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CITY OF SAINT PAUL

2026 City Council Legislative Priorities



STATE BUDGET & FORECAST DEADLINES

- FY 2026-27 projected surplus of \$2.465 billion (current biennium)
- Projected \$2.9 billion shortfall in out years (FY 2028-29)
- Higher inflation increases revenue and spending forecast
- Shifting policies at federal level create forecast uncertainty
- Debt Service (Bonding) Forecast at \$1.165 billion
- Legislative Session: 12pm February 17, 2026
- Legislative Session ends: May 17, 2026 at midnight



LAY OF THE LAND: MN SENATE

- DFL Majority at 1 seat
- Majority Leader Erin Murphy (DFL; SD64, Saint Paul)
- Senate President Bobby Joe Champion (DFL; SD59, Minneapolis)
- Minority Leader Mark Johnson (GOP; SD1, East Grand Forks)





LAY OF THE LAND: MN HOUSE

- Power sharing agreement with House - 2 special elections in January
- Speaker Lisa Demuth (GOP, 13A, Cold Spring)
- Caucus Leader, DFL Leader Zack Stephenson (35A, Coon Rapids)
- DFL Floor Leader Jamie Long (61B, Minneapolis)
- GOP Leader Harry Niska (31A, Ramsey)





SAINT PAUL DELEGATION

Saint Paul Delegation Leadership Roles

- Representative Maria Isa Pérez-Vega: House Delegation Chair
- Representative Samakab Hussein: House Delegation Vice-Chair
- Senator Clare Oumou Verbeten: Assistant Majority Leader & Senate Delegation Chair
- Representative Athena Hollins: House DFL Whip

Senate Committee Chairs

- Chair Sandra Pappas: Capital Investment
- Chair Founq Hawj: Environment, Climate, and Legacy

House Committee Co-Chairs

- Chair Dave Pinto: Labor and Workforce Development Finance & Policy
- Chair Jay Xiong: Veterans and Military Affairs Division

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SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

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REVENUE, TAXES, & REVENUE

- Support equitable state revenue and fiscal policies that work to support all Minnesotans and ensure cities have the local control needed to best serve their residents
- Extend the city's half-cent local option sales tax to 2060
- Support property tax relief for Saint Paul residents through an increase in Local Government Aid (LGA) and indexing LGA to inflation
- 5th tier income tax on highest earners to support Medicaid expansion
- Reform the state mortgage transfer and deed tax to keep revenues local
- Automate and reform the property tax refund process to make it easier for renters and homeowners to get their refunds
- Expand the property tax base for cities like Saint Paul that host a large number of non-taxable properties like schools and state buildings

- Grand Casino Arena Complex renovations
- Mississippi River Learning Center phase 2
- Support for Como Zoo Big Cat Exhibit renovation

- Direct state investments for nonprofit capital investment projects
- Support state investments in downtown Saint Paul revitalization efforts, including tools like the CUB tax credit and TIF to incentivize redevelopment of underused and vacant commercial buildings
- Land Value Tax pilot project in Midway
- Support policy tools for cities to spur economic development in ways that meet that city's unique needs, strengths, and challenges
- State investments to support small businesses during road construction
- Social Districts local authority



TRANSPORTATION

- Support an equitable regional transit system, including BRT, that works for all people to access school, work, healthcare, shopping and entertainment, parks, and cultural spaces
- State & Regional Investments in West Seventh Corridor
- Support for local traffic calming measures like speed cameras



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- Support all Minnesotans to have equitable access to exceptional education and workforce training from birth through adulthood, including New Americans and English Language Learners
- Support investments in statewide regional library systems as crucial community resources for lifelong education and workforce support centers
- State investments in local no-fee swimming lessons in low-income and disadvantaged communities



PUBLIC SAFETY

- Ban Firearms in Publicly-Owned Buildings
- Repeal state law preempting local governments from enacting and enforcing common sense gun violence prevention measures
- Support statewide common sense gun violence prevention policies and early intervention
- Ongoing Public Safety Aid to cities
- Maintain copper wire theft law
- OPPOSE bills that harm new Americans, including but not limited to:
 - ICE Cooperation Requirement for Local Law Enforcement



HOUSING, ECONOMIC, & COMMUNITY STABILITY

- Support the state's active partnership in providing funding for housing including direct funding, financial incentives, and initiatives to assist local governments and developers to support affordable housing and housing appropriate for people at all stages of life
- Support for \$45 million in Housing Investment Bonds at The Heights
- Support ongoing state funding for Ramsey County homelessness prevention efforts and emergency shelters
- Support strong statewide tenants' rights and protections for renters
- Support state policies and funding to support and welcome New Americans
- Support state policies and investments to address racial disparities and develop tools and resources that advance racially equitable outcomes

- Support state policies and investments in access to clean water for all Minnesotans
- Support state funding to local governments in preparing for and responding to climate change

QUESTIONS?

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