to the State Building Code to allow cities to utilize appropriate parts of those  
68 guidelines in their communities. Metro Cities also supports adopting the international energy  
69 conservation code to the state building code without amendments. Metro Cities does not  
70 support legislative solutions that fail to recognize the interrelationships among builders, state  
71 building codes and cities.

72 Metro Cities supports efforts to increase awareness of the potential impacts and benefits of  
73 requiring sprinklers in new homes and townhouses. Metro Cities supports discussion and the  
74 dissemination of information on these impacts via the code adoption process through the  
75 Department of Labor and Industry. Metro Cities supports adopting and amending the State  
76 Building Code through the rulemaking process and opposes legislative changes to building  
77 codes absent unusual or extraordinary circumstances.

78 As energy costs continue to rise, more attention must be paid to the poor energy efficiency of  
79 much of the existing housing stock as well as commercial and industrial buildings. Homes and  
80 other buildings that are energy inefficient are more costly to maintain and create added cost to  
81 ownership and occupancy. Making homes and buildings more energy efficient will make them  
82 more affordable to operate and will help the state achieve energy demand goals and will reduce  
83 greenhouse gas emissions. This includes supporting legislation to increase the efficiency of  
84 buildings on a pathway toward net zero energy.

85 Metro Cities supports state funding and technical support for programs that provide support for  
86 property owners for weatherization and energy efficiency improvements, including programs  
87 available for local governments.

88 While a single set of coordinated codes helps provide consistency in code administration and  
89 enforcement, implementation of sustainable building design, construction, and operation does  
90 not readily integrate with the existing state building and energy code system. As a result, many  
91 cities are interested in adopting stronger local standards for sustainable development and  
92 conservation.

93 Metro Cities supports authorizing cities to employ stronger local standards for sustainable  
94 development and conservation that will help inform the state code development process.

95 The state should include an optional sustainable appendix to the State Building Code to allow  
96 cities to utilize appropriate parts of guidelines in their communities. Metro Cities also supports

97 the state adopting an advanced energy building standard for buildings within the State Building  
98 Code and allowing cities to adopt their own enhanced standards.

99

## 100 **GG-7 ADMINISTRATIVE FINES**

101 Administrative fines can be used to moderate local costs associated with traditional methods of  
102 citation, enforcement, and prosecution. Metro Cities supports the administrative fine authority  
103 that allows cities to issue administrative fines for defined local traffic offenses and supports  
104 further modifications to enhance functionality of this authority. Metro Cities continues to  
105 support cities' authority to use administrative fines for regulatory ordinances such as building  
106 codes, zoning codes, health codes, and public safety and nuisance ordinances.

107 Metro Cities supports the use of city administrative fines, at a minimum, for regulatory matters  
108 that are not duplicative of misdemeanor or higher-level state traffic and criminal offenses.  
109 Metro Cities also endorses a fair hearing process before a disinterested third party.

110

## 111 **GG-8 RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS**

112 Sufficient funding and oversight is needed to ensure that residents living in residential programs  
113 have appropriate care and supervision, ~~and that neighborhoods are not disproportionately~~  
114 ~~impacted by high concentrations of residential programs. Historically, federal and state laws~~  
115 ~~have discouraged the concentration of residential group homes so as not to promote areas that~~  
116 ~~reinforce institutional quality settings.~~

117 Under current law, operators of certain residential programs are not required to notify cities  
118 when they intend to purchase single-family housing for this purpose. Cities do not have the  
119 authority to regulate the locations of residential programs or require certain settings (i.e.,  
120 community residential setting (CRS) and licensed assisted living setting with a licensed capacity  
121 of six or fewer individuals) to comply with rental license ordinances. Some cities have  
122 ~~reasonable~~ concerns about high concentrations of these facilities in residential neighborhoods,  
123 and additional traffic and service deliveries surrounding these facilities when they are grouped  
124 closely together. Municipalities recognize and support the services residential programs provide.  
125 ~~However, cities also have an interest in preserving balance between residential programs and~~  
126 ~~other uses in residential neighborhoods.~~

127 Providers applying to operate residential programs should be required to notify the city when  
128 applying for licensure to be informed of local ordinance requirements as a part of the

129 application process. Licensing agencies should be required to notify the city of properties  
130 receiving licensure to be operated as residential programs.

131 ~~Metro Cities supports changes to Minn. Stat. § 245A.11, subd. 4, to allow for appropriate non-~~  
132 ~~concentration standards for all types of cities to prevent clustering.~~ Metro Cities supports  
133 statutory modifications to require licensed agencies and licensed providers that operate  
134 residential programs to notify the city of properties being operated as residential programs.  
135 ~~Metro Cities also supports the establishment of appropriate non-concentration standards for~~  
136 ~~residential programs, to prevent clustering, and supports enforcement of these rules by the~~  
137 ~~appropriate county agencies. (Language suggested by city of Elko New Market)~~

138 Metro Cities opposed legislation enacted in 2024 that exempts group homes and assisted living  
139 facilities with licensed capacities of six or fewer individuals from local rental licensing  
140 regulations. Local communities are best positioned to determine whether residential group  
141 homes should be included in a rental housing inspection program. Residents in group homes  
142 can be especially vulnerable to experiencing unsafe living conditions. Local inspections ensure  
143 that housing meets minimum standards and requirements for safety and livability. In addition to  
144 any state oversight, local inspections also ensure that any housing conditions needing attention  
145 can be addressed promptly. Metro Cities will continue to monitor the new law and urges the  
146 Legislature to consider its repeal. (Language suggested by city of Richfield)

147

## 148 **GG-9 ANNEXATION**

149 Attempts have been made in recent years to reduce tensions between cities and townships in  
150 annexations. ~~A Municipal Boundary Adjustment Task Force worked to develop~~  
151 ~~recommendations regarding best practices annexation training for city and township officials to~~  
152 ~~better communicate and jointly plan potential annexations. While the task force defined~~  
153 ~~differences between cities and townships, no significant advancements were made in creating~~  
154 ~~best practices. (Edit suggested by staff)~~

155 Metro Cities supports continued legislative efforts to develop recommendations regarding best  
156 practices and annexation training for city and township officials to better communicate and plan  
157 for potential annexations. Further, Metro Cities supports substantive changes to the state's  
158 annexation laws that will lead to better land use planning, energy conservation, greater  
159 environmental protection, fairer tax bases, clarification of fee reimbursement and fewer  
160 conflicts between townships and cities. Metro Cities also supports technical annexation changes  
161 that are agreed to by cities and townships.

162

163 **GG-10 STATEWIDE FUNDING SOURCES FOR LOCAL ISSUES WITH REGIONAL IMPACT**

164 Many issues including, but not limited to, a metropolitan area groundwater monitoring  
165 network, emerald ash borer management, perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances  
166 (PFAS/PFOS), and the cleanup of storm-water retention ponds, come with significant local costs,  
167 and have effects that reach beyond municipal boundaries.

168 Metro Cities supports the availability of statewide funding sources to address local issues that  
169 have regional or statewide significance or are caused by state or regional actions.

170 Metro Cities opposes any requirement to enact ordinances more restrictive than state law in  
171 exchange for access to these funds.

172

173 **GG-11 URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT FUNDING**

174 Urban forests are an essential local infrastructure component. Dutch elm disease, oak wilt  
175 disease, drought, storms, and emerald ash borer threaten public investments in trees and  
176 controlling these issues can be greatly consequential for city budgets. The Minnesota  
177 Department of Natural Resources, through its Urban and Community Forestry program, and the  
178 Minnesota Department of Agriculture, through its Shade Tree and Invasive Species program,  
179 have regulatory authority to direct tree sanitation and control programs. Although these  
180 programs allow for addressing some tree disease, pest, and other problems, funding has been  
181 inadequate to meet the need of cities to build capacity for tree programs and respond to  
182 catastrophic problems.

183 Cities share the goal of the state’s ReLeaf Program – promoting and funding the inventory,  
184 planning, planting, maintenance, and improvement of trees in cities throughout the state. In  
185 addition, residents are facing significant costs for the removal, replacement, and treatment of  
186 emerald ash borer (EAB). Economic and environmental gains for storm water management,  
187 climate change mitigation, air quality management, tourism, recreation, and other benefits  
188 must be protected from tree loss. A lack of timely investment in urban forests costs cities  
189 significantly more in the long run. (*Language suggested by city of Minneapolis*)

190 Metro Cities supports continued funding for state programs to assist cities with building and  
191 increasing capacity for urban forest management, meeting the costs of preparing for, and  
192 responding to, catastrophic urban forest problems and preventing further loss and increasing  
193 canopy coverage. Specifically, direct grants to cities are desperately needed for the  
194 identification, removal, replacement, and treatment of trees related to management of emerald  
195 ash borer (EAB). Metro Cities supports direct grants and/or aid payments to local governments

196 for reimbursement and retroactive relief to cost-burdened homeowners for treatment or  
197 removal, transporting and disposal of wood waste containing ash tree material. (*Language*  
198 *suggested by city of Minneapolis*)

199

## 200 **GG-12 POLLINATOR HABITAT RESOURCES**

201 Recent declines in the abundance of pollinator insects, such as bees and butterflies, have been  
202 identified by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization as a threat to food security,  
203 as these insects are an important method of plant pollination. According to the US Fish and  
204 Wildlife Service, the main threats facing pollinators are habitat loss, degradation, and  
205 fragmentation. Pollinators lose food and nesting sites they need to survive when native  
206 vegetation is replaced by roadways, manicured lawns, crops, and non-native gardens. This can  
207 have added detriment to pollinators that migrate. Research has shown that increasing habitats  
208 can create the conditions for these insect populations to recover. Converting traditional grass  
209 lawns has been identified as one way to increase pollinator habitat.

210 The Minnesota Legislature created the Lawns to Legumes program, which provides grants to  
211 private homeowners to convert traditional lawns to pollinator friendly landscape. The program  
212 also funds demonstration neighborhoods, which are pollinator programs run by local  
213 governments and nonprofit organizations. Metro Cities supports state funding to programs such  
214 as Lawns to Legumes that create pollinator habitat on both public and private lands.

215

## 216 **GG-13 REGULATION OF HARMFUL SUBSTANCES AND PRODUCTS**

217 In metropolitan regions where most cities share boundaries with other cities, local bans of  
218 harmful drugs and substances such as synthetic drugs, which have been found to be dangerous,  
219 do not eliminate access to these products unless all cities take the same regulatory action.

220 Metro Cities supports statewide regulation and prohibition of products or substances in  
221 circumstances where there is evidence that products present a danger to anyone who uses  
222 them, where there is broad local support for a ban and where corresponding regulatory issues  
223 have regional or statewide significance.

224 In addition, the Legislature should provide for the regulation of products that are known to  
225 damage water quality, sewer collection, and storm and wastewater treatment systems, not just  
226 at the treatment and infrastructure maintenance levels, but at the consumer and manufacturing  
227 levels, through accurate labeling of products, public education, and recycling and re-use  
228 programs.

229

230 **GG-14 WATER SUPPLY**

231 Municipal water suppliers are charged with meeting the water supply needs of their  
232 communities and work to do so with safe, reliable, and cost-effective systems that are  
233 sustainable both for established cities and for all future growth.

234 The aquifers in the metropolitan area cross municipal boundaries and therefore require a  
235 coordinated regional approach to planning for their future availability. Currently, approximately  
236 75% of municipal water supply in the metropolitan area comes from groundwater. With proper  
237 management of the resource, the current water supply in the region is adequate; however,  
238 Metropolitan Council projections predict localized declines in aquifer availability due to  
239 population growth estimates if current usage levels are maintained.

240 Regulation of water is complex and compartmentalized. Various agencies permit its use, plan for  
241 its availability, regulate stormwater, treat wastewater and protect the safety of water. To ensure  
242 that water supply remains adequate and sustainable across the region, we must understand  
243 how much water can be sustainably drawn from the aquifers and what effect increases in re-  
244 use, conservation and recharge can have on the sustainability and availability of both  
245 groundwater and surface water. Many of these strategies cross agency jurisdictions and will  
246 require improved coordination and cooperation.

247 Municipal water suppliers have made significant infrastructure investments in their systems  
248 based on calculated water availability and DNR permits. Proposals to reduce the reliance on  
249 groundwater by switching municipal water systems from groundwater to surface water supplies  
250 will come with significant costs that could place excessive burdens on local resources.

251 The outcomes and benefits of re-balancing the mix of groundwater and surface water use for  
252 specific municipalities and the region must be identifiable before any projects are undertaken.  
253 The sustainability of our water supply is an issue of regional and statewide significance and the  
254 expense of any necessary projects that benefit the region should not fall on individual cities.  
255 Any attempts to address water supply sustainability must also consider all water users, including  
256 municipal water suppliers, industry, private wells, agriculture and contamination containment.

257 The metropolitan region must consider the effects of groundwater use beyond the borders of  
258 the metropolitan area on the region's groundwater availability and the cost of treating  
259 contaminants in surface water that comes into the metropolitan area for use.

260 Metro Cities supports the removal of barriers to wastewater and storm water re-use, improved  
261 inter-agency coordination, clarifying the appropriate roles of local, regional, and state

262 governments with respect to water, streamlining and consolidating permit approval processes  
263 and the availability of statewide resources to plan for and ensure the future sustainability of  
264 water supply in the metropolitan area. Metro Cities also encourages the Metropolitan Council,  
265 in consultation with municipalities, to find ways to re-use wastewater and to develop other  
266 strategies to improve conservation.

267 Metro Cities supports state funding for costs associated with converting water supply from  
268 groundwater to surface water and funds to encourage and promote water conservation as a  
269 strategy to improve water sustainability and to improve and protect water quality.

270

#### 271 **GG-15 PRIVATE WELL DRILLING RESTRICTION AUTHORITY**

272 Cities are authorized to enact ordinances that disallow the placement of private wells within city  
273 limits to ensure both water safety and availability for residents and businesses. This authority is  
274 important for the appropriate management of local water supply conservation efforts.

275 Municipal water systems are financially dependent upon users to operate and maintain the  
276 system. A loss of significant rate payers resulting from unregulated private well drilling would  
277 economically destabilize water systems and could lead to contamination of the water supply.

278 Metro Cities supports current law that authorizes cities to regulate and prohibit the placement  
279 of private wells within municipal utility service boundaries and opposes any attempt to remove  
280 or alter that authority. Metro Cities supports funding that can be used to cap private wells.

281

#### 282 **GG-16 ORGANIZED WASTE COLLECTION**

283 Cities over 1,000 in population are required by law to ensure all residents have solid waste  
284 collection available to them. A city can meet the statutory requirement by licensing haulers to  
285 operate in an open collection system, authorize city employees to collect waste, or implement  
286 organized collection through one or multiple haulers to increase efficiency, reduce truck traffic  
287 and control costs to residents.

288 Metro Cities supports current laws that allow cities to work with existing haulers to achieve the  
289 benefits of organized collection or investigate the merits of organized collection without the  
290 pressure of a rigid timeline and requirement to pass 'an intent to organize' at the beginning of  
291 the discussion process. Metro Cities opposes any legislation that would further increase the cost  
292 or further complicate the process cities are required to follow to organize waste collection or  
293 prohibit cities from implementing, expanding, or using organized waste collection. Metro Cities



294 supports state funding to local governments to increase the availability of material and organic  
295 recycling.

296

#### 297 **GG-17 UTILITY FRANCHISE FEES, ACCOUNTABILITY AND COST TRANSPARENCY**

298 Minnesota cities are authorized by Minn. Stat. 216B and Minn. Stat. § 301B.01 to require a  
299 public utility (gas or electric) that provides services to the city or occupies the public right of  
300 way within a city to obtain a franchise. Several metro area cities have entered agreements that  
301 require the utility to pay a fee to help offset costs of maintaining the right of way.

302 Cities are also adopting energy policies that use renewable energy resources to light or heat  
303 public facilities. Policies and programs have also been instituted in cooperation with the public  
304 utility franchisee to increase energy efficiency for all users. Cities also contract, at city expense,  
305 with public utilities to “underground” wires. State laws also require energy companies to  
306 provide more electric energy from renewable sources. The specific amounts vary by type of  
307 utility.

308 Metro Cities supports state policies adopted by legislation or through rules of the Public Utility  
309 Commission that provide cities with the authority to include city energy policies and priorities in  
310 a franchise or similar agreement with a franchisee.

311 Metro Cities supports greater accountability and transparency for city paid costs associated with  
312 underground utility and similar work performed by electric utilities as part of a local project.

313

#### 314 **GG-18 ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

315 Cities play a critical role in managing and ensuring the integrity of elections. Any changes made  
316 to election laws should not place undue financial or administrative burdens on local  
317 governments. Metro Cities supports reimbursement by the state to local units of government  
318 for any costs associated with changes to election laws.

319 State laws that allow the filling of municipal vacancies by special election on one of four days  
320 specified in law, can create logistical and financial challenges for municipalities. Metro Cities  
321 supports changes to state laws that allow sufficient flexibility for municipalities in addressing  
322 vacancies in municipal offices.

323 Metro Cities supports laws to increase efficiencies in administering absentee ballots and early  
324 voting, to reduce the potential for errors, and to improve absentee balloting and early voting  
325 processes.

326 Metro Cities further supports:

- 327 • ~~Laws allowing in-person absentee voters to place their ballots in a secure tabulator, and~~  
328 Statutory changes to allow this direct balloting for the duration of the absentee voting period.
- 329 • Establishing an earlier deadline for ending in-person absentee voting.
- 330 • ~~Revising absentee ballot regulations to allow any person 18 and older to witness the absentee~~  
331 ~~process and sign the envelope as a witness.~~
- 332 • Authorizing cities ~~with health care facilities~~ to schedule election judges to conduct absentee  
333 voting at an earlier date in health care facilities.
- 334 • Additional funding and flexibility for cities that administer absentee balloting and early voting,  
335 ~~given the extended early voting period and required hours of operation during evenings and~~  
336 ~~weekends.~~  
337 *(Edit suggested by staff)*

338

#### 339 **GG-19 REGULATION OF MASSAGE THERAPISTS**

340 In the absence of statewide regulation for massage therapy practitioners, many cities have  
341 enacted local ordinances that require massage therapists to obtain a local professional license  
342 to assist law enforcement in differentiating between legitimate providers and illegitimate  
343 businesses fronting as massage therapy establishments.

344 Metro Cities supports statewide registration or licensure of massage therapists to aid local law  
345 enforcement efforts in this area. Metro Cities supports cities' ability to continue to license  
346 massage therapy businesses.

347

#### 348 **GG-20 PEACE OFFICER ARBITRATION REFORM**

349 Many municipalities in the metropolitan area provide law enforcement services and employ  
350 licensed peace officers. To ensure the public's safety and trust, and to strengthen collaboration  
351 between citizens and peace officers, cities must have the authority to effectively govern local  
352 law enforcement agencies. City officials are ultimately responsible for the safety and protection  
353 of the local community.

354 Metro Cities supports statutory arbitration reforms to allow for the discipline, including  
355 removal, of law enforcement officers who have been found to have violated local law  
356 enforcement agency policies.

357 Metro Cities further supports a reasonable standard of review in law enforcement arbitration  
358 cases, which would limit the determination of arbitrators to whether the actions of an employer  
359 were reasonable and consistent with city and agency policies. Metro Cities further supports  
360 using administrative law judges (ALJs) or arbitration to address grievances and discipline related  
361 to police misconduct.

362

### 363 **GG-21 PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

364 Metro Cities acknowledges that the tasks public safety responders have been asked to address  
365 are increasingly the result of inadequate social services and programs. Metro Cities recognizes  
366 the need for adequate resources for social service and mental health services and programs to  
367 help reduce the need for public safety responders to perform these services. Metro Cities  
368 supports ongoing state funding to local governments for public safety. (Language suggested by  
369 city of Minneapolis)

370 Metro Cities supports ongoing state funding for public safety responders training, including  
371 training for crisis management, cultural awareness and implicit bias, mental health and de-  
372 escalation, and supports ongoing funding for equipment such as body cameras.

373 Metro Cities supports ongoing state funding for public safety innovation at the local level. This  
374 could include funding for imbedded social workers or mental health crisis response.

375 Metro Cities supports resources for the MN Department of Public Safety to acquire and store  
376 with a third-party vendor anti-scale fencing, pedestrian doors, and vehicle gates for local  
377 government facilities to improve equitable access to these de-escalation and safety tools.

378

### 379 ~~**GG-22 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS**~~

380 ~~In 2023, the Legislature included provisions in the omnibus education bill to limit the use of~~  
381 ~~force toward students by school resource officers (SROs). The law has generated conflicting legal~~  
382 ~~interpretations and created ambiguity for SROs on when use of certain restraints is authorized~~  
383 ~~in school settings, and whether SROs retain the authority to use reasonable force, as provided~~  
384 ~~by Minnesota Statutes 609.06.~~

385 ~~Due to these ambiguities and potential civil and criminal liability risks, some local law~~  
386 ~~enforcement agencies suspended or terminated SRO contracts with school districts. Although~~  
387 ~~two opinions released by the Attorney General make the law clearer, it is possible that these~~  
388 ~~opinions could be challenged, and result in legal consequences for SROs and their employers.~~

389 ~~Metro Cities supports the Legislature and Governor working with stakeholders, including law~~  
390 ~~enforcement, local government, and education organizations, to clarify laws pertaining to the~~  
391 ~~authority SROs have in schools.~~

392 *(Staff suggests deleting this policy)*

393

### 394 **GG-23 STREET RACING**

395 Street racing is an issue of increasing concern for cities across the metropolitan region. This  
396 activity is highly mobile, is strongly associated with other illegal activity and poses significant  
397 public safety risks for participants, third-party observers, and the general public.

398 Metro Cities supports modifications to state laws to prohibit street racing and activities  
399 associated with promoting and undertaking the activity of street racing. Specifically, Metro  
400 Cities supports statutory changes that address the activity and associated risks posed by street  
401 racing, sliding, and drifting. These could include penalties such as license suspension, minimum  
402 impoundment periods, and vehicle forfeiture.

403 Metro Cities supports state funding to help prevent and respond to street racing activity. This  
404 could include funding for State Patrol air supports and funding for costs, including overtime,  
405 associated with targeted law enforcement saturations and Toward Zero Deaths initiatives. Metro  
406 Cities also supports state resources to increase the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension's  
407 intelligence gathering capabilities and to enhance existing coordination efforts among law  
408 enforcement agencies.

409 Metro Cities further recognizes the importance and value of diversion programs that emphasize  
410 behavior modifications, which can help curb illegal activity and minimize recidivism.

411 *(Staff suggests combining with GG-24)*

412

### 413 **GG-24 CARJACKING**

414 The crime of carjacking has increased significantly in the metropolitan region, with serious  
415 consequences for individual and community public safety.

416 Metro Cities supports the consideration by the Legislature of statutory changes to address the  
417 severity of this crime. This includes state funding to help state and local law enforcement  
418 agencies prevent and respond to carjacking. This could include funding for State Patrol air  
419 supports and for costs, including overtime, associated with targeted law enforcement  
420 saturations. Metro Cities also supports state resources to increase the Bureau of Criminal  
421 Apprehension’s intelligence gathering capabilities and to enhance existing coordination efforts  
422 among law enforcement agencies.

423 Metro Cities further recognizes the importance and value of diversion programs that emphasize  
424 behavior modifications, which can help curb illegal activity and minimize recidivism.

425 Metro Cities supports consumer protection efforts that require motor vehicle manufacturers to  
426 offer antitheft protection devices on certain vehicles that have been shown to be especially  
427 susceptible to theft.

428 *(Staff suggests combining with GG-23)*

429

430 **~~GG-25 COPPER AND OTHER METAL THEFT~~**

431 ~~Wire theft from streetlights, other public infrastructure, and private property negatively impacts~~  
432 ~~communities, by reducing public safety for all transportation modes. These thefts also cost cities~~  
433 ~~hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to replace and repair damaged streetlights.~~

434 ~~Metro Cities supports efforts to curtail the theft of copper wires from public infrastructure and~~  
435 ~~private property. Metro Cities supports statutory changes that would require appropriate~~  
436 ~~controls on the purchase and sale of scrap copper and other metals.~~

437 *(Staff suggests deleting this policy)*

438

439 **GG-26 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

440 The Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board (EMSRB) is the state regulatory entity that  
441 oversees and issues ambulance licenses and also has authority to designate exclusive  
442 emergency medical services (EMS) operating areas, or primary service areas (PSAs), for  
443 ambulance providers. Once a provider has been approved to operate in a PSA, the provider is  
444 authorized to serve the area for an indefinite period of time. Currently, no other state health  
445 licensing board grants providers an exclusive operating area.

446 Health licensing boards play a critical role in setting professional standards and credentialing  
447 processes. However, the EMSRB has not imposed operational standards to ensure an area has  
448 adequate coverage and service levels such as response time requirements. Nor is there state  
449 oversight of ambulance billing rates. The current system does not require ambulance services to  
450 disclose the number of ambulances staffed, where an ambulance is responding from or any  
451 other important data points that would ensure a community is receiving quality ambulance  
452 services.

453 The lack of transparency within Minnesota’s ambulance industry compromises accountability by  
454 EMS providers.

455 In 2024, legislation was passed establishing the Office of Emergency Medical Services, which will  
456 replace the EMSRB, effective January 1, 2025. The new office is comprised of three divisions for  
457 Medical Services, Ambulance Services, and Emergency Medical Service Providers. Additionally,  
458 three advisory councils are established to provide input and guidance to the office. Metro Cities  
459 supports the local government representation on the Emergency Medical Services Advisory  
460 Council. Metro Cities supports regional balance among the membership of the various advisory  
461 councils established by the office. (Edit suggested by staff)

462 Metro Cities supports allowing local units of government to designate which licensed  
463 ambulance service provider(s) serve their community and to determine the appropriate level of  
464 service. Metro Cities further supports additional tools and local authority that ensure  
465 transparency by EMS providers.

466 Metro Cities supports decoupling the professional standards overview role from the service  
467 area determination. ~~Metro Cities additionally supports regional balance in the membership of~~  
468 ~~the EMSRB and a requirement that includes representatives of municipal ambulance services on~~  
469 ~~the EMSRB. The EMSRB should be required to submit biennial reports on EMS service delivery~~  
470 ~~data points for all local governments, to appropriate legislative committees. (Edit suggested by~~  
471 ~~staff)~~

472

## 473 **GG-27 RACE EQUITY**

474 In the seven-county metropolitan region, people of color represent 28% of the population, and  
475 this percentage is expected to grow to 44% by 2050, according to the current population  
476 forecast from the Metropolitan Council. As racial and ethnic diversity increases in the region,  
477 people of color continue to experience significant barriers in housing, employment, criminal  
478 justice, public infrastructure, health, and education, and disparities are becoming more  
479 apparent. Across the metropolitan region, many cities are working to examine local policies and

480 systems, to revise the delivery of public services, and to allocate resources to help advance race  
481 equity. All levels of government as well as the nonprofit and business sectors have roles to play  
482 in addressing race inequities and must work collaboratively to ensure that services and  
483 resources are considered, designed, and implemented in a comprehensive, purposeful,  
484 informed, and inclusive way to achieve race equity. Metro Cities supports:

485 •An examination and revision of state, regional, county and city laws, ordinances, and policies  
486 to address racial disparities.

487 • State resources to assist with comprehensive data collection, disaggregation and sharing to  
488 ensure informed policy and funding decisions at all levels of government.

489 • Funding to assist in the development of tools and resources that advance racially equitable  
490 outcomes.

491 • Activating partnerships among state, regional and local governmental institutions, and other  
492 entities to advance race equity.

493

#### 494 **GG-28 OPEN MEETING LAW**

495 Public meetings in the State of Minnesota, including city council meetings and local boards and  
496 commissions, must be conducted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law under Minnesota  
497 Statute 13D. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, cities successfully pivoted to working  
498 remotely while maintaining and even increasing transparency and accessibility.

499 Metro Cities supports amending the Open Meeting Law to allow city councilmembers and city  
500 board and/or commission members the ability to participate remotely in up to fifty percent of  
501 scheduled meetings each year without making their location open and accessible to the public  
502 as otherwise required under Minn. Stat. § 13D.02, subd. 1. Metro Cities also supports amending  
503 the Open Meeting Law to the remove the three-times-per- year cap for medical and military  
504 exceptions.

505

#### 506 **GG-29 ADULT-USE CANNABIS**

507 The Minnesota Legislature legalized adult-use cannabis in 2023. The law establishes the Office  
508 of Cannabis Management, which will be responsible for licensing cannabis businesses and  
509 regulating the industry. The law includes a local registration process for cannabis business  
510 license holders where local governments are authorized to charge a registration and renewal  
511 fee. Responsible local governments are required to conduct compliance checks for age

512 verification and the enforcement of local ordinances at cannabis businesses. Cities are  
513 authorized to establish, own, and operate a municipal cannabis store. The law also includes an  
514 optional, population-based limit on the number of retail locations in each city or county. It is  
515 vital that local governments retain the ability to suspend retail registrations for businesses that  
516 pose an immediate threat to public health or safety. *(Edit suggested by staff)*

517 The law permits local units of government to establish reasonable restrictions on the time,  
518 place, and manner of cannabis business operations and includes a zoning compliance  
519 requirement for businesses where a local jurisdiction certifies that a business' plans are  
520 appropriate and in line with local requirements.

521 The law establishes a Local Cannabis Aid Account to provide aid to cities and counties. The  
522 account will receive 20% of the of the revenue from the 10% gross receipts tax on cannabis  
523 products. Half of the local cannabis aid will go to counties and half will be distributed to cities  
524 based on the number of businesses located in each city.

525 Metro Cities opposes any efforts to reduce cities' local control and zoning authority related to  
526 cannabis. Metro Cities supports legislation providing cities the ability to prohibit cannabis  
527 businesses within their jurisdiction.

528 Metro Cities expects the Office of Cannabis Management to work closely with cities as this  
529 legislation is fully implemented. This includes working with local governments to create model  
530 ordinances and providing technical assistance on cannabis-related issues.

531 Metro Cities supports the ongoing evaluation of costs associated with the legalization of adult-  
532 use cannabis. Funding should be made available to cities without cannabis businesses if such  
533 studies show that those communities face additional budgetary pressures because of cannabis  
534 legalization.

535 Metro Cities supports the distribution of tax revenue from adult-use cannabis sales to cities  
536 based on the number of products sold and not the number of stores located in each  
537 municipality.



1 **TRANSPORTATION POLICIES AND FUNDING INTRODUCTION**

2 Metro Cities supports a comprehensive transportation system as a vital component in planning  
3 for and meeting the physical, social, and economic needs of the state and metropolitan region.

4 A comprehensive transportation system includes streets and bridges, transit, and multi-modal  
5 solutions that work cohesively to best meet state, regional and local transportation needs.

6 Adequate and stable sources of funding are necessary to ensure the development and  
7 maintenance of a high quality, efficient and safe transportation system that meets these needs  
8 and that will position the state and region to be economically competitive in the years ahead.

9 Failure to maintain a functional transportation system will have adverse effects on the state’s  
10 ability to attract and retain businesses and create jobs.

11 Transportation funding and planning must be a high priority for state, regional and local  
12 policymakers so that the transportation system can meet the needs of the state’s residents and  
13 businesses as well as projected population growth. Funding and planning for regional and  
14 statewide systems must be coordinated at the federal, state, regional and local levels to  
15 optimally achieve long-term needs and goals.

16

17 **TP-1 ROAD AND BRIDGE FUNDING**

18 Under current financing structures that rely primarily on local property taxes and fees as well as  
19 cities’ share of the Highway User Tax Distribution (HUTD) Fund, road and bridge needs in the  
20 metropolitan region continue to be underfunded. Metro Cities supports stable, sufficient, and  
21 sustainable statewide transportation funding and expanded local tools to meet the  
22 transportation system needs of the region and local municipal systems.

23 Consideration should be given to using new, expanded, and existing resources to meet these  
24 needs. Metro Cities supports the use of dedicated taxes and fees to fund transportation  
25 infrastructure.

26 In addition, cities lack adequate tools and resources for the maintenance and improvement of  
27 municipal street systems, with resources restricted to property taxes and special assessments. It  
28 is imperative that alternative revenue generating authority be granted to municipalities and that  
29 state resources be made available for this purpose to aid local communities and relieve the  
30 burden on the property tax system.

31 Metro Cities supports Municipal State Aid Street (MSAS) funding. MSAS provides an important  
32 but limited revenue source that assists eligible cities with street infrastructure needs and is  
33 limited to twenty percent of a city's street system.

34 Metro Cities supports state funding to assist cities over-burdened by cost participation  
35 responsibilities from improvement projects on state or county highways. Metro Cities supports  
36 flexibility in cost participation policies, especially for those cities with a disproportionate  
37 number of state or county highways in and around their local boundaries. The state and  
38 counties should have responsibility for the installation, replacement, and ongoing maintenance  
39 for infrastructure within their right-of-way including Complete Streets facilities such as trails and  
40 sidewalks. (Language suggested by city of Plymouth)

41 Metro Cities supports state funding for state highway projects, including congestion, bottleneck  
42 and safety improvements. Metro Cities supports requiring the Minnesota Advisory Council on  
43 Infrastructure (MACI) to include in its annual reporting all road and bridge funding provided by  
44 MnDOT and counties. This information should include the jurisdiction(s) projects are located in,  
45 the source of funding, and any local match required for each investment. (Language suggested  
46 by city of Maple Grove) Metro Cities also supports state financial assistance, as well as  
47 innovations in design and construction, to offset the impacts of regional transportation  
48 construction projects on businesses.

49 Metro Cities opposes statutory changes restricting the use of local funds for transportation  
50 projects. Metro Cities opposes restrictions on aesthetic related components of transportation  
51 projects, as these components often provide important safety and other benefits to projects.

52 Metro Cities supports further research into the policy implications for electric and automated  
53 vehicles on roadways, transit, and other components of transportation systems. Metro Cities  
54 encourages the state to study the impact of electric and automated vehicles on transportation  
55 related funding and policies.

56

## 57 **TP-2 REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM**

58 The Twin Cities Metropolitan Area needs a multi-modal regional transit system as part of a  
59 comprehensive transportation strategy that serves all users, including commuters and the  
60 transit dependent. The transit system should be composed of a mix of ~~high occupancy vehicle~~  
61 ~~(HOV) lanes, high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, a network of bike and pedestrian trails,~~ bus rapid  
62 transit, express and regular route bus service, exclusive transit ways, light rail transit, streetcars,  
63 and commuter rail corridors designed to connect residential, employment, retail, and  
64 entertainment centers. The system should be regularly monitored and adjusted to ensure that

65 routes of service correspond to current and forecasted changes in the region's transit service  
66 needs and priorities. Metro Cities supports strategic expansion of the regional transit system.  
67 *(Edit suggested by staff)*

68 Current congestion levels and forecasted population growth require a stable, reliable, and  
69 growing source of revenue for transit construction and operations so that our metropolitan  
70 region can meet its transportation needs to remain economically competitive. Metro Cities  
71 supports an effective, efficient, and comprehensive regional transit system as an invaluable  
72 component in meeting the multimodal transportation needs of the metropolitan region and to  
73 the region's economic vibrancy and quality of life.

74 Metro Cities recognizes that transit service connects residents to jobs, schools, health care, and  
75 activity centers. Transit access and service frequency levels should recognize the role of public  
76 transit in addressing equity, including but not limited to racial and economic disparities, people  
77 with disabilities and the elderly. Metro Cities supports efforts to transition the fleets of transit  
78 providers in the metropolitan region to low or zero emission buses and supports using equity  
79 and environmental criteria identified in transit providers' zero emission bus transition plans to  
80 prioritize the deployment of zero or low-emission buses.

81 Metro Cities opposes statutory changes restricting the use of local funds for planning or  
82 construction of transit projects. Restricting local planning and funding limits the ability of cities  
83 to participate in transit corridor planning and development. State and regional policymakers  
84 must coordinate with local units of government as decisions are made at the state level on  
85 transit projects that also involve municipal planning, funding, and policy decisions.

86 In the interest of including all potential options in the pursuit of a regionally balanced transit  
87 system, Metro Cities opposes the imposition of legislative moratoriums on the study, planning,  
88 design, or construction of specific transit projects.

89 Metro Cities supports a regional governance structure that ensures a measurably reliable and  
90 efficient system, recognizes the diverse transit needs of our region and addresses funding needs  
91 for all components of the system. These structures must work with and be responsive to the  
92 needs of the communities they serve.

93 Metro Cities supports an open and collaborative regional transportation planning process that  
94 fully engages all public transit providers as partners in ongoing policy development to achieve  
95 desired outcomes, including establishment of transit project criteria that promote fair and  
96 equitable selection of projects throughout the region and transparent regional distribution of  
97 available funding.

98 Metro Cities recognizes the need for flexibility in transit systems for cities that border the edges  
99 of the seven-county metropolitan area to ensure users can get to destinations outside of the  
100 seven-county area. Metro Cities encourages the Metropolitan Council to coordinate with collar  
101 counties so that riders can get to and from destinations beyond the boundaries of the region.

102 Metro Cities is opposed to legislative or Metropolitan Council directives that constrain the  
103 ability of metropolitan transit providers to provide a full range of transit services, including  
104 reverse commute routes, suburb-to-suburb routes, transit hub feeder services or new,  
105 experimental services that may show a low rate of operating cost recovery from the fare box.

106 Metro Cities supports the autonomy of suburban transit providers to conduct operations to  
107 meet demonstrated and unique needs in their designated service areas independent from the  
108 operations of other regional transit providers. Metro Cities supports the ability of a new window  
109 to be established for cities to opt out of Metro Transit to either partner with or join an existing  
110 suburban transit provider or to establish their own transit service.

111 Suburban transit providers are concerned that funding challenges may be used to attempt to  
112 justify a repeal of their authorizing legislation and to consolidate transit services into a single  
113 regional entity. This would result in reverting to conditions existing nearly 40 years ago when  
114 inadequate service caused twelve suburbs to elect not to be part of the traditional transit  
115 system.

116 In the interest of safety and traffic management, Metro Cities supports further study of rail  
117 safety issues relating to water quality protections, public safety concerns relating to  
118 derailments, traffic implications from longer and more frequent trains and the sensitive balance  
119 between rail commerce and the quality-of-life impacts on the communities through which they  
120 pass.

121

### 122 **TP-3 TRANSIT FINANCING**

123 Shifting demographics in the metropolitan region will mean increased demand for various  
124 modes of transit in areas with and without current transit service. MVST revenue projections  
125 are unpredictable, and the Legislature has repeatedly reduced general fund support for Metro  
126 Transit, which contributes to persistent operating deficits for regional transit providers.

127 Operating subsidies necessary to support a regional system should come from regional and  
128 statewide funding sources and not local taxpayers. Until recently, state and regional resources  
129 for transit had diminished, with costs shifting to local taxpayers in the metropolitan area. A  
130 system of transit provides significant economic benefits to the state and metropolitan region

131 and must be supported with state and regional revenue sources. In addition, capital costs for  
132 the expansion of the regional transit system should be supported through state and regional  
133 sources, and not the sole responsibility of local units of government. In 2023, 0.75% regional  
134 sales and use tax in the seven-county metropolitan region was established to provide funding  
135 for transit operations, maintenance, capital projects.

136 Metro Cities supports stable and predictable state and regional revenue sources to fund  
137 operating and capital expenses for all regional transit providers and Metro Mobility at a level  
138 sufficient to meet the growing operational and capital transit needs of the region and to expand  
139 the system to areas that lack sufficient transit service options.

140 Metro Cities continues to support an advisory role for municipal officials in decisions associated  
141 with local transit projects. Metro Cities supports the early engagement of local governments in  
142 transit project planning and development including project scoping, cost estimating, funding  
143 requests and coordination with overlapping initiatives to achieve successful corridor-based  
144 projects.

145 To promote stable and predictable distribution of Regional Transportation Sales and Use Tax  
146 receipts, Metro Cities supports a collaborative process by which the Metropolitan Council  
147 includes stakeholders in the creation of policy guiding the distribution of funds.

148 Metro Cities supports the creation of a city allocation from the Regional Transportation Sales  
149 Tax to aid cities with local transportation infrastructure.

150

#### 151 **TP-4 STREET IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS**

152 Funding sources for local transportation projects are limited to the use of Municipal State Aid  
153 Street Program (MSAS), Transportation Advancement Account (TAA) distributions, property  
154 taxes and special assessments. With increasing pressures on city budgets and limited tools and  
155 resources, cities are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain aging streets. *(Edit suggested by*  
156 *staff)*

157 Street improvement districts allow cities in developed and developing areas to fund new  
158 construction as well as reconstruction and maintenance efforts.

159 The street improvement district is designed to allow cities, through a fair and objective fee  
160 structure, to create a district or districts within the city in which fees are raised on properties in  
161 the district and spent within the boundaries of the district.

162 Metro Cities supports the authority of local units of government to establish street  
163 improvement districts. Metro Cities also supports changes to special assessment laws to make  
164 assessing state- owned property a more predictable process with uniformity in the payment of  
165 assessments across the state.

166

#### 167 **TP-5 HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE TURN BACKS & FUNDING**

168 Cities do not have the financial capacity and in many cities the technical expertise other than  
169 through significant property tax increases, to absorb additional roadway or bridge infrastructure  
170 responsibilities without new funding sources. The existing municipal turnback fund is not  
171 adequate based on contemplated turn backs.

172 Metro Cities supports jurisdictional reassignment or turnback of roads (Minn. Stat. § 161.16,  
173 subd. 4) on a phased basis using functional classifications and other appropriate criteria subject  
174 to a corresponding mechanism for adequate funding of roadway improvements and continued  
175 maintenance.

176 Metro Cities does not support a wholesale turnback of county or state roads or bridges without  
177 the consent of the municipality and the total cost, agreed to by the municipality, being  
178 reimbursed to the city in a timely manner. The process for establishing state policies to assign a  
179 shared cost participation for newly constructed or rebuilt bridges over trunk highways to local  
180 officials, must include input by the local municipalities affected, and any assigned shared costs  
181 and responsibilities must be agreed to by the municipalities.

182

#### 183 **TP-6 “3C” TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS: ELECTED OFFICIALS’ ROLE**

184 The Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) was developed to meet federal requirements,  
185 designating the Metropolitan Council as the organization that is responsible for a continuous,  
186 comprehensive, and cooperative (3C) transportation planning process to allocate federal funds  
187 among metropolitan area projects. Input by local officials into the planning and prioritization of  
188 transportation investments in the region is a vital component of these processes.

189 Metro Cities supports continuation of the TAB with a majority of locally elected municipal  
190 officials as members and participating in the process.

191

#### 192 **TP-7 ELECTRONIC IMAGING FOR ENFORCEMENT OF TRAFFIC LAWS**

193 Enforcement of traffic laws with cameras and other motion imaging technology has been  
194 demonstrated to improve driver compliance and safety.

195 Metro Cities supports cities having the authority to use such technology, including photos and  
196 videos, to enforce traffic laws.

197

## 198 **TP-8 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES AND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES**

199 The introduction of transportation network companies (TNC) such as Lyft and Uber, vehicle  
200 sharing and other wheeled transportation modes such as bicycles and scooters, require the  
201 need for local officials to determine licensing and inspection requirements for these modes, and  
202 to address issues concerning management over public rights-of-way. Cities have the authority to  
203 license rideshare companies, inspect vehicles, license drivers, and regulate access to sidewalks  
204 and streets. The use of autonomous delivery robots and aerial drones in public rights-of-way is  
205 also becoming more prevalent and cities must maintain and enhance the authority necessary to  
206 regulate the use of these vehicles to ensure safe use of the public right of way.

207 Metro Cities supports the authority of local officials to regulate and establish fees on these  
208 transportation modes. Emerging and future transportation technologies have potentially  
209 significant implications for local public safety and local public service levels, the needs and  
210 impacts of which vary by community.

211

## 212 **TP-9 AIRPORT NOISE MITIGATION**

213 Communities closest to MSP and reliever airports are significantly impacted by noise, traffic,  
214 and other numerous expansion-related issues.

215 Metro Cities supports the broad goal of providing MSP-impacted communities greater  
216 representation on the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC). Metro Cities encourages  
217 continued communication between MAC commissioners and the cities they represent.

218 Balancing the needs of the MAC, the business community, and the airport host cities and their  
219 residents requires open communication, planning and coordination. Cities must be viewed as  
220 partners with the MAC in resolving differences that arise out of airport projects and the  
221 development of adjacent parcels. Regular contact between the MAC and cities throughout a  
222 project proposal process will enhance communication and problem solving. The MAC should  
223 provide full funding for noise mitigation for all structures in communities impacted by flights in  
224 and out of MSP.

225 Metro Cities supports noise abatement programs and expenditures and the work of the Noise  
226 Oversight Committee to minimize the impacts of MAC operated facilities on neighboring  
227 communities. The MAC should determine the design and geographic reach of these programs  
228 only after a thorough public input process that considers the priorities and concerns of  
229 impacted cities and their residents. The MAC should provide full funding for noise mitigation for  
230 all structures in communities impacted by flights in and out of MSP.

231

#### 232 **TP-10 FUNDING FOR NON-MUNICIPAL STATE AID (MSAS) CITY STREETS**

233 Cities under 5,000 in population are not eligible for Municipal State Aid. Cities over 5,000  
234 residents have limited eligibility for dedicated Highway User Tax Distribution Fund dollars, which  
235 are capped by the state constitution as being available for up to twenty percent of streets.

236 Current County State Aid Highway (CSAH) distributions to metropolitan counties are inadequate  
237 to provide for the needs of smaller cities in the metropolitan area.

238 Cities need long-term, stable, funding for street improvements and maintenance. In 2023, the  
239 Legislature established the Transportation Advancement Account which distributes revenue  
240 from the retail delivery fee and the auto parts sales tax to counties, cities, townships, and a food  
241 delivery support account. Specifically, this account will distribute 27 percent of the revenue  
242 collected to cities under 5,000 in population and 15 percent to cities over 5,000 in population.

243 Metro Cities supports the distribution of revenue deposited into the Transportation  
244 Advancement Account to cities, providing sustainable funding for non-MSAS city streets. Metro  
245 Cities supports additional resources and flexible policies to meet local infrastructure needs and  
246 increased demands on city streets.

247

#### 248 **TP-11 COUNTY STATE AID HIGHWAY (CSAH) DISTRIBUTION FORMULA**

249 Significant resource needs remain in the metropolitan area CSAH system. Revenues provided by  
250 the Legislature for the CSAH system have resulted in a higher number of projects being  
251 completed. However, greater pressure is being placed on municipalities to participate in cost  
252 sharing activities, encumbering an already over-burdened local funding system. When the  
253 alternative is not building or maintaining roads, cities bear not only the costs of their local  
254 systems but also as much as fifty percent of county road projects. Metro Cities supports special  
255 or additional funding for cities that have burdens of additional cost participation in projects  
256 involving county roads.



257 ~~Although only 5 percent of CSAH roads are in the metropolitan area, they account for nearly 37~~  
258 ~~percent of the vehicle miles traveled.~~ The CSAH formula passed by the Legislature in 2008  
259 helped to better account for needs in the metropolitan region but additional resources for the  
260 region are needed. Metro Cities supports a new CSAH formula more equitably designed to fund  
261 the needs of our metropolitan region. *(Edit suggested by staff)*

262

## 263 **TP-12 MUNICIPAL INPUT/CONSENT FOR TRUNK HIGHWAYS AND COUNTY ROADS**

264 State statutes direct the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to submit detailed  
265 plans, with city cost estimates, at a point one-and-a-half to two years prior to bid letting, at  
266 which time public hearings are held for community input. If MnDOT does not concur with  
267 requested changes, it may appeal. Currently, that process would take a maximum of three and a  
268 half months and the results of the appeals board are binding on both the city and MnDOT.

269 Metro Cities supports the municipal consent process and opposes changes to weaken municipal  
270 consent or adding another level of government to the consent process. Metro Cities opposes  
271 changes to current statutes that would allow MnDOT to disregard the appeals board ruling for  
272 state trunk highways. Such a change would significantly minimize MnDOT's need to negotiate in  
273 good faith with cities for appropriate project access and alignment and would render the public  
274 hearing and appeals process meaningless. Metro Cities also opposes the elimination of the  
275 county road municipal consent and appeal process for these reasons.

276

## 277 **TP-13 PLAT AUTHORITY**

278 Current law grants counties review and comment authority for access and drainage issues for  
279 city plats abutting county roads.

280 Metro Cities opposes any statutory change that would grant counties veto power or that would  
281 shorten the 120-day review and permit process time.

282

## 283 **TP-14 MNDOT MAINTENANCE BUDGET**

284 MnDOT has been inconsistent in meeting its responsibility ~~The state has failed in its~~  
285 ~~responsibility~~ for maintaining major roads throughout the state by requiring and has required,  
286 through omission, that cities bear the burden of maintaining major state roads. *(Edit suggested*  
287 *by staff)*

288 MnDOT should be required to meet standards adopted by cities through local ordinances, or  
289 reimburse cities for labor, equipment and material used on the state’s behalf to improve public  
290 safety or meet local standards. Furthermore, if a city performs maintenance, the city should be  
291 fully reimbursed.

292 Metro Cities supports MnDOT taking full responsibility for maintaining state-owned  
293 infrastructure and property, including, but not limited to, sound walls and right of way within  
294 city limits. Metro Cities supports cooperative agreements between cities and MnDOT, which  
295 have proven to be effective in other parts of the state. Metro Cities supports adequate state  
296 funding for the maintenance of state rights-of-way.

297

### 298 **TP-15 TRANSIT TAXING DISTRICT**

299 The transit taxing district, which funds the capital cost of transit service in the Metropolitan  
300 Area through the property tax system, is inequitable. Because the boundaries of the transit  
301 taxing district do not correspond with any rational service line nor is being within the  
302 boundaries a guarantee to receive service, cities within and outside of the taxing district are  
303 contributing unequally to the transit service in the metropolitan area. This inequity should be  
304 corrected.

305 Metro Cities supports a stable revenue source to fund both the capital and operating costs for  
306 transit at the Metropolitan Council. However, Metro Cities does not support the expansion of  
307 the transit taxing district without a corresponding increase in service and an overall increase in  
308 operational funds. To do so would create additional property taxes without a corresponding  
309 benefit.

310

### 311 **TP-16 COMPLETE STREETS**

312 A complete street may include sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus  
313 lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crossing  
314 opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel  
315 lanes and more.

316 A complete street in a rural area will differ from a complete street in a highly urban area, but  
317 both are designed to balance safety and convenience for everyone using the road.

318 Metro Cities supports options in state design guidelines for complete streets that would give  
319 cities greater flexibility to:

- 320 • Safely accommodate all modes of travel.
  - 321 • Lower traveling speeds on local streets.
  - 322 • Address city infrastructure needs.
  - 323 • Ensure livability in the appropriate context for each city.
- 324 Metro Cities opposes state-imposed mandates that would increase street infrastructure  
325 improvement costs in locations and instances where providing access for alternative modes  
326 including cycling and walking are deemed unnecessary or inappropriate as determined by local  
327 jurisdictions.