



OPEN COUNCIL WORK SESSION

MUNICIPAL CENTER COUNCIL CHAMBERS

1616 HUMBOLDT AVENUE, WEST ST. PAUL, MN 55118

MONDAY, APRIL 10, 2023

Immediately following EDA Meeting

1. Welcome and Note Attendance

2. Agenda Item(s)

A. Sign Ordinance Discussion

Documents:

[OCWS ACTION ITEM - DISCUSSION ON SIGN CODE UPDATES - 04.10.2023.PDF](#)

B. Strategic Planning Discussion

Documents:

[CITY COUNCIL ACTION ITEM - STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION.PDF](#)
[ATTACHMENT - 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN ONE PAGE SUMMARY.PDF](#)
[ATTACHMENT - WEST ST PAUL STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY REPORT_2023 \(002\).PDF](#)

3. Regular Meeting Consent Agenda Review

4. Adjourn

If you need an accommodation to participate in the meeting, please contact the ADA Coordinator at 651-552-4108 or email ADA@wspmn.gov at least 5 business days prior to the meeting.

Si usted desea que alguna parte del paquete de esta agenda sea traducida al Español, por favor solicítelo al social@wspmn.gov.

www.wspmn.gov EOE/AA

Subject: Discussion on Sign Ordinance Updates

| | |
|--|--|
| Meeting Date: Monday, April 10, 2023 | |
| Submitted/Presented by/Department: Melissa Houtsma - Community Development | |
| Action Type | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consent Item | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion/Direction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Informational Only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Action/Motion | <input type="checkbox"/> Report |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| Action | |
| Work Session Discussion | |
| Background | |
| <p>Due to multiple events over the past couple of years, staff has been reviewing the current sign code various areas in need of revision in order to best accomplish the vision established through various previous discussions.</p> <p>Prior to beginning to write the ordinance language and changes, staff is asking council to review and affirm that the following list of items accurately reflects previously discussed areas of concern and addresses said concerns.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Change to the definition of “sign” to be less restrictive for non-commercial signs in residential districts. As well as to allow for community art, murals, etc.in commercial districts. 2. Change to allow non-commercial speech murals in the commercial districts. Staff is suggesting 20 percent maximum wall coverage per elevation, and we are reviewing whether or not the allowance can be reviewed through the CUP process. 3. Change the temporary signage restrictions for residential (largely single-family homes) districts from allowing a certain number of signs to a cumulative square footage of signage. Specifically, staff is suggesting a maximum of 10 square feet (open for direction). 4. Change current language to allow signage (banners and the like) to be affixed or mounted, not painted, on fencing when the fence faces the public right-of-way and not an adjacent neighbor. The maximum square footage discussed in item 2 would also apply to signs located on fences. 5. Change current language to allow window coverings inside the window in order to offer businesses additional privacy without it being a violation of the signage/window coverage restriction. 6. Incorporate the multiple different residential zoning districts within the sign code. Currently the code reads simply as “residential”, meaning that churches, schools, and multi-family apartments have the same sign regulations as single-family homes. By | |

Subject: Discussion on Sign Ordinance Updates

adding and clarifying the different districts, this allows for the various uses to have more flexibility on permissible signage.

7. Add a severability section to offer additional clarification that if any section or component of the sign code were to be challenged and/or found to be unconstitutional, the ordinance as a whole is not in jeopardy of being stricken by a court upon said challenge.
8. Clarification of definitions and language. One example specifically being to change “Temporary real estate signs” to something adjacent to “Temporary signs used for the purposes of selling or leasing real property”. While the language sounds nearly identical, the change of emphasis from “real estate sign” to “sign for real estate” clarifies that the code does not regulate based on the content of signs.
9. Various housekeeping clean ups and clarifications.

Staff is open to any other overall comments or concerns with the sign ordinance. Pending direction received at the meeting, staff will draft a formal ordinance amendment for review by the Planning Commission and Council.

Attachments

N/A

Previous Relevant Actions

N/A

Alternatives

N/A

Financial

Budgeted: Yes

No Financial Impact

Fund: N/A

Department: N/A

Account: N/A

Amount: N/A

Subject: Strategic Planning Discussion

| | |
|--|--|
| Meeting Date: April 10, 2023 | |
| Submitted/Presented by/Department: Nate Burkett, City Manager | |
| Action Type | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consent Item | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion/Direction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Informational Only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Action/Motion | <input type="checkbox"/> Report |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| Action | |
| NA | |
| Background | |
| <p>The Council engaged in a strategic planning session with staff on March 11. The attached DRAFT report is for Council to review and comment on.</p> <p>The next step is to draft initiatives, which are the action steps and special projects that staff will undertake over the next couple of years to effect the strategic goals of the Council.</p> <p>Council is asked to consider and recommend initiatives.</p> | |
| Attachments | |
| Attachment - DRAFT Strategic Plan | |
| Previous Relevant Actions | |
| | |
| Alternatives | |
| | |
| Financial | |
| Budgeted: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Financial Impact |
| Fund: | |
| Department: | |
| Account: | |
| Amount: | |

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | DESIRED OUTCOME | KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR (KOI) | TARGET | STRATEGIC INITIATIVES |
|--------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY | Stable taxes | Tax Rate | 0% tax rate increase 2023-2026 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance policy update Transparent planning and reporting (plain language, at a glance) Performance Based Budgeting/Balanced scorecard |
| | Effective debt management | Debt Plan adherence | No new issuance of G.O. debt through 2028 | |
| | Adequate cash balances | Year-end cash balances | Achieve cash goals for all funds by 2025 | |
| TARGETED REDEVELOPMENT | Improved mix of commercial offerings | - # targeted uses added - Retail ratios achieved | Move commercial use mix from ___ to ___ by 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing toolkit and plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify desired uses Identify available places Recruit Expand partnerships for BR&E and recognition |
| | Broadened partnerships | # new collaborations | Enable 3 new partnerships with developers by 2023 | |
| | Expansion of tax base | Net market value – new investment | \$30M increase by 2024 | |
| QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE | Well connected & accessible community | Miles of new sidewalks/trails | 5 new miles trail/sidewalk by 2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update trails/sidewalks plan Re-vision neighborhood parks, pool, ice arena, horseshoe pit Evaluate policies/programs that support housing maintenance (SFH, rental) and promote affordability GreenSteps advancement Evaluate public infrastructure maintenance philosophy |
| | Well maintained city street system | Pavement Condition Index (PCI) | Maintain current level on Pavement Condition Index (PCI) 2022-2025 | |
| | Maintain a quality housing stock | Median home value | 15-20% increase from 2022-2025 | |
| | Reliable sanitary sewer system | # of updated lift stations | 100% of lift stations updated by 2025 | |
| STABLE WORKFORCE | Stable, well qualified workforce | Retention rate | - ___% retention rate 2022-2025 - > ___% of promotions are from within 2022-2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class and Comp study Organization-wide training plan Employee performance management strategy Equitable recruitment strategies |
| | Workforce that reflects the community | Employee demographic makeup | Improve City workforce diversity from ___ to ___ by 2025 | |
| | Well trained workforce | - % mandatory training completed - % self-directed training completed | ___% employees meet by training targets by ___ (date) | |
| EXPANDED COMMUNICATION | Effective 2-way communication with all segments of population | - # new channels - # events, attendance - Social Media interactions - Survey responses | - 25% NCS survey response - ___% increase in social media interactions 2022-2025 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and deploy project based communications plan Develop and deploy a strategic communications plan Community events plan “re-deploy” advisory committees Re-branding initiative |
| | Improved city image | - # social media followers - Positive survey responses | - Increase social followers by 25% by ___ - Increase website visitors by 10% by ___ - Increase online meeting views by 20% by ___ | |
| | Expanded communication capacity | - New social media sites - # additional channels | ___# additional communication channels by ___ | |
| SAFE COMMUNITY | Increase public safety capacity | # calls per public safety employee | - Reduce calls per officer by 5% by 2024 - Increase officer uncommitted time by ___% by ___ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate, plan and implement actions to identify and remove/mitigate real and perceived barriers to trust in public safety programs/services Partner to implement supportive mental health crisis intervention protocols Develop WSP public safety philosophy |
| | Increase perception of safety | # feeling safer responses | 80% of residents feel safer by ___ | |
| | Strong mental health response | % of calls w/ crisis response | Increase by 25% crisis worker response to emergent crisis calls by 2025 | |

2023-2024
STRATEGIC PLAN
SUMMARY REPORT



CITY OF WEST ST. PAUL

MARCH 2023



RAPP CONSULTING GROUP

March 20, 2023

RE: 2023-2024 Strategic Plan – City of West St. Paul

Dear Mayor Napier,

I am pleased to present this strategic plan and summary report to the City of West St. Paul. The report reflects the organization's priorities, commitment to measurable results and the delivery of quality services.

It has been a pleasure once again assisting the City of West St. Paul with this important project. The final product was a result of the group's dedication and focused effort.

I particularly wish to thank City Manager Nate Burkett and Assistant City Manager Dan Nowicki for their help and support dedication during the process.

Yours truly,

Craig R. Rapp
President

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From January 2023 through March 2023, the City of West St. Paul engaged in a strategic planning process. The process yielded a strategic plan covering 2023-2024.

The plan consists of four strategic **priorities**—the issues of greatest importance to the City of West St. Paul over the next three years. Associated with each priority is a set of **desired outcomes**, **key outcome indicators**, and **performance targets**, describing expected results and how the results will be measured. The plan also includes **strategic initiatives** that will be undertaken to achieve the targeted outcomes.

The planning effort began with an examination of the operating environment, consisting of an environmental scan and a SWOT analysis. On March 11th, the City's leadership team held a full day strategic planning session. They developed a set of priorities, key outcomes, performance targets, and identified concepts for draft vision, mission, and values statements, detailed on the following pages.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Focused Economic
Development

Expanded Community
Engagement

Reliable Service Delivery

Improved Housing

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY 2023-2024

City of West St. Paul

| STRATEGIC PRIORITY | DESIRED OUTCOME | KEY OUTCOME INDICATOR (KOI) | TARGET | STRATEGIC INITIATIVES |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|-----------------------|
| FOCUSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | Successful development of city-owned 9-acre parcel | - Property sale - Development approvals | - Sale of property and development approvals in place by 12/2023 | |
| | Active and functioning business network group | - #_ of businesses participating | - 10% of existing businesses participating in networking group by 2025 | |
| | Redevelopment of underutilized and blighted properties | - #_ of underutilized properties - #_ of blighted properties | - Reduce underutilized/blighted properties by 20% by 2025 | |
| EXPANDED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | Increased BIPOC involvement in decision making | - #_ applicants from BIPOC community members - #_ appointments from BIPOC community members | - Increase BIPOC representation on committees/commissions by 10% by 06/2025 | |
| | Higher engagement with diverse populations | - #_ non-white participants in city programs | - Increase BIPOC participation in city programming by 10% by 06/2025 | |
| | Meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships with community partners | - Partnership survey results | - 75% of community partners report that their relationship with the city is meaningful and mutually beneficial | |
| RELIABLE SERVICE DELIVERY | A safe community | - Crime rate (part 1 & part 2) | - Crime rate reduced %_ by 06/2025 | |
| | An engaged workforce | - Employee engagement survey scores | - Employee engagement increased by %_ year over year | |
| | Reliable and functional equipment and infrastructure | - \$ value of deferred maintenance - Breaks, backlogs, downtime statistics | - Decreases in deferred maintenance, downtime, breaks and backlogs 2023-2025 in each department (or specify) | |
| IMPROVED HOUSING | Rental housing meets or exceeds community expectations | - #_ of improved rental units | - %_ of rental housing units exceed minimum housing standards by _(date)_ | |
| | Expanded rehabilitation of existing homeowner properties | - #_ of rehabbed owned properties | - Public financing programs - #_ of properties improved by ____ | |
| | All renters fully knowledgeable of their rights | - #_ of verified knowledgeable renters | - 20% increase of renters who know their rights | |

Commented [c1]: This has two outcomes-it is preferable to have one—if you can pick the most important and adjust outcome and target

Commented [c2]: this should include the statement listed or specify certain departments

OUR VISION

The City of West St. Paul is a friendly, evolving, walkable and well-connected community. We value a robust partnership with our property owners and businesses. We are recognized for fostering community engagement, encouraging citizen involvement, and preserving green spaces. We take pride in having the highest quality infrastructure, parks, trails, and facilities.

OUR MISSION

Promote and preserve a community of excellence by ethical, responsive, efficient, and innovative provision of services.

SETTING DIRECTION: STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Strategic planning is a process that helps leaders examine the current state of the organization, determine a desired future state, establish priorities, and define a set of actions to achieve specific outcomes. The process followed by the City of West St. Paul was designed to answer four key questions: (1) Where are we now? (2) Where are we going? (3) How will we get there? (4) What will we do? The process is divided into a development phase and an implementation phase. The full process is depicted below.



Initiating the Process – Setting Expectations, Reviewing Current Situation

The strategic planning process began with a meeting of the consultant and City Manager on January 17, 2023. The meeting included a review of strategic planning approach, a discussion of the previous plan, progress to date, environmental scan and the current dynamics on the City Council and senior management team. The session concluded with a project timeline and agreement on the approach for the strategic planning one-day session.

MISSION, VISION, VALUE PROPOSITION AND CULTURE

On March 11, 2023, the City Council and senior management team held a daylong retreat to develop the strategic plan. As they addressed the question of “Where are we now?” the group was challenged to define the current organizational culture and its value proposition—understanding that an organization’s culture, and the value proposition it puts forth provide the foundation for the way in which services are delivered and strategic direction is set. The three value propositions and core cultures presented are summarized below:

Three Value Propositions

Operational Excellence (example: Wal-Mart, Southwest Airlines)

- Motto: They adjust to us

Product/Service Leadership (example: Apple, Google)

- Motto: They ‘ooh and ‘ah’ over our products/services

Customer Intimacy (example: Nordstrom, Ritz-Carlton)

- Motto: We get to know them and solve their problems/satisfy their needs

Four Core Cultures

Control Culture (example: Military - command and control)

Competence Culture (example: Research Lab – best and brightest)

Collaboration Culture (example: Family-teams)

Cultivation Culture (example: Non-profit/religious group-mission/values)

The group engaged in an extended discussion regarding the value proposition and its relationship to the culture. It was generally agreed that customer intimacy reflects their aspirations, however operational excellence will continue to be the most important, and realistic for operational stability. Based upon that understanding, operational excellence was determined to be the primary value proposition, with customer intimacy as a secondary focus.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Assess Current Environment

- Senior Management Review
- Previous Plan status
- Vision/Mission/Values
- Environmental Scan
- Stakeholder engagement
- SWOT Analysis

Set Priorities, Targets

- Strategic Planning Retreat
- Operating Environment
 - Culture, Value Proposition
 - Internal SWOT
- Challenges, Priorities
- Outcomes, KOI’s, Targets

Implement the Plan

- Implementation Session
 - Strategic Initiatives
 - Action Plans
- Refine details
- Final Review, Approval

REVIEWING THE ENVIRONMENT, SETTING PRIORITIES

Following the culture, value proposition and mission discussion, the leadership team continued the process of assessing the operating environment. This was done via a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis—a process that examines the organization’s internal strengths (cited as Do Well) and weaknesses (cited as Do Better/Need to Improve), as well as the opportunities (cited as Do More) and threats (cited as Con in the external environment. To facilitate this, a SWOT questionnaire was distributed to the Council and senior staff in advance of the planning session. Using the SWOT data, a small group review process revealed the most frequently mentioned characteristics in each area.

DO WELL

- Community Services (service levels, responsiveness, events, engagement)
- Public safety (Police, Fire, mental health, partnerships, code enforcement, licensing)
- Public works (planning, infrastructure, maintenance, Ross)
- Amenities (parks, programming, trails, restaurants, economic development, green spaces)

NEED TO IMPROVE/DO BETTER

- Communication (translations, website, highlight City accomplishments, educate)
- Sense of community/residents (events, connections)
- Partnerships (shift/share resources, school district, business, other local government)
- Economic development/integrity (ordinance, zoning cleanup)
- Redevelopment

DO MORE

- Building relationships (business retention, creating partnerships, rental community, community roundtable & collaborations)
- Recognition, engagement & outreach (diversify public engagement and outreach practices, small business recognition, accessibility)
- Sense of place (signature community event, public art, uniquely WSP)
- Provision of services (sidewalks and trails, parks and rec programming)

CONCERNS

- Having the “right” people (different perspectives) in the room
- Housing (affordability, quality, quantity/availability, safety, renters rights/protections, pride)
- Finances (resources, health)
- Infrastructure
- Safety

The group used this information to identify those opportunities that would be helped the most by the organization's inherent strengths and which external threats were most likely to exacerbate their weaknesses.

STRENGTHS LEVERAGING OPPORTUNITIES

(Make good things happen)

- Uniquely WSP (sense of place, belonging)
- Provision of services (public safety, public works, amenities)
- Recognitions and engagement (services, building relationships)
- Accessibility (outreach, communication)

WEAKNESSES EXACERBATED BY THREATS

(Keep bad things from happening)

- Infrastructure, deterioration of maintenance
- Housing quality/stability (rental property)
- Lack of community engagement (increase inclusiveness)
- Financial resources

Following this exercise, the group considered the results, and engaged in additional brainstorming to identify the strategic issues and challenges facing the organization:

STRATEGIC ISSUES/CHALLENGES

- Infrastructure
- Finances
- Housing quality (rental)
- Community engagement (inclusiveness)
- Sense of place/community
- Economic development
- Staffing – Police
- Communication
- Partnerships/partners

Based upon the challenges and issues identified, a facilitated discussion ensued to determine the highest priorities for the strategic planning period. The following priorities emerged as the most important:

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Focused Economic Development

Expanded Community Engagement

Reliable Service Delivery

Improved Housing



DEFINING THE PRIORITIES

To clarify the meaning of each priority, the group identified key concepts which were used to create guidance and definitions.

1. Focused Economic Development

- Hy Vee, Redevelopment, BR + E, Community modes, Smith Dodd, outlots

2. Expanded Community Engagement

- Communications, inclusiveness, translations, partnerships, events neighborhoods

3. Reliable Service Delivery

- Public safety, workforce, infrastructure, finance, departments

4. Improved Housing

- Rental quality, tenant rights, rehab, reinvestment, diversification

KEY OUTCOMES, INDICATORS, AND TARGETS BY PRIORITY:

With definitions in place, the group determined the most important outcomes to be achieved for each priority, defined Key Outcome Indicators (KOI's), and developed Performance Targets. KOI's define progress toward desired outcomes. Performance Targets define successful outcomes, expressed in measurable terms. The alignment created between priorities, outcomes and targets is important for maintaining a disciplined focus on the desired results.

Focused Economic Development

- Outcome:** Successful development of city-owned 9-acre parcel
KOI: Property sale; development approvals
Target: Sale of property and development approvals in place by 12/2023
- Outcome:** Active and functioning business network group
KOI: _#_ of businesses participating
Target: 10% of existing businesses participation by 2025
- Outcome:** Redevelopment of underutilized and blighted properties
KOI: _#_ of underutilized properties; _#_ of blighted properties
Target: Reduce underutilized/blighted properties by 20% by 2025

Expanded Community Engagement

- a. **Outcome:** Increase BIPOC involvement in decision making
KOI: Track applicants/appointments from BIPOC community members
Target: Increase BIPOC representation on committees/commissions by 10% by 06/2025
- b. **Outcome:** Higher engagement with diverse populations
KOI: #_ participating in city programming
Target: Increase BIPOC participation in city programming by 10% by 06/2025
- c. **Outcome:** Meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships with community partners
KOI: Partnership survey results
Target: 75% of community partners report that their relationship with the city is meaningful and mutually beneficial

Reliable Service Delivery

- a. **Outcome:** Safe community
KOI: Measure crime rate (part 1 + part 2)
Target: Crime rate reduced ___ by 06/2025
- b. **Outcome:** Engaged workforce
KOI: Employee engagement survey scores
Target: Employee engagement increase by ___% year over year
- c. **Outcome:** Reliable and functional equipment and infrastructure
KOI: _\$ in deferred maintenance and replacement
Target: Decreases in deferred maintenance, downtime, breaks and backlogs

Improved Housing

- a. **Outcome:** Rental housing meets or exceed community expectations
KOI: #_ of improved units
Target: %_ of rental housing units exceed minimum housing standards (to be expanded) by ___
- b. **Outcome:** Expanded rehabilitation of existing homeowner properties
KOI: #_ of rehabbed properties
Target: Public financing programs; #_ of properties improved by ___
- c. **Outcome:** All renters fully knowledgeable of their rights
KOI: #_ of knowledgeable renters
Target: 20% increase of renters who know their rights

STRATEGIC PLANNING PARTICIPANTS

The strategic plan was developed with the hard work and dedication of many individuals. The City Council led the way, taking time out their schedules to commit to long-term thinking. They defined a direction and a set of outcomes that are important to the citizens, businesses, and stakeholders with whom they partner and serve. The senior staff supported the Council and provided valuable perspectives to the .

Elected Officials

Dave Napier, *Mayor*
Pat Armon, *Councilmember*
Wendy Berry, *Councilmember*
Julie Eastman, *Councilmember*
Lisa Eng Sarne, *Councilmember*
Robyn Gulley, *Councilmember*
John Justen, *Councilmember*
Joe Atkins, *County Commissioner*

Staff

Nate Burkett, *City Manager*
Dan Nowicki, *Assistant City Manager*
Ben Boike, *Community Development Director*
Char Stark, *Finance Director*
Deb Gieseke, *Human Resources Director*
Brian Sturgeon, *Police Chief*
Ross Beckwith, *Parks and Public Works Director / City Engineer*
Mark Juelfs, *Fire Chief*
Dennis Schilling, *Building Official*
Nicole Tillander, *City Clerk*
Dave Schletty, *Assistant Parks & Recreation Director*
Melissa Houtsma, *City Planner*
Chue Vue, *IT Manager*
Sarah Haugen, *Grants and Communications Coordinator*

Consultants

Craig Rapp
Rapp Consulting Group

APPENDIX I

SWOT Analysis

WHAT DOES THE CITY DO WELL?

- Policing.
- Snow plowing.
- Adapting as needed.
- Prioritizing community needs.
- Customer service.
- Finding creative solutions for residents.
- Collaboration with one another.
- Real public safety
- Community
- Awesome parks
- Great city staff
- Police practices
- Quick and responsive fire department
- Restaurants and retail
- City services (snowplowing!)
- Infrastructure maintenance
- Public works responsiveness
- Outreach about projects (big improvement in the last few years)
- Communication with residents
- Website translation
- Events
- Policing
- Moving forward bike/ped plan
- Staff retention/morale
- Recreational programming
- Social media engagement
- Customer service
- Leadership in public works
- I&I, snow plowing
- Street maintenance
- Community events
- Police and fire responsiveness
- The city's police department has done a great job. As an inner-ring suburb, the department has been able to, for the most part, insulate the city from some very nasty violent crime that is all too prevalent not far away in St. Paul. Our police reserves are the envy of many other cities.
- The South Metro Fire Department's service and response times are top notch. Community surveys consistently show strong grades for our public safety operations.
- The city staff is fairly lean and mean as a fairly small staff for the city's size seems to get a lot done.
- Special Events
- Committees & Commissions
- Public Meetings
- Green spaces
- Infrastructure Maintenance & Improvements
- Economic Development
- Public Safety
- Collaborative approach
- Mental Health partnerships
- Courageous, innovative leadership open to new approaches
- Police/fire service that engages well w/ community
- Welcoming place, inclusive
- Public Safety

- Public Works
- Community Outreach
- Code enforcement
- Snow Plowing
- Mental Health Responsiveness (Internal and External)
- Emerging Policing Tactics/Best Practices
- Communications and Marketing
- Building and Inspections
- While I feel the City has many special events that are done well; very well; there may be too many that causes the group to be spread out too far.
- Customer Service - front desk support is great. 2 out of the 3 front desk employees speak Spanish, which is such a benefit to the community.
- Our police department have Spanish speaking officers. This provides comfort to the community when they come in to address an issue.
- Snow removal
- Public Safety (Fire/Police)
- Parks/Rec programming
- Special Events
- Customer Service
- Providing Information on the Web site
- Opportunities for Citizens to give input
- Community outreach
- Redevelopment
- Public Safety
- Road maintenance
- Customer service, building permitting/inspections and working with Developers on development approvals
- Snow Plowing
- Public Safety presence/community building
- Snow plowing
- Rec Programming
- Police and Fire
- Street and Park Maintenance
- Customer service - in all areas
- Snow plowing
- Responsiveness to resident emergencies
- Outreach
- Openness and Transparency
- Police Community Outreach
- Parks & Recreation events
- Parks & Recreation partnerships
- Summer events
- Police responsiveness
- City/County partnerships
- General Customer service and responsiveness to citizen requests/inquiries
- Communicating and listening to the residents about projects, meetings, events, etc.
- Strive for excellence

WHAT DOES THE CITY NEED TO IMPROVE ON?

- Accessibility to things on our website. Places for new residents or new homeowners to go to find things they might not know otherwise.
- Building a sense of community by helping people get to know others in the city.
- Bragging about the things we're doing right.
- Evaluating equity in all policy decisions, ordinances, and zoning changes, etc.
- Ongoing partnerships with the school district and private schools within WSP.
- Perception of public safety
- Stop paying for petty crime at Wal-Mart (stop subsidizing Wal-Mart at all)
- Communication/engagement in other languages
- Bus stop safety/lighting/warmth
- Prioritizing pedestrians (especially kids, but everyone)
- Rental property inspection/tenant support
- Alignment of zoning/comp plan
- Ordinance cleanup/simplification
- Community events - we will see Explore WSP Days come back and even better in 2023.
- There is still a huge desire for community connection as we emerge from the last few years
- Continued community communication improvements (2022 initiatives already on track with minimum communication grid)
- Diversity recruitment (hiring and committees and commissions)
- I know this is not easy, but the city on its own cannot improve itself without its businesses and residential structures improving themselves without substantial subsidies. To cut to the chase, we need to find more ways of getting things done without city money. Do we have some businesses such as Tapemark and others who would rise to assist?
- Obviously, the theme here is more partnerships and engagement in both private and public and utilizing other resources to their full extent. This would extend to enhanced relationships with the Met Council/MTC, county, ISD 197, St. Paul Water, our legislators, federal representation, county commissioner, Met Council Rep, state agencies, and more.
- I would like to explore options for organized snow removal along Robert Street the north of Butler. And, maybe the entire stretch of Robert knowing that person providing our current good deal for snow removal is retiring soon. This plays into my suggestion about re-exploring a maintenance district along Robert
- Expand Communication frequency & methods with community
- Posting Town Square recordings for committees and commissions
- Public Hearing notices
- Communication re: economic development (signage, surveys)
- Use of Signage
- Partnerships with rental housing, senior housing, affordable housing (sites and organizations)
- Schedule regular sessions (OCWS?) with state and local elected officials, public organizations, partners
- Community center
- City cleanliness
- Community Activities
- HR Approachability/Cordiality
- Engagement with broader audience (younger, racially diverse)
- Community-wide special events - communicate with the internal staff so everyone is aware of what is going on with the event so if others want to be involved, they can be versus just involving the committee.
- Technology infrastructure - Fiber network, upgrade switches, wireless access points & security cameras
- Partnerships to do more events Marketing - showing what we do Bring visitors here. A destination.
- Find our own niche. Don't copy everyone else's ideas. Be West St. Paul
- Business Retention and Expansion

- Econ. Dev.
- Marketing
- Public input opportunities on new developments
- Inclusive and translated communication
- Crime Prevention
- More community-wide events
- Different avenues of communication with residents (i.e. - electronic newsletters, city e-blasts)
- Collecting feedback from residents
- Language translation services
- Connecting with community minority members
- More free programs for residents
- Continue to Explore alternative/creative ways to gain Community input

WHAT SHOULD THE CITY BE DOING MORE OF?

- Collaboration amongst council.
- Partnering with area non-profits.
- Finding and supporting ways to engage renters, like with the resident-led renters group.
- Talking about the small businesses that are already here.
- Parks and Rec programming
- Restaurants and retail (always)
- More public gathering places
- More bike/walking trails
- Keep improving bike/ped infrastructure (safety and otherwise)
- Public Art!
- Highlighting different cultures in our city
- Communicating in community languages
- Collaborating across levels of government city, school board, Met Council, county, legislature (inviting other governing bodies to Council meetings? Mixers?)
- Collaborating with nearby cities
- Highlighting community history
- Keep working on retail corridors beyond Robert Street
- Small business recognition
- Promotion of exterior grant program
- Translation of documents/website/newsletter
- Messaging about small business variety - no more chicken jokes
- Diversified and targeted business recruitment
- Creating spaces uniquely West St. Paul
- Recruitment and hiring of talent with diverse backgrounds
- Building committees and commissions that represent the population
- Engagement with underrepresented communities
- Establishing higher environmental standards for new development
- Partnerships and collaboration. Not just with other governments but generate and facilitate many more private/public partnerships.
- Businesses helping promote community events and opportunities.
- Encourage businesses to form a Chamber or similar organization. Now the city has too many businesses with divergent goals and elected officials are often not aware of where common interests and concerns start and stop. There is no magic solution to this either, but there are too many absentee commercial landlords and big boxes and national chains that seem to have little interest in the well-being of the city.

- Begin ways on how the city and businesses can better promote their proximity to potential customers in surrounding areas. Such as not only with new residents who are moving into our expanded housing, but that in downtown St. Paul and the west side as well. .
- I would like to see enhanced cooperation with businesses, apartment managers, residents, the MTC, local schools and community groups, and volunteers to reduce the number of stray shopping carts and litter in the city. Residents taking pride in their city could help.
- Bringing back Neighborhood Associations would help.
- I would also like to see a renewed effort to create at least some kind of maintenance district along Robert Street - even if it were to just start with Robert Street facing properties keeping the area clean.
- For Ward 1, I would like to see exploring the creation of a Lilly Lake Association for homeowners who surround the lake. However, maybe it can get formed with an initially simple goal of them partnering to see what they can do to help the lake that involves little, if any money. Such as assisting with shoreline restoration, using lake-friendly pesticides and lawn-care products, and keeping the lake as litter-free as possible.
- We need to explore every way possible to provide less burden for the taxpayers. Several cities (not St. Paul as they somehow managed to botch this) residents have benefitted from decreased cost through organized trash collection. Such would also benefit our streets, reduce noise pollution and help the environment.
- Work on ways that better spread out the costs for the county's 911 service. The 911 board has heard about the financial impact that municipalities without a municipal police department and depend on the Sheriff's department for coverage might not be "fair" to paying for what they receive. This might be a start in having the county just take over the financing of the operation like 85 counties already do.
- Communication (social media, meeting notices, development signage, events, etc.)
- Multi-lingual & translation services
- Rental Properties Strategies, Policies and Relationships with Property Management and Tenants
- Code Enforcement Strategies and Policies
- Economic Development Strategies and Policies
- Collaboration with other city governments, public non-profits and organizations
- Collaboration with federal, state and county organizations and officials
- Community roundtable meetings with Mayor, Council, Police & Fire Chiefs
- Identify and collaborate with state, county and school district on "big ticket" items
- Targeted recruitment of needed businesses/activities
- Creation of a "signature" community event
- Business engagement
- Communication
- Partnerships with Dodge and our bordering cities
- Celebrating the seasons through decorations
- Small town feel
- All Ages Recreation
- Business Retention
- Maybe collaboration with other governments, but collaboration between the MN Cities could be a benefit to support each other.
- Invest in Technology
- Expand tax base
- Social media marketing
- Collaboration of resources with other cities where needed
- Collaboration with other governments-this is growing
- Diversify business's
- Recognize business's
- Marketing of Economic Development Activities and Subsidies
- Business Retention and Expansion
- Outreach to renters

- Inclusive programs
- Employee social events
- Developing relationships with Local business
- Police department recruitment
- Engaging News/Social media
- Highlighting the Community
- Positive recognitions, existing and/or expanding businesses, Long term residents and/or employees
- Continue to Explore alternative/creative ways to gain Community input

GREATEST CONCERNS FOR FUTURE OF CITY

- Lack of actual affordable housing.
- The health and welfare of our firefighters in their current location, which leads to the concern of the cost of replacing the fire station.
- Lack of partnerships with surrounding cities for common interests.
- Inability to engage renters and BIPOC community.
- Lack of quality affordable housing
- Lack of communicating with residents who do not speak English
- Lack of opportunity to move important things because of debt
- Need to move quickly to handle infrastructure maintenance that should have been on a schedule
- Alley maintenance
- Local wages and cost of living
- Controlling/preempting increasing corporate single family rental ownership
- Development of HYVee site and other city owned properties
- Stagnant park reconstruction
- Cannabis store management and control
- Degrading aging multifamily rental areas
- Rising rents and ability to maintain affordability
- Covid-era accommodations ending that made that made the city more accessible
- Paying down debts while meeting community expectations for improvement
- Safety on and around Robert Street (and other busy corridors)
- Infrastructure needs/improvements and the impact on affordability
- Rebuilding hope/fun/community after challenging years
- Public safety
- Inflation not only has a negative impact on our residents, but the city as well. The cost of goods, services, products, and staff to run the city are increasing where more revenue from taxes will likely be needed. Hence, inflation will create a double whammy for residents.
- As stated earlier, people do not want to live, visit or conduct business in places they perceive as not being clean or safe. With crime increasing in St. Paul I am concerned that it will inevitably spill over to our city. We also have our fair share of property crimes and theft, which also deter quality of life.
- South Metro Fire's ambulance response rates are exceptional. However, I am wondering how long city taxpayers can continue to finance that level of service.
- Community quality of life
- Maintaining public safety
- Improving older rental housing stock
- City Budget/Tax Levy
- Economic Development/Acceleration of the 2040 Comp Plan - demographic & economic changes
- Aging infrastructure
- Current multi-modal transportation options are okay, but more demand is ahead
- Lack of enough parks, trails, greenspace, natural areas
- Opioid use
- Criminal activity
- Financial Stability

- Public Safety
- Lack of undeveloped land to expand
- Housing (especially rent) prices becoming unattainable for low income (broader than WSP issue)
- Balancing the homeowners concerns with those of the renting residents; concerns of the older community members vs new community - coming from different perspectives.
- DEI is in the forefront that I would comment would always be a concern to work on from all directions.
- Technology infrastructure
- Fiber footprint to our lift stations & CCTV
- Having the staffing and resources to address the needs of the city
- Expand the tax base to meet needs without over taxing residents
- Trying to have it all on a shoestring budget.
- Don't lose the sight of who West St. Paul is.
- Developing the Hy-Vee site
- Financial stability
- Maintaining aging housing stock
- Changing retail environment and being on the forefront
- Aging infrastructure
- Keeping up with infrastructure replacement, so expensive
- Increase in rental housing stock
- Decline of older rental housing
- Violent crime
- Business retention - given current economy
- Needs for affordable housing
- Lack of small businesses
- Maintaining good PD relationship with the Community
- Aging housing stock as well as residents
- Low-income base for residents in conjunction with inflation of costs of living
- Shrinking need for brick and mortar (commercial) buildings and resulting loss in established tax base.

MOST IMPORTANT PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT THREE (3) YEARS

- Creating a sense of placemaking and community regardless of whether or not we move forward with a community center.
- Continuing work on sidewalks.
- Continuing to shift our identity away from "close to it all" and into our own "brand".
- Infrastructure maintenance and replacement schedule
- Paying off Robert Street debt
- Updating city pool
- Public spaces (a variety to meet different needs)
- Moving away from prioritizing car transportation
- Communicating with all residents (English and non-English speakers)
- Quality, affordable housing
- Public art
- Mental health services
- Public transit
- Fix sign code/allow business murals
- Encourage development of outlots on Robert Street
- Former HYVee location development
- Focus on/recruit light industrial in underutilized buildings
- Redevelop aging industrial zone

- Rebuilding opportunity for Community connection
- Creating a sense of place and pride in West St. Paul
- Long-term financial sustainability
- Maintaining quality infrastructure
- Resourcing around mental health needs of the Community
- Continue with trust-Building around policing within the Community
- Improve walkability and safety for non-car users
- Maintaining long-term financial sustainability, keeping the city safe and clean, allowing South Metro to continue their current high-level of service and maintaining quality infrastructure should be important priorities.
- Keeping up with the latest best practices and innovations while exploring as many avenues as possible for grant funding.
- Explore other and hopefully better options for the prolonged health of the pool and especially the dome. I think that the contract with the management company who runs the dome needs to be heavily evaluated and/or better enforced. The dome has not been kept up well with litter and falling insulation being strewn about. Additionally, city residents have little benefit from the dome being owned and being in the city. I have heard that the roof is also leaking, with almost 10 years to go before it is supposed to be replaced (I hope that I am correct with that).
- The same concept goes for taking a good look at the agreement with the YMCA for managing the pool. Let's take a better look at that agreement as it may not be surviving the test of time.
- We are getting regular attendance now from a representative (we were told by them that at least one will attend all meetings) who is relaying tenant issues to the council. I think this is great and hope that rental housing management can do better at representing themselves as well. It would be great if the tenants group could meet with a management group to share concerns and solutions. The successes and failures for common ground could be presented to the city so we know what the issues are.
- Constant and productive interaction with our legislative, congressional, county, school district, and Met Council representation.
- Use Website and quarterly newsletter to communicate to residents how city government works. Namely that our government is based on the city manager running the city and that the council's role is to create policy that city staff then carries out. Other topics can be what the city departments are and what they do. Finally, instruction about what other levels of government do (school district, Met Council, County, etc. would be useful as well and hopefully can create a better engaged citizenry.
- I would like to see us review our economic development programs and subsidies to see how they might be best used or re-focused. Economic development done right and stretching dollars as far as possible and how it can best be done in a post-pandemic world is vital to our success. We need to focus about how work from home, little seeming demand for office space (and what can be done with it), and modern use of commercial space and storefronts looks like today and not yesterday.
- City: Staff, Service & Financial Sustainability
- Infrastructure Improvements and Maintenance
- Growth (economic development, population, services)
- Public safety
- Green space maintenance
- Financial stability
- Strategic development of City owned property
- Maintain street improvement plan
- Business retention/expansion
- Emerging policing tactics
- De-escalation, crime prevention, etc.
- Maintaining quality infrastructure
- From internal City Hall perspective - Employees My position is not community facing, but instead employee focused. This impacts the community, but in a different direction.
- Financial stability - allows us to get the workforce that is needed to support the community.
- Technology funding for the above-mentioned infrastructure improvements

- Staffing
- More development is good but that means more work for city workers
- Maintaining infrastructure including roadways
- Maintain infrastructure-we are moving in the right direction.
- Continue the goal of having strong cash flows.
- Ensuring the infrastructure is taken care of including city buildings.
- Hy-vee Property Redevelopment
- Maintaining aging infrastructure - roads/sewers
- Public Safety
- Targeting more restaurant/entertainment uses
- Community Equity efforts - recognizing diversity of community and capitalizing on it
- Quality infrastructure
- Business retention
- Continued reduction of crime
- Maintaining quality infrastructure
- Providing unique, Engaging and enriching free programming/events for residents
- Financial stability and utilizing grant funds
- Supporting Local business
- Supporting businesses that elevate the Community
- Preserving the housing stock and General maintenance of properties, both residential and commercial - Maintaining a steady financial base while still continuing to re-invest in the Community