



2023 – 2024

STRATEGIC PLAN

JUNE 2023



CITY OF
WEST ST. PAUL



RAPP CONSULTING GROUP

June 27, 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.



The Plan

Four Strategic Priorities

- 1 FOCUSED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- 2 EXPANDED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
- 3 RELIABLE SERVICE DELIVERY
- 4 IMPROVED HOUSING

STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY 2023–2024

City of West St. Paul

Strategic Priority	Desired Outcome	Key Outcome Indicator	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	a) Project development agreement, entitlements, and site plan approval
	Active and functioning business network group	- _#_ of businesses participating	- 10% of existing businesses participating in networking group by 2025	b) Re-evaluate existing business association relationships c) Develop marketing plan and marketing toolbox targeting desired restaurants, retail and industry
	Redevelopment of underutilized and blighted properties	- _#_ of underutilized properties - _#_ of blighted properties	- Reduce underutilized/blighted properties by 20% by 2025	d) Identify high priority re-development areas
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	a) Identify barriers to participation in committees and commissions, focus groups, etc. and remove them b) Develop and deploy a strategic communications plan with equity focus
	Higher engagement with diverse populations	- _#_ non-white participants in city programs	- Increase BIPOC participation in city programming by 10% by 06/2025	c) Evaluate existing community events/programs plan to ensure offerings are impactful and reach all community members
	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	d) Explore re-branding e) Community partners assessment
Reliable Service Delivery	A safe community	- Crime rate (part 1 & part 2)	- Crime rate reduced _%_ by 06/2025	a) Adopt WSP public safety philosophy
	An engaged workforce	- Employee engagement survey scores	- Employee engagement increased by _%_ year over year	b) Organization-wide training and education plan c) Employee performance management strategy
	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	d) Establish employee engagement survey e) Identify gaps for equipment and infrastructure
Improved Housing	Rental housing meets or exceeds community expectations	- _#_ of improved rental units	- _%_ of rental housing units exceed minimum housing standards by _(date)_	a) Review and revise ordinances/policies to improve equity and minimum standards for rental housing
	Expanded rehabilitation of existing residential properties	- _#_ of rehabbed owned properties	- Public financing programs - _#_ of properties improved by ____	b) Explore methods to engage renter population c) Evaluation policies/programs that support housing maintenance (SFH, rental) and promote affordability
	All renters fully knowledgeable of their rights	- _#_ of verified knowledgeable renters	- 20% increase of renters who know their rights	d) City participation in and advancement of renters' rights group(s)



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 EQUITY VISION

We envision a West St. Paul community that:

- Connects people and families of all races, ethnicities, ages, abilities, genders, sexual identities, orientations, and religions to a shared community experience
- Reflects the needs of all people, including those who have been historically marginalized, and intentionally engages all members in community decisions
- Nurtures the wellbeing of the whole person by ensuring personal safety, access to transportation, and economic opportunity



OUR MISSION

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



OUR VALUES

Ethical

Innovative

Responsive

Equitable

Efficient

FUN!

Reviewing the Environment, Setting Strategic 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 Concerns) in the external environment. The results are displayed below.

STRENGTHS

- 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)

WEAKNESSES

- 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

SWOT Analysis

- 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)

OPPORTUNITIES

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

THREATS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Focused Economic Development



Outcome

Successful development of city-owned 9-acre parcel

Key outcome indicator

Property sale; development approvals

Target

Sale of property and development approvals in place by 12/2023

Outcome

Active and functioning business network group

Key outcome indicator

of businesses participating

Target

10% of existing businesses participating in networking group by 2025

Outcome

Redevelopment of underutilized and blighted properties

Key outcome indicator

of underutilized properties; _#_ of blighted properties

Target

Reduce underutilized/blighted properties by 20% by 2025

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

a) Project development agreement, entitlements and site plan approval

b) Re-evaluate existing business association relationships

c) Develop marketing plan and marketing toolbox targeting desired restaurants, retail and industry

d) Identify high priority re-development areas

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Expanded Community Engagement



Outcome

Increase BIPOC involvement in decision making

Key outcome indicator

applicants from BIPOC community members; _#_ appointments from BIPOC community members

Target

Increase BIPOC representation on committees/commissions by 10% by 06/2025

Outcome

Higher engagement with diverse populations

Key outcome indicator

non-white participants in city programs

Target

Increase BIPOC participation in city programming by 10% by 06/2025

Outcome

Mutually beneficial relationships with community partners

Key outcome indicator

Partnership survey results

Target

75% of community partners report that their relationship with the city is meaningful and mutually beneficial

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

a) Identify barriers to participation in committees and commissions, focus groups, etc. and remove them

b) Develop and deploy a strategic communications plan with equity focus

c) Evaluate existing community events/programs plan to ensure offerings are impactful and reach all community members

d) Explore re-branding

e) Community partners assessment

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Reliable Service Delivery



Outcome

A safe community

Key outcome indicator

Crime rate (part 1 & part 2)

Target

Crime rate reduced % by 06/2025

Outcome

An engaged workforce

Key outcome indicator

Employee engagement survey scores

Target

Employee engagement increased by % year over year

Outcome

Reliable and functional equipment and infrastructure

Key outcome indicator

 \$ value of deferred maintenance; breaks, backlogs, downtime statistics

Target

Decreases in deferred maintenance, downtime, breaks and backlogs 2023-2025 in each department

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- a) Adopt WSP public safety philosophy
- b) Organization-wide training and education plan
- c) Employee performance management strategy

- d) Establish employee engagement survey
- e) Identify funding gaps for equipment and infrastructure

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Improved Housing



Outcome

Rental housing meets or exceeds community expectations

Key outcome indicator

of improved rental units

Target

% of rental housing units exceed minimum housing standards by _(date)_

Outcome

Expanded rehabilitation of existing residential properties

Key outcome indicator

of rehabbed owned properties

Target

Public financing programs; _#_ of properties improved by ____

Outcome

All renters fully knowledgeable of their rights

Key outcome indicator

of verified knowledgeable renters

Target

20% increase of renters who know their rights

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

a) Review and revise ordinances/policies to improve equity and minimum standards for rental housing

b) Explore methods to engage renter population

c) Evaluate policies/programs that support housing maintenance (SFH, rental) and promote affordability

d) City participation in and advancement of renters' rights group(s)

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 throughout the process.

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