

# 2026 City of Saint Paul Legislative Priorities Presentation

City of Saint Paul



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MINNESOTA

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# Agenda

- Overview & Timeline
- Staffing in Mayor Her's Office
- Top City Priorities
- Additional Legislative “Lead” Items
- Support for Legislative Items
- Collaboration & Next Steps
- Questions





## Overview & Timeline

- Legislative Session begins at Noon on February 17th, 2026 and ends on May 17th, 2026 at midnight.
- St. Paul Delegation Welcome Back Legislators Reception: February 24th, 2026 - location TBD.
- 2026 is a "Policy" year at the Legislature, meaning nothing *must* happen.
- Uncertainty
  - Federal immigration enforcement impacts on our residents
  - Continued attention on fraud
  - Fallout of the political assassination
  - Federal reconciliation bill fallout
  - Structural budget imbalance in the planning years
  - 34-33 DFL Majority in the Senate, 67-67 tie in the House
  - Midterm elections



## Staffing in the Mayor's Office

- Mayor's Office has hired Jennifer O'Rourke as the City's Intergovernmental Relations Director, and she starts early February.
- Hiring for the Intergovernmental Relations Associate is currently underway.







## Top City Priorities for this Legislative Session

Our City's Preliminary Legislative Agenda integrates feedback from:

- Councilmembers
- City Departments
- Partners, such as the Saint Paul Port Authority, the Saint Paul Area Chamber, the Downtown Alliance, Ramsey County, and many more

Two main goals of this agenda include:

- 1) Maximum economic impact coming into the City in a short legislative session.
- 2) Strategically positioning the City's "asks" across a variety of areas to prepare for potential shifts in control at the Legislature.



## Top City Priorities for this Legislative Session

- Arena Complex & Surrounding Entertainment District investments,
  - State assistance may include (but not limited to):
    - capital bonding
    - cash funding
    - annual appropriations
    - forgivable or interest-free loans
    - extension of authorized local option sales tax
    - sales tax exemptions related to construction
  - Negotiations with the Team are ongoing
  - Inclusive of funding asks for: Grand Casino Arena, RiverCentre, Roy Wilkins Auditorium, Eastbound Kellogg Bridge, RiverCentre Parking Ramp
  - Expansion of social district authorization



## Top City Priorities for this Legislative Session

- Amending the definition of a natural disaster to be inclusive of cyber attacks
  - Provides 100% cost-share for expenses associated with cyber attacks to impacted entity
  - Would align state policy with current reality that cyber attacks are likely to continue
  - Comprehensive coverage of cities/counties across state (Mower County in southern Minnesota experienced a cyber attack last year)
- Establish and fund a state reimbursement program for law enforcement agencies that respond to protests and demonstrations and Governor's residence
  - Could take the form of an LGA increase, appropriation, or per action reimbursement



## Top City Priorities for this Legislative Session

- State and regional investments into the West 7th Corridor
  - Spans from full re-design and construction to Mill-and-Overlay from Kellogg to Highway 5
  - Likely a multi-year ask
- State funding and legislation that reimburses and supports individuals, families, community organizations, business, and local governments for costs incurred during the federal immigration surge
- Incentivizing downtown redevelopment through creative financing tools
  - Tax Increment Financing expansion
  - Historic tax credit expansion for conversions
  - Catalyzation of Underutilized Buildings credits





## Additional Legislative Items the City will “Lead” on

- Capital Investment Projects:
  - Mississippi River Learning Center (Phase 2)
  - Como Zoo Big Cat Exhibit renovation
  - Randolph Avenue Bridget reconstruction
  - Historic Walnut Steps on Summit Avenue
- Parks and Recreation & SPPL:
  - Reinstate state funding for regional parks (Saint Paul estimated at nearly \$5M annual lost revenue)
  - Duluth & Case Community Center design
  - Playground and park at The Heights
  - Requiring bus drivers to do post-trip inspection to ensure all children have exited the bus
  - Riverview Library renovation



## Additional Legislative Items the City will “Lead” on

- Public Safety:
  - Repealing the local government preemption on enacting and enforcing common-sense gun violence prevention measures
  - Enact local authority to prohibit handguns and weapons in city-owned/leased and county-owned/leased buildings, facilities, parks, libraries, liquor stores, and at city-sponsored youth activities
  - Designate libraries and recreation centers as “drug free zones”
  - Adding Saint Paul to speed control camera pilot
- Other:
  - Reinstate Local Cannabis Aid
  - Online database for scrap dealers and next steps on copper wire theft
  - Protection of labor standards complainants from retaliation
  - Subpoena power on human rights and labor standards investigations
  - Additional funding for replacement of lead service lines



## Support for Items in the Legislative Platform

- Increased Municipal Funding through Local Government Aid
- State Property Tax Relief
- State Role in Housing
- Support for those experiencing Unsheltered Homelessness
- Continued support for tenant protections and renter's rights
- Supporting New Americans
- Advancing racial equity
- Economic justice and inclusion
- Access to Clean Water
- Advancing resilience and climate investments
- Expansion of the regional transit system and support for complete streets
- Support for parks and recreation funding
- Climate and resiliency initiatives including weatherization, geothermal planning, transit funding, and renewable energy support
- Further support for mitigating the harms of PFAS in the water supply
- Supporting aligned components of partner's agendas:
  - Saint Paul Port Authority



## Collaboration and Next Steps

- Variety of items across legislative agenda necessitate collaboration and coordination
  - Testimony
  - Subject matter experts
- We look forward to adjusting these items with Councilmember input over the next few weeks
- Final Council vote and amendments to the Legislative Agenda will happen before Legislative Session begins (February 4th or 11th)





## Questions & Discussion

- Nick Stumo-Langer  
Assistant Mayor for Housing, Economic Vibrancy, and Infrastructure
- Hnu Vang  
Assistant Mayor for Staff and Strategic Partnerships

Photo by Chue Yang  
\*Missing Councilmember  
Johnson - Ward 7