

From: [Peter Hendricks](#)
To: [#CI-StPaul_Ward3](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward2](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward4](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward5](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward6](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward7](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward1](#); [*CI-StPaul_Contact-Council](#)
Cc: [Jay Willms](#)
Subject: Fw: Follow-Up to My Comments at the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing
Date: Thursday, November 27, 2025 11:22:42 AM

Dear Councilmembers:

Please include the following comments in the public record for the Adopting the 2026 Budget item for consideration at the December 3, 2025 council meeting.

Thank you,

Peter Hendricks
Osceola Avenue, St. Paul -- Ward 3 Resident

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Peter Hendricks <pmhendricks@yahoo.com>
To: jay.willms@ci.stpaul.mn.us <jay.willms@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2025 at 10:36:52 AM CST
Subject: Follow-Up to My Comments at the Truth in Taxation Public Hearing

Dear Mr. Willms:

Thank you for talking with me after the Truth in Taxation Hearing. We discussed four items: translation errors, testimony by phone, the date to sign up for an interpreter, and the City Council's Department Goals. You mentioned that you wished that I had made you aware of my concerns, which I found to be an unusual request given that I shared my concerns to the council and the public at Tuesday's hearing.

Notice of Public Hearing Translation Errors

We discussed the translation error on Notice of Public Hearing that was mailed to all property tax owners. The Spanish, Hmong, and Somali versions all had the wrong date for the public hearing: Tuesday, December 3 at 6:00 p.m. (The Karen version may have also had the wrong date, but I was unable to use Google translate to confirm.)

You acknowledged that Saint Paul Public Schools did the translation for the City and you would talk with SPPS. You also said that you don't speak Spanish. I applaud the City for using SPPS resources to be more efficient. And I am not expecting you to speak other languages. For the Spanish text on the Notice ("Martes 3 de diciembre de 2025 a las 6 p.m."), an English reader certainly may not know that "Martes" is Tuesday. But, an English reader likely would know that it is referring to December 3, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. There is no Tuesday, December 3, 2025.

As a St. Paul resident, your response could have been better. Instead of owning the error, my perception of what you told me was the City was casting blame elsewhere. It was perceived as a dismissive response. Ultimately, the City of Saint Paul is responsible for accurate notices whether employees or contractors do the work. Your comment that you don't speak Spanish is not relevant. I also assume you also don't speak Hmong, Somali, or Karen. My guess is there are employees within the City Council who have knowledge, or ready access to colleagues or constituents, who do speak these languages and who could have taken a quick read of the Notice and spotted the errors.

I want to offer a solution. I am happy to volunteer my time to the City Council to proof any draft notices for errors. Please let me know if the City Council would like my help.

Testimony by Telephone

I told you that I tried to register in advance to testify by phone using the address in the notice (stpaul.gov/departments/city-council) but it directed me to a page that said it is not accepting responses. You mentioned that I would have had to sign up a day in advance. That's reasonable and thank you helping me better understand.

I just tried to sign up to speak by telephone at the December 3 hearing. I followed the same process, which directed me to this page: <https://forms.office.com/g/TD3xN7WHy5>. This is the same registration link on the

agenda for the December 3 meeting (see below). I received the same error (see below). Please let me how a resident is supposed to register to sign up to testify by phone. Is the registration only open on a particular day?

Interpreter Access for the Truth in Taxation Hearing

The Notice of Public Hearing reads, "If you need an interpreter, call no later than 4 p.m. on Friday, November 14."

My neighbors and I received our Ramsey County proposed property tax notice in the mail on Tuesday, November 18, after the deadline to request an interpreter. [Minnesota Statutes 275.065, subdivision 3\(a\)](#) requires delivery of the notice "after November 10 and on or before November 24." So, even if the notice was delivered on the first available day of November 11, which seems unlikely given when our neighborhood received the mailing, that would have given residents only a few days to request an interpreter. For future notices, make sure the deadlines don't occur before a notice arrives.

City Council Goals

We discussed the City Council Department goals in the 2026 Proposed Budget (see below). These goals include words like transparency, accountable, outreach, and responsive communication. You mentioned that the Council is meeting to review these goals. But, these are the goals for the City Council Department listed on next year's proposed budget document so I presume they are current. If they are outdated please let me know.

I acknowledge that you are an employee and different from every councilmember who elected for a term of office and not accountable to any City staff person. When I heard the Council President mention on Tuesday evening that "all of us in our wards have had separate budget community engagement events over the months since [the September citywide meeting at Arlington Hills Community City]" I wonder where the outreach and transparency is. Councilmember Jost and the Ward 3 office have told me that the "office chooses to communicate with constituents in a manner different than a newsletter", I should follow the Ward 3 Facebook page for information (of which there was nothing about a separate Ward 3 budget community meeting), and they "try to make ourselves frequently available in the community...and [w]e are happy to correspond via email as well if you have any questions." This begs the question, if there is no newsletter, how does a constituent easily and efficiently find events in advance to engage with an elected official? I realize the communication style or priorities of a councilmember may not appear to be your problem as the Director of City of Council Operations because you serve at the pleasure of elected officials and you cannot tell them what to do, but it is an issue if the department goals do not align with reality. You are the face of the Council.

Thank you for your time. I send this feedback in hopes of improving how our City functions. I realize we have had two perhaps uncomfortable but honest discussions within the last few months. I am confident that we both you share similar goals in making the City work better. Now we need to work together to make that happen. I have provided you with some ideas and my offer to help. I look forward to helping.

Reach out any time.

Sincerely,

Peter Hendricks
651-285-0290

Interested parties who wish to speak on a specific [Council Agenda](#) item via telephone are required to pre-register. You are asked to [register here](#) by 12 noon on Tuesday to participate.

You are also encouraged to submit your comments in writing or voicemail. Please email Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us OR CouncilHearing@ci.stpaul.mn.us, mail your comments, or leave a voicemail at 651-266-6805. All information provided in the email or voicemail will be added to the public record. (For your information, e-mails will be attached as written, voicemails will be transcribed and attached in writing.)



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City Council

Meeting Agenda

December 3, 2025

City Council meetings are open for in person attendance, but the public may also comment on public hearing items in writing or via voicemail. Any comments and materials submitted by 12:00 pm of the day before the meeting will be attached to the public record and available for review by the City Council. Comments may be submitted as follows:

The public may comment on public hearing items in writing or via voicemail. Any comments and materials submitted by 12:00 pm of the day before the meeting will be attached to the public record and available for review by the City Council. Comments may be submitted as follows:

Written public comment on public hearing items can be submitted to Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us, CouncilHearing@ci.stpaul.mn.us, or by voicemail at 651-266-6805. Live testimony will be taken in person in the Council Chambers, and by telephone by registering to speak by noon on the day before the meeting. The registration link is located on the City Council website at www.stpaul.gov/council or <https://forms.office.com/g/TD3xN7WHy5>.

Council Meeting Information

The City Council is paperless which saves the environment and reduces expenses. The agendas and Council files are all available on the Web (see below). Council members use mobile devices to review the files during the meeting. Using a mobile device greatly reduces costs since most agendas, including the documents attached to files, are over 1000 pages when printed.

2026 Proposed Budget: City Council

Department Mission: The City Council makes legislative, policy, budget approval, and performance auditing decisions for the City of Saint Paul. The seven Councilmembers also serve as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, the Board of Health, and the Library Board.

Learn More: stpaul.gov/city-council

Department Facts

- **Total General Fund Budget:** \$4,696,600
- **Total Special Fund Budget:** \$250,000
- **Total FTEs:** 31.50
- There are seven part-time Councilmembers representing the seven wards of the City.
- Councilmembers are elected to serve four-year terms.
- The current term ends on December 31, 2028.

Department Goals

- Support transparent, efficient, and accountable council operations.
- Set legislative priorities and enact policies that reflect community needs and values.
- Ensure responsible budgeting, transparent financial decisions, and long-term fiscal health.
- Strengthen relationships with residents through outreach, accessibility, and responsive communication.