



**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**  
*Melvin Carter, Mayor*

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**DATE:** April 24, 2019

**TO:** Mayor Melvin Carter  
Members of the Saint Paul City Council

**FROM:** Elizabeth Reveal, Chair, Saint Paul Planning Commission

**SUBJECT:** Transmittal of *Saint Paul for All: 2040 Comprehensive Plan* for Adoption

As Chair of the Saint Paul Planning Commission, I am very pleased to transmit the draft of *Saint Paul for All: 2040 Comprehensive Plan* as it was approved by the Planning Commission on March 22, 2019. The attached document contains the seven city-wide chapters – Land Use; Transportation; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; Housing; Water Resources Management; Heritage and Cultural Preservation; and Implementation. The Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area chapter will be transmitted to you in late May.

**BACKGROUND**

MN Statutes (the Metropolitan Land Planning Act) require every municipality in the seven-county region to prepare and adopt a Comprehensive Plan every 10 years. The Plan is required to have a 20-year planning horizon, and address land use, transportation, housing, parks and open space, water resources and the Mississippi River Critical Area. The Plan must also: 1) respond to the Metropolitan Council's regional framework, *Thrive MSP 2040*; 2) show how the City will accommodate the growth projected for it through 2040; and 3) implement the regional system plans, prepared by the Metropolitan Council. Through a different section in State Statutes, the City is also required to have a preservation chapter in its Comprehensive Plan if it designates historic resources.

Beyond the State and regional mandates for planning, however, it is important for Saint Paul to regularly engage its residents in visioning for the future. A comprehensive look at the city as a whole, and the development of city-wide policy, is critical to guiding the interim preparation of district plans, small area plans and master plans. The decennial Comprehensive Plan update process is the City's opportunity to think collectively and comprehensively about where it is going.

**PLAN PREPARATION**

Work on the 2040 Comprehensive Plan began in 2015, with Planning staff working on scoping, issue identification and background research; and establishing the process and timeline for the update. The Planning Commission's role has been to ensure that the Plan responds to the regional mandate for growth, maintains a city-wide perspective, is consistent across chapters and reflects the City's core values. The Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee of the Planning Commission has acted as the Steering Committee, providing oversight of and coordination between the chapters.

An inter-departmental City staff working group, led by a City Planner, was created for each chapter. Where appropriate, the working group also contained a member of the City Commission with responsibility for Plan implementation (e.g. the Parks and Recreation Commission and Heritage Preservation Commission) or staff from a partner agency with implementation responsibility (e.g. Ramsey County Parks). The working groups met throughout 2016 and 2017 to assist staff in writing the draft chapters.

Staff did extensive community engagement in 2016, speaking with 2300+ residents at almost 70 events. The goal was to reach as many people as possible; be genuine about the role of engagement; and be representative by race, age and geography. The outreach strategy was to meet with people where they were already gathering, so staff attended community events and district council meetings; hung out in front of libraries and rec centers, and talked to people as they were entering and exiting; parked the Pop-Up truck at several sites; participated in radio call-in shows; and met with experts and advocacy organizations. In addition, staff held open houses prior to critical decision points in the process.

Nine themes and priorities emerged from the community engagement:

1. Livability, equity and sustainability
2. Parks and open space
3. Sense of community
4. Public safety
5. Road safety for walking and biking
6. Invest in people
7. Jobs
8. Quality affordable housing
9. Saint Paul is full of opportunity sites

These are described in more detail in the Introduction chapter.

Staff spent 2017 writing the draft chapters, checking in regularly with their working groups, the Planning Commission and other relevant Commissions, the Mayor and City Council. In March 2018, the Planning Commission released a preliminary draft of the seven city-wide chapters of *Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan* to the Metropolitan Council for a voluntary 30-day preliminary review, and to adjacent/affected jurisdictions for a mandatory 6-month review. During that time, we heard from the Metropolitan Council, and the following adjacent cities, counties and affected agencies.

**Adjacent cities and counties**

Lauderdale  
Maplewood  
Mendota Heights  
Newport  
North St. Paul  
Vadnais Heights  
Dakota County  
Washington County

**Agencies with jurisdiction in Saint Paul**

MnDOT  
National Park Service  
Metropolitan Airports Commission  
State Historic Preservation Office  
Saint Paul Port Authority  
Saint Paul Public Housing Agency  
Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board

Between March and August 2018, City staff also met informally with all of the district councils and many interested stakeholders (e.g. Mayor's Advisory Committee on Aging, community health experts, housing advocates, Mayor Carter's Chief Resilience Officer), and held two public Open Houses to present key ideas in the draft plan. Based on the feedback over these six months, an official public hearing draft was prepared and released in November 2018. The Planning Commission held its public hearing in January 2019.

The Planning Commission received 1200+ comments in writing and through public testimony at the hearing. The Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee spent several hours over four weeks going through the comments and recommending changes to the draft Plan in response to those comments. The full Commission approved a revised draft of *Saint Paul for All: 2040 Comprehensive Plan* on March 22, 2019.

### **FOUNDATIONS IN SAINT PAUL FOR ALL: 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

At the core of the Plan is a vision for Saint Paul over the next 20 years:

**Saint Paul is a community that is welcoming to and a place of opportunity for people of all incomes, ages, races, ethnicities and abilities. It accomplishes this by addressing the place-based dimensions of our neighborhoods: embracing growth; offering a wide range of housing choices for its diverse residents; providing a transportation system that meets the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, riders and drivers; preserving, celebrating and building on our histories; and supporting infill development that sensitively accommodates a growing, aging and increasingly diverse population. Saint Paul is defined and enhanced by its location on the Mississippi River - an economic, environmental, cultural, historic and recreational amenity that enriches our quality of life and economic prosperity.**

This Vision is based in a set of core values:

- Equity and opportunity
- Building on our assets
- Resilience and sustainability
- Celebrating parks
- Innovation
- People-centered
- Health
- Welcoming and safe
- Growth and prosperity through density
- Integration and coordination

In addition to the standard chapter titles of Land Use, Transportation, etc., six focus areas are integrated into each chapter: racial and social equity, aging in community, community/public health, economic development, sustainability/resiliency and urban design.

All of the policies and implementation strategies are based on these foundational elements.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning Commission looks forward to working with the Mayor, City Council and City staff to ensure implementation of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, especially in terms of equity. We will be working with staff to create metrics to gauge implementation success, and will be receiving an annual update from staff on our progress. We will share our results with you.

The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council adopt the seven city-wide chapters of *Saint Paul for All: 2040 Comprehensive Plan*, attached, and forward them to the Metropolitan Council for final adoption.

April 24, 2019  
Mayor Carter and Councilmembers  
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Attachments:

- ✓ Saint Paul for All: 2040 Comprehensive Plan, March 22, 2019
- ✓ Planning Commission Resolution 19-13, March 22, 2019
- ✓ Supporting materials and background available at: [www.stpaul.gov/saintpaul4all](http://www.stpaul.gov/saintpaul4all)