



TAC Approves Release of Regional Solicitation

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) has accepted public comments to the 2018 Regional Solicitation and approved its release. The Regional Solicitation is the method by which federal transportation dollars from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality program are allocated within the metro area. The funding is distributed among roadway, transit and travel demand management, and bicycle and pedestrian projects.

As part of its recommendation to release the solicitation, TAC recommended the removal of right-of-way costs as an eligible cost reimbursement for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

These recommendations will be considered by TAB at their January 17th meeting. If the solicitation is approved, it will be forwarded to the Metropolitan Council for approval.

Questions? Please contact Steve Huser at 651-215-4003, or steven@metrocitiesmn.org

MNDOT Accepting Feedback on Project Selection Changes

MNDOT is currently accepting comments on potential changes to its highway project selection process. These changes are the result of a 2016 OLA (Office of Legislative Auditor) report on selection processes and subsequent new statutory changes. The audit found that MNDOT's methods for determining projects was sound but that the agency does not provide sufficient information about the selection process to stakeholders or the public. The 2017 law (MN Session Law Chapter 3, Sec. 124) calls on MNDOT to develop, adopt and implement a policy for project evaluation and selection by November of 2018. MNDOT must consult with federal, state, regional and local transportation partners and stakeholders during this policy development process. When completed, this process will be applied to the 2020-2023 State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP).

MNDOT is looking for feedback on how local governments would like to be included in decision making processes. They are also interested in what types of information would be most useful to stakeholders after projects are selected. MNDOT will be accepting comments through early February.

For more information, click [here](#).

Comments can be submitted to Philip Schaffner, Project Selection Process Manager, at Philip.schaffner@state.mn.us. Metro Cities would also ask that you submit a copy of submitted comments to Metro Cities at steven@metrocitiesmn.org.

Senate Transportation Committee Hears MNLARS Update

The Senate Transportation Committee held a hearing this week to receive an update on the state's work to improve the new Minnesota Licensing and Registration System (MNLARS) system. MNLARS was introduced by the state to replace its 30-year old legacy IT system for driver's license, identification card and vehicle registration and ownership transactions. The motor vehicle portion of MNLARS was released last summer.

The committee heard testimony from registrars, and auto dealers who testified that while some progress has been made to improve the new system, problems with the system continue to create delays in processing. The committee heard testimony from both the Department of Public Safety and MN IT Services (MNIT). MNIT testified that it is working to create a road map to fix the outstanding problems with the system. This work is expected to be released at the end of January.

Several legislators expressed frustration and disappointment that the system continues to not function properly and that a clear timeline for fixing the system could not be provided by MNIT to the committee. Metro Cities will provide any further updates on this issue.

Governor's Housing Task Force Seeks Comments, Sets Initial Meeting Dates

The newly announced Governor's Task Force on Housing has set its first two meeting dates and is inviting comments from housing stakeholders.

A [new website](#) includes a brief survey, open for a limited time through January 17, to capture ideas for the task force's priorities, as well as a listserv subscription and the task force's timeline.

The first two meetings of the task force will be held Friday, January 12 and Wednesday, February 21. Both meetings will be held from 9 am to 2 pm at Sunrise Banks in St. Paul, at 2525 Wabash Avenue. The meetings are open to the public. The first meeting will cover mapping the housing ecosystem as task force members will explore research and data on the state of housing in Minnesota. There will be three additional task force meetings held later. The dates and times for those meetings have not yet been announced.

Regional housing forums will be held in five locations across the state between March and May 2018. Metro Cities will provide more information when the details are made available.

Three working committees have been established to focus the task force work on three specific areas: homeownership, rental housing, and housing stability and opportunity. These committees will meet in addition to the full task force meetings and regional housing forums.

The task force plans to release its final report to the public by the end of July 2018. Metro Cities will monitor the task force and provide comments in a manner consistent with Metro Cities' policies.

Contact Charlie Vander Aarde at 651-215-4001 or charlie@metrocitiesmn.org with any questions.

Reminder! Metro Cities Seeking Candidates for the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB)

Metro Cities is seeking interested candidates for an opening on the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB). Metro Cities has statutory appointing authority for making municipal appointments to the TAB.

Municipal appointees for the TAB must be elected officials. Metro Cities' guidelines place a priority on making the TAB balanced with respect to city size and geography. The Metro Cities Board also gives preference to those who agree to serve on Metro Cities Transportation Policy Committee. The board seeks candidates who will be committed to strong attendance at meetings.

The deadline for application is Monday, January 8th, 2018. Interested candidates should complete this [questionnaire](#) and submit a letter of interest and resume to Kim Ciarrocchi at kimberly@metrocitiesmn.org or by mail to Metro Cities at 145 University Ave W, St. Paul, MN, 55103.

Questions? Please contact Steven Huser at steven@metrocitiesmn.org.

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