



SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

2023 State Legislative Agenda



City of Saint Paul Bonding Priorities

- ① Eastbound Kellogg RiverCentre Bridge - \$26 million
- ② The Park at RiversEdge (Ramsey County) - \$26 million
- ③ Great River Passage - River Recreation and Environmental Education Center - \$20 million
- ④ Como Park Zoo and Conservatory - \$12 million
- ⑤ The Heights (Saint Paul Port Authority) - \$13 million
- ⑥ North End Community Center - \$8 million

Other Projects

The City of Saint Paul also supports the following projects:

Nonprofit Bonding Projects

- Playwrights' Center - \$5.65 million
- ReConnect Rondo Land Bridge

Nonprofit Projects - Equity Appropriations

- Sanneh Foundation - \$5 million
- East Side Freedom Library - \$300,000

Funding and Policy Initiatives

Revenue, Taxes, and Finance

Local Government Aid (LGA)

The City of Saint Paul supports increasing the Local Government Aid (LGA) appropriation to address cities' unmet needs as defined by the LGA formula, as well as increases in the LGA appropriation to account for inflation. The Minnesota Department of Revenue calculated that the state-wide unmet need in the LGA formula for 2023 is \$767.9 million. However, the current funding is capped at \$564.4 million. The City of Saint Paul supports increasing LGA to close this \$203.5 million gap and fully fund cities' needs. The City of Saint Paul also supports adjusting LGA each year to account for inflation.

The City of Saint Paul uses state-allocated LGA to fund critical city services and to stabilize property taxes. LGA remains a key variable in the city's ability to provide basic services, accounting for 19.5% of City general fund revenues. The City strongly opposes freezes to the LGA appropriation or reductions of LGA for balancing state budget deficits. The City also opposes targeted reductions to specific cities as well as reductions or offsets for local policy or expenditure decisions.

Local Control

The increasingly complex and costly requirements necessary for cities to provide services to their residents require a strong partnership between federal, state and local governments. This partnership should be based upon a shared vision for Minnesota and should allow individual communities to tailor that vision to the unique needs of their communities. There are 853 cities in Minnesota, each with its own challenges, and legislators at the Capitol generally tend to agree that local elected officials are in the best position to decide how the needs of their communities should be addressed.

Saint Paul supports the preservation of local control to ensure city officials can exercise their own decision making authority.

Other Revenue, Tax and Finance Items

- The City supports the fiscal disparities program as it's an important tool in providing a common level of services among cities.
- The City does not support state-sanctioned levy limits which undermine the relationship between local officials and residents in determining the appropriate

balance of taxation and service delivery.

- The City supports simplifying the process to receive the exemption for construction materials, as well as extending the exemption to materials purchased by third party officials on behalf of the City.
- The City opposes the elimination of the Solid Waste Management Tax.

Housing

Housing is a basic and fundamental human need. With the Covid-19 pandemic, this basic need is more important than ever. The City is focused on three people-focused strategies to meet housing needs:

- Production: Creating new affordable housing
- Preservation: Maintaining existing affordable housing
- Protection: Ensuring all residents can have safe affordable homes

Unsheltered Homelessness

Since 2018, the City has been actively responding to encampments through coordination and outreach in collaboration with Ramsey County, and nonprofit partners. Protocols are in place to monitor the safety and health of encampment residents and ensure access to services.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the numbers of people who are experiencing homelessness, and the related economic impacts have led to more residents living in unsafe conditions in tents, under bridges, in caves. The pandemic also has affected the way local jurisdictions respond to encampments. With the goal of limiting the spread of COVID-19, Governor Tim Walz's peacetime emergency and subsequent Executive Orders outline the conditions under which local jurisdictions can restrict, limit or close encampments.

The City acts to restrict, limit, or close encampments only when necessary to protect the health, safety or security of encampment residents. Before any action is taken on an encampment the City works with Ramsey County and nonprofit partners to find safe, stable housing for encampment residents. In partnership, the City supports legislative efforts for more supportive services, shelter options, permanent housing for our unsheltered homelessness, and direct state aid appropriations to local units of government to help address these issues.

Renter Community

As a renter-majority community, the City of Saint Paul supports state and local government tools that increase the supply of housing units for our most vulnerable residents and expands access through tenant protections. The City also supports reducing racial disparities in homeownership through increasing in homeownership opportunities and increasing resiliency of existing homeowners.

In the 2021 general election, St. Paul voters approved a rent ordinance by ballot initiative. The City is currently working towards implementing the voter approved, and City Council amended, rent ordinance by the implementation date of January 1, 2023 and supports sustainable housing policy that meets growth and equity goals in Saint Paul, while ensuring everyone has access to stable and affordable housing. The City continues to examine the rent ordinance and what efforts are needed to ensure the ordinance can be effectively implemented to protect renters, support the continued investment in our housing stock, and allow for the construction of needed additional housing units.

Community Trust Land

The City also established a Community Land Trust financing tool to support new pathways to homeownership for low-income households designed to stay affordable long term. Financing can be used by community land trusts and/or real estate development partners for property acquisition, development gap financing, long-term affordability gap financing and closing cost assistance.

The city supports legislative priorities that advance our housing goals:

Housing Infrastructure (HIB) Bonds and General Obligation (GO) Bonds

The development and preservation of affordable housing is critical to creating jobs, economic development, and stability for our most vulnerable populations through: Housing Infrastructure Bonds (HIB) provide much needed multifamily housing development purposes tied to supportive and senior housing; and, GO Bonds support our Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) for capital rehabilitation of their public housing units, providing vital housing for the most impoverished Minnesotans.

Local Housing Trust Funds

In 2019, Saint Paul established a \$10 million Housing Trust Fund and an ongoing \$2 million annual investment. The contributions of City dollars along with federal and state financing tools are intended to address the current crisis of housing affordability in Saint Paul and invest in a future city that works for all residents.

4(d) Affordable Housing Incentive Program

The City has established a 4(d) Affordable Housing Incentive Program which provides owners of unsubsidized rental housing 4(d) status in exchange for 10-year affordability restrictions to serve households at or below 60% AMI. The City does not support changes to the 4(d) property tax classification without a comprehensive study to examine the property tax implications for cities and their residents.

Homework Starts with Home

The program supports collaborative efforts between schools, housing organizations, and local governments to identify, engage, and stabilize students experiencing homelessness and their families--a situation that affects 9,500 students statewide. This initiative builds on the successful Rental Assistance Pilot for Homeless and Highly Mobile Families with School-Age Children, administered by MHFA and the MN Department of Education.

Tenants Rights and Remedies

The City supports tenant protection policies geared at ensuring stable, accessible, fair and equitable Housing opportunities for all. The City supports policies around tenant rights and responsibilities, just cause notices, advance-notice of sale, security deposit limitations, and tenant screening guidelines. The City also supports Tenant Remedies Act (TRA) that allows tenants to petition the court to require landlords to provide necessary repairs and improvements in the case of the loss of essential services and amenities. The proposed amendment to TRA combines the existing court order with a priority lien on the property.

The City also supports legislative efforts to:

- Promote multi-year or permanent extensions to the State of Minnesota Historic Tax Credit
- Provide State Rent Subsidy that allocates Minnesota Housing funds to housing authorities already administering federal housing choice vouchers to serve people of the lowest income.
- Modify the Housing Support Program, an income supplement program funded by the State and administered through the Department of Human Services, to work better for families by increasing the subsidy to account for household size.
- Meet the needs of those with the lowest incomes who are most cost-burdened and who have the fewest existing options by increasing supply.
- Expand affordable housing programs for seniors, veterans, and those experiencing

long-term homelessness.

- Expand and promote permanent supportive housing for youth.
- Expand low cost financing programs that improve the energy efficiency of existing homes and buildings, particularly those in low and moderate-income communities.
- Maintain housing options, such as workforce housing, and prevent displacements for low- and moderate- income residents by investing in the existing housing supply.
- Promote fair access and the removal of common barriers to housing options through expungement reforms.

Community-First Public Safety

Crime in Saint Paul has continued its downward trend in 2022, it has not deviated from national trends, and remains consistent with what is happening in other cities nationwide. The record levels of gun violence in our communities are the primary barrier to sustainably addressing Saint Paul's most pressing inequities – joblessness, homelessness, poor education, and health – as we build broad systems to address all public safety needs for residents. Saint Paul continues to experience gun violence in 2022.

The Saint Paul Police Department Budget has increased by 73% over the past 15 years, leading all city departments with a total budget of \$105 million in 2020. The City's 2023 police budget continues these investments; however, our officers can't do it alone. The City's 2023 Community-First Public Safety Plan continues to prioritize investments with new investments in the new Office of Neighborhood Safety that are data-driven approaches that are documented to make our most vulnerable children and families more secure in our homes and neighborhoods and center around these three focus areas

- Improving community connectivity & supports NSCC Community Grants
- Improvement of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
- Enhancing the capacity of public safety systems

The City's community-first public safety investments for 2023 total nearly \$4 Million and include:

- Project PEACE/Operation ASPIRE
- Targeted Youth Employment, City's Right Track Program
- Community Ambassadors Initiative
- Saint Paul Fire Department CARES team
- Department of Safety and Inspections HART team
- Returning Home Saint Paul

- Healing Streets an initiative of Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health
- ETHOS is an initiative of the City Attorney's Office
- Awakenings is an intervention program in the City's Parks and Rec Department

Community First Public Safety Commission In December 2020, Mayor Carter announced his Community-First Public Safety Commission. The 48 members include a broad array of voices from the public and private sectors, nonprofit, community and neighborhood organizations, educational institutions, peace officer associations, city commissions, labor and advocacy organizations, healthcare, philanthropy, and residents. The commission will be replaced by a 15-member Neighborhood Safety Community Council (NSCC) that will continue the work of the commission as well as administer grants to community-based organizations focusing on the recommendations of the Commission addressing youth, gun and group violence. The NSCC will convene monthly to hear concerns and address public safety needs and will provide recommendations to the Director of the Office of Neighborhood Safety.

The City and Office of Neighborhood Safety supports legislative efforts to:

- Appropriate funding that incorporates safe and effective community-led initiatives to policing.
- Appropriate funding to youth and young adult initiatives that support and address workforce development and community stabilization.
- Appropriate funding and support mental health initiatives and substance use treatment facilities for youth and young adults.
- Appropriate funding that support creation of mental health alternatives to incarceration for low-level offenses.
- Add certified Violence Prevention Professionals (VPP) to the list of recognized health care providers that are eligible for reimbursement under the Minnesota's Medical Assistance Program.
- Require that firearms be stored unloaded and in a secure manner and requires the State Department of Health to develop relevant public education materials.
- Regulate un-serialized firearms and certain unfinished frames and receivers.
- Increase the penalties for knowingly being a participant in a straw purchase of a firearm by elevating the crime penalties.
- Decriminalize fare evasion on public transportation.

Gun Violence Prevention

The City is committed to supporting efforts to reduce gun violence, including background checks on all gun sales and purchases and gun violence protective orders.

- Red Flag laws are a powerful tool to help keep people and communities safe, while also respecting individual rights. These laws empower families, law enforcement officers and school administrators to petition for a court-issued Extreme Risk Protection Order to temporarily restrict a person's access to firearms when they pose a significant risk of harming themselves or others.
- Background checks are the primary method to enforce gun possession laws. Strong laws targeted at people who pose a risk of violence to themselves and others have been shown to disrupt firearm access and save lives. Requiring background checks for gun buyers is the most comprehensive intervention to keep guns out of the wrong hands. Loopholes in our background check system weaken gun possession laws, enabling criminals to get armed with no questions asked and making it difficult to enforce the law and protect communities from gun violence.
- Passage of laws to prohibit the sale of ghost guns and the critical parts to manufacture them, mandate that firearms that are manufactured at home are serialized, and require the licensure of individuals who want to manufacture firearms.
- Expanded authority to regulate the carrying or possession of firearms in City or County-owned properties, such as libraries and recreational facilities.

Legalization of cannabis

Legalizing cannabis for recreational use will help reduce expungement of non-violent marijuana related drug offenses, provide dedicated new tax revenues toward education and community wealth building programs. Currently, marijuana is legal in the District of Columbia and 21 states. Minnesota legalized medical cannabis in 2014. Local jurisdictions should be authorized to impose a local impact tax at their discretion with broad flexibility on the ability to use revenue.

Post-Conviction Relief Exceptions

Under current Minnesota law, a person who has been convicted of a crime cannot file a petition for post-conviction relief after two years of the entry of judgement. The City of Saint Paul supports legislation that will allow individuals to file for post-conviction relief outside of the two-year limitation when their past criminal conviction becomes the basis of an unknown collateral consequence.

Restore the Vote

Minnesotans convicted of any felony offense are not allowed to vote while they are incarcerated or in the community on probation. About 63,000 Minnesotans - 1.5% of the voting age population - are unable to vote due to a felony conviction. Everyone should be encouraged to be civically engaged and have every opportunity to participate in the democratic process. The City supports efforts to allow for individuals who are released from incarceration to vote.

Supporting recently incarcerated individuals seeking employment and housing

A key to reducing recidivism and building safer communities is to support the successful re-entry of formerly incarcerated individuals into society. The City supports efforts to reduce the barriers that formerly incarcerated individuals face in obtaining housing and employment including banning the box for housing.

Fines and Fees

The City supports reforms that reduce the collateral consequences for low level driving offenses. The City supports efforts to end the cycle of amassing fines for these offenses and providing opportunities for diversion and restitution to enable people to access better jobs, work more hours, be reliable employees, and take better care of their family.

Catalytic Converters

The City of Saint Paul supports the League of Minnesota's Cities' proposals to address the theft of catalytic converters by limiting the ability of businesses to purchase these devices without proof of origin. The resale of these stolen items imposes enormous costs on people statewide.

Copper Wire Theft

The city of Saint Paul supports efforts to curtail the theft of copper wires from public infrastructure using similar strategies to catalytic converter theft which limit the ability of businesses to purchase copper wire without proof of origin. Wire theft from street lights and other public infrastructure negatively impacts our community, by reducing public safety for all modes of transportation and mobility but also costs the City of Saint Paul hundreds of thousands of dollars each year to replace and repair damaged street lights.

The City also supports legislative efforts to:

- Reform arbitration, bail, probation, and civil asset forfeiture.
- Reduce sex trafficking while protecting victims and supporting survivors.
- Support legislation to appropriate funding towards Cop Autism Response Education (C.A.R.E) training protocol to better meet the needs of individuals on the Autism Spectrum and build more inclusive communities.
- Create mental health alternatives to incarceration for low-level offenses.

Supporting New Americans

Our nation has a proud tradition of welcoming immigrants and refugees into our communities, and Saint Paul is no exception. Minnesota's first large group of immigrants came from European countries of Norway, Sweden, Ireland, and Germany. Today, Minnesota's immigrant and refugee populations are from across the globe including Central and South America, Southeast Asia, East Africa and South Asia. Nearly 20 percent of our residents are foreign-born. Nearly 30 percent of our residents speak more than one language. In all, over 100 languages are spoken in our city.

Protecting the human rights of residents of the United States, including the City of Saint Paul, is not just a moral imperative rooted in the founding principles of our nation but also essential to ensuring future economic opportunity and prosperity for all who live, work, and conduct commerce within Minnesota and the City of Saint Paul. Regardless of immigration status, an individual is endowed with the same universal and inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The City supports legislation that welcomes and supports our new American communities, advances community cohesion and family unity, and prevents the unfair and unjust removal of our residents. The City supports state-funded resettlement assistance for recent Afghan refugees.

The City supports these legislative efforts:

Driver's License for All

The City of Saint Paul supports efforts to ensure that all Minnesota residents have access to driver's licenses. Many Minnesota residents cannot access a state driver's license because of their legal status even though they are established members of our communities. Their children are U.S. citizens and Minnesota is their home. The inability to obtain a driver's license inhibits their ability to provide for their families and contribute to the economy.

Ban Private Detention Centers

The aggressive and expanding presence of US ICE in communities across Minnesota has caused and will continue to cause trauma for many families. The City supports banning private prisons from operating in Minnesota to incarcerate inmates detained by State and local jurisdictions.

Reduce Gross Misdemeanor Sentencing

A difference between the state and federal definitions creates an inconsistency in Minnesota. Two people can be convicted of the same gross misdemeanor, with one sentenced to 364 days and the other to 365 days. Federal law dictates that these two people will face very different immigration consequences. The City of Saint Paul supports efforts to align sentencing guidelines.

Timely U-Visa Certification Processing

The City of Saint Paul supports efforts that expedite law enforcement agencies processing of immigration-related requests from victims of crimes who are foreign nationals in the United States under a U-Visa. These victims provide a certificate from law enforcement identifying them as crime victims to federal immigration authorities to support their request to remain in the United States under a U-visa.

Emergency Responders

As part of the Community First Public Safety strategy, the City's budget invests in our emergency responders to ensure they have the resources to respond to the wide variety of health and safety needs across the city.

The City supports legislative efforts to:

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- Provide state funding to help cover costs associated with filling temporary personnel gaps created by firefighters, police officers, and emergency responders who are called to military duty for training or combat.
 - Adjust state statute regarding the federal fee for service Medicaid match allowing for more thorough reimbursement rates for EMS services.

- Fund the Minnesota Fire Safety Account with a standing appropriation to fund critical services and the Department of Labor and Industry efforts to transfer authority for adoption of the state fire code to the state Fire Marshal.
- Maintain current state statutes related to fireworks sales and use.
- Add concealing criminal proceeds § 609.496 and engaging in business of concealing criminal proceeds § 609.497 to the list of forfeitable offenses and monitoring other legislative changes to the state's forfeiture laws.
- Increase the crash reporting threshold above the \$1000.00 currently in statute.
- Amend § 152.021-152.025 to assign weights to marijuana derivatives.
- Reduce health risks to firefighters and emergency responders through legislation related to flame-retardant chemicals.
- Expand § 609.2231, sub. 6 to include code enforcement officials allowing for escalated charges for assaults perpetrated while performing official duties.

Lifelong Learning

In the City of Saint Paul, we believe that everyone should have the opportunity to learn and grow over the course of their entire life from infants and toddlers to our aging adults.

Early Childhood Learning and Caring

The City of Saint Paul understands how critical it is for our youngest learners to have access to quality education and childcare. Research has proven that investing in early childhood has as much as an 18% return on investment and can help mitigate many of these negative outcomes. The City of Saint Paul supports investments in early childhood, including Early Learning Scholarships, Voluntary PreK, and the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP), as well as increasing CCAP rates and removing the cap for early learning scholarships while fully funding public schools to appropriate levels.

The City also supports opportunities for cities to meet the needs of their own community in early learning, by expanding funding opportunities for early childhood learning and care. The City has been and continues to be an active and engaged partner on key local, regional, and national initiatives to ensure every child has an opportunity to learn and grow.

City initiatives and partnerships include:

Saint Paul Children’s Collaborative

A collaborative effort to ensure that all families in Saint Paul have access to affordable, high-quality early learning and child care.

Families First Housing Pilot

The City of Saint Paul and the Saint Paul Public Schools launched the Families First Housing Pilot. The program will provide a \$300 monthly rent supplement to families with children in Saint Paul Public Schools, in addition to ongoing housing support services for up to three years.

Sprockets

Sprockets is a collaboration between the City of Saint Paul, Saint Paul Public Schools, and community organizations that supports quality out-of-school time experiences for youth.

Youth Jobs

The Department of Employment and Economic Development competitive grant programs provides key funding for Right Track, the City’s youth employment and training program. Funds from the state support internships and employment training nearly 1,000 young people each year. Right Track brings together over a hundred partners across sectors to support young people starting on their career journeys.

Workforce Training

The City of Saint Paul supports efforts to increase funding for job search assistance, skills training, childcare, and related programs to help people find and retain employment, including:

- A payroll tax credit for job training programs that invest in skilled employees.
- The Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Program.
- Tax incentives for companies that hire and retain disadvantaged workers.

Public Libraries

The City of Saint Paul supports legislation that will ensure that the Saint Paul Public Library has the resources necessary to provide high-quality educational tools and programming.

The City supports increased funding for Regional Library Basic System Support (RLBSS), Regional Library Telecommunication Aid (RLTA), and continuing access to Legacy/Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund for public library programs.

Specifically, the City of Saint Paul supports:

- Increased funding and a corresponding formula change for Minnesota's regional public library systems to provide the essential support needed by citizens, students and lifelong learners to reach their educational, personal and professional goals.
- Investment in infrastructure to repair, modernize, and construct public library facilities to ensure safe, accessible and welcoming library spaces for Minnesotans.

High-Quality Afterschool and Summer Learning

High-quality afterschool and summer learning programs have evidence-based benefits that will positively impact the persistent challenges facing Saint Paul's young people, families, businesses, educators, and communities. The City of Saint Paul supports new state public funding for competitive grants for afterschool and summer programs targeted to low-income youth.

Broadband Access and Digital Equity for All Minnesotans

- Encouraging investment in broadband and digital inclusion to ensure affordable, high-capacity internet access, as well as digital literacy training and support, is available to all Minnesotans.
- Write broadband spending guidelines in ways that are inclusive of metro digital equity needs to address the significant disparity gaps in digital access and literacy.

Public Libraries Infrastructure Needs

The City of Saint Paul support infrastructure funding for public libraries in recognition of the essential role they play in supporting community needs for digital equity, education and learning, workforce support, access to government resources, and social connection.

Specifically, the City of Saint Paul supports state funding for the following library capital investment projects in Saint Paul:

- Renovations of the Hayden Heights and Riverview libraries to enhance their ability to meet community learning, work, and wellbeing needs.
- Updates to technology in all libraries to support community collaboration, meetings, and co-working.
- Enhancements to children's spaces to welcome and encourage hands-on, play-based, interactive, family learning.
- preparation.
- Prioritize organizations that demonstrate an ability to manage funds and partnerships that support alignment across systems.
- Base funding decisions on factors including the number and percentage of youth in poverty, youth of color and the youth unemployment rate.
- Encourage greater private sector participation.
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- Base funding decisions on factors including the number and percentage of youth in poverty, youth of color and the youth unemployment rate.
- Encourage greater private sector participation.

Economic Justice and Inclusion

To build a city that works for all of us, Saint Paul is committed to ensuring that everyone has safe, healthy neighborhoods to live in and raise a family, access to high-quality education, and the opportunity of good-paying jobs. The City established a new Office of Financial Empowerment to connect families with financial education and wealth-building resources available from the government, non-profit, and private sectors. The City supports legislation that will expand economic opportunity for families and workers.

The City supports these legislative efforts:

Working Families

People are working harder than ever, but many families are still struggling to make ends meet. The City of Saint Paul recognizes that strong families create strong communities. The City supports responsible statewide solutions that help individuals make a better life for themselves and their families such as paid parental leave and family medical leave.

Statewide \$15 Minimum Wage

The City supports a statewide \$15 minimum wage to ensure that no one working full time has to live in poverty. With the recent passage of a \$15 minimum wage ordinance, the City is committed to working families and supports legislation that will ensure that workers with disabilities are paid the full minimum wage.

Statewide Earned Sick and Safe Time

The city supports a statewide policy guaranteeing earned sick and safe time for workers to ensure that all Minnesotans can achieve the best possible health and safety outcomes for themselves and their families.

Military Leave Subsidy for Police Officers and Firefighters

State law requires political subdivisions of the state to award preference points to veterans for most open, competitive positions and establishes the requirements persons must meet in order to qualify for Veterans Preference. The City supports adding positions when police officers and firefighters are on extended military leave.

Human Rights

The City supports a change to the Minnesota Municipal Contracting Statute is codified at § 471.345 to allow cities to make a contract by two quotes for contracts estimated not to exceed \$250,000, but only if the business being directly solicited was either:

- Certified as a small business enterprise by a county-designated small business certification program; or
- Certified by the commissioner of administration as a small business that is majority-owned and operated by a veteran or service-disabled veteran. This authority currently applies only to county boards and the cities requests the same authority.

The City also supports legislative efforts to:

- Exempt local public assistance grants from being included as income.
- Dedicate state funding for programs at the Department of Employment and Economic Development focusing on cultural corridors, women and minority-owned businesses, redevelopment areas and transit improvement areas.
- Preserve a local municipality's ability to set the fees necessary to protect and promote public health within their community.
- Address systemic racism and racial injustice by making critical investments in the areas of housing, public health and health care, business development, contracting, jobs, and arts that target Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities who have been traditionally left out of economic opportunities.
- Establish a system of reparations for the African American community to grow equity and generational wealth and eliminate ongoing disparities.
- Support direct appropriation for job training and workforce development of underserved communities.
- Foster equity within our tax system by automating tax rebates for renters, seniors, and low-income individuals.
- Modernize governing capacity by expanding Open Meeting Law requirements to allow flexibility for local boards and commissions with regulatory or advisory capacities.

Streets, Sidewalks, and Bikeways

Streets, sidewalks, and bikeways are how we connect people to opportunity. Investing in a long-term strategy will be vital for our city's future. Our 2023 budget continues our work from 2022 by investing \$27.8 million for road reconstruction and resurfacing.

The availability of transportation funding resources continues to significantly lag behind need, especially for local municipalities. The City supports a new comprehensive transportation financing package that gives cities the new resources and funding tools needed to meet growing demand.

The City supports these legislative efforts:

City Streets

The City of Saint Paul supports new dedicated revenue outside of the constitutional formula for city streets. The City also supports funding for the statewide Complete

The City of Saint Paul supports new dedicated revenue outside of the constitutional formula for city streets. The City also supports funding for the statewide Complete Streets policy; ensuring streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Additionally, the City supports improving safety, reducing crashes, and enhancing livability by enabling municipalities to set lower default speed limits consistent with local priorities and plans. The City supports a statewide effort to educate motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians about the rules of the road and best practices to increase safety and decrease crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

Transit Investments

The City of Saint Paul supports additional funding for transit projects across the region, including a sales tax increase for Metro Transit. To build a 21st century transit system, any new transit funding from the state must recognize the need for a geographic balance across the Metro Area. This includes projects like the Gateway Corridor, Riverview Corridor, Rush Line, Red Rock, and Robert Street. The City of Saint Paul also supports efforts to develop and incorporate bus rapid transit into the Highway 252/I-94 project.

Railroads

The City of Saint Paul has 84 active rail crossings and 5 quiet zones, yet has little authority to protect the human and environmental health of our community as it relates to railroads. The planning and coordination required for response operations is city and region wide and spans from initial response through recovery. The City recognizes the important role rail plays in our economy and as a transportation mode for goods, and will monitor all legislative activity related to railroads.

Safe Routes to School Funding

The Safe Routes to School grant funds are used for planning and infrastructure projects that encourage more students to walk and bicycle to school by increasing the walkability of the city and by assuring that curbs are compliant with ADA regulations. As part of the effort to more fully support the Safe Routes to School Program, the City supports funding for repairing, advancing and upgrading sidewalks.

Parks and Recreation Centers

The City of Saint Paul is committed to providing a parks and recreation system that provides opportunities for health, safety, and lifelong learning.

The City supports these legislative efforts:

Legacy Funding

Legacy resources are used to supplement and support projects and programs including regional parks, libraries, Como Park Zoo and Conservatory, improvements to the Mississippi River, and a host of other items.

The City of Saint Paul supports the following positions regarding the Legacy Amendment:

- Overall Fund – Support the equitable distribution of all funds.
- Parks and Trails Fund – Support projects with clear regional or statewide significance that will ensure equitable funding across metro, outstate, and DNR programs.
- Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund – Support more equitable geographic distribution of this fund, recognizing the unique circumstances the Metropolitan area presents related to fish, game, habitats, wetlands, prairies, and forests.
- Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund – Support distribution of the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund in a fair and equitable way. This includes support for the Minnesota regional library systems and Como Park Zoo and Conservatory.

Urban Forest Invasive Species Mitigation

The City supports funding to assist cities with urban forest management and meeting the needs of preparing for, and responding to, catastrophic urban forest issues such as Emerald ash borer and climate change. To combat present and future pests and diseases and the impacts of climate change, cities need additional funding for planning, tree inventory, maintenance, treatment, removal and planting. The state should provide on-going funding for those activities.

Parks Funding

Local parks and trails support the economic vitality needed to attract and retain a dedicated and qualified workforce. Investment in local parks is important to the future of economic growth, both to keep pace with the needs of those who live and work in Saint Paul and to

attract future development opportunities. The City of Saint Paul supports the dedication of resources that can be invested in these local assets. Local parks and trails are not constitutionally eligible for Legacy funds, therefore the City supports the dedication of other resources that can be invested in these local assets.

The Saint Paul Parks Department is 1 of 10 implementing agencies in the Metropolitan Council's Metro Regional Parks System. The City works closely with those nine other implementing agencies to ensure an equitable funding formula for the Parks and Trails Fund and to increase the operations and maintenance funding, required by state statute to be 40 percent, currently funded at less than 8 percent. The City supports fully funding the Metro Regional Parks biennial budget, opposes cuts and allowing the Metropolitan Council to maximize investments in capital assets.

Skate Parks

Skateboarding is a growing recreational activity for youth and young adults and new skate parks are needed to address this trend. Skate parks have unique design and construction characteristics and benefit from having qualified, experienced skate park firms oversee their design and construction. State law does not allow municipalities to utilize design-build as a delivery method for projects, including skate parks. A skate park has been proposed at Eastside Heritage Park, and the state should allow this project an exemption to utilize design-build delivery. The City of Saint Paul supports a statewide matching grant program for skate parks and regional skate park amenities.

Resilience

Cities everywhere must respond and adapt to the harmful effects of climate change and other long-term challenges. The City of Saint Paul is committed to becoming a carbon-neutral community by 2050 and being a leader on clean and efficient energy, sustainable transportation systems, land use, and solid waste systems.

The City supports these legislative efforts:

State Sales Tax Exemption for the McCarrons Water Treatment Plant Improvements Project

Saint Paul Regional Water Services will be completing the process of procurement for the services of a Design-Build firm in 2020 for the McCarrons WTP Improvements Project. SPRWS is exempt from state sales tax currently for these types of projects. When using a contractor such as this, an exempt entity (SPRWS) can designate the contractor as its purchasing agent and follow a rigorous reimbursement process or it can seek legislation to provide sales tax exemption for the specific project. There is still a reimbursement process in that case, but it is much less intensive than the process when you designate a purchasing agent. SPRWS would like to pursue this legislative approval during the 2023 session.

Advanced Commercial Energy Code

Accelerate the statewide commercial energy code adoption process with updates occurring every three years, rather than the current six-year cycle. The accelerated process will result in commercial buildings (including multifamily buildings 4+ stories) being designed and constructed to be net-zero energy by 2036. This legislation is a result of several years of work and broad stakeholder engagement and is supported by the Minnesota Departments of Commerce and Labor and Industry.

Advanced Energy Standard / Stretch Code

Enable Minnesota cities to require commercial and multifamily buildings to be designed and constructed to an energy performance standard sometimes referred to as an advanced energy standard or stretch code. The legislation would also permit cities to apply the advanced energy standard to commercial and multifamily buildings undergoing major renovation.

Energy Conservation & Optimization (“ECO”) Act

Build on the highly successful Minnesota Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) by expanding customer choices to include load management (modifying timing of energy use) and limited efficient fuel switching (switching to the use of another fuel when more efficient, cost-effective, and lower carbon).

District Energy St. Paul

Support the continued operation of the Saint Paul district heating and cooling system cogeneration facility, which consumes large volumes of waste wood as its primary fuel source to supply electricity, until alternative solutions to managing waste wood can be fully evaluated and implemented.

The City also supports legislative efforts to:

- Advance the work of the Pig's Eye Landfill Task Force and fund the cleanup and restoration of the Minnesota Superfund sites at Pig's Eye Lake.
- Clarify in statute local government taxing authority to establish a municipal streetlight utility.
- Financially support City-wide lead line replacement efforts and policies to authorize use of utility funds to pay for private service line replacements, support disclosure of a lead pipe at point of sale, and lead pipe replacement requirements.
- Increase state funding for energy efficient building upgrades to outdated libraries and rec centers.
- Advocate for including more renewable, equitable, and locally produced energy so that our city can meet the bold commitments for reducing emissions and energy burdens as expressed in our Climate Inheritance Resolution and Climate Action and Resilience Plan.
- Incentivize the manufacture of green products to be used in construction and assist manufacturers in incorporating green practices in their production of goods.
- Support the Metropolitan Council as a regional governmental agency and planning organization.
- Improve energy efficiency goals and activities by investor owned utilities.
- Prepare for the impacts of climate change on infrastructure, natural systems and human health.
- Increase distributed generation technologies, such as solar photovoltaic, solar thermal production, wind, combined heat and power for both public and private entities.
- Encourage legislation and amendments to rules to expand source separated composting efforts.
- Increase state funding for the state solid waste block grant program referred to as SCORE to be used for recycling efforts and expansion of organics collection.
- Exempt nonprofit car sharing from the current car rental tax in order to increase affordability of services for residents of racially diverse and low-income communities.
- Repurpose revenues from car rental fees to support growth of car sharing in disadvantaged communities.

Contact

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