

House Committees Hold Joint Meeting to Discuss Transit Safety

The House Transportation Finance and Transportation and Regional Governance Policy Committees held a joint meeting on Tuesday to hear from Metro Transit officials on crime prevention efforts and to discuss bus operator shortages as well as a co-location agreement for Southwest Light Rail Transit.

Much of the time was spent hearing from John Harrington, Metro Transit's Police Chief, on levels and types of crimes occurring on transit lines, and efforts being made to reduce crime levels. The hearing followed a formal data request made by House Transportation Finance Chair Paul Torkelson to the Metropolitan Council earlier this summer asking for three years of data and statistics on the number of citations issued by Metro Transit as well as information on the five most common offenses for which citations are issued. The request also asked for a breakdown of citations by municipality.

To view the presentation, click [here](#).

MNLARS Update

The Minnesota Licensing and Registration System (MNLARS) Steering Committee, a bi-cameral statutory committee created to consider issues associated with the rollout of the licensing system, met this week to hear a presentation by the Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) on the OLA's recently released audit ([link here](#)) and to consider a request for a transfer of funds. The MNLARS system, created to replace a 30-year old IT system for driver's license, identification card and vehicle registration transactions, has experienced numerous challenges since the motor-vehicle portion roll-out last year.

The committee approved a request by Minnesota IT Services (MNIT) and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) to transfer \$93,000 in funds resulting from contract savings to address new fixes and urgent repairs identified by registrars.

MNIT and DPS also discussed their intention to direct \$5.5 million in funding to fixes related to REAL ID. Some members expressed concern that such use of those funds, originally meant for future work on the REAL ID system, would create a future shortfall. Commissioner Clyborne informed the committee that without these fixes, additional disruption of work will occur and the timeline for repairs would be extended beyond the work timelines.

The OLA presented a recently released audit that examined the accuracy of MNLARS system transactions, including charges related to all transaction types. To view the audit, click [here](#). The OLA found inaccuracies in all types of transactions, with registration taxes for passenger vehicles being the most problematic, with nearly 40% of amounts found to be in error. The report found that reasons for inaccuracies varied and included inaccurate data and programming errors within MNLARS as well as system user errors.

This is the first of three reports by the OLA on MNLARS. The next report is a review of how the system got to where it is today, and will be released this winter. The third will be a review of MNIT and how it is functioning. This report is due for release in February.

Met Council Approves Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP)

The Metropolitan Council recently adopted the 2019-2022 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The TIP addresses transportation projects in the region that are prioritized by year and that use federal funds or have effects on air quality. Projects include highways, transit, bikeway and pedestrian improvements. All metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) must draft a TIP. The Transportation Advisory Board approved the TIP at their August meeting. For more information, click [here](#). To view the draft TIP, click [here](#).

State Revenues Higher Than Forecast

According to the most recent MN Management and Budget (MMB) update, net general fund revenues for the state are \$79 million, or 5%, more than forecast. Net general fund revenues totaled \$1.6 billion.

State net revenues for the first two months of the new fiscal year that began in July are \$107 million more than forecast, or 4.1%. Tax receipts across various tax types are coming in at higher than anticipated levels. State officials as always caution that month to month revenue updates are preliminary and subject to change. The next complete budget forecast will be released in early December.

Met Council Committee Reviews Climate Vulnerability Assessment

The Metropolitan Council Land Use Advisory Committee heard an update on the Council's Climate Vulnerability Assessment. The assessment is a Council tool to evaluate the region's built environment and can serve as a resource for cities in the region.

Two climate change impacts - heat and water - are the focus of the assessment. The Council is providing a localized flooding analysis on the Council's regional systems and assets (transportation and transit, wastewater, Council-owned housing, and regional parks and trails) as well as local water supply assets. The Council has also provided [data and maps](#) for communities to use when planning for localized flooding and extreme heat.

The Council is finalizing content on its Climate Vulnerability Assessment website and will convene additional local stakeholder outreach in early 2019. Metro Cities will continue to monitor the Council's work with cities and provide newsletter updates.

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

Met Council Continues Research on Suburban Typology

Metropolitan Council research staff [provided an update](#) on its Typology of Change in Suburban Neighborhoods project to the Land Use Advisory Committee. The Council held meetings with developers and cities earlier this summer and presented comments from those meetings to the LUAC.

Cities told Council staff the data could be helpful for city council members and new city staff and could provide context for regional comparison. Some questioned how the data could help with

decision making and thought the census tract level was too broad, recommending block level data could be more helpful.

The Council will continue outreach efforts with city planners, HRA and EDA staff in future months. Metro Cities will continue to provide updates on this project.

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

Metro Regional Meeting/Metro Cities Policy Adoption Meeting

Join your colleagues from the metro area for the LMC Metro Regional Meeting and Policy Adoption Meeting on November 29th, 2018 at Brookview in Golden Valley!

Hear from the cities of Minnetonka, Eagan, and Prior Lake on their strategies for community engagement. LMC and LMCIT staff will present on conflict in local government and how to work together for more effective governing and problem-solving. Metro Cities membership will also meet to approve the 2019 Legislative Policies for Metro Cities staff to use going into the 2019 legislative session. A membership quorum is required for policy adoption, so each member city should make sure to send a representative! The event will end with a great networking social hour.

Click [here](#) for more information and to register. We look forward to seeing you there!

Metro Cities News and Website

We're excited to announce that our website now has a new look! The web address (www.MetroCitiesMN.org) is still the same, but you'll see a new design and format next time you visit the site. We hope these changes make our site more user-friendly and pleasant to view, and always welcome your feedback on any additional changes that could make the website a more helpful resource for you!

In the next few weeks, this newsletter, Metro Cities News, will also have a new look and format! We look forward to sharing it with you, and again hope that it provides you with an improved experience.

Please contact Kimberly at kimberly@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4000 with any questions or comments. We welcome your feedback!

Metro Cities News is emailed periodically to all Metro Cities member mayors, councilmembers, city managers and administrators to keep officials abreast of important metro city issues. This information is also intended to be shared with city staff.

If you'd like to sign up to receive Metro Cities News, please email newsletter@metrocitiesmn.org and provide the following: Name, Title, Employer and Email address. Thank you.

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