



March 26, 2025

Chair Hawj, Lead Green, and members of the Senate Environment, Climate, and Legacy Committee:

In advance of the committee's work to pass the Omnibus Legacy bill later this week, I would like to respectfully encourage you to consider including the Metropolitan Council's position on Regional Parks and Trails and Clean Water Fund budget items in the final bill.

Regional Parks and Trails

The Metropolitan Council supports the continued 40-40-20 split of the parks and trails funding found in [SF 1447](#) (Hoffman). The Parks and Trails Legacy Fund is shared between the Metropolitan Council, the Department of Natural Resources, and Greater Minnesota Parks and Trails. The 40% of funds allocated to the Met Council are passed through to the 10 regional parks implementing agencies, which use Legacy funds to ensure that the metro region has access to high-quality recreational opportunities. This vital funding fuels our efforts to connect people and the outdoors, acquire land and development opportunities, and take care of the existing system.

Clean Water Fund Recommendations

The Metropolitan Council also supports the Governor's and Clean Water Council's recommendations for the Clean Water Fund. [SF 1447](#) (Hoffman) includes two recommendations related to the Met Council. Adjusted for the February budget forecast, the recommendations include:

- Water Sustainability Program: \$1.375 million each year in fiscal years 2026 and 2027 would support local actions that address emerging drinking water supply threats and overall water sustainability, provide cost-effective regional solutions, leverage inter-jurisdictional coordination, support local implementation of wellhead protection plans, and prevent degradation of groundwater and surface water resources.
- Water Efficiency Grant Program: \$700,000 each year in fiscal years 2026 and 2027 would allow the Met Council to give grants to cities and townships served by a municipal water supply system to offer residents rebates or grants to replace toilets, washing machines, dishwashers, and more with efficient appliances, install advanced metering infrastructure technology to better prevent loss of water from major leaks, install smart irrigation systems, and allow municipalities to conduct water audits.

Thank you again for your consideration of these provisions in the omnibus Legacy bill. I look forward to working with you over the next few months as you complete your work. Please reach out to me or Judd Schetnan (judd.schetnan@metc.state.mn.us) with any questions or comments. We are available to meet at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles A. Zelle".

Charles A. Zelle
Chair