

2025 Transportation & General Government Committee Members

Name	Title	Organization
Kristin Asher	Public Works Director	Richfield
Josh Berg	Councilmember	Elko New Market
Kissy Coakley	Councilmember	Minnetonka
Marc Culver	City Engineer	Brooklyn Park
Inderia Falana	Government Relations Representative	Minneapolis
Clancy Ferris	Legislative and Grants Analyst	St. Louis Park
**Anne Finn	IGR Director	League of MN Cities
Tom Fischer	Mayor	Little Canada
Tom Fletcher	Mayor	Greenwood
Gary Hansen	Councilmember	Eagan
Sean Hayford Oleary	Councilmember	Richfield
Debra Heiser	Engineering Director	St. Louis Park
Clint Hooppaw	Mayor	Apple Valley
Taylor Hubbard	Mayor	Chaska
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
**Tori Kee	IGR Representative/Attorney	League of MN Cities
Brad Larson	City Administrator	Savage
Brady Lee	Public Works Director	Victoria
**Daniel Lightfoot	IGR Representative	League of MN Cities
Brent Mareck	City Manager	Carver
Amáda Márquez Simula	Mayor	Columbia Heights
Justin Miller	City Administrator	Lakeville
Kari Niedfeldt- Thomas	Mayor	New Brighton
*Heidi Nelson	City Administrator	Maple Grove
Loren Olson	Senior Government Relations Representative	Minneapolis
**Hannah Pallmeyer	Government Affairs Liaison	Metropolitan Council
Christian Pederson	Councilmember	Victoria
Eric Petersen	IGR Associate	St. Paul
Chelsea Petersen	Assistant City Administrator	Shakopee
Nick Peterson	City Engineer	St. Paul
Mark Ray	Public Works Director	Burnsville
Tim Sandvik	City Manager	Robbinsdale
Jay Stroebe	City Manager	Brooklyn Park

Michael Thompson	Public Works Director	Plymouth
Kate Thunstrom	City Administrator	St. Francis
Katie Topinka	IGR Director	Minneapolis
Patrick Trudgeon	City Manager	Roseville
**Owen Wirth	IGR Representative	League of MN Cities
Jeff Weisensel	Mayor	Rosemount
Wally Wysopal	City Manager	Fridley
Nyle Zikmund	City Administrator	Mounds View

*Committee Chair

**Guest/Non-City Official

September 15, 2025

TO: Transportation & General Government Policy Committee Members
FROM: Heidi Nelson, City Administrator, City of Maple Grove
SUBJECT: Meeting Notice and Agenda

Monday, September 22, 2025

9:00 am – 11:30 am

Virtual Meeting: Zoom

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. (Heidi Nelson, Chair)
2. Approval of minutes for the August 25, 2025 meeting.
3. Presentations.
 - a. Department of Human Services: Christala Culhane – HCBS Licensing Manager and Jason Flint – Licensing Division Assistant Director.
 - b. Department of Health: Rick Michals – Executive Regional Operations Manager, Health Regulation Division
4. Review policy Committee Memo. (Mike Lund, Metro Cities Staff)
5. Discussion of policies and suggested modifications.
6. Discuss additional suggestions for policies, and issues for future consideration.
7. Other business.
8. Adjourn. (11:30 a.m.)

Transportation and General Government Meeting

Minutes for Meeting of August 25th, 2025

Present: Heidi Nelson, Christian Peders, Andrew Brody, Brent Mareck, Nick Thompson, Nyle Zikmund, Clint Hooppaw, Hannah Pallmeyer, Mark Ray, Gary Hansen, Gillian Linnell, Taylor Hubbard, Wally Wysopal, Josh Berg, Gary Hansen, Kristin Asher, Clancy Ferris, Tom Fischer, Brady, Chelsea Petersen, Kari Niedfeldt, Jay Stroebe, Sean Hayford, Dan Kealey, Eric Petersen, Steve Huser, Loren Olson, Brad Larson, Tim Sandvick, Courtney Jasper, Tom Fletcher, Tori Kee, Inderia Falana, Lori Grivna, Kate Thunstrom, Matt Fyten, Justin Miller, Michael Thompson, Marc Culver, Nick Petersen, Nauman, Mike Lund, Ania McDonnell, Jennifer Dorn.

Chair Nelson called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

Motion by Weisensel, seconded by Mareck to approve the meeting minutes of July 28, 2025.

Motion approved.

Ms. Lund introduced speakers for the meeting. Speakers provided overviews on transit ridership trends, and planning.

Mr. Fletcher asked how ridership of BRT lines compares to projected ridership. Ms. Kandaras stated that BRT has been more resilient to ridership losses. Mr. Hayford O'Leary noted that he appreciated the state fair transit marketing videos. Mr. Wynder provided Suburban Transit Association updates. Discussion.

Mr. Lund reviewed the policy committee memo. Chair Nelson moved to agenda item 5a and noted General Government policies with no recommended changes. Mr. Lund reviewed the policies. Mr. Berg asked if there will be speakers at the third meeting on residential programs. Mr. Lund added that we have asked MDH and DHS to speak. Mr. Ray noted funding for fencing. Further discussion. Motion by Fletcher, seconded by Fischer to approve GG-1-GG-5, GG-7-GG10, GG12-GG-20, GG-24, and GG-27. Motion approved.

Mr. Lund moved to Transportation policies without suggested changes. Motion by Weisensel, seconded by Stroebe to adopt TP-4, TP-5, TP-6, TP-7, TP-8, TP-10, TP-11, TP-13, TP-14, TP-15. Motion approved.

Mr. Lund reviewed General Government policies with suggested changes: GG-6 Building Codes, with language suggested by the city of Greenwood. Mr. Fletcher stated that building codes are statewide and should consider affordability when code changes are being considered. Mr. Huser is concerned about language being removed on energy efficiency. Mr. Fletcher noted that this is still considered in the policy. Further discussion. Ms. Asher noted concerns with making sure codes are adequate to address issues. Mr. Hayford O'Leary stated he is concerned about removing sprinkler code language. Mr. Weisensel added that lower costs on the front end can result in higher costs down the road. Chair Nelson stated we should hold the policy to the third meeting. Mr. Fletcher stated he is fine with holding it. Chair Nelson moved to GG-11, GG-21, and GG-22.

Mr. Lund moved to GG-23 and noted this is a staff edit. Motion by Fletcher, seconded by Fischer to approve GG-23. Motion approved.

Mr. Lund moved to GG-25 and noted that due to recent legislation that passed, staff is recommending deletion of the policy. Mr. Huser asked if there may be push back on the new law and asked how Metro Cities would address that minus a policy. Mr. Lund stated that Metro Cities lobbied on the issue prior to having a policy in place. Discussion. Motion by Fletcher, seconded by Hooppaw to delete GG-25. Motion approved.

Mr. Lund reviewed staff suggested changes to GG-26. Mr. Peterson said he is interested in the account being re-established and funding based on the number of sales and products versus retail stores. Mr. Huser agrees and suggested support for other ways to increase funding. Further discussion. GG-26 will be held over to the third meeting.

Mr. Lund moved to Transportation policies with suggested changes. TP-1: Mr. Culver stated that we should hold over for language or a new policy on MnDOT cost participation. We could adopt the deletion and keep TP-1 on the table. Motion by Fischer, seconded by Wysopal to delete the proposed language and keep the policy on the table. Motion approved.

Mr. Lund moved to TP-2 and proposed language to add micro transit. Motion Hansen, seconded by Kealy to approve the language and policy. Motion approved.

Mr. Lund moved to TP-3. Mr. Hansen reviewed the proposed language. Discussion. Mr. Hansen added that the language could be changed, and we would not need to define a formula. Mr. Huser would like to look at agreed upon language. Chair Nelson stated the policy will be held to the third meeting to possibly adjust language to “factors such as”.

Mr. Lund reviewed TP-9 changes. Ms. Asher noted the issue of noise wall mitigation with MnDOT. Mr. Fischer added that Little Canada receives many calls regarding noise. Ms. Olson added that we should have a separate policy. Discussion.

Mr. Lund moved to TP-12 language. Ms. Asher described the proposed language and said a contractor can change design, and that design build should be used sparingly as is not in the best interest of taxpayers. Discussion. Motion by Asher, seconded by Stroebel to approve the language and policy. Motion approved, with one no vote.

Mr. Lund moved to TP-16. Ms. Asher reviewed the proposed language. Mr. Huser added the city of Minneapolis is concerned about push back. Discussion. Ms. Asher added there is value in standards, but they are too restrictive. Chair Nelson stated this will be held for the third meeting.

Chair Nelson stated the third meeting agenda will be robust. Mr. Lund added that members will see information ahead of the third meeting so they can hit the ground running.

Mr. Lund moved to issues for future consideration. Mr. Lund reviewed language on flexibility on newspaper language for a potential policy. Mr. Larson added that cities that have a paper that is closed or don't have a paper, this is to let the community know of changes. The city of Savage would like to see this language included. Ms. Hubbard agreed and said the city is having to put out notices to other community papers that our residents don't read and that the costs to post to the Star Tribune are high. Mr. Larson will work with Mr. Lund on a policy.

Chair Nelson adjourned the meeting at 11:32 am.

September 15, 2025

To: Metro Cities Transportation and General Government Policy Committee
From: Mike Lund, Government Relations Specialist
Re: September 22nd Policy Committee Memo

Enclosed are materials for the second meeting of the Transportation and General Government Policy Committee on **Monday, September 22nd at 9:00 AM**. The committee will begin with presentations from both the Department of Human Services and Department of Health on residential programs.

Below are policies requiring committee action with notes on whether there is new language being proposed. Also noted are policies without proposed changes adopted at the August meeting.

Following discussion at the last meeting, staff has compiled information and resources related to MnDOT's use of design-build contracts for the committee's reference. Also attached are slides from the Metro Transit and Suburban Transit Association presentations at our August meeting and slides from MnDOT on their ongoing work to update their local cost participation policy.

Transportation and General Government Policies (Requiring action at third meeting)	
GG-3	Weapons on City Property – <i>Adopted in August</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>New language suggested by city of St. Paul.</i>• <i>Requires a vote by committee to reopen the policy.</i>
GG-6	Building Codes: <i>Language suggested by city of Greenwood.</i>
GG-11	Urban Forest Management Funding: <i>No suggested changes.</i>
GG-21	Public Safety Training and Resources: <i>Language suggested by city of St. Paul.</i>
GG-22	Copper and Other Metal Theft: <i>Language suggested by city of St. Paul.</i>
GG-26	Adult-Use Cannabis: <i>Staff suggested changes.</i>
GG-NEW	Public Notice Requirements: <i>Staff drafted based on committee discussion/input.</i>
GG-NEW	Contracting and Purchasing: <i>Language suggested by city of St. Paul.</i>
TP-1	Road and Bridge Funding: <i>No new changes suggested for meeting 3.</i>
TP-3	Transit Financing: <i>Language suggested by city of Eagan.</i>
TP-9	Airport Noise Mitigation: <i>No suggested changes.</i>
TP-16	Complete Streets <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Language suggested by city of Richfield.</i>• <i>Language suggested by city of Minneapolis.</i>
TP-NEW	Noise Wall Voting Procedure: <i>Language suggested by city of Richfield.</i>
TP-NEW	Project Cost Participation: <i>Language suggested by city of Brooklyn Park.</i>

General Government (Policies adopted in August 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-4	911 Telephone Tax – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-5	800 MHz Radio System – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-7	Administrative Fines – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-8	Residential Programs – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-9	Annexation – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-10	Statewide Funding Sources for Local Issues with Regional Impact – <i>Adopted</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-17	Utility Franchise Fees, Accountability and Cost Transparency – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-18	Election Administration – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-19	Regulation of Massage Therapists – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-20	Peace Officer Arbitration Reform – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-23	Emergency Medical Services – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
GG-24	Race Equity – <i>Adopted</i>
GG-25	Open Meeting Law – <i>Deleted</i>
GG-27	Street Racing and Carjacking – <i>Adopted</i>

Transportation (Policies adopted in August with no other recommended changes at this time.)	
TP-2	Regional Transit System – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
TP-4	Street Improvement Districts – <i>Adopted</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-10	Funding for Non-Municipal State Aid (MSAS) City Streets – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-11	County State Aid Highway (CSAH) Distribution Formula – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-12	Municipal Input/Consent for Trunk Highways and County Roads – <i>Adopted, as amended.</i>
TP-13	Plat Authority – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-14	MnDOT Maintenance Budget – <i>Adopted</i>
TP-15	Transit Taxing District – <i>Adopted</i>

We look forward to seeing you on the 22nd.

GG-1 MANDATES, ZONING & LOCAL AUTHORITY

ADOPTED

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

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

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

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

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

GG-2 CITY ENTERPRISE ACTIVITIES

ADOPTED

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

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

GG-3 GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND WEAPONS ON CITY PROPERTY

ADOPTED*

Cities are fighting for public safety measures that can protect our residents from gun violence. We must work to close the loopholes that jeopardize the safety of our residents and encourage a culture of responsible gun ownership. Cities know that gun violence is preventable, and we're committed to doing what it takes to keep residents safe.

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

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

Metro Cities supports the ban on binary triggers, the public possession of assault weapons in city owned and leased buildings, and the requirement that every firearm to have a serial number.

(Language suggested by city of St. Paul)

GG-4 911 TELEPHONE TAX

ADOPTED

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

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

GG-5 800 MHZ RADIO SYSTEM

ADOPTED

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

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

GG-6 BUILDING CODES

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

Metro Cities supports an equitable distribution of fees from the Construction Code Fund, with proportional distribution based on the area of enforcement where fees were received. Metro Cities further supports efforts by the state, cities, and builders to collectively identify appropriate uses for the fund, including education, analysis of new materials and construction techniques, building code updating, building inspector training, and development of performance standards and identification of construction “best practices.”

Metro Cities also supports adopting the international energy conservation code to the state building code without amendments. Metro Cities does not support legislative solutions that fail to recognize the interrelationships among builders, state building codes and cities.

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

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

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

While a single set of coordinated codes helps provide consistency in code administration and enforcement, implementation of sustainable building design, construction, and operation does not readily integrate with the existing state building and energy code system. As a result, many

~~cities are interested in adopting stronger local standards for sustainable development and conservation.~~

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

~~The state should include an optional sustainable appendix to the State Building Code to allow cities to utilize appropriate parts of guidelines in their communities. Metro Cities also supports the state adopting an advanced energy building standard for buildings within the State Building Code and allowing cities to adopt their own enhanced standards.~~

The State Building Code (SBC) sets statewide standards for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, and repair of buildings and other structures governed by the code. A statewide building code provides many benefits, with safety as a primary consideration, including uniformity of construction standards in the building industry, and consistency in code interpretation and enforcement.

Metro Cities supports adopting and amending the State Building Code through the rulemaking process and opposes legislative modifications absent unusual or extraordinary circumstances.

Metro Cities supports an equitable distribution of fees from the Construction Code Fund and collaborative efforts by the state, cities, and builders to identify appropriate uses for the fund, including education, training, and best practices.

The Department of Labor and Industry should collaborate with local governments, builders, and other stakeholders on modifications to the building codes. Proposed changes to the building codes should primarily focus on preserving and improving safety. Impacts on the cost of development and advancing sustainability should also be considered.

Advanced state energy standards reduce energy burdens and costs for building occupants and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Metro Cities supports state funding for programs that support property owners in making energy efficiency improvements, as well as programs available for local governments.

GG-7 ADMINISTRATIVE FINES

ADOPTED

Administrative fines can be used to moderate local costs associated with traditional methods of citation, enforcement, and prosecution. Metro Cities supports the administrative fine authority that allows cities to issue administrative fines for defined local traffic offenses and supports further modifications to enhance functionality of this authority. Metro Cities continues to

support cities' authority to use administrative fines for regulatory ordinances such as building codes, zoning codes, health codes, and public safety and nuisance ordinances.

Metro Cities supports the use of city administrative fines, at a minimum, for regulatory matters that are not duplicative of misdemeanor or higher-level state traffic and criminal offenses.

Metro Cities also endorses a fair hearing process before a disinterested third party.

GG-8 RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

ADOPTED

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

Under current law, operators of certain residential programs are not required to notify cities when they intend to purchase single-family housing for this purpose. Cities do not have the authority to regulate the locations of residential programs. Cities have reasonable concerns about high concentrations of these facilities in residential neighborhoods, and additional traffic and service deliveries surrounding these facilities when they are grouped closely together. Municipalities recognize and support the services residential programs provide. However, cities also have an interest in preserving balance between residential programs and other uses in residential neighborhoods.

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

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

Metro Cities opposes legislation enacted in 2024 that exempts group homes and assisted living facilities with licensed capacities of six or fewer individuals from local rental licensing

161 regulations. Local communities are best positioned to determine whether residential group
162 homes should be included in a rental housing inspection program. Residents in group homes
163 can be especially vulnerable to experiencing unsafe living conditions. Local inspections ensure
164 that housing meets minimum standards and requirements for safety and livability. In addition to
165 any state oversight, local inspections also ensure that any housing conditions needing attention
166 can be addressed promptly. Metro Cities will continue to monitor the new law and urges the
167 Legislature to consider its repeal.

169 **GG-9 ANNEXATION**

ADOPTED

170 Attempts have been made in recent years to reduce tensions between cities and townships in
171 annexations. Metro Cities supports continued legislative efforts to develop recommendations
172 regarding best practices and annexation training for city and township officials to better
173 communicate and plan for potential annexations. Further, Metro Cities supports substantive
174 changes to the state's annexation laws that will lead to better land use planning, energy
175 conservation, greater environmental protection, fairer tax bases, clarification of fee
176 reimbursement and fewer conflicts between townships and cities. Metro Cities also supports
177 technical annexation changes that are agreed to by cities and townships.

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

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

184 Metro Cities supports the availability of statewide funding sources to address local issues that
185 have regional or statewide significance or are caused by state or regional actions. Metro Cities
186 opposes any requirement to enact ordinances more restrictive than state law in exchange for
187 access to these funds.

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

190 Urban forests are an essential local infrastructure component. Dutch elm disease, oak wilt
191 disease, drought, storms, and emerald ash borer threaten public investments in trees and
192 controlling these issues can be greatly consequential for city budgets. The Minnesota

Department of Natural Resources, through its Urban and Community Forestry program, and the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, through its Shade Tree and Invasive Species program, have regulatory authority to direct tree sanitation and control programs. Although these programs allow for addressing some tree disease, pest, and other problems, funding has been inadequate to meet the need of cities to build capacity for tree programs and respond to catastrophic problems.

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

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

GG-12 POLLINATOR HABITAT RESOURCES

ADOPTED

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

The Minnesota Legislature created the Lawns to Legumes program, which provides grants to private homeowners to convert traditional lawns to pollinator friendly landscape. The program also funds demonstration neighborhoods, which are pollinator programs run by local

governments and nonprofit organizations. Metro Cities supports state funding to programs such as Lawns to Legumes that create pollinator habitat on both public and private lands.

GG-13 REGULATION OF HARMFUL SUBSTANCES AND PRODUCTS

ADOPTED

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

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

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

GG-14 WATER SUPPLY

ADOPTED

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

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

Regulation of water is complex and compartmentalized. Various agencies permit its use, plan for its availability, regulate stormwater, treat wastewater and protect the safety of water. To ensure that water supply remains adequate and sustainable across the region, we must understand how much water can be sustainably drawn from the aquifers and what effect increases in re-use, conservation and recharge can have on the sustainability and availability of both

groundwater and surface water. Many of these strategies cross agency jurisdictions and will require improved coordination and cooperation.

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

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

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

Metro Cities supports the removal of barriers to wastewater and storm water re-use, improved inter-agency coordination, clarifying the appropriate roles of local, regional, and state governments with respect to water, streamlining and consolidating permit approval processes and the availability of statewide resources to plan for and ensure the future sustainability of water supply in the metropolitan area. Metro Cities also encourages the Metropolitan Council, in consultation with municipalities, to find ways to re-use wastewater and to develop other strategies to improve conservation.

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

GG-15 PRIVATE WELL DRILLING RESTRICTION AUTHORITY

ADOPTED

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

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

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

GG-16 ORGANIZED WASTE COLLECTION

ADOPTED

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

Metro Cities supports current laws that allow cities to work with existing haulers to achieve the benefits of organized collection or investigate the merits of organized collection without the pressure of a rigid timeline and requirement to pass ‘an intent to organize’ at the beginning of the discussion process. Metro Cities opposes any legislation that would further increase the cost or further complicate the process cities are required to follow to organize waste collection or prohibit cities from implementing, expanding, or using organized waste collection. Metro Cities supports state funding to local governments to increase the availability of material and organic recycling.

GG-17 FRANCHISE FEES, ACCOUNTABILITY AND COST TRANSPARENCY

ADOPTED

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

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

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

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

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

GG-18 ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

ADOPTED

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

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

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

Metro Cities further supports:

- Statutory changes to allow direct balloting for the duration of the absentee voting period.
- Establishing an earlier deadline for ending in-person absentee voting.
- Authorizing cities to schedule election judges to conduct absentee voting at an earlier date in health care facilities.
- Additional funding and flexibility for cities that administer absentee balloting and early voting.

- Requiring the legislature to conduct a cost-benefit analysis for Minn. Stat. §203B.085, which mandates certain days and hours for early voting, weighing the number of voters served by extended hours on evenings and weekends with the cost to local governments.

GG-19 REGULATION OF MASSAGE THERAPISTS

ADOPTED

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

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

GG-20 PEACE OFFICER ARBITRATION REFORM

ADOPTED

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

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

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

GG-21 PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Metro Cities acknowledges that the tasks public safety responders have been asked to address are increasingly the result of inadequate social services and programs.

Metro Cities recognizes the need for adequate resources for social service and mental health services and programs to help reduce the need for public safety responders to perform these services. Metro Cities supports allocated ongoing state funding to local governments for public safety purposes such as imbedded social workers, mental health response, training, innovation, and more.

Metro Cities supports tools and incentives such as scholarships and/or reimbursements for local law enforcement agencies to use and help with recruitment and retention barriers.

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

Metro Cities supports establishing a reimbursement program for law enforcement agencies that respond to protests and demonstrations at the Capitol complex, the Governor's residence, city owned public facilities, and the homes of elected officials.

Metro Cities supports making the Public Safety Aid permanent to provide ongoing funding to cities to assist with increased costs to police, fire, emergency services, and emergency management.

(Language suggested by city of St. Paul)

GG-22 COPPER AND OTHER METAL THEFT

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

Metro Cities supports efforts to curtail the theft of copper wires from public infrastructure and private property. Metro Cities supports statutory changes that would require appropriate controls on the purchase and sale of scrap copper and other metals. Metro Cities also supports increasing penalties for copper wire and other metal theft.

Metro Cities supports the creation of a leads online database for the Department of Commerce, Department of Public Safety, and local law enforcement agencies to have access to sellers contact information and types of products sold each day at metal recycling businesses.

(Language suggested by city of St. Paul)

GG-23 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

ADOPTED AS AMENDED

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

~~Health licensing boards play a critical role in setting professional standards and credentialing processes. However, the EMSRB has not imposed operational standards to ensure an area has adequate coverage and service levels such as response time requirements. Nor is there state oversight of ambulance billing rates. The current system does not require ambulance services to disclose the number of ambulances staffed, where an ambulance is responding from or any other important data points that would ensure a community is receiving quality ambulance services. The lack of transparency within Minnesota's ambulance industry compromises accountability by EMS providers.~~

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

Metro Cities supports allowing local units of government to designate which licensed ambulance service provider(s) serve their community and to determine the appropriate level of service. Metro Cities further supports additional tools, data collection, and local authority that ensure transparency by EMS providers. Metro Cities supports decoupling the professional standards overview role from the service area determination.

(Edits suggested by staff)

GG-24 RACE EQUITY

ADOPTED

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

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

~~GG-25 OPENMEETING LAW~~

DELETED

~~Public meetings in the State of Minnesota, including city council meetings and local boards and commissions, must be conducted in accordance with the Open Meeting Law under Minnesota Statute 13D.~~

~~In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, cities successfully pivoted to working remotely while maintaining and even increasing transparency and accessibility.~~

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

GG-26 ADULT-USE CANNABIS

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

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

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

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

Metro Cities supports reestablishing the Local Cannabis Aid Account to provide ongoing funding to cities to assist with costs related to the local implementation of legal adult-use cannabis. Metro Cities also supports lifting the cap on retail registration fees imposed by local units of government.

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

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

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

(Edits suggested by staff)

GG-27 STREET RACING AND CARJACKING

ADOPTED

Street racing and carjacking are issues of concern for cities across the metropolitan region. The highly mobile nature of street racing makes it difficult to prevent or stop. Street racing is strongly associated with other illegal activity and poses significant public safety risks for participants, third-party observers, and the public. The crime of carjacking has serious consequences for individual and community public safety. While data provided by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) shows recent decreases in the number of carjacking incidents, more should be done to curb this behavior.

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

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

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

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

546 **GG-NEW PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS**

547 State law requires that cities publish certain public notices (ordinances, advertisements for bids,
548 financial reports, upcoming public meetings, elections, etc.) in a qualified newspaper designated
549 by the city. Residents increasingly rely on digital platforms, city websites, and social media for
550 official information, making web publications more accessible than traditional newspapers,
551 especially when local papers are shuttering, reducing circulation to residents while significantly
552 increasing costs to cities.

553 Legislation passed in 2025 provided clarity for cities when their designated qualified newspaper
554 closes, but this change in law failed to address cities previously impacted by a local newspaper
555 closure. Cities impacted by a newspaper closure after July 2025 must post notices on both their
556 own city website and the Minnesota Newspaper Association’s statewide public notices website
557 until another qualified newspaper can be identified. Furthermore, once a new qualified
558 newspaper is identified, it is frequently a subscription-based publication with limited local
559 circulation, thereby undermining the intended goal of broad public accessibility.

560 Metro Cities supports amending Minn. Stat. § 331A.10, subd. 2 to include a lookback period of
561 at least five years to address the needs of cities with recently closed local newspapers. Metro
562 Cities further supports the repeal of outdated and unnecessary publication requirements that
563 no longer reflect current technology or effectively serve the public interest. Cities should have
564 the authority to determine the most effective means of meeting statutory publication
565 obligations, including whether to substitute or supplement newspaper publication with web-
566 based publication or city-newsletters based on the unique needs of each community; ensuring
567 notices reach the greatest number of residents. Updating statutory publication requirements
568 will enhance transparency, improve access, and allow more effective communication with
569 residents.

570 (Language drafted by staff based on committee discussion, with input from Savage, Chaska, and
571 Carver).

572
573 **GG-NEW CONTRACTING AND PURCHASING**

574 Minnesota statutes stipulate contracting and purchasing requirements for Minnesota cities. The
575 law prescribes the process political subdivisions must use to make purchases and award
576 contracts and requires a competitive sealed bid procedure for contracts or purchases over
577 \$175,000. The intent of these statutory requirements is to provide taxpayers with the best value
578 for their dollar and ensure integrity in the process. However, imposing these statutory

requirements may, at times, result in political subdivisions paying more for goods and services than private entities under the same circumstances.

Metro Cities supports broader use of alternative contracting and purchasing methods that streamline the process and reduce local purchasing costs.

Specifically, Metro Cities supports authorizing cities to use the design-build procedure and providing municipalities with broader authority, similar to that of private businesses, to directly negotiate contracts.

Metro Cities supports a change to the Minnesota Municipal Contracting Statute that is codified at § 471.345 to allow cities the flexibility to make a contract by two quotes for contracts estimated not to exceed \$250,000, but only if the business being directly solicited was either:

- Certified as a small business enterprise by a county-designated small business certification program; or
- Certified by the commissioner of administration as a small business that is majority owned and operated by a veteran or service-disabled veteran.

(Language suggested by city of St. Paul)

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES AND FUNDING INTRODUCTION

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

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

Adequate and stable sources of funding are necessary to ensure the development and maintenance of a high quality, efficient and safe transportation system that meets these needs and that will position the state and region to be economically competitive in the years ahead. Failure to maintain a functional transportation system will have adverse effects on the state's ability to attract and retain businesses and create jobs.

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

TP-1 ROAD AND BRIDGE FUNDING

Under current financing structures that rely primarily on local property taxes and fees as well as cities' share of the Highway User Tax Distribution (HUTD) Fund, road and bridge needs in the metropolitan region continue to be underfunded. Metro Cities supports stable, sufficient, and sustainable statewide transportation funding and expanded local tools to meet the transportation system needs of the region and local municipal systems. Consideration should be given to using new, expanded, and existing resources to meet these needs. Metro Cities supports the use of dedicated taxes and fees to fund transportation infrastructure.

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

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

Metro Cities supports state funding to assist cities over-burdened by cost participation responsibilities from improvement projects on state or county highways.

Metro Cities supports flexibility in cost participation policies, especially for those cities with a disproportionate number of state or county highways in and around their local boundaries. The state and counties should have responsibility for the installation, replacement, and ongoing maintenance for infrastructure within their right-of-way including Complete Streets facilities such as trails and sidewalks.

Metro Cities supports state funding for state highway projects, including congestion, bottleneck and safety improvements. ~~Metro Cities supports requiring the Minnesota Advisory Council on Infrastructure (MACI) to include in its annual reporting all road and bridge funding provided by MnDOT and counties.~~ *(Edit suggested by staff, adopted in August)* This information should include the jurisdiction(s) projects are located in, the source of funding, and any local match required for each investment. Metro Cities also supports state financial assistance, as well as innovations in design and construction, to offset the impacts of regional transportation construction projects on businesses.

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

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

TP-2 REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEM

ADOPTED AS AMENDED

The Twin Cities Metropolitan Area needs a multi-modal regional transit system as part of a comprehensive transportation strategy that serves all users, including commuters and the transit dependent. The transit system should be composed of a mix of high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, a network of bike and pedestrian trails, bus rapid transit, express and regular route bus service, ride-on-demand microtransit, exclusive transitways, light rail transit, streetcars, and commuter rail corridors designed to connect residential, employment, retail, and entertainment centers. *(Language suggested by city of Eagan)* The system should be regularly monitored and adjusted to ensure that routes of service correspond to current and forecasted changes in the region's transit service needs and priorities. Metro Cities supports strategic expansion of the regional transit system.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TP-3 TRANSIT FINANCING

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

Operating subsidies necessary to support a regional system should come from regional and statewide funding sources and not local taxpayers. Until recently, state and regional resources for transit had diminished, with costs shifting to local taxpayers in the metropolitan area. A system of transit provides significant economic benefits to the state and metropolitan region and must be supported with state and regional revenue sources. In addition, capital costs for the expansion of the regional transit system should be supported through state and regional sources, and not the sole responsibility of local units of government. In 2023, a 0.75% regional sales and use tax in the seven-county metropolitan region was established to provide funding for transit operations, maintenance, and capital projects.

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

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

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

Metro Cities supports equitable distribution of Regional Transportation Sales and Use Tax receipts to adequately fund regional transit providers' operating and capital needs based on consideration of factors such as ridership, population, and net tax capacity at a percentage rate commensurate with Motor Vehicle Sales Tax funding of these providers. (*Language suggested by city of Eagan*) Metro Cities supports the creation of a city allocation from the Regional Transportation Sales Tax to aid cities with local transportation infrastructure.

TP-4 STREET IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

ADOPTED

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

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

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

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

TP-5 HIGHWAY AND BRIDGE TURN BACKS & FUNDING

ADOPTED

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

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

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

184

185 **TP-6 "3C" TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS: ELECTED OFFICIALS' ROLE** **ADOPTED**

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

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

193

194 **TP-7 ELECTRONIC IMAGING FOR ENFORCEMENT OF TRAFFIC**

ADOPTED

195 Enforcement of traffic laws with cameras and other motion imaging technology has been
196 demonstrated to improve driver compliance and safety. Metro Cities supports cities having the
197 authority to use such technology, including photos and videos, to enforce traffic laws.

198

**TP-8 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK COMPANIES AND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MODES
ADOPTED**

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

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

TP-9 AIRPORT NOISE MITIGATION

Communities closest to MSP and reliever airports are significantly impacted by noise, traffic, and other numerous expansion-related issues. Metro Cities supports the broad goal of providing MSP-impacted communities greater representation on the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC). Metro Cities encourages continued communication between MAC commissioners and the cities they represent.

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

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

233

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

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

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

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

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

249

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

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.

257 Metro Cities supports special or additional funding for cities that have burdens of additional
258 cost participation in projects involving county roads.

259 The CSAH formula passed by the Legislature in 2008 helped to better account for needs in the
260 metropolitan region but additional resources for the region are needed. Metro Cities supports a
261 new CSAH formula more equitably designed to fund the needs of our metropolitan region.

262

TP-12 MUNICIPAL INPUT/CONSENT FOR TRUNK HIGHWAYS AND COUNTY ROADS
ADOPTED AS AMENDED

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

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

Metro Cities supports limiting the use of design-build contracts to projects with a single owner of the infrastructure being constructed or when there is a compelling reason to utilize that type of contract. MnDOT should be required to justify why an accelerated project is necessary. The decision to use a design-build contract should be made with the input and consent of the jurisdictions impacted by the project. (Language suggested by city of Richfield)

TP-13 PLAT AUTHORITY **ADOPTED**

Current law grants counties review and comment authority for access and drainage issues for city plats abutting county roads. Metro Cities opposes any statutory change that would grant counties veto power or that would shorten the 120-day review and permit process time.

TP-14 MNDOT MAINTENANCE BUDGET **ADOPTED**

MnDOT has been inconsistent in meeting its responsibility for maintaining major roads throughout the state and has required, through omission, that cities bear the burden of maintaining major state roads.

MnDOT should be required to meet standards adopted by cities through local ordinances, or reimburse cities for labor, equipment and material used on the state's behalf to improve public

safety or meet local standards. Furthermore, if a city performs maintenance, the city should be fully reimbursed.

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

TP-15 TRANSIT TAXING DISTRICT

ADOPTED

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

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

TP-16 COMPLETE STREETS

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

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

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

- Safely accommodate all modes of travel.
- Lower traveling speeds on local streets.

- Address city infrastructure needs.
- Ensure livability in the appropriate context for each city.

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

Municipal State Aid design standards continue to be too restrictive for cities to design and construct complete streets that fit the community's context and address the needs of the community without a variance. Design flexibility should not be denied based on the amount of right-of-way available, it should be at the discretion of the local community's engineer and design team, and it should reflect the needs of the community.

Metro Cities supports efforts to develop new State Aid design standards that focus on providing broad guardrails and greater flexibility for design engineers to use their best judgment on how to meet the needs of a community, limiting the need for variances.

(Language suggested by city of Richfield)

Municipal State Aid design standards, while created with local engineering representation, have at times been too restrictive for cities to design and construct complete streets that fit a community's context and address the needs and desires of the community without a variance. Design flexibility should allow for increased discretion by the local community's engineer and design team.

Metro Cities supports updated Municipal State Aid design standards that better acknowledge and accommodate the needs and context of urban cities and that better align with other nationally and/or state recognized engineering design standards. Further, Metro Cities supports changes to the variance process to include an appeals process for any variance denials.

(Language suggested by city of Minneapolis)

TP-NEW NOISE WALL VOTING

MnDOT's current policy for approval of highway noise walls uses a weighted voting system for residents and property owners adjacent to proposed noise walls. In all cases, a property owner is allocated twice as many votes as a resident that does not own the property. This effectively denies renters any ability to influence the approval of noise walls adjacent to their homes. In

the case of higher density housing, a single non-resident property owner can determine the outcome of a noise wall approval for hundreds of residents. If a property owner votes against a noise wall, even if residents overwhelmingly vote for a noise wall, the MnDOT policy results in hundreds of residents being disadvantaged. This is especially concerning considering renters are more likely to be lower income and more diverse. Metro Cities supports a comprehensive assessment of MnDOT's current noise wall voting policy, specifically including an equity analysis of the policy.

(Language suggested by city of Richfield)

TP-NEW PROJECT COST PARTICIPATION

Under current policies with MnDOT and many of the state's counties, cities are responsible for cost participation on transportation projects occurring on state and county systems. These costs include shares of costs related to right-of-way, traffic signals, sidewalks and trails, bike facilities, stormwater, landscaping, and other components of the project. Many cities end up using most, and in some cases all, of their Municipal State Aid funding to cover these costs. This results in less funding for the city's own Municipal State Aid system.

Cities should be given credit and recognition for the ongoing maintenance of facilities in the state and county right-of-way such as snow removal on trails and sidewalks, electric and lighting costs, landscape maintenance and other ongoing maintenance costs with which cities incur a large cost over the life of these facilities.

As MnDOT and counties begin to embrace the importance of multimodal facilities within their rights-of-way their funding for these facilities should align with their vision for the installation of these facilities. Metro Cities supports cost participation policies that reduce the burden on cities for state and county roadway projects and shifts more of the cost to the agency with jurisdiction over the roadway; particularly costs for trails, sidewalks, bikeways, traffic signals and the right-of-way to support those facilities.

In 2026, MnDOT is required to provide a report to the Legislature detailing changes to its Cost Participation Policy with changes required to be in effect by March of 2026. Metro Cities supports changes to MnDOT's Cost Participation Policy to reduce, or even eliminate, local cost participation on Trunk Highway projects and stands ready to comment on MnDOT's report and recommend further changes to fulfill this vision of a fair and equitable cost participation policy.

(Language suggested by city of Brooklyn Park)

About the program

Design-build is an innovative contracting method used throughout the transportation trade with its roots in the vertical building industry. MnDOT uses the flexibility DB offers to maximize the value received per dollar spent, in a variety of situations. With growing public pressure to minimize traffic disruptions, utilize innovative approaches and deliver projects quickly, design-build has become an important contracting option for the department.

At a high level, DB projects increase MnDOT's ability to be both nimble and responsive as conditions change during project delivery. This is accomplished, in part, by requiring designers and contractors to team up and work together as opposed to having them work consecutively on projects. This arrangement serves to increase the reliability, speed and quality of a project. Furthermore, the more complicated a project is, the higher the likelihood that it will be completed at delivered for a lower cost using DB.

MnDOT received legislative approval to use this contracting method in 2001. Since that time, 24 projects have been awarded using design-build. While this is a small number of projects, it includes a wide variety of project types, including the emergency construction of the I-35W Bridge over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis.

Advantages

- DB contracts can be advanced from the preliminary design stage to letting (and ultimately completion) much more quickly than the more standard design-bid-build projects given that design and construction activities can occur simultaneously following letting.
- The DB method encourages the design-build teams to propose new and/or innovative techniques using performance specifications, Pre-Approved Elements, Alternative Technical Concepts, and other techniques.
- DB offers a number of techniques that enhance the department's financial effectiveness such as 'Best Value' award structures including 'fixed price, variable scope', the transference of project risks (i.e. earthwork calculations) that the design-build team is better equipped to manage, the flexibility associated with performance specifications and ATCs, etc. ATCs in particular are estimated to have saved MnDOT \$45 million during the 20 projects on which this data was computed.

Contact: Peter Davich, Design-Build Program Manager, 651-283-6698

Projects (Potential Future Projects, Projects Under Construction, and Completed Projects)

Design-Build Resources

Manual and templates

- [Design-Build Manual](#)
- [Design-Build Contract Administration Manual \(Word\)](#)

Forms

- [Request for Clarification - RFQ \(Word\)](#)
- [Request for Clarification - RFP \(Word\)](#)
- [Insurance Checklist \(Excel\)](#)

Laws and policies

- [Minnesota Design-Build Law](#)
- [FHWA Design-build Guidance](#)
- [Conflict of Interest \(PDF\)](#)

Reports

- [Design-build Institute of America and regional chapters](#)



Metro Transit Update

Metro Cities Policy Committee | August 25, 2025



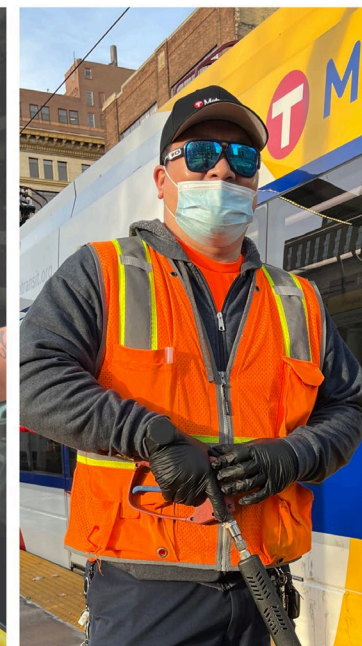
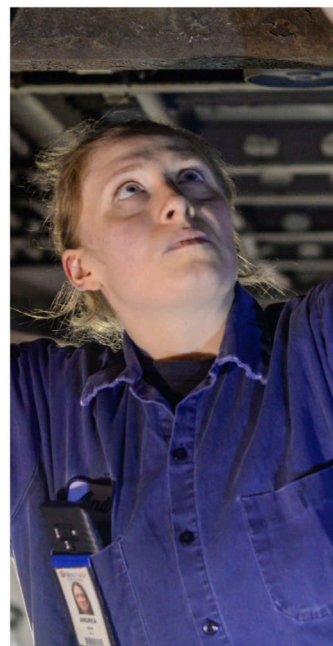
Agenda

- Introductions and Overview
- Ridership
- Northstar
- Process for developing new BRT lines
- Metro Micro
- Other topics of note

Metro Transit Overview

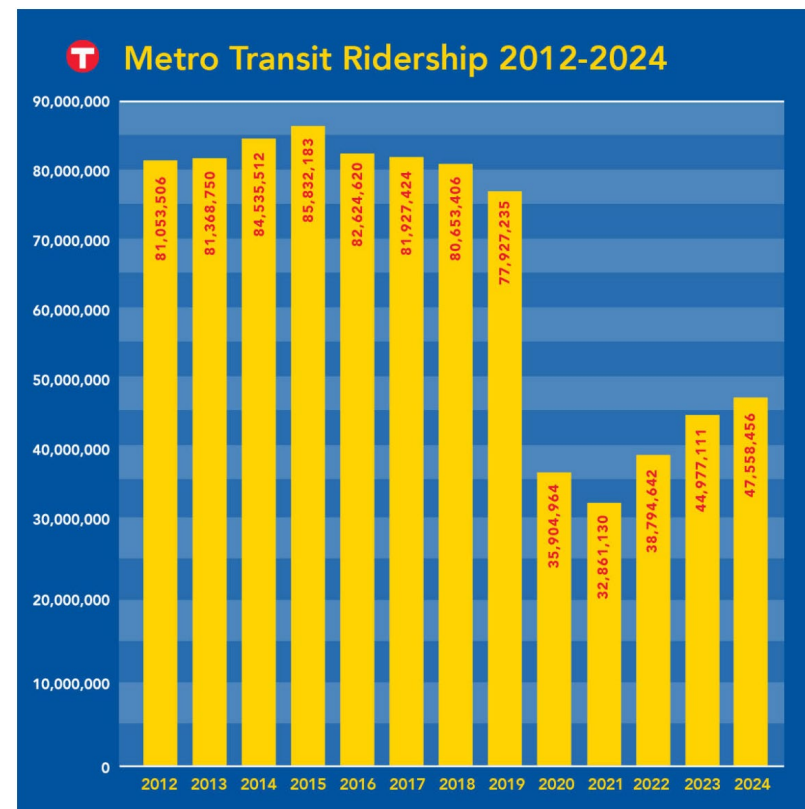
- Bus, light rail, commuter rail
- 75+ communities served
- 3,400+ employees
- Fleet: Nearly 700 buses, 118 light rail vehicles, 6 locomotives, 18 passenger rail cars
- Facilities: 9,887 bus stops, 793 bus shelters, 87 BRT stations, 44 rail stations, 46 Park & Rides, 22 transit centers

Mission: We connect people, strengthen communities, and improves lives by delivering high-quality public transportation.

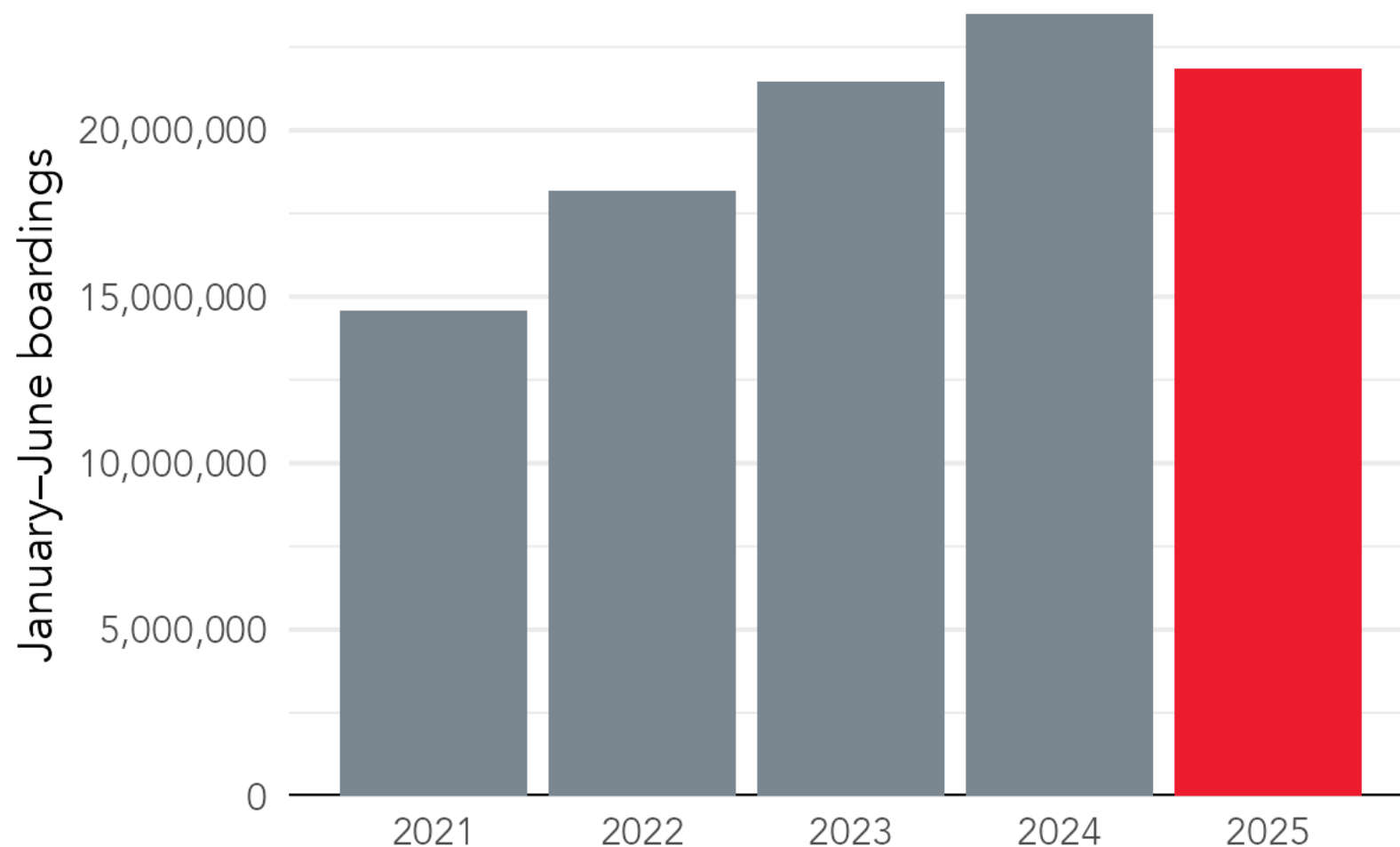


Ridership Overview

- 47.5M rides in 2024
- 29% of riders are 18-24 years old
- One-third of riders earn less than \$25K/year
- 35% of trips for commute purposes (down from 48% in 2016)
- Top destinations: Downtowns, U of M, Mall of America, MSP

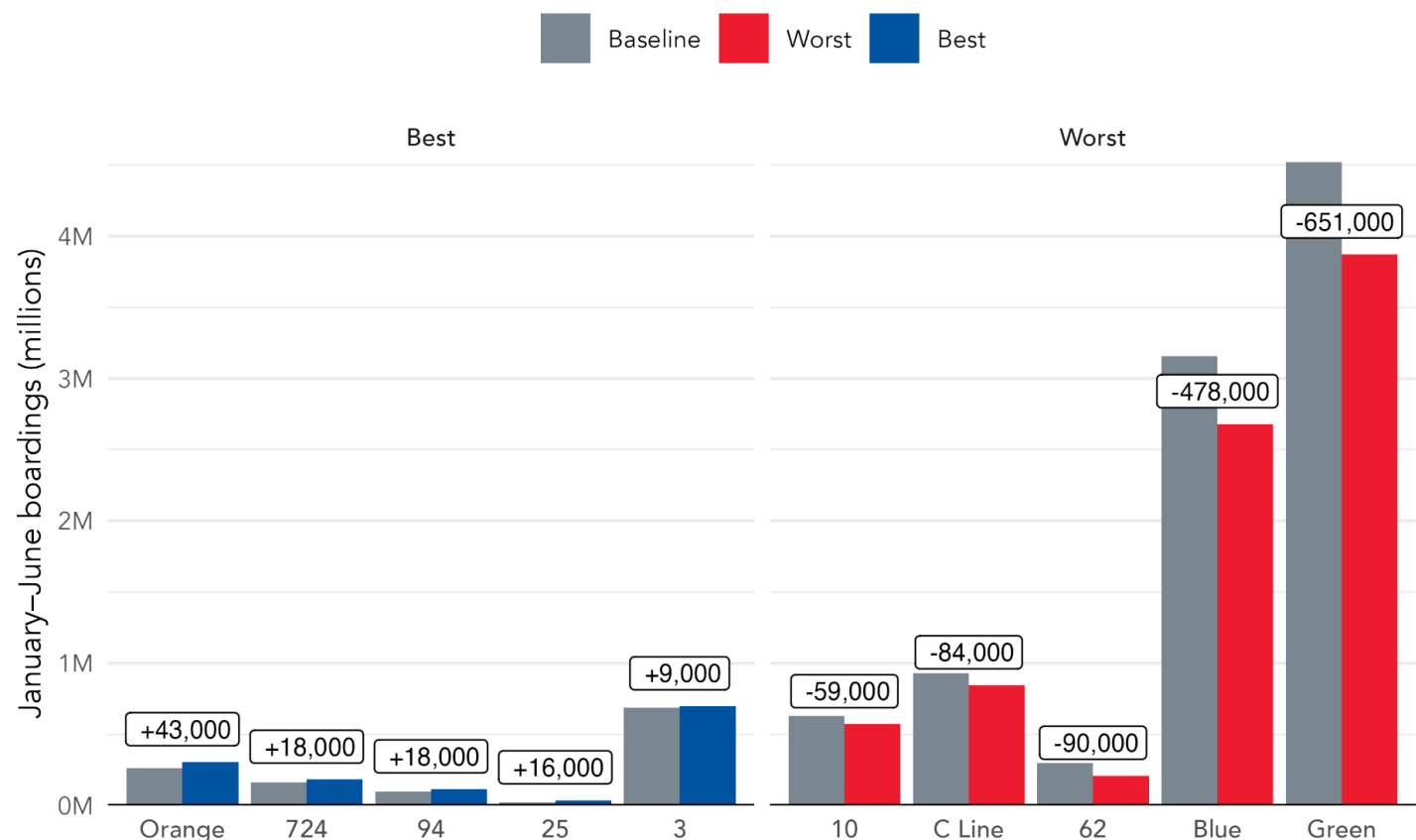


Metro Transit Systemwide Ridership



- Ridership through Q2 is down 7% from 2024
- 2025 is similar to 2023

Metro Transit Systemwide Ridership



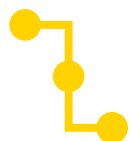
Blue and Green lines are 61% of decline

More ridership data at:
www.metrotransit.org/performance

Safe, fast and frequent service grows ridership in the long-term



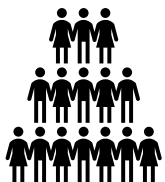
Riders report they would ride more if they feel safer



High-frequency service has increased steadily since early 2022 and Network Now service improvements continue



On average, residents can reach more jobs on transit than anytime in the last four years



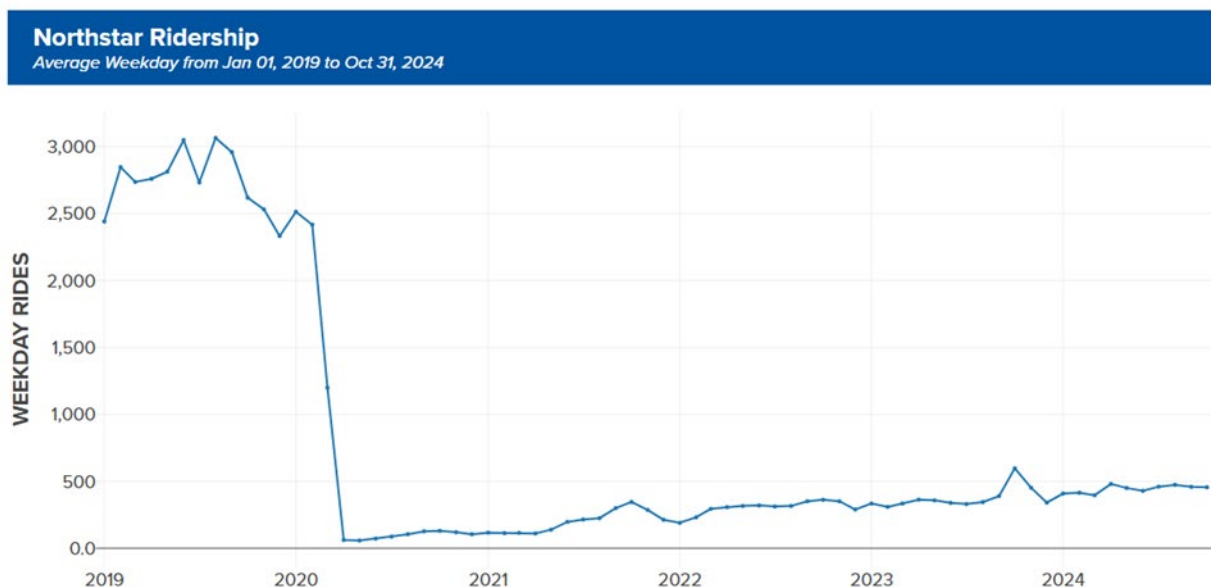
Commuter market likely to improve as return-to-office mandates expand

Northstar Transition Consistent with Network Now Framework

- **More Options for Riders:** Enhanced bus service offers more trips for more of the day, with comparable travel times, weekend service and lower cost
- **Adapts to Changing Needs:** Service changes designed to grow ridership by responding to changes in when and where people are choosing to travel.
 - Service more frequent on busy corridors throughout the day, on nights and weekends
 - Fast, frequent service that serves many trip purposes
 - Similar to discontinuation of 50 routes in March 2025, nearly all of which provided weekday commuter express service like Northstar
- **Responsive to Community:** Service design informed by feedback from riders and community partners

Low Ridership with Little Rebounding

- Pre-pandemic, Northstar saw a maximum of 2,660 average weekday rides - less than half the projected 2025 ridership (projected 5,590)
- By 2024, ridership had declined to 430 average weekday rides



Subsidy per Ride is an Outlier

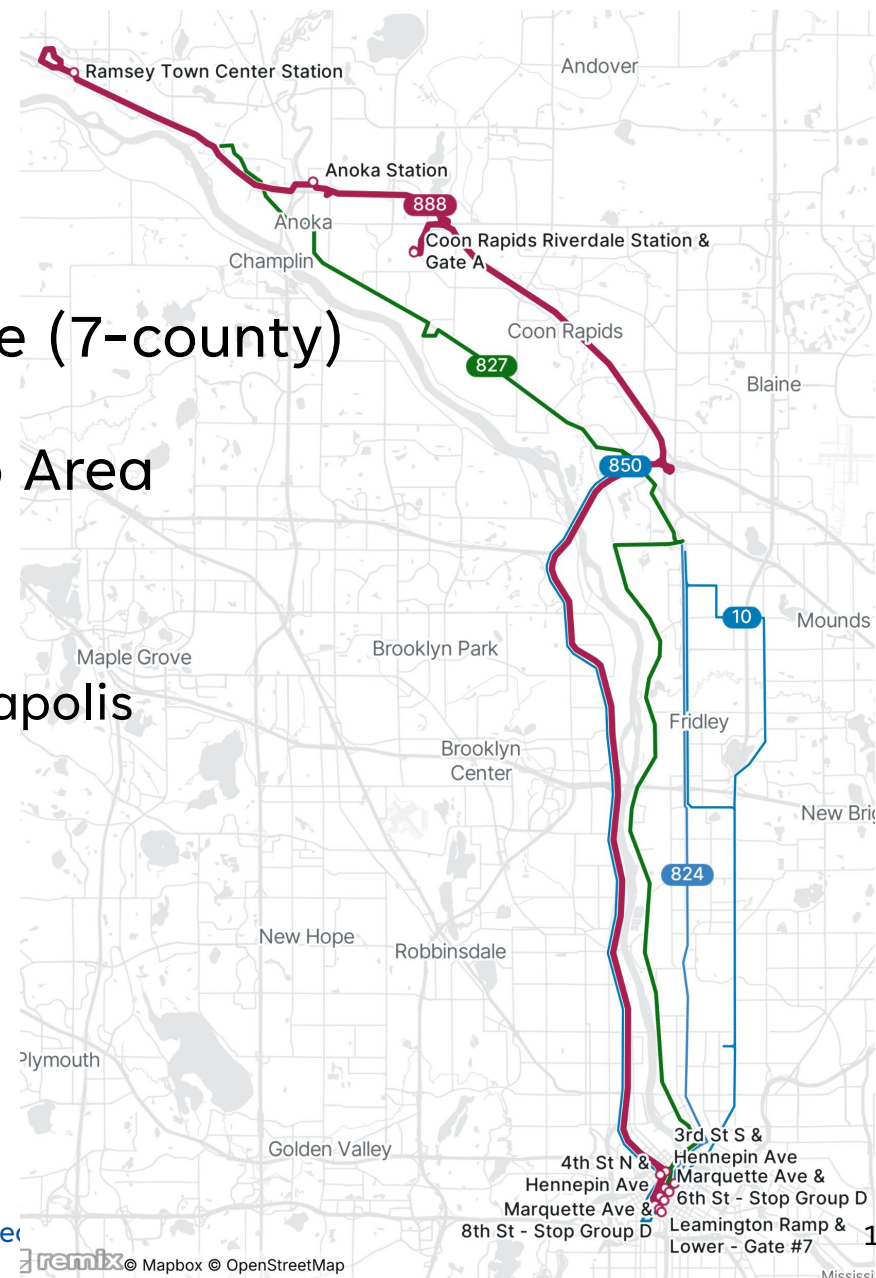
- Region
 - In 2023, the subsidy per Northstar ride was \$116.60 compared to \$16.07 for commuter bus service that year (each round-trip Northstar rider cost taxpayers about \$233)

NORTHSTAR SUBSIDY PER RIDE:				
2017		\$	16.15	
2018		\$	17.24	
2019		\$	19.29	
2020		\$	99.13	
2021		\$	173.35	
2022		\$	147.21	
2023		\$	116.00	

- National
 - Of 29 other U.S. commuter rail lines, only one had a higher subsidy per ride in 2023

Northstar transition planning

- Metro Transit constrained to Metro Area by Statute (7-county)
- MNDOT authority to provide service outside Metro Area
- Develop service concept for Route 827 and 888
 - Ramsey, Anoka, Coon Rapids, Fridley, downtown Minneapolis
 - 30-minute rush hour
 - Hourly all day
- Community engagement



Rail to bus service comparison

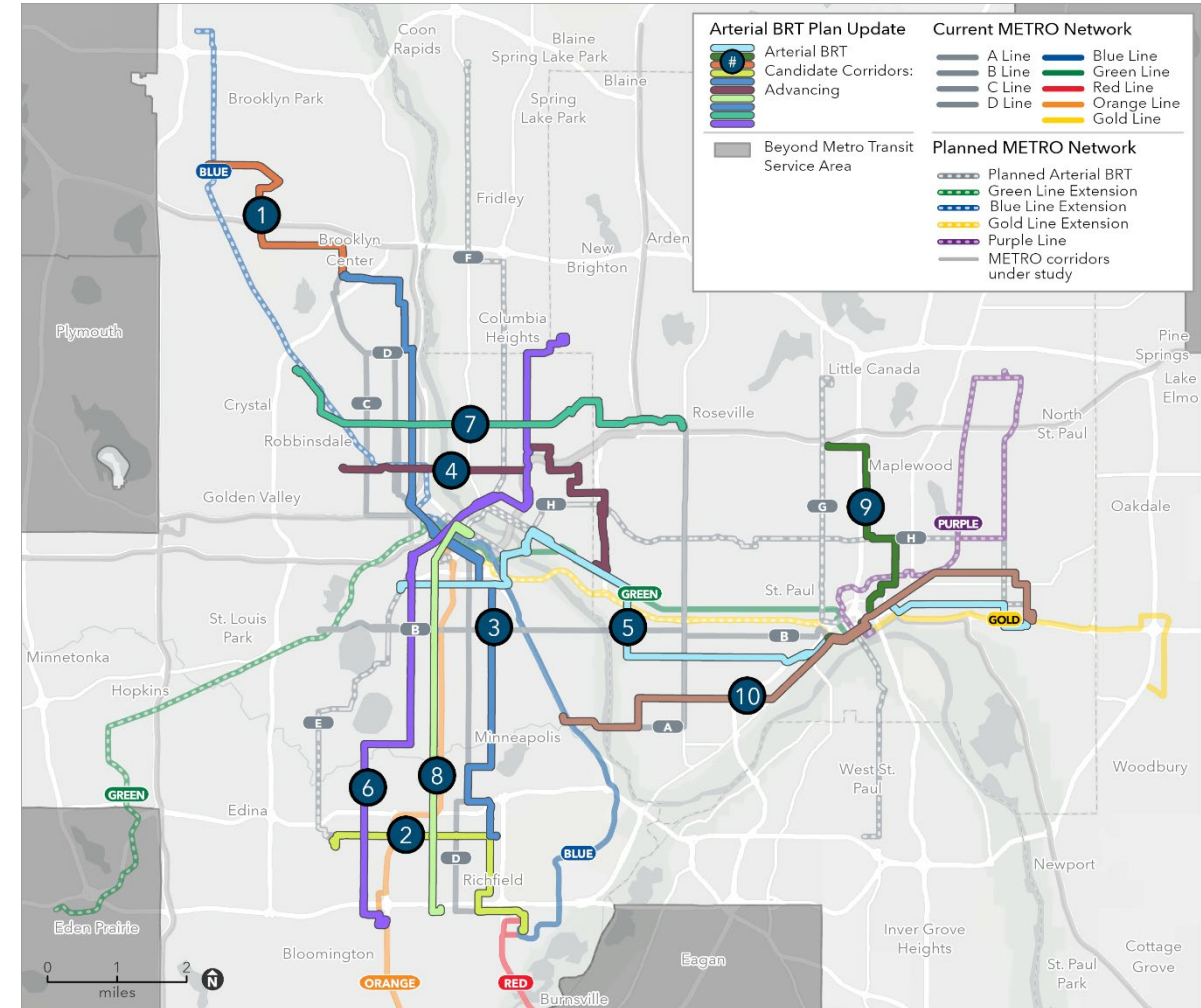
	Current rail schedule	Planned bus schedule
Weekdays	8 trips per weekday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 southbound AM • 3 northbound PM • 2 reverse trips, one AM and one PM 	Route 888 (Ramsey, Anoka, Coon Rapids, Minneapolis) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 southbound 5:00 am – 6:00 pm • 16 northbound 6:00 am – 7:00 pm Route 827 (Fridley, Minneapolis) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 southbound 6:00 am – 9:00 pm • 19 northbound 5:00 am – 8:00 pm
Weekends	None, except special events	Route 888 Saturday & Sunday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 southbound 10:30 am – 5:30 pm • 3 northbound 2:00 pm – 11:00 pm Route 827 Saturday <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 southbound 8:00 am – 6:00 pm • 11 northbound 9:30 am – 7:30 pm
Weekly total	40 trips	379 trips

Key Northstar Transition Dates

- **August 27, 2025** - Metropolitan Council will take up the business item to suspend rail service and add enhanced bus service plan to Network Now
- **January 5, 2026** – Bus service will begin and rail service will be suspended if the Council approves the business item

Arterial BRT network planning and corridor identification

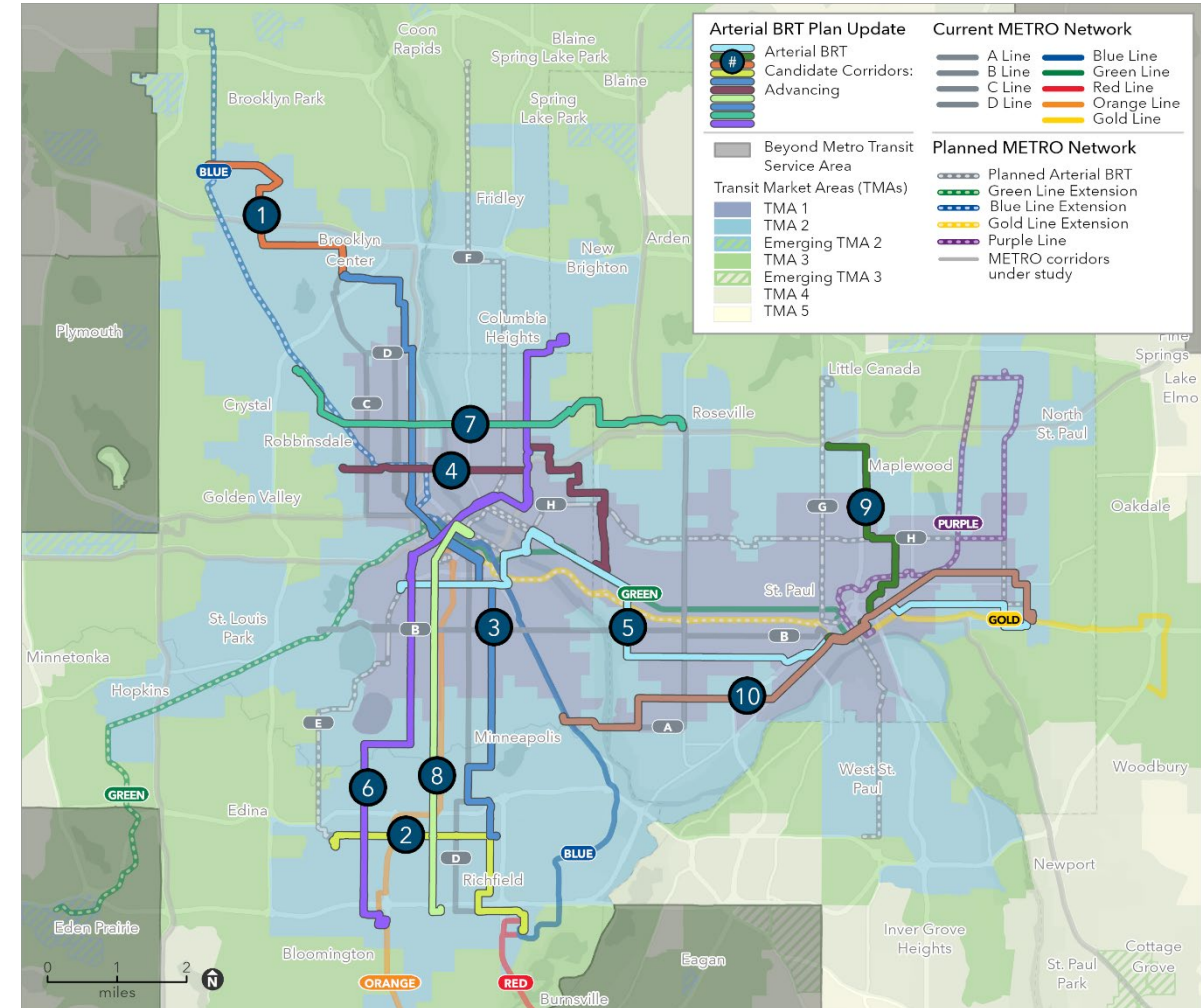
- Metro Transit updates arterial BRT network plans on a recurring basis
- Currently undertaking plan update to identify the J, K, and L lines
 - To be implemented between 2030-2035
 - Plan update complete by end of 2025
- Four-step planning process beginning with a wide set of candidate corridors and narrowing down to three



10 candidate corridors currently under consideration for J, K, and L lines
For more information visit: metrotransit.org/arterial-brt-plan

What makes a promising arterial BRT corridor?

- Arterial BRT is aimed at generating high ridership
- Improves service on highest ridership local routes on constrained urban arterial streets
- Candidate corridors are identified from:
 - High ridership routes
 - Existing or planned high frequency services
 - Local priorities for consideration
- The top-performing corridors will:
 - have high ridership potential,
 - advance equity,
 - connect transit-supportive land uses, and
 - balance available resources

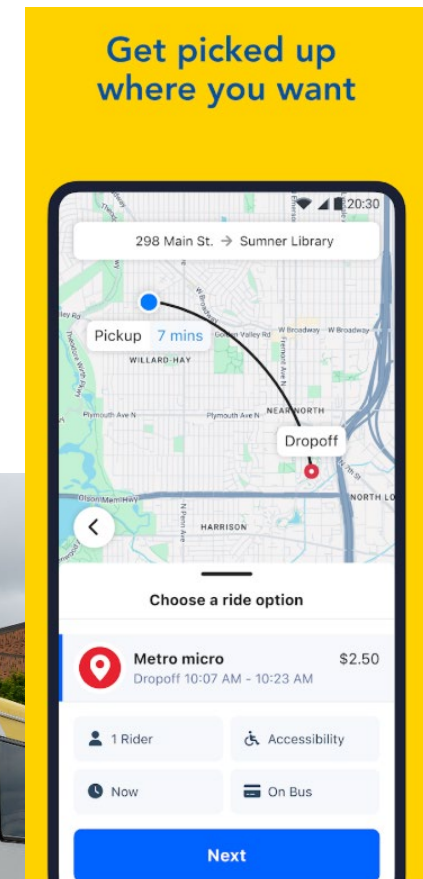


10 candidate corridors currently under consideration with transit market areas. Blue areas of region have highest potential for transit ridership.

Metro micro



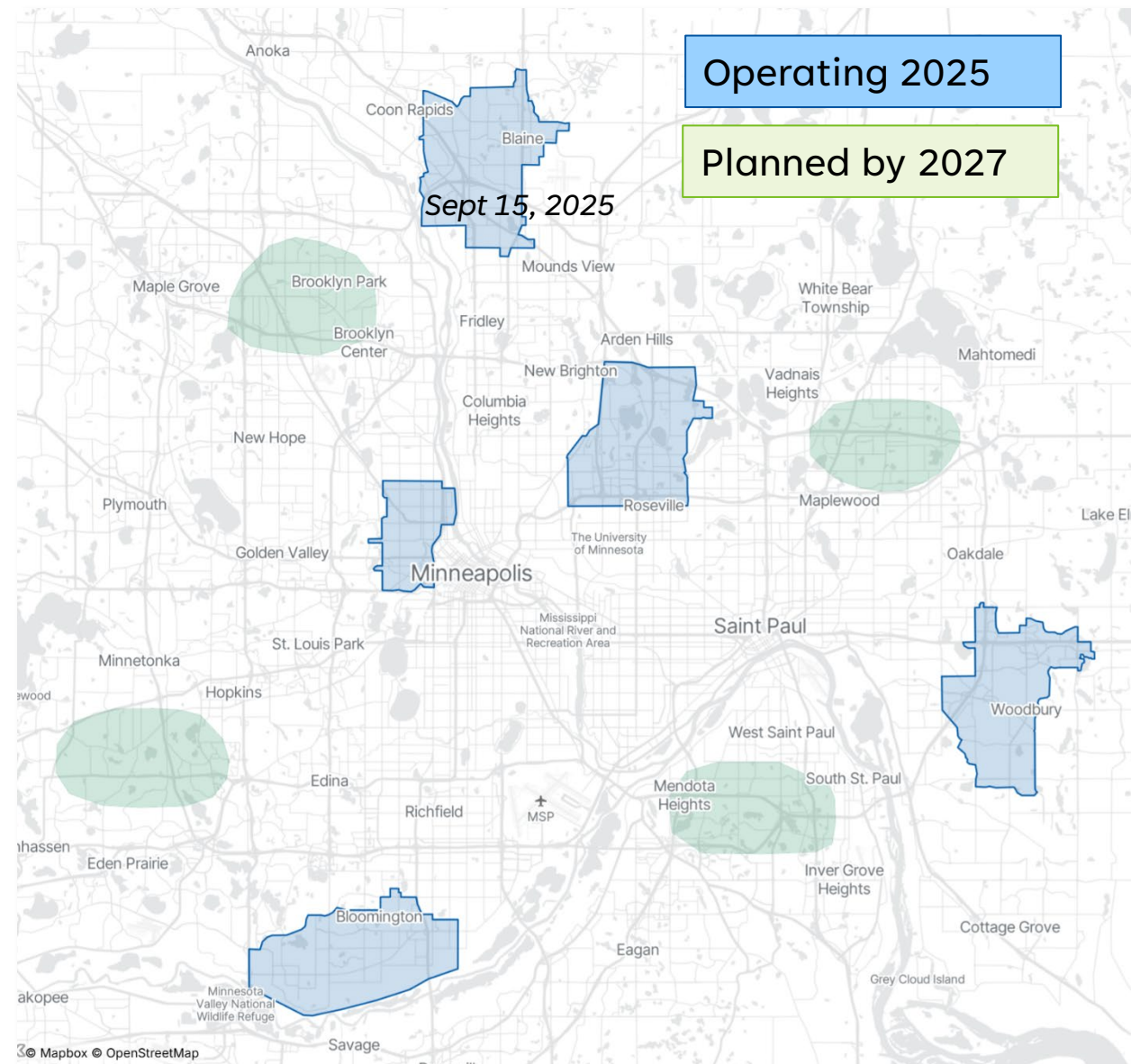
- Same day booking, Shared-ride
- Provide access in **areas difficult to serve** with traditional fixed-route
- Available seven days/week
 - 5:30am-10:30pm weekdays
 - 7:00am-10:30pm weekends
- Fare \$2.50; \$3.25 rush hour
 - Reduced fare \$1



Metro micro



- **Nine zones** operating by 2027
 - Anchor at **transit centers** with high-frequency service
 - Five vehicles at peak
 - Average wait time of >20 min
 - \$1.5 million/year per zone
- Ridership in Roseville, Woodbury Area zones: 110 rides/day



Metro micro



- Strong, positive response to service
 - "I'm so thankful and happy that we have Metro Micro in Roseville. The drivers are so friendly and professional. They make me feel so good just riding with them. Please keep up the fantastic service to our community."



Other topics of note

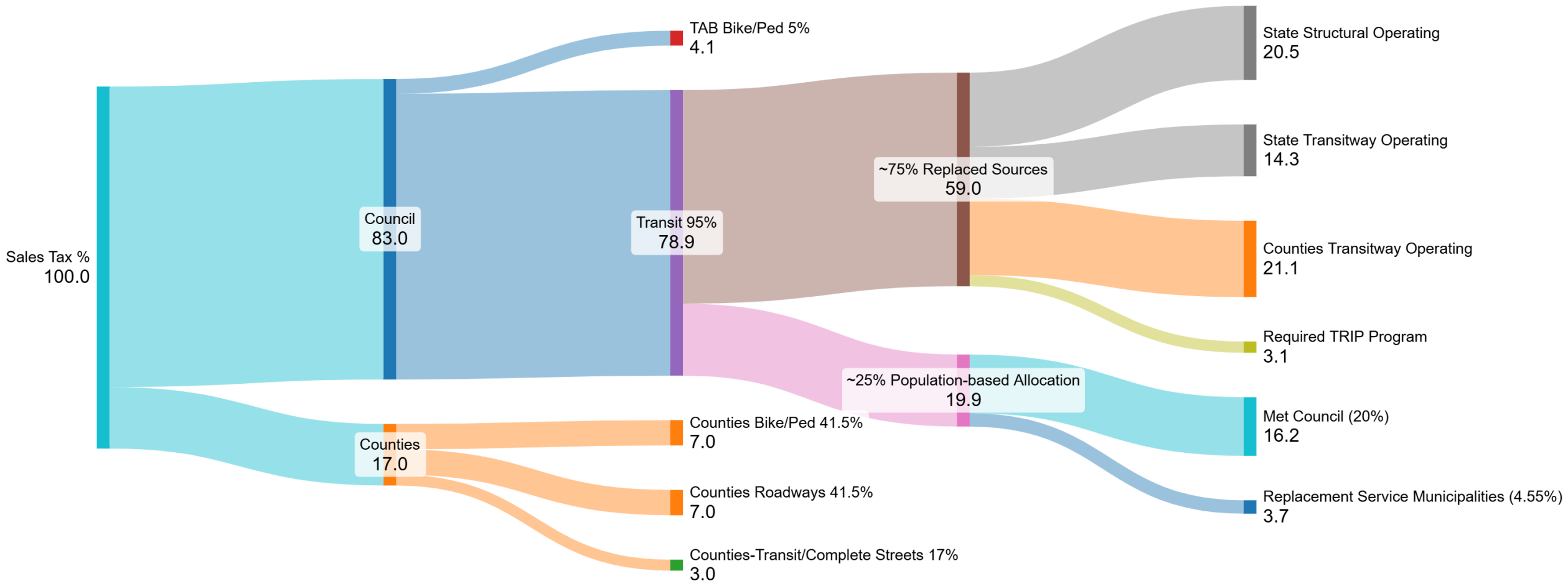
- 2025 is a big year for BRT; preparing for Green Line Extension in 2027
- Public safety investments, including continued MTPD hiring, TRIP expansion, supplemental security expansion, and facility improvements
- “Renew the Blue” light rail state of good repair project
- Fare policy and fare collection updates



Discussion

Sales and Use Tax Funding Allocation

2026-2050 Uses



Sales Tax Allocation + Other Assistance

Allocation Basis

1. Account for replaced funding sources (county, state)
2. Allocate remaining ~25% between Council and Suburban Providers on a simple allocation basis
3. Three options developed (+STP transit share):
Population (4.55%), MVST (3.03%), Ridership (0.96%)
4. Allocation proposal basis: **Population (4.55%)**
 - Increased total investment
 - Geographic distribution amongst providers
 - Simple to calculate and update periodically
5. Policy provisions regarding STP sales tax transit funds
 - Allows active transportation uses by replacement service municipalities (optional)
 - Require fare collection agreements defining roles/costs by Jan. 2027
 - Additional allocations for RTC levy equivalent

Other Revisions and Total Funding

1. Sales tax allocation
2. Increased federal funding per full federal formula
3. Allocate RTC (property levy) funds to STPs
4. Increased funding replaces previous “pooled” capital

473.388 Provider	MVST (No % change)	Federal Total	RTC	Sales Tax	Total
Maple Grove	\$5.1	\$1.0	\$1.6	\$2.4	\$10.12
MVTA	\$28.3	\$5.3	\$6.5	\$10.7	\$50.71
Plymouth	\$7.5	\$1.0	\$2.1	\$2.7	\$13.34
SW Transit	\$13.5	\$2.2	\$3.0	\$3.9	\$22.53
473.388 Total	\$54.4	\$9.5	\$13.2	\$19.6	\$96.70



Working Together for Transit Solutions

Metro Cities

August 25, 2025

Who We Are

- In 1982, fast-growing suburbs in the south and west of the Twin Cities sought legislation to create dedicated transit agencies to serve communities that were paying for transit services but, were not being served.
- 2020 Blue Ribbon Panel: “The Committee recognizes the value of local input that is part of the suburban transit provider model and that dedicated funding allows suburban providers to try innovative ideas.”



STA's Vision

Providing high-quality, community-driven, and reliable transit service that meets identified customer needs.

- Ensuring customers first- and last-mile needs are being met across service areas, including connecting to existing and planned Metro Transit BRT and LRT lines.
- Building a dynamic and flexible transit system that serves the new normal of the post-pandemic world and meets sustainability goals.
- Guaranteeing reliably safe and on-time rides.
- Improving regional coordination that's inclusive of all providers and transportation modes.

Market Drivers

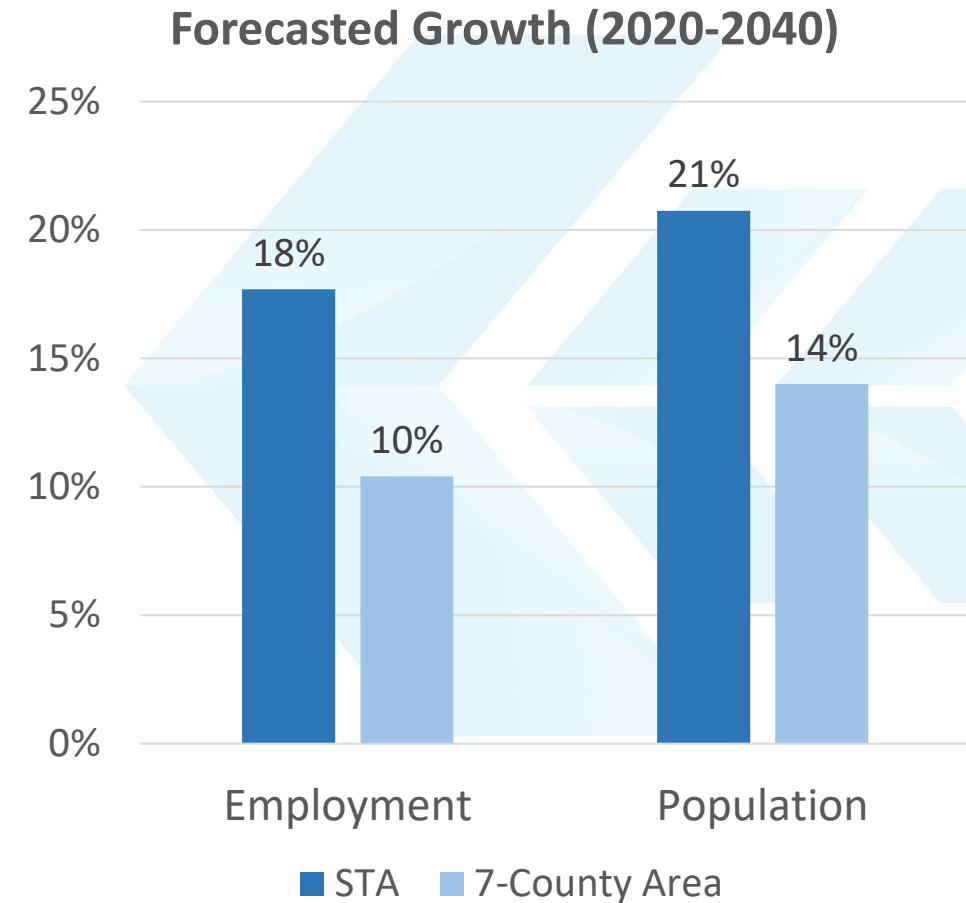
- During the pandemic, **suburban local routes** showed more resilience than most regional services and provided key connections for transit-dependent populations.
- **Microtransit service** has outgrown pre-pandemic levels and continues to see growth – with demand regularly out-stripping capacity.
- **Express service** adapting to a new normal shaped by work-from-home and uneven downtown recoveries.
- **Customer and policy maker** calls for improved sustainability and carbon reduction.



STA Population/Jobs to Outpace 7-County Area

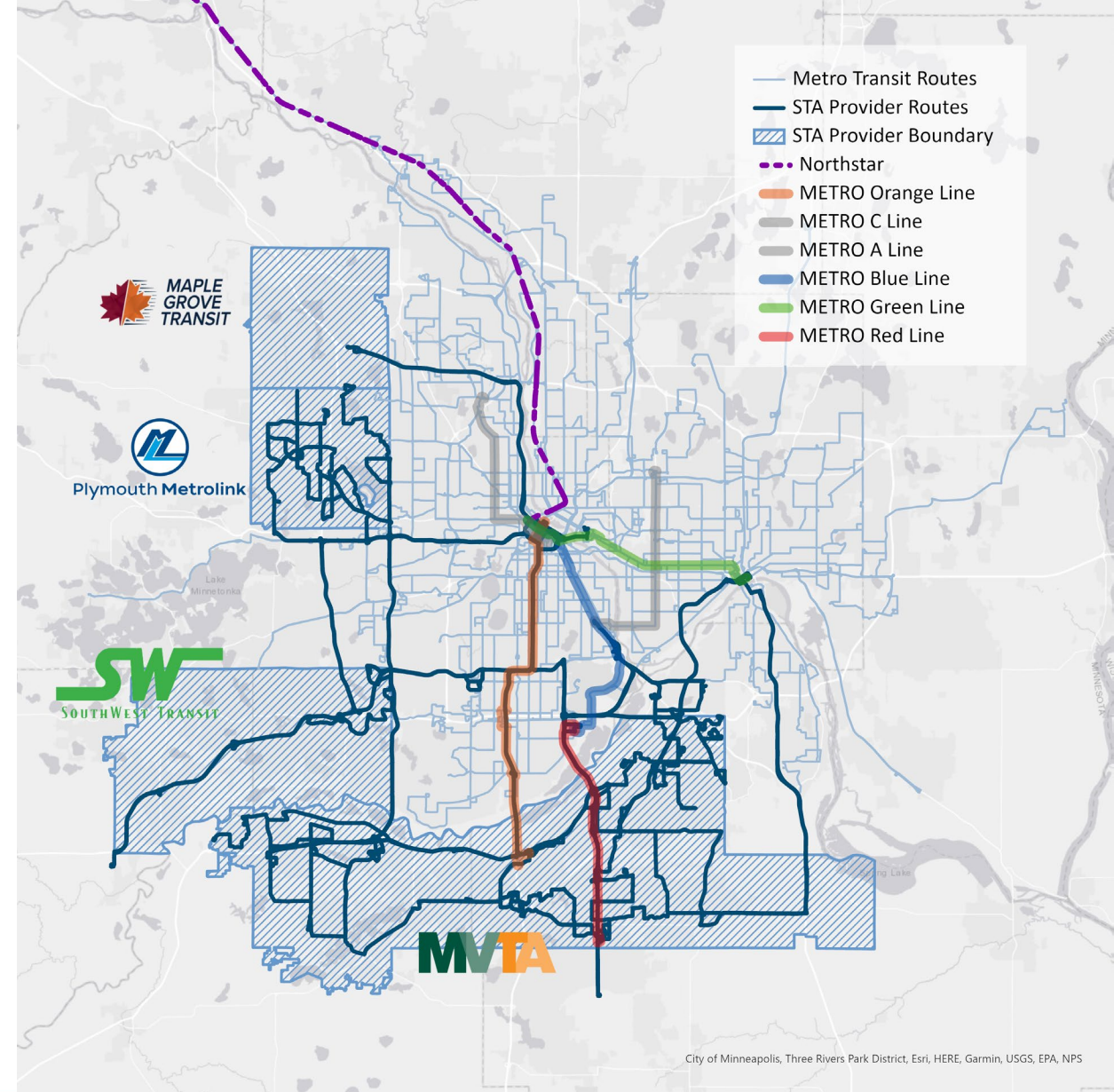
- Over next 20 years, STA population to grow by 123,000 – 20.75%, compared to 14% for rest of 7-county area.
- STA employment to grow by 61,880 workers – 17.7%, compared to 10.4% for rest of 7-county area.
- Already pressed suburbs need additional work force transportation as labor force grows.

Data Source: Met Council



Interconnected with Region

- **Interconnected bus services** feeding into BRT/LRT services key to linking urban metro and suburban/exurban communities.
- **Microtransit** services provide both first- and last-mile and door-to-door connections.
- **Essential links** to suburban entertainment and employment destinations and MSP Airport.
- STA connections **critical to economic recovery** of entire region.
- **Increased regional suburban transit** use will provide significant reductions in highway traffic and carbon emissions.



Service Update

- Express service – **All STA providers had an increase in Express.** MVTA is up 10% from 2024.
- Microtransit
 - SW Prime – Ridership increased by over 100% compared to 2021, surpassing pre-pandemic ridership levels.
 - Maple Grove MY RIDE – Ridership higher than pre-pandemic levels.
 - Plymouth Click and Ride – Ridership up by 30%.
 - MVTA Connect – Ridership increase of 40% over 2024, higher than pre-pandemic ridership.



On-Going Effort: Sales Tax Equity

- STA requests a 12.35% share of sales and use tax revenue.
 - The Met Council staff are proposing a population-based distribution of remaining 25% of the sales and use tax revenue should be allocated to the suburban providers.
 - Under this new model, MVTA is being forced to take on over **30% more expenses**. Yet, **our funding increase is only 6%**.
 - The mismatch between transferred expenses and allocated funding will put STPs in an impossible financial position.
- The suburban transit providers have been engaging with the Met Council to try to create a fair and sustainable path to ensure all the regions transit providers can maintain existing service levels, replace aging fleets, and expand transit services.



Support for Suburban Transit

- During the 2025 legislature there were backdoor efforts to try to eliminate the suburban providers.
- The suburban providers are innovators in the region, they created the first:
 - BRT in the region
 - Micro Transit
 - WiFi on buses
- Suburban transit riders report satisfactory experiences with suburban providers.



Suburban Transit Association Contacts

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(612) 723-4245



Cost Participation Policy Update

League of Minnesota Cities
Improving Local Economies Policy Committee

August 19, 2025

MnDOT Goals for the CPP Update

- Update policy and manual to reflect current agency plans, strategic direction, and updated guidance
- Integrate context more into the manual
- Address transportation equity
- Improve readability, make more visual and reduce ambiguity



Steering Committee

MnDOT

- **Lynn Clarkowski**, Engineering Services
- **Josh Knatterud-Hubinger**, CFO
- **Jeff Perkins**, Operations
- **Mike Ginnaty/Nicki Bartelt**, Operations
- **Ted Schoenecker**, State Aid
- **Sheila Kauppi**, Sustainability, Planning and Program Management

Local Agencies

- **Madeline Cash**, MN Association of Townships
- **Jim Foldesi**, St. Louis County
- **Deb Heiser**, St. Louis Park
- **Julie Long**, Bloomington
- **Tony Winiecki**, Scott County
- **Bob Zimmerman**, Moorhead

Status (August 2025)

✓ Items of Agreement

- ✓ De Minimis Clause
- ✓ RRFBs and Pedestrian Flashers
- ✓ Lighting
- ✓ Roundabouts

• Items Under Discussion

- Ability to Pay
- Sidewalks, Shared Use Paths, Bikeways & Pedestrian Bridges
- Bridges & Interchanges
- Traffic Signals

• Active Work Groups

- Aesthetics
- Drainage, Green Infrastructure and Wetlands
- Alternative Uses of ROW + Caps, Lids and Stitches
- Utilities

• Additional Topics

- Parking
- Overall readability
- When do we finalize the local share?

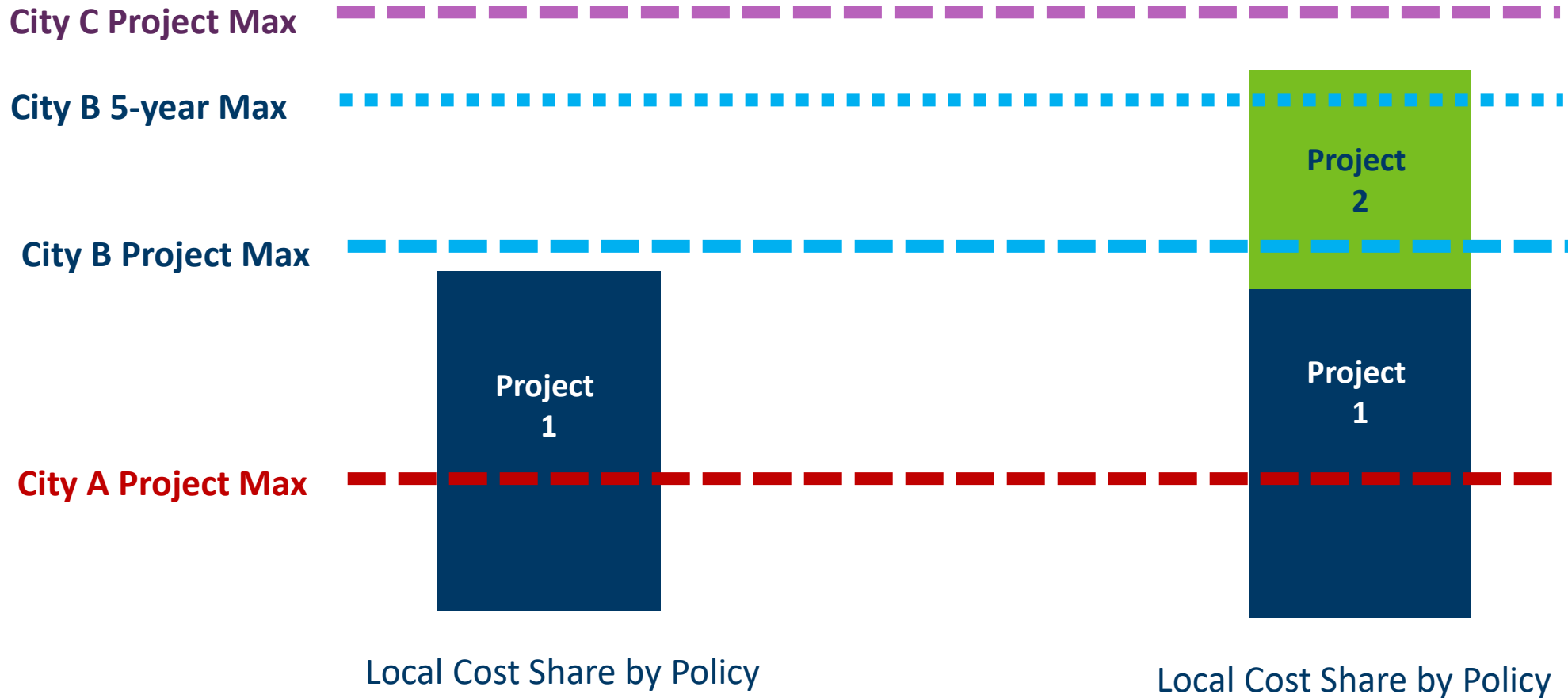
Legislative Direction

By March 1, 2026, the commissioner, in consultation with representatives of local units of government, must update and adopt the department's cost participation policy...

The policy may consider a local unit of government's ability to pay as a factor in determining the amount of local contribution, if any.

- MnDOT exploring the possibility of setting a maximum contribution for an individual project and a 5-year maximum
- Would apply to Trunk Highway-eligible costs for the scope determined by MnDOT
 - Additional items a city may wish to add to a project scope would not count toward the maximum
- Based on publicly available data on financial resources
 - Currently thinking property taxes (based on avg. rate) and state aid (if any)

Ability to Pay Concept



Discussion



For More Information

Philip Schaffner

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