

2024 Transportation & General Government Committee Members

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

Patrick Trudgeon	City Manager	Roseville
Wally Wysopal	City Manager	Fridley
Nyle Zikmund	City Administrator	Mounds View

*Committee Chair

**Guest/Non-City Official

September 16, 2024

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

Monday, September 23, 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!

Attached are the materials for the third 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 August 26, 2024 meeting.
3. **Presentation:** Charles Carlson, Executive Director of Metropolitan Transportation Services.
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.)

Transportation & General Government Policy Committee Minutes for Meeting of August 26, 2024

Present: Heidi Nelson, Josh Berg, Mike Lund, Jennifer Dorn, Patricia Nauman, Ania McDonnell, Hannah Pallmeyer, Loren Olson, Marc Culver, Inderia Falana, Tom Fletcher, Tom Fischer, Dave Shoger, Kristin Asher, Gary Hansen, Dan Kealey, Brad Larson, Chelsea Petersen, Dan Ruiz, Brent Mareck, Julie Urban, Amáda Márquez Simula, Sean Hayford Oleary, Steve Huser, Nick Thompson, Nyle Zikmund, Wally Wysopal, Eric Petersen, Michael Thompson, Deltry Coles.

Chair Heidi Nelson called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

Motion by Berg, seconded by Olson to approve the meeting minutes of July 29th. Motion adopted.

Metro Transit staff presented with updates and information on transit ridership, safety, rapid response teams, bus routes and micro lines. Mr. Eric Hansen, CEO of Southwest Transit, presented on ridership, customer needs and vehicle services, data, and enhanced collaboration among transit providers. Discussion.

Mr. Lund reviewed the committee memo and moved to policies with no recommended changes under General Government.

Motion by Berg seconded by Nelson to adopt policies 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, and GG-28 Open Meeting Law. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund discussed transportation policies with no recommended changes. Motion by Olson and seconded by Falana to adopt policies: 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. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund moved to policies with proposed changes under General Government. Mr. Berg reviewed changes being proposed by the city of Elko New Market, for policy GG-8, Residential Programs. Discussion. Mr. Fletcher moved to adopt proposed changes by the city of Richfield, and to oppose the proposed changes by the city of Elko New Market. Mr. Lund suggested that Richfield should first present their policy change, and Mr. Fletcher withdrew his motion. Ms. Urban reviewed the proposed language on GG-8 from Richfield that supports cities retaining the ability to inspect group home dwellings to ensure safe housing. Ms. Urban said the city’s experience is that responses by the Department of Human Services have been inadequate. Ms. Nauman stated that Metro Cities opposed legislation this session to eliminate the ability of cities

to locally license this type of rental property. Ms. Márquez Simula stated that the city of Columbia Heights has similar concerns as those of Richfield. Further discussion. Mr. Berg requested a roll call vote. Motion by Berg to approve the city of Elko New Market's proposed language. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Chair Nelson moved to Richfield's proposed language. Motion by Hayford Oleary, seconded by Falana to adopt language proposed by the city of Richfield that would reinstate the ability of cities to locally license. The motion was adopted on a roll call vote of 13-2.

Mr. Lund moved to GG-9 and reviewed staff suggested changes. Motion by Chair Nelson, seconded by Peterson to adopt the policy with the proposed changes. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund moved to Policy GG-11 and changes suggested by the city of Minneapolis. Ms. Falana reviewed proposed language. Chair Nelson suggested removing "cost burden". Motion by Falana, seconded by Petersen to adopt the language as proposed and with the added amendment. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund suggested holding GG-17 for the third meeting.

Mr. Lund reviewed changes to policy GG-18, staff suggested changes. Chair Nelson added that there are cost benefit concerns with hours, absentee voting etc., and suggested there could be language to urge the state for an analysis. Mr. Lund stated we could hold this policy over to the third meeting. Ms. Márquez Simula added that the city would like to limit precincts due to city size.

Mr. Lund reviewed GG-2. Mr. Huser reviewed the proposed language from the city of Minneapolis. Discussion. Motion by Fletcher, seconded by Huser to adopt the language as proposed. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund moved to GG-22, with staff suggesting deletion of the policy. Motion by Chair Nelson, seconded by Kealey to delete the policy language. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund moved to GG-23 and GG-24, and a staff suggestion to combine policies. Discussion. Mr. Petersen may have language suggestions. The policy will be held until the third meeting.

Mr. Lund moved to GG-25. Staff suggests deleting this policy. Discussion. The policy will be held until the third meeting.

Mr. Lund moved to GG-29 and staff suggested changes. Motion by Olson, seconded by Chair Nelson to adopt the policy as proposed. Motion adopted.

Chair Nelson moved to the transportation policies. Mr. Lund discussed policy TP-1. Mr. Thompson reviewed the change suggested by the city of Plymouth and Chair Nelson reviewed changes suggested by Maple Grove. Discussion. Mr. Culver asked is MACI a new Council formed. Chair Nelson replied yes. Motion by Thompson, seconded by Ruiz to recommend the policy as proposed. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund moved to TP-2 and TP-3, which will be held until the third meeting.

Mr. Lund moved to TP-4 and staff suggested changes. Motion by Petersen, seconded by Chair Nelson to adopt the policy as proposed. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund moved to TP-11 and staff suggested changes. Motion by Olson to approve, seconded by Berg. Motion adopted.

Mr. Lund moved to TP-14 with staff suggested changes. Motion by Olson, seconded by Márquez Simula to adopt the policy as proposed. Motion adopted.

Chair Nelson opened the floor for discussion on new topics.

Mr. Berg thanked the committee for the discussion on policy GG-8-Residential Programs and said he would be happy to work with cities to problem solve. Chair Nelson stated that if there are concerns, concrete examples should be provided.

Mr. Culver stated that the plumbing code for storm sewers on private property is burdensome with respect to development and noted we may need to bring up for conversation or possible recommended language. Mr. Lund added the issue is challenging with a project development this year, and that the League was involved. Mr. Fletcher asked if this has gone to the Plumbing Board or Dept of Labor. Mr. Culver stated the Plumbing Board.

Motion by Olson, seconded by Berg to adjourn the meeting at 11:20AM. Motion adopted.

September 16, 2024

To: Metro Cities Transportation and General Government Policy Committee
From: Mike Lund, Government Relations Specialist
Re: September 23rd Policy Committee Memo

Enclosed are materials for the third meeting of the Transportation and General Government Policy Committee on **Monday, September 23rd at 9:00 AM**. The committee will begin with a presentation from Charles Carlson, Executive Director of Metropolitan Transportation Services. Mr. Carlson will provide an update on the Metropolitan Council’s ongoing work regarding the regional transportation sales tax.

Below are policies with suggested changes 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. Staff has prepared draft language for a combined Street Racing and Carjacking policy for the committee’s consideration.

Transportation and General Government Policies for Meeting 3	
GG-17	Utility Franchise Fees, Accountability and Cost Transparency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Language suggested by city of Spring Lake Park</i>
GG-18	Election Administration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff suggested changes.</i> • <i>Language suggested by city of Maple Grove.</i>
GG-21	Public Safety Training and Resources: <i>Language suggested by city of Saint Paul*</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>Language suggested by city of Saint Paul</i>
GG-28	Open Meeting Law: <i>Language suggested by city of Saint Paul*</i>
TP-2	Regional Transit System: <i>Language suggested by city of Greenwood</i>
TP-3	Transit Financing: <i>Held for meeting 3, no suggested changes.</i>

*These policies were adopted by the committee during the August meeting and will require a vote to bring back up to discuss additional suggested language.

General Government (Policies adopted at August meeting with no other recommended changes at this time.)	
GG-1	Mandates, Zoning & Local Authority – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-2	City Enterprise Activities – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-3	Weapons on City Property – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-4	911 Telephone Tax – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-5	800 MHz Radio System – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-6	Building Codes – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-7	Administrative Fines – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-8	Residential Programs – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>

GG-9	Annexation – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
GG-10	Statewide Funding Sources for Local Issues with Regional Impact – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-11	Urban Forest Management Funding – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
GG-12	Pollinator Habitat Resources – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-13	Regulation of Harmful Substances and Products – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-14	Water Supply – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-15	Private Well Drilling Restriction Authority – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-16	Organized Waste Collection – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-19	Regulation of Massage Therapists – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-20	Peace Officer Arbitration Reform – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-22	School Resources Officers – <i>Deleted</i>
GG-26	Emergency Medical Services – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
GG-27	Race Equity – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-29	Adult-Use Cannabis – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>

Transportation	
(Policies adopted at August meeting with no other recommended changes at this time.)	
TP-1	Road and Bridge Funding – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
TP-4	Street Improvement Districts – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
TP-5	Highway and Bridge Turn Backs & Funding – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-6	“3C” Transportation Planning Process: Elected Officials’ Role – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-7	Electronic Imaging for Enforcement of Traffic Laws – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-8	Transportation Network Companies and Alternative Transportation Modes – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-9	Airport Noise Mitigation – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-10	Funding for Non-Municipal State Aid (MSAS) City Street – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-11	County State Aid Highway (CSAH) Distribution Formula – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
TP-12	Municipal Input/Consent for Trunk Highways and County Roads – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-13	Plat Authority – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-14	MnDOT Maintenance Budget – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
TP-15	Transit Taxing District – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-16	Complete Streets – <i>Adopted</i>

We look forward to seeing you on the 23rd.

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

ADOPTED

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**

ADOPTED

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**

ADOPTED

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**

ADOPTED

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**

ADOPTED

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**

ADOPTED

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**

ADOPTED

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**

ADOPTED AS AMENDED

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. Cities have reasonable concerns
120 about high concentrations of these facilities in residential neighborhoods, and additional traffic
121 and service deliveries surrounding these facilities when they are grouped closely together.
122 Municipalities recognize and support the services residential programs provide. However, cities
123 also have an interest in preserving balance between residential programs and other uses in
124 residential neighborhoods.

125 Providers applying to operate residential programs should be required to notify the city when
126 applying for licensure to be informed of local ordinance requirements as a part of the
127 application process. Licensing agencies should be required to notify the city of properties
128 receiving licensure to be operated as residential programs.

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

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

145

146 **GG-9 ANNEXATION**

ADOPTED AS AMENDED

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

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

160

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

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

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

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

170

171 **GG-11 URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT FUNDING** **ADOPTED AS AMENDED**

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

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

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

195 and disposal of wood waste containing ash tree material. (Language suggested by city of
196 Minneapolis and amended in committee)

197

198 **GG-12 POLLINATOR HABITAT RESOURCES**

ADOPTED

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

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

213

214 **GG-13 REGULATION OF HARMFUL SUBSTANCES AND PRODUCTS**

ADOPTED

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

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

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

227

228 **GG-14 WATER SUPPLY**

ADOPTED

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

268

269 **GG-15 PRIVATE WELL DRILLING RESTRICTION AUTHORITY** **ADOPTED**

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

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

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

279

280 **GG-16 ORGANIZED WASTE COLLECTION** **ADOPTED**

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

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

292 supports state funding to local governments to increase the availability of material and organic
293 recycling.

294

295 **GG-17 ~~UTILITY~~ FRANCHISE FEES, ACCOUNTABILITY AND COST TRANSPARENCY**

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

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

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

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

311 Metro Cities supports legislation authorizing cities to franchise broadband/internet service
312 providers (ISPs) in the public right-of-way and to collect franchise fees from these providers.
313 Broadband Franchising will allow a city to require equal access to the same quality of
314 broadband service throughout a city, to require reasonable build-out and system upgrades of
315 broadband systems, to require uniform pricing and other customer service requirements, as
316 well as other public benefits. Furthermore, Metro Cities supports the use of franchise fees on
317 broadband or other dedicated funding to support local community television, which has seen
318 declining funding from cable franchise fees and public, educational, and governmental (PEG)
319 access fees as consumers switch to internet-based streaming over traditional cable tv
320 service. (Language suggested by city of Spring Lake Park)

321

322 **GG-18 ELECTION ADMINISTRATION**

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

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

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

334 Metro Cities further supports:

- 335 • ~~Laws allowing in-person absentee voters to place their ballots in a secure tabulator, and~~
336 Statutory changes to allow ~~this~~ direct balloting for the duration of ~~the~~ absentee voting
337 period.
- 338 • Establishing an earlier deadline for ending in-person absentee voting.
- 339 • ~~Revising absentee ballot regulations to allow any person 18 and older to witness the~~
340 ~~absentee process and sign the envelope as a witness.~~
- 341 • Authorizing cities ~~with health care facilities~~ to schedule election judges to conduct
342 absentee voting at an earlier date in health care facilities.
- 343 • Additional funding and flexibility for cities that administer absentee balloting and early
344 voting. ~~given the extended early voting period and required hours of operation during~~
345 ~~evenings and weekends.~~
- 346 • Requiring the legislature to conduct a cost-benefit analysis for Minn. Stat. §
347 203B.085, which mandates certain days and hours for early voting, weighing the number
348 of voters served by extended hours on evenings and weekends with the cost to local
349 governments. (Language suggested by city of Maple Grove)

350

351 **GG-19 REGULATION OF MASSAGE THERAPISTS**

ADOPTED

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

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

359

360 **GG-20 PEACE OFFICER ARBITRATION REFORM**

ADOPTED

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

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

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

374

375 **GG-21 PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

376 Metro Cities acknowledges that the tasks public safety responders have been asked to address
377 are increasingly the result of inadequate social services and programs. Metro Cities recognizes
378 the need for adequate resources for social service and mental health services and programs to
379 help reduce the need for public safety responders to perform these services. Metro Cities
380 supports allocated ongoing state funding to local governments for public safety including, but
381 not limited to for imbedded social workers, mental health response, training, innovation, and
382 equipment. (Language suggested by city of Minneapolis and amended in committee.)

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

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

388 Metro Cities supports tools and incentives such as scholarships and/or reimbursements for local
389 law enforcement agencies to use and help with recruitment and retention barriers. (*Language*
390 *suggested by city of Saint Paul*)

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

394

395 **GG-22 SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS**

DELETED

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

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

405 ~~Metro Cities supports the Legislature and Governor working with stakeholders, including law~~
406 ~~enforcement, local government, and education organizations, to clarify laws pertaining to the~~
407 ~~authority SROs have in schools. (Staff suggests deleting this policy)~~

408

409 **GG-23 STREET RACING**

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

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

418 Metro Cities supports state funding to help prevent and respond to street racing activity. This
419 could include funding for State Patrol air supports and funding for costs, including overtime,

420 associated with targeted law enforcement saturations and Toward Zero Deaths initiatives. Metro
421 Cities also supports state resources to increase the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension’s
422 intelligence gathering capabilities and to enhance existing coordination efforts among law
423 enforcement agencies.

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

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

427

428 **GG-24 CARJACKING**

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

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

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

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

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

444

445 **GG-NEW STREET RACING AND CARJACKING**

446 Street racing and carjacking are issues of concern for cities across the metropolitan region. The
447 highly mobile nature of street racing makes it difficult to prevent or stop. Street racing is
448 strongly associated with other illegal activity and poses significant public safety risks for
449 participants, third-party observers, and the public. The crime of carjacking has serious
450 consequences for individual and community public safety. While data provided by the

451 Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) shows recent decreases in the number of
452 carjacking incidents, more should be done to curb this behavior.

453 Metro Cities supports state funding to help state and local law enforcement agencies prevent
454 and respond to street racing and carjacking. This could include funding for State Patrol air
455 support and funding for costs, including overtime, associated with targeted law enforcement
456 saturation and Toward Zero Deaths initiatives. Metro Cities also supports state resources to
457 increase the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension’s intelligence gathering capabilities and to
458 enhance existing coordination efforts among law enforcement agencies.

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

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

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

469 *(Draft language suggested by staff)*

470

471 **GG-25 COPPER AND OTHER METAL THEFT**

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

475 Metro Cities supports efforts to curtail the theft of copper wires from public infrastructure and
476 private property. Metro Cities supports statutory changes that would require appropriate
477 controls on the ~~purchase and~~ sale of scrap copper and other metals. Metro Cities also supports
478 increasing penalties for copper wire and other metal theft. *(Language suggested by city of Saint*
479 *Paul)*

480

481 **GG-26 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

ADOPTED AS AMENDED

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

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

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

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

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

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

514

515 **GG-27 RACE EQUITY**

ADOPTED

516 In the seven-county metropolitan region, people of color represent 28% of the population, and
517 this percentage is expected to grow to 44% by 2050, according to the current population
518 forecast from the Metropolitan Council. As racial and ethnic diversity increases in the region,
519 people of color continue to experience significant barriers in housing, employment, criminal
520 justice, public infrastructure, health, and education, and disparities are becoming more
521 apparent. Across the metropolitan region, many cities are working to examine local policies and
522 systems, to revise the delivery of public services, and to allocate resources to help advance race
523 equity. All levels of government as well as the nonprofit and business sectors have roles to play
524 in addressing race inequities and must work collaboratively to ensure that services and
525 resources are considered, designed, and implemented in a comprehensive, purposeful,
526 informed, and inclusive way to achieve race equity. Metro Cities supports:

- 527 • An examination and revision of state, regional, county and city laws, ordinances, and policies
528 to address racial disparities.
- 529 • State resources to assist with comprehensive data collection, disaggregation and sharing to
530 ensure informed policy and funding decisions at all levels of government.
- 531 • Funding to assist in the development of tools and resources that advance racially equitable
532 outcomes.
- 533 • Activating partnerships among state, regional and local governmental institutions, and other
534 entities to advance race equity.

535

536 **GG-28 OPEN MEETING LAW**

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

541 Metro Cities supports amending the Open Meeting Law to allow ~~city council members and non-~~
542 elected local city board and/or commission members the ability to participate remotely in up to
543 fifty percent of scheduled meetings each year without making their location open and
544 accessible to the public as otherwise required under Minn. Stat. § 13D.02, subd. 1. (*Language*
545 *suggested by city of Saint Paul*) Metro Cities also supports amending the Open Meeting Law to
546 the remove the three-times-per- year cap for medical and military exceptions.

547

549 The Minnesota Legislature legalized adult-use cannabis in 2023. The law establishes the Office
550 of Cannabis Management, which will be responsible for licensing cannabis businesses and
551 regulating the industry. The law includes a local registration process for cannabis business
552 license holders where local governments are authorized to charge a registration and renewal
553 fee. Responsible local governments are required to conduct compliance checks for age
554 verification and the enforcement of local ordinances at cannabis businesses. Cities are
555 authorized to establish, own, and operate a municipal cannabis store. The law also includes an
556 optional, population-based limit on the number of retail locations in each city or county. It is
557 vital that local governments retain the ability to suspend retail registrations for businesses that
558 pose an immediate threat to public health or safety. *(Edit suggested by staff)*

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

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

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

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

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

577 Metro Cities supports the distribution of tax revenue from adult-use cannabis sales to cities
578 based on the number of products sold and not the number of stores located in each
579 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**

ADOPTED AS AMENDED

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. (Language suggested by city of Greenwood) The system should be

65 regularly monitored and adjusted to ensure that routes of service correspond to current and
66 forecasted changes in the region’s transit service needs and priorities. Metro Cities supports
67 strategic expansion of the regional transit system.

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**

ADOPTED AS AMENDED

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** **ADOPTED**

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** **ADOPTED**

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** **ADOPTED**

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 **ADOPTED**

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

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

212

213 **TP-9 AIRPORT NOISE MITIGATION** **ADOPTED**

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

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

219 Balancing the needs of the MAC, the business community, and the airport host cities and their
220 residents requires open communication, planning and coordination. Cities must be viewed as
221 partners with the MAC in resolving differences that arise out of airport projects and the
222 development of adjacent parcels. Regular contact between the MAC and cities throughout a
223 project proposal process will enhance communication and problem solving. The MAC should

224 provide full funding for noise mitigation for all structures in communities impacted by flights in
225 and out of MSP.

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

232

233 **TP-10 FUNDING FOR NON-MUNICIPAL STATE AID (MSAS) CITY STREETS** **ADOPTED**

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

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

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

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

248

249 **TP-11 COUNTY STATE AID HIGHWAY (CSAH) DISTRIBUTION FORMULA**
250 **ADOPTED AS AMENDED**

251 Significant resource needs remain in the metropolitan area CSAH system. Revenues provided by
252 the Legislature for the CSAH system have resulted in a higher number of projects being
253 completed. However, greater pressure is being placed on municipalities to participate in cost
254 sharing activities, encumbering an already over-burdened local funding system. When the
255 alternative is not building or maintaining roads, cities bear not only the costs of their local

256 systems but also as much as fifty percent of county road projects. Metro Cities supports special
257 or additional funding for cities that have burdens of additional cost participation in projects
258 involving county roads.

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

264

265 **TP-12 MUNICIPAL INPUT/CONSENT FOR TRUNK HIGHWAYS AND COUNTY ROADS**
266 **ADOPTED**

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

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

279

280 **TP-13 PLAT AUTHORITY** **ADOPTED**

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

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

285

286 **TP-14 MNDOT MAINTENANCE BUDGET** **ADOPTED AS AMENDED**

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

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

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

300

301 **TP-15 TRANSIT TAXING DISTRICT**

ADOPTED

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

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

313

314 **TP-16 COMPLETE STREETS**

ADOPTED

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

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

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

- 323 • Safely accommodate all modes of travel.
- 324 • Lower traveling speeds on local streets.
- 325 • Address city infrastructure needs.
- 326 • Ensure livability in the appropriate context for each city.

327 Metro Cities opposes state-imposed mandates that would increase street infrastructure
328 improvement costs in locations and instances where providing access for alternative modes
329 including cycling and walking are deemed unnecessary or inappropriate as determined by local
330 jurisdictions.