

Changes Proposed for Industrial SAC (Sewer Availability Charge)

Metropolitan Council Environment Services (MCES) staff is considering recommending changes to the Industrial SAC (Sewer Availability Charge) program, based on input from industrial use customers.

The proposal calls for industrial customers to have a baseline SAC rate determined. If an industrial customer exceeded the baseline in a given year, they would be allowed to pay a new Industrial Capacity Charge for the overage, at a rate of \$2.10 per 1,000 gallons. The industrial customer could also choose to pay for additional SAC units at a rate of \$1.25 per 1,000 gallons, and have those units added to their future base value. Currently, industrial uses are assigned a baseline that is reviewed every three years. If this baseline is exceeded, the industry is allowed one year to reduce flow to below the baseline or be charged SAC. Industrial SAC accounts for around two-percent, or \$750,000, of all SAC collected in the region.

The Metropolitan Council Environment Committee will consider the proposal at its October 23rd meeting. If approved, the policy would be adopted at the Council Rate Adoption meeting on November 14th. For more information, click [here](#). Metro Cities is monitoring work on the proposal.

If you have any questions, please contact Steven Huser at steven@metrocitiesmn.org.

Metropolitan Council Discusses Fare Policy Recommendations

At its Committee of the Whole meeting this week, the Metropolitan Council heard recommendations from staff related to transit fare increases. When an increase was approved last year, the Council asked staff for recommendations to formalize the process for increases. Staff also conducted a peer review of fare policies in other metropolitan areas.

The recommendations include: having fare recovery and policy become part of the annual operating budget conversation, establishing a fare recovery level trigger that starts a formalized fare adjustment conversation, continuing to work on securing a more reliable funding source for current and future operations, increasing fares consistently across all modes and categories while considering ridership and other forces at play, continuing to grow the TAP program to serve low-income customers, increase awareness to Limited Mobility and other discounted transit products, and considering small simplification efforts with future fare adjustments.

The transit fare peer review study found that the Metro Transit fare recovery ratio of 25 percent was under the peer average of 27 percent. Metro Transit sets fare recovery goal of 28.5 percent, which is higher than the goals of several peer transit systems.

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

Four Metro Area Projects Receive DEED Redevelopment Grants

Four redevelopment projects in the metropolitan region will receive state grant funds. The awards, among a total of eight for blighted sites across Minnesota, were announced this week by DEED.

The \$2.16 million in awards are through DEED's Redevelopment Grant and Demolition Loan Program, which Metro Cities supports. Although the program did not receive a direct appropriation from the Legislature this budget cycle, DEED used its authority to transfer funds from the Minnesota Investment Fund to the redevelopment program for this round of awards.

Metro projects receiving the awards are in Edina, Fridley and Minneapolis (two projects). The Edina site will be redeveloped into apartments, the Fridley site is a warehouse that will be renovated and reused, one Minneapolis site will be redeveloped into a commercial space and the other Minneapolis site will see an office building redeveloped into a hotel.

The Redevelopment Grant Program helps communities with the costs of redeveloping blighted industrial, residential or commercial sites for planned projects. Grants pay up to half the redevelopment costs for a qualifying site, with a 50 percent local match required. The Demolition Loan Program helps development officials with the costs of demolishing blighted buildings on sites that have future development potential but where there are no current development plans. Low-interest loans can pay up to 100 percent of demolition costs for a qualifying site and can be used for site acquisition costs.

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

Metropolitan Council Committee Approves \$900,000 Transfer for Housing Choice Vouchers

The Metropolitan Council's Community Development Committee approved transferring \$900,000 from the Metropolitan Council's reserves to the Metro HRA to fully lease all housing vouchers to low income families in the region. According to Council staff, the transfer will help preserve voucher funding by maximizing federal voucher revenue in 2019, serving as many families as possible. Following the transfer, Metro HRA reserves will still be above the Council's 8.3 percent minimum reserve level.

Metropolitan Council Reviews Parks Plan Comments

The Metropolitan Council reviewed public comments to its draft Parks Policy Plan on October 1. At a joint meeting of the Community Development Committee and Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission, Council members and Commission members discussed a range of comments that focused on parks outreach, use of the equity toolkit, the role of regional parks versus municipal and state parks, appropriate amenities and recreational uses at regional parks, development versus natural resource conservation and restoration, and distribution of funds between capital updates and operating expenses.

The Council adopted the Regional Parks Policy Plan in 2015 and state law requires the Council to complete a comprehensive review of the plan every four years. The current draft updates the requirement to complete a comprehensive review. The [draft plan and related documents](#) can be found here. The [public comments](#) can be found here. The PowerPoint of the October 1 meeting, including sample comments, can be found [here](#).

The Community Development Committee, Parks and Open Space Commission and full Metropolitan Council are scheduled to approve the plan in November.

Upcoming Newsletter Changes

Within the next few weeks, this newsletter, Metro Cities News, will have a new look and format. Starting next week, the newsletter will come from a new email address (mcamm@memberclicks-mail.net). If you do not receive the newsletter by the end of the day next Friday, please check your spam/junk mail, and save mcamm@memberclicks-mail.net as a safe and approved email address. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kimberly at kimberly@metrocitiesmn.org or 651-215-4000.

We look forward to sharing this new format with you, and hope that it provides you with an improved experience. As always, we welcome your feedback!

Check Out Our New Website Design!

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!

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you are experiencing any difficulty locating any items or resources on the new site. Contact Kimberly at 651-215-4000 or kimberly@metrocitiesmn.org.

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 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.

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