

**City of Minneapolis
2010 Legislative Agenda**

As Amended on May 14, 2010

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Local Government Finance

The priority issues for Minneapolis:

Local Government Aid (LGA) and Levy Limits

LGA is the state program that provides cities and counties with annual financial assistance. Initiated in 1971 LGA distributes a state general appropriation based on a legislatively approved formula. In 2009 the LGA appropriation was authorized at \$526.0 million or \$42.0 million greater than the previous year's amount. However, the state budget deficit has resulted in the Governor unallotting approximately \$212 million in 2008 through 2010. As a result of the unallotments, approximately \$380.0 million in LGA will be distributed to cities as compared to the authorized \$526.0 million. The following chart presents the City of Minneapolis's certified and actual amounts for the timeframe.

The City's certified and actual LGA amounts from 2008 to 2010 is as follows:

Year/Unallotment Date	Certified Amount	Actual Amount
2008/ Dec. 26	\$ 82,230,891	\$ 68,057,346
2009/ July 16	88,786,411	80,249,971
2010/ January	90,012,451	68,671,351

During the interim before the 2010 session, several legislative taskforces are working on such topics as policies to balance the budget, job creation, and LGA. The LGA workgroup's report is due in December 2010. While it is doubtful that the Legislature will amend the LGA program including the distribution formula, the funding level could be adjusted by the 2010 legislature or the Governor if state general fund revenues do not meet projections. As part of the LGA study group's fact-finding and to facilitate on-going analysis of the state-local fiscal relationship, the Department of Revenue should annually collect and compile information on state tax collections by city, in addition to the county and regional reports.

The 2008 Legislature approved the imposition of levy limits for cities over 2,500 in population. The limits are effective for taxes collected in 2009 through 2011. The limits are based on levy plus aids and permit certain expenditures such as debt payments, and pensions to be special levies, or exempt from the limit.

Levy limits restrict the authority of local governments to manage their operations. In the absence of levy limits, the City of Minneapolis has been able to expend public funds that have been targeted to needed services and has maintained the City's fiscal health.

Being aware of the LGA workgroup and the status of the state budget, the City of Minneapolis recommends that the 2010 legislature:

- Refrain from further reductions in Local Government Aid
- Eliminate levy limits for taxes payable in 2011 and thereafter
- Establish a Local Government Aid funding level that is greater than the 2010 actual level and approximate the planned certified amount.

Mall of America (MoA)

The City is aware that the MoA adds to the region's economy by attracting patrons from other parts of the state and country and that it is a major employer of both construction and retail service workers. However, the City must oppose legislation relating to the expansion of the MoA unless the following conditions are met:

- a) ~~the public improvements are paid from non regional sources and not fiscal disparities which provides property tax relief for many cities;~~
- b) ~~the parking structure, in part, is self funded either through fees or leases entered into by MoA tenants;~~
- c) ~~the proposed theater will not upon completion or by a later modification provide performances that could compete with publicly funded theaters in the region. Theater configurations which will be assumed to be competitive include theaters configured as a dinner theater with tables on the main floor and a seating capacity which exceeds 1,500 seats, or a theater configured in the traditional auditorium style with "fly space" and a seating capacity which exceeds 500 seats; and~~
- d) ~~the MoA's conference center will not complete with regional convention centers located in the metro area and greater Minnesota.~~

~~The 2008 legislature authorized the City of Bloomington to levy special taxes (sales, lodging, food and beverage) and tax increment financing to support public improvements including the parking ramp. The taxes apply to the mall district and some of the taxes could be extended by the Bloomington City Council to other parts of the city. The legislation does not include regional financing and it prohibits live theater on the site.~~

~~If the 2010 Legislature discusses the MoA development legislation the City of Minneapolis reaffirms its opposition unless the identified conditions are included in the final bill.~~

State/Local Fiscal Relationships: Local Government Aid (LGA)

For almost 40 years, the State of Minnesota has provided aid to cities, counties and schools, while limiting their authority to impose local taxes. Over the years the programs have been amended but the state has continued to share revenues with local governments. However, when the state experiences a revenue shortfall local governments, as well as state government, are subject to revenue reductions or, at best, no appropriations increase. Since 2008, cities and counties have been subject to reductions through unallotments and budget modifications while schools have received no increases but have been subject to shifts in payment dates.

Current Biennial Budget (FY2010/2011) Spending Changes Fall Heavily on Cities

Prior to 2010 legislative action, the current biennial budget appropriated \$33.5 billion in spending but was subsequently reduced by \$2.6 billion. The spending changes included timing changes (shifts) for school aid payments and permanent reductions. The shifts are to be paid to the schools in the future. The reductions represent 77% of the budget solution while the remaining 23%, or \$711 million, were revenue changes including, but not limited to, transfers from other funds, increased tax compliance enforcement, delays in paying tax refunds. The major spending changes included:

- \$404.3 million in local aid and credit programs, or 12 % of the budget solution
- \$146.6 million to higher education, or 4% of the budget solution
- \$114.3 million to state agencies, programs, and property tax relief not identified above, or 3 % of the solution.
- \$1.949 billion in payment shifts to school aids, or 56% of the budget solution.

The budget solution falls heavily on cities and is disproportionate to the city's appropriation as compared to the total budget.

- City LGA and market value homestead credit (MVHC) paid to cities accounted for 3.6% of the budget prior to adjustments.
- Reductions in LGA and MVHC paid to cities were equivalent to 7.2% of the solution (revenue, shifts and reductions), or almost twice its share of the budget.

Excluding the revenue changes and the shift, approximately \$686.0 million in spending has been cut. **Of the total spending cuts city aids and credits account for 35% of the spending reductions.**

Over the last three years the state has not paid the certified (promised) amounts and as a result, cities and counties have received reduced amounts. In 2009, Minneapolis was promised \$ 88.7 million but actually received \$ 80.2 million.

The 2010 promised amount of \$ 90.0 million was reduced to \$64.0 million, a 29% reduction. In 2010, Minneapolis lost all of its market value homestead credit prior to a LGA reduction (\$6.4 million).

The unreliable nature of LGA has caused several cities to treat LGA as one-time funding, or use it for non-recurring expenses. Cities have also reduced services, instituted lay-offs and or increased property taxes to offset state aid losses.

Legislative LGA Study Commission. "Formula Reform" Delayed

While the amount of the actual LGA amount has been a major concern for cities, the statutory formula that distributes LGA has been subject criticisms that it does not measure city needs or a city's ability to raise revenue. Concerns regarding special formula components by city size and location have also been identified. Being aware of the concerns, the 2008 tax bill contained a provision that established a LGA study group. The group which consists of city officials and legislators is charged to study the current formula and make recommendation to improve it. The report to the legislature was due by December 15, 2010 but the due date has been delayed to December 15, 2012

Minneapolis Priority

- Funding of the LGA program at, a minimum, its promised amount (\$526.0 million in 2011) during the 2012-2013 biennium.
- Move-up the deadline of the LGA study group to December, 2011.

Convention Center Lodging Tax Cap

- The 1986 Legislature authorized the City of Minneapolis to plan, finance and construct a convention center. To finance the construction and operation of the facility the city was permitted to levy a city-wide sales and lodging tax as well as food and beverage taxes in a downtown taxing district. The lodging tax maximum rate was set at 3%. The actual rate however was subject to a cap based on the sum of sales and other lodging taxes. The combined rate could not exceed 12%. Sales taxes included state and local taxes. The 1986 calculation resulted in a 2.5% lodging tax. (State Sales tax 6% + city sales tax 0.5% + existing lodging tax 3% + 1986 lodging tax 2.5%) = 12 %). In 1991 the rate was adjusted to 2% as a result of the ½% increase in the state sales tax.
- The 2001 legislature amended the cap to 13% and, as a result, the lodging tax increased to 3%. In July 2009, the state sales tax rate increased to 6.875% and the lodging tax rate dropped to 2.625%. The reduction is estimated to decrease the lodging tax receipts by approximately \$650,000 annually. The receipts are dedicated to the convention center fund. The City is the only city with a cap.
- It is proposed that the 1986 law be amended to eliminate the cap.

Minneapolis supports:

Increased property tax relief to those residential properties that will have significant tax increases due to the elimination of the limited market value program, tax levy increases and changes in the property tax base.

- ~~Continued efforts by the Department of Revenue to provide public information regarding the property tax relief program. Such efforts can include but not be limited to public service announcements, web pages, printed materials and presentations at public meetings and on public education/government programming.~~
- Diversifying revenue sources for municipalities, including but not limited to street use utility, sales tax, and other user fees including infrastructure maintenance fees.
- Repealing the state sales tax on local government purchases.

- Restructure the property tax relief programs to base property tax relief primarily on the income of the owner-occupant of residential property.
- ~~As part of the LGA study and to facilitate ongoing analysis of the state local fiscal relationship, Direct the Minnesota Department of Revenue to provide information on state collected taxes by city in addition to the current county and regional reports.~~

Minneapolis opposes:

- Legislation including constitutional and statutory amendments, including levy limits, that would limit government revenues and authority.
- Unfunded mandated services or procedures imposed by the legislature on local governments.
- ~~Use of the sales tax proceeds approved by the Clean Water, Land and Legacy constitutional amendment for purposes other than those intended by the amendment.~~

Capital Bonding

The following projects were submitted by the City of Minneapolis to Minnesota Management and Budget and adopted as the City’s bonding priorities for the 2010 Session.

1. Northtown Rail Yards Bridge	\$7.0M
2. Training and Emergency Operations Center	\$750,000
3. Granary Road	\$5.3M
4. Target Center Improvements	\$6.5M
5. I-35W 3 rd and 4 th Street Interchange	\$2.5M
6. Grand Rounds Scenic Byway Lighting Renovation	\$2.0M
7. 35W South and 35W North Storm Tunnel Preservation Projects	\$2.0M
8. Hiawatha LRT Corridor Development	\$6.5M

~~In addition the City of Minneapolis is willing to be the political subdivision required by Minnesota law for the Orchestra Hall/Peavey Plaza Redevelopment project, should that organization obtain state bonding proceeds.~~

The City of Minneapolis supports continued metro-wide efforts to secure bonding funds for local inflow and infiltration and other stormwater projects.

Minneapolis supports bonding for statewide bridge replacement and rehabilitation and the Transit Capital Improvement Program including funding for Bottineau, Cedar, Central, Northern Lights Express, 35W and Southwest transit corridors.

Public Safety

Keeping residents and visitors safe is a top priority for the City of Minneapolis.

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

General Public Safety

- Funding for the entire public safety system, including such critical functions as police, fire, prosecutors, public defense, communication systems, probation, the courts and victim services. Providing public safety, a core responsibility of local government, is threatened by insufficient funding.
- Changing the criminal code to address chronic offenders of indecent exposure laws and allowing for enhancement to felony level offenses.
- Creating a statewide coordinated plan for dealing with released sex offenders that addresses the overall concentration of offenders located within the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County and especially mitigates the concentration of sex offenders within vulnerable neighborhoods. To ensure this equitable distribution of sex offenders, the State must fund additional housing options and placement of half-way houses and should require the county of commitment to bear financial responsibility for released offenders.
- Update MS 624.7142 (~~carrying while under influence of alcohol or controlled substance~~) to Prohibit carrying a pistol with a blood-alcohol concentration of .08 or more.

Prostitution and Human Trafficking

- Efforts to reduce prostitution and human trafficking.
- Streamlining statutes in order to more effectively prosecute prostitution-related offenses.
- Legislation designating funding for treatment and creation of transitional housing programs to support ~~prostitution~~ prostituted people.

Domestic Abuse

- Amend the existing definition of “family or household members” to clarify that it does include persons *formerly* involved in such a relationship.
- Strengthen the existing domestic abuse no contact order statute to provide increased safety for victims and to enable police, prosecutors, probation and the courts to hold domestic abuse offenders who violate those orders more accountable
- Amend the domestic abuse gross misdemeanor statute to remove the requirement that the prior qualified offense be against a family or household member.
- Improve the processes to access court records.

Traffic and Driving Offenses

- Allowing for a gross misdemeanor and increasing penalties for careless driving offense if driving conduct results in a fatality or great bodily harm.

Minneapolis Supports:

General Public Safety

- Continued funding for re-entry programs and efforts to coordinate the programs with existing opportunities. Legislation supporting the re-entry of ex-offenders into their communities, such as voting rights, public/private training and employment programs, and access to affordable housing.
- Sufficient funding for General Assistance Medical Care and other programs that fund mental health treatment and other safety net services.

- Protecting the human rights of immigrant populations and establishing a culture of mutual trust between law enforcement and immigrant populations to foster greater community public safety.
- On a state-wide basis, imposing a wholesale level impact fee equivalent to a per-drink surcharge on alcoholic beverages and using the proceeds for public safety, crime prevention and rehabilitation of offenders.
- Initiatives to address livability crimes, including continued and increased state funding for restorative justice programs.
- Legislation supporting significant gun control measures including the mandatory reporting of any lost or stolen firearm, strengthening laws regulating the transfer of firearms, the prohibition of possessing replica guns in public, and measures to stop the flow of handguns to youth.
- Full exploration of the provision of forensic science services to law enforcement agencies in Hennepin County.

Domestic Abuse

- Legislation disqualifying an offender who violates a domestic abuse no contact order or interferes with an emergency call from owning or possessing a pistol.

Traffic and Driving Offenses

- ~~Legislative authority for the “Stop on Red” initiative.~~ Legislation enabling cities to efficiently leverage public safety resources by allowing the use of technology such as photo enforcement.
- Legislation making it a crime to drive under the influence of any drug that makes a person an unsafe driver, including THC.
- Amending the driving while impaired statute to change to .16, the level at which a person’s alcohol concentration becomes an aggravating factor, allowing prosecutors to charge such an offense at a higher level.
- Amending the reckless or careless driving statute to address aggressive driving perpetrated with malicious intent.
- ~~Amend MS 169A.03, subd. 3 (driving while impaired definitions section), to add a subsection as an aggravating factor for having caused an accident resulting in property damage or physical injury to any other party.~~ Establish an aggravating factor to the driving while impaired statute for having caused an accident resulting in property damage or physical injury to another person.

Vulnerable Adults

- Strengthening laws regarding the health, safety and wellbeing of vulnerable adults, including indecent exposure and neglect laws.

Fire Safety

- Mandated fire sprinklers in certain facilities such as large homes, nursing homes, high rises.
- Required inspections by the State Fire Marshall to include private schools, assisted living facilities and resorts.

General Changes to Criminal Code

- Legislation that would prohibit the solicitation of business at the scene of a mass casualty or disaster.
- Amending the burglary statutes to make it a crime for a person to enter a building without consent and commit invasion of privacy offenses.
- Legislation creating tougher penalties for offenders convicted of tagging, which includes the suspending of drivers’ licenses for up to one year; and also support a statewide age limit on the purchase of spray paint.
- Allowing “any equivalent crime in another state” to be added to the increased penalty for certain misdemeanors statute and clarifying when prosecutors may charge offenders.

Minneapolis Opposes

- Oppose the expansion of fireworks.
- Efforts to decriminalize misdemeanor and livability-related offenses.
- Efforts to reduce the effective use of the Automated Pawn System (APS), to promote cooperation between law enforcement and the pawn industry, to enhance the ability to identify illegal activity and recover stolen property.

Pension Sustainability

The Plan for Sustainable Pensions: Funding and Securing the Police and Fire Relief Associations.

In 1980, the Minneapolis Police Relief Association (MPRA) pension fund and the Minneapolis Firefighters' Relief Association (MFRA) pension fund were "closed" to new members. City employees who would have been eligible for enrollment in those plans were enrolled in the Public Employees Retirement Fund (PERA) from that point on.

The MPRA and MFRA pension plans need to achieve full funding and secure pension benefits without undue burden to Minneapolis taxpayers. The City of Minneapolis supports merging MPRA and MFRA into PERA under the following principles: ~~It is time that the City and the Legislature work to address the following problems:~~

1. Pension benefits based on a proper determination of amounts under state law, by-laws of pension plan, and court orders.
2. Fixed annual city and state contributions sufficient to fund remaining unfunded liabilities.
3. City approval
4. Assure the continuation of retiree base benefits as required by law.
5. Balance retiree and taxpayer interests.
6. Simplify and link the annual cost of living adjustments in a manner consistent with other governmental pension plans.
7. Establish a schedule of City contributions to fully fund the plans by 2020.
 1. ~~Minneapolis taxpayers have an unlimited financial obligation under current law to fund the growing costs of the closed pension funds, and the City has very limited authority to manage or control these costs.~~ From 2009 to 2010, the anticipated City contribution to the closed funds will grow by 231% to \$18.0 million, not including debt service. This substantial increase from 2010 forward is mostly due to a change in the mortality assumptions calculation for MPRA. In addition to recurring annual costs, debt service payments on the closed pension funds will cost the City \$34.9 million through 2014. The combined City obligation to the closed funds with debt service is \$258.9 million over the next 20 years if no action is taken. Also, it should be noted that the associations which govern the funds are both considering proposals that would further increase the City's costs beyond these projections. *Costs could quickly balloon beyond current projections in this document unless something is done.*

- ~~2. **The City funds the pension plans, but has limited influence in the governance of the plans.** In 2009, the City's contribution to MPRA from the tax levy is \$3.0 million with an additional \$2.9 million required for debt service. The City's 2009 contribution to MFRA from the tax levy is \$1.9 million. MFRA debt service obligations were fulfilled in 2008. These costs have increased over time under the auspices of the associations which govern the plans and compute the benefit calculations.~~
- ~~3. **The plans are not fully funded.** MFRA was fully funded from 1998-2001; however, poor market performance has produced a negative return on investments, increasing the burden on Minneapolis taxpayers responsible for covering the shortfall. MPRA has never been fully funded. When decisions made by the associations result in losses, the City must fund these losses.~~
- ~~4. **Benefit calculations are determined by the associations and are not linked to cost of living adjustments commonly used by other funds.** The associations are administered by the members receiving the benefits. No external party validates the calculations, and the associations are the sole arbitrators of any disputes short of legal action. In effect, the association members have exercised great latitude in setting their own benefit amounts by changing the "unit value" calculations in violation of the 1995 Agreement between the City and the associations, as identified by the State Auditor.~~

~~The annual cost of living adjustment for each of these funds is unpredictable, has no limit on the annual adjustment like other public pension plans in Minnesota, and is tied to the pay of a small number of current employees, which can vary widely from year to year.~~

~~The City's sustainability plan includes the following objectives:~~

- ~~1. Assure the continuation of retiree base benefits as required by law.~~
- ~~2. Balance retiree and taxpayer interests.~~
- ~~3. Simplify and link the annual cost of living adjustments in a manner consistent with other governmental pension plans.~~
- ~~4. Establish a schedule of City contributions to fully fund the plans by 2020.~~

~~While there may be a number of ways to reach these objectives, The City's sustainability plan includes the following actions that require legislative approval followed by City Council approval:~~

- ~~1. **Ensure that retirees receive consistent cost of living adjustments.** This could be achieved by replacing the annual change in unit value with a cost of living adjustment equal to or comparable with what other police and fire retirees in Minnesota receive.~~
- ~~2. **Change the structure of governance for the closed funds.** To achieve this, The current administrative structure should be replaced with the Public Employee Retirement Association (PERA) and all of the funds' assets should be managed by the State Board of Investment (SBI). This will save significantly on the cost of administering these small funds.~~
- ~~3. **Commit the City to a fixed annual contribution that fully funds each plan no later than 2020. Fund these plans consistent with the requirements of statewide pension plans.** The City's funding commitment will begin when the sustainability plan is approved by the legislature, agreement is reached on actuarial assumptions, the change in administration of~~

the plans occurs, cost of living adjustments are linked to the COLA changes for similar Minnesota pension plans, and City Council approval is made.

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

The City will in 2011 ~~2010~~:

- ~~● Pursue in cooperation with the Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund (MERF) Board of Directors consolidation of MERF into the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) with an effective date of June 30, 2010.~~
- Pursue legislation that will merge the Minneapolis Police Relief Association (MPRA) and the Minneapolis Fire Relief Association (MFRA) into PERA - Police and Fire with an effective date no later than December 31, 2012 ~~2010~~. The merger plan will include continued financial contributions from the city and state of Minnesota, continuation of basic pension benefits that are at least equal to current levels as required by law, cost of living adjustments consistent with other PERA - Police and Fire retirees and a plan to transfer each plan's assets to PERA - Police and Fire at least six months prior to the effective date of the merger.

Minneapolis opposes:

- Legislation increasing benefits to MFRA and MPRA members until such time that a sustainable solution to ensure the long-term health of the funds can be ~~jointly reached by MFRA and the City.~~

Transportation

The City supports increased funding for transit and highways that includes stable and secure financial resources to meet both the capital and operational needs of the expanding regional transit systems.

Minneapolis supports funding for all modes of transportation and puts a high priority on model options that provide alternatives to the use of single occupancy vehicles and supports legislation that requires that all state funded transportation projects consider appropriate accommodations for all transportation modes.

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

- Funding to complete development of the Central Corridor LRT line
- Funding for Southwest Corridor and Bottineau Boulevard and Northern Lights Express
- Funding for the state's portion of high speed rail funds for a Chicago to Twin Cities route
- Funding of all other transit corridors which help build a complete transit system.
- New funding mechanisms for alternative transportation ideas including street cars
- Funding for 35W BRT improvements including funds for a Lake Street Station
- Funding for traffic mitigation efforts in and around the University of Minnesota made necessary because of the Washington Avenue Central Corridor LRT alignment
- Adequate funding for transit operations without reductions in metropolitan development funds
- Legislation creating alternative sources of revenue for transportation improvements, including local authority to create and make use of a street utility, new forms of Tax Increment Financing and the repealing of special laws that limit the City of Minneapolis' authority more than other cities in Minnesota
- ~~● Moving Violation for Blocking Intersections. Amend MS 169.15 to allow local jurisdictions to issue a moving violation for blocking intersections. Currently the City has an ordinance that prohibits blocking an intersection and assesses a \$30 fine for the offense~~

Affordable Housing & Homelessness Prevention

Minneapolis has adopted and implemented policies to provide lifecycle housing throughout the City. Providing all residents with safe, quality and affordable housing is a priority in Minneapolis. In cooperation with public and private partners, the City has assisted in the production of affordable rental and owner-occupied housing.

The City's efforts in providing affordable housing have been slowed by the mortgage foreclosure crisis and the tightening of credit to potential homeowners. While the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) has helped, additional resources are needed.

Recognizing that limited resources are available, Minneapolis plans to achieve ~~this~~ its housing goals by partnering with local and statewide housing advocates and agencies, including MinnesotaHousing, and several nonprofit organizations.

Other affordable housing priorities in Minneapolis include safeguarding the current ~~MHFA~~ MinnesotaHousing programs that serve low-income residents.

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

- Policies that prevent mortgage foreclosures, secure and reoccupy vacant and abandoned properties, and help stabilize communities that have suffered from foreclosures and abandonment. Such policies include but are not limited to:
 - Improved notices of foreclosures to cities and renters
 - Modifications of mortgage terms
 - Increased availability and public awareness of counseling services
 - ~~Permitting continued occupancy of foreclosed property during the redemption period and~~
 - Modifying the foreclosure process to provide additional time prior to the sale
 - Maintain owner occupancy of foreclosed homes by current or new owner occupants
 - Lender-owner mediation
 - Funding for local governments or non-profits to purchase homes for owner-occupancy
 - Ensure that tenants' rights are protected in such arrangements as lease-to-own contracts
- Appropriations for MinnesotaHousing at a level significant enough to have statewide impact on shelters as well as permanent, supportive, assisted and transitional housing that serve affordable housing needs throughout the State. The Legislature should also continue the homelessness prevention programs, including the outreach project and provide additional resources for housing preservation and mortgage foreclosure prevention programs.

Minneapolis supports:

- ~~Continued review of the property tax code to encourage affordable housing production and preservation.~~
- State income tax credits for affordable housing.
- Initiation of a state-supported land trust project.
- ~~The initiatives proposed by the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless to prevent homelessness by improving transitions from corrections, including ensuring permanent state funding for additional prison discharge planners and the creation and funding for a jail re-entry pilot project in up to five Minnesota counties.~~
- Repeal of the \$50 offset for households living in public or rent subsidized housing and receiving financial assistance from the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP).

- Legislative action to eliminate tax incentives that encourage the conversion of single family housing to rental property.
- Funding, both capital and program, for the continued implementation of Heading Home Hennepin including capital funding for the equal opportunity center.
- Prospective repeal of the relative homestead property tax classification.
- Efforts including the ability of cities to acquire or hold properties to preserve neighborhoods impacted by the concentration of foreclosures

Municipal Governance

Minneapolis' ability to conduct business in an orderly and efficient manner is frequently regulated by state law.

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

- Legislation repealing the numerous special laws that had been enacted between 1960 and 2002 establishing specific unclassified appointed positions in the City of Minneapolis. In 2003, the City passed a special law that allowed the City to determine which positions should be in the appointed unclassified service.
- Support a state law allowing the Civilian Review Authority (CRA) to be granted limited subpoena power to compel the production of documents, records and other physical evidence to improve the quality of CRA staff investigations by obtaining information relevant to the allegations from entities outside the city organization.
- Legislation authorizing cities to conduct alternative voting methods including instant runoff voting and legislation that adopts rules to implement instant runoff voting or authorize the Secretary of State or cities to promulgate the rules.
- ~~Legislation enabling the charging of a felony when there is evidence that a person uses, trains, or possesses a dog or other animal for the purpose of participating in, engaging in, or promoting animal fighting; increased penalties for animal fighting and possession of animals for fighting; and allowing for the charging of a felony for being a spectator at an animal fight.~~
- Amendments to state law so that reasonable conditions may be imposed uniquely to a given liquor licensee whether the license has already been issued or not and without passing an ordinance laying out the terms and conditions for that particular licensee.

Minneapolis supports:

- Legislation to assist the City in dealing with abandoned vehicles that are not claimed by their owners, including:
 - authority like that granted to private lot operator to bring deficiency claims against owner of abandoned vehicles for the cost of towing and storage of their car;
 - the creating of a statewide fund to assist impound lot operators in covering the costs of unpaid towing and storage fees not covered by the sale of abandoned vehicles;
 - other measures to reduce the costs associated with abandoned vehicles and the costs of operating one of only two public impound lots in the State of Minnesota.
- Legislation that eliminates outdated or unnecessary publications and permits cities to elect alternative means such as the web to publish notices and official proceedings.
- ~~Support the examination of the governance of the Metropolitan Council to ensure that the council members are chosen via a process that includes an opportunity for local governments and other stakeholders to provide meaningful input, including consideration for an elected Met Council. Any future changes to the governance structure should be reflective of the true geography of the metropolitan region and a regional understanding of the Metropolitan Council's future direction and goals.~~

- Legislation allowing local units of government to define “dependent” for purposes of group benefits for local government officers and employees.
- Legislation that would authorize state regulation of dog and cat breeders.
- Legislation that would permit qualifying nonprofit animal welfare organizations to provide subsidized spay and neuter services to animals belonging to low income persons.
- ~~An amendment to the Municipal Planning Act (MS 462.351 to 462. 364) that would establish a period of time in which a person can appeal to the district court for review of the decision. The amendment would be to MS 462.361 (Judicial Review) and would be similar to the provisions of the county planning, development and zoning law (MS 394). The county law (MS 394.27 sub 9) allows an appeal to the district court of a decision made by the County Board of Adjustment within thirty days of the date of the decision.~~
Support legislation to amend the Municipal Planning Act (MS 462.351 to 462.364) so that provisions for appeals to local government adoption or amendment of an ordinance, rule or regulation, final approval of the adoption or amendment, are consistent with similar provisions for county governments (MS 394.) For example, presently the appeal period for a local government land use decision is six years, while the appeal period for a county land use decisions is 60 days. A shared time frame provides certainty for units of government and citizens and creates a uniform standard. This also aligns the process with the timeframe for appeals of quasi-judicial decisions (MS 606.01) which is also 60 days
- ~~Legislation allowing municipalities to adopt and enforce a housing, property maintenance, or rental licensing ordinance to ensure the safety of residential properties.~~
- ~~Support and promote~~ Legislation that removes barriers to, and helps to more readily facilitate regional and cross jurisdictional partnership, joint powers and shared service agreements.
- ~~Support~~ Legislation concerning the process and regulatory requirements for the placement of high voltage power lines in urban areas.

Minneapolis opposes:

- Legislation restricting the authority of cities to license industries such as pawnshops, massage establishments, tattoo and piercing establishments ~~the pawnshop industry~~. Efforts to limit the authority of cities to set licensing and transaction fees that enable cities to recover their full regulatory and enforcement expenses.

City Livability

The City works to keep Minneapolis a desirable place to live, work, conduct business and play.

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

General City Livability

- Legislation authorizing the development of a statewide aviation policy to diversify air traffic throughout the State.

Youth Violence Prevention

Traditionally, public policy has addressed youth violence primarily as a public safety issue. As a result, solutions to the increasing problem of youth violence have been sought through the criminal justice system. Increased arrests, longer sentences, and trying youth as adults, however, have not solved the problem.

By changing our perspective and instead addressing youth violence as an issue of public and community health and wellbeing, public and nonprofit partners are better able to work cooperatively with youth, parents, teachers, health providers and other stakeholders to protect

youth and prevent violence. Viewed through the lens of public health, the City is recommending policies that:

- Establish competitive grant funds for existing state or local mentoring partnerships to increase the number of mentors statewide.
- Align existing state resources to fund prevention and intervention programs that address youth violence and associated risk and protective factors including but not limited to teen pregnancy prevention, school attendance, and community connectedness.
- Maintain state and federal workforce funding and policies to employ at-risk youth and youth reentering the community from the criminal justice system.
- Support policies that help local law enforcement track illegal guns and restrict the access of young people to illegal guns.
- Support funding for the Youth Violence Prevention Act of 2009
- ~~Reinstate funding for the Youth Intervention Program Association.~~ Increased funding for youth development and early intervention programs including after-school activities and mentoring opportunities.

Public Health

- ~~Maintain funding to community health boards for the State Health Improvement Program, a statewide comprehensive health promotion plan to prevent chronic disease through the prevention of obesity and tobacco use.~~
- Support proposals that will prevent childhood lead poisoning and promote healthier homes through the reduction of asthma triggers, and other indoor environmental health concerns.
- ~~Legislation to remove one potential barrier to early entry into prenatal care created by the perceived punitive nature of a state law mandating that health care providers report prenatal substance use to local welfare agencies.~~
- ~~Proposals to protect~~ Expanding health care access and resources to help low-income persons obtain health care coverage and health services. Eliminating health disparities so that all residents can have equal opportunity for optimal health. Support health care coverage for all that includes a comprehensive benefit set that emphasizes primary and preventive care and includes physical health, mental health, substance abuse, dental services, medications and quality interpreter and translation services. Support a system that is made affordable for patients and other payers by controlling both administrative and clinical costs; assures culturally relevant high quality care ~~including interpreter and translation services~~, and is easy for patients to understand.
- ~~Reinstate~~ Sufficient funding for and improved access to General Assistance Medical Care, ~~and protect funding for~~ MinnesotaCare, ~~and~~ Medical Assistance, and urban family planning programs.

Minneapolis supports: (these items will be reordered and grouped in the final document for better organization.)

- Sustaining the minor's consent law permitting adolescents to see medical providers for confidential reproductive, mental health and chemical dependency services. ~~issues without informing or obtaining the consent of a parent or guardian.~~
- Strengthening physical and health education curriculum in schools to prevent obesity and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Ensuring efficient funding for public health emergency preparedness and response.
- Establishing and enforcing quality standards, and restoring and maintaining the funding for early childhood programs.
- Continued funding and retention of the ~~formula to distribute state health funds.~~ Local Public Health Grant Program

- Maintained funding for the Eliminating Health Disparities grants.
- ~~Continued and expanded funding to support urban family planning programs.~~
- Legislation to increase funding for public library operations and to exempt county sales tax proceeds from maintenance of effort requirements.
- ~~Increased funding for youth development programs including after-school programs and reinstatement of the Youth at Risk Behavior program.~~
- The City supports and approves the Youth Coordinating Board (YCB)'s legislative agenda.
- ~~A health care system and a public health system that eliminates health disparities so that all residents can have equal opportunity for optimal health. A system would be affordable, assure a culturally relevant quality of care, be user-friendly and provide a comprehensive benefit set that emphasizes primary and preventive care and includes physical health, mental health, substance abuse, dental services and medications.~~
- Policies and enhanced funding to increase the number of children who can bike and walk to school safely.
- Legislation providing for gender-neutral marriage law, and enacting the Marriage and Family Protection Act.
- The use of Health Impact Assessments and funding to conduct them.
- Increased reimbursement for pre-school developmental and health screening, to ensure that reimbursements cover the actual cost of preschool screening.
- The Minnesota Health Plan Act, ~~Senate File No. 188/House File No. 135 regarding health care availability and affordability for every Minnesotan.~~ a single, statewide plan that would cover all Minnesotans for all their medical needs.

Minneapolis opposes:

- Legislation allowing the purchase of wine in grocery stores or other changes making it easier for minors to purchase alcoholic beverages.
- Legislation that further directs the City of Minneapolis on governance issues related to the neighborhood revitalization program.
- Efforts to further restrict access to health care programs for undocumented persons.

Environment and Sustainability

Minneapolis supports strong environmental policies focused on improving air, water and soil quality. The City will partner with county, state, federal and other jurisdictions to meet these objectives.

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

Extended Product Responsibility

- Support an Extended Producer Responsibility Framework approach that creates effective, and environmentally beneficial producer-initiated reduction, reuse and recycling programs to address the lifecycle impacts of products including greenhouse gas emissions from design through end-of-life management ~~so that state, county and city governments do not have primary responsibility for financing such efforts.~~ thereby reducing the local government responsibility for financing and managing collection and recycling activities.
- Support a Pharmaceutical Extended Producer Responsibility Framework approach that creates effective and environmentally beneficial, producer-initiated reduction, reuse and recycling programs to deal with a medications' lifecycle impacts such as illegal use and water pollution from design through end-of-life management so that state, county and city governments do not have primary responsibility for financing such efforts.

Minneapolis supports:

Stormwater/Wastewater Management

- Support increased state funding of stormwater management costs to local governments for rehabilitation of existing infrastructure and ~~This includes funds to help cities promote best management practices for stormwater,~~ costs associated with stormwater projects necessitated by impairments to water bodies through Total Maximum Daily Load or TMDL studies. ~~There should be~~ Support increased assistance costs associated with surcharges for excess inflow and infiltration, combined sewer overflows and flood mitigation. Priority should be given to projects that solve more than one stormwater problem and that also emphasize water quality. Future legislation should also ensure that the Metropolitan Council is eligible for all appropriate waste water funding programs and recognize the upcoming costs of stormwater management infrastructure and operation on municipalities from new regulatory mandates and load reduction requirements.

Clean Cars

- ~~The goal is to pass legislation that adopts California's auto emissions standards (including greenhouse gas standards). The federal Clean Air Act allows states to adopt the California vehicle emission standards, which require reductions in carbon dioxide emissions of 30 percent by 2016 in new passenger vehicles. These standards, already adopted by 14 other states, go beyond the federal CAFE standards.~~

Low Carbon Fuel Standard

- Support passage of a Low-Carbon Fuel Standard to reduce carbon impact of transportation fuels in Minnesota at least 10% by 2020. The LCFS is performance-based, greenhouse gas standard targeting transportation fuels sold in the state. It does not promote specific technologies. California has already adopted a similar measure.

Eco-Driving

- ~~Support requirements to the state's driver's training curriculum regarding pollution reduction and greenhouse gas reduction.~~

Climate Change Financial Incentives

- Support legislation that would provide local governments and non profits the same tax and financial incentives provided to private individuals and businesses for global warming initiatives including energy efficiency. This could include, but not be limited to consultants, fleets, fuels, renewable energy, capital projects, appliances and equipment purchases.

Solar

- Solar as a clean, affordable energy technology is lagging in Minnesota when compared to other states. Support incentives, mandates, and policies that increase solar photovoltaic and thermal production for both public and private entities.

Land Use Impacts on Climate Change

- Support amending the Met Council's comprehensive planning process to incorporate global warming reduction targets.
- Support creating financial incentives for metro and greater Minnesota communities land use planning that would achieve global warming pollution reduction goals.
- Support amending the statutory goals of MnDoT to include a reduction in per capita vehicle miles driven and propose changes in other state agencies' goals or mission that can also foster reduction of global warming pollution through more efficient land use patterns and reduced need for driving.

- Support requiring analysis of energy use and direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions as part of the environmental review of projects that currently require review.

Lead Weight Restrictions

- ~~Support mandates or incentives to eliminate the use of lead free tire weights for vehicles~~

Artificial Turf

- Support previously proposed legislation to conduct health study of synthetic turf and crumb rubber adding a comparable analysis of alternatives.

Trees

- Support legislation that will increase funding for incentives for tree planting and maintenance. In addition to a net loss of nearly 9,000 public trees over the past five years, the City has more than 200,000 trees, or 1/5th of its canopy, at stake with the impending arrival of the emerald ash borer. Planting the next generation of trees now will proactively mitigate the impact of the loss of these trees.
- Support research on insecticide to treat Emerald Ash Borer to determine effectiveness and impacts on human health and environment

Local Food

- Support efforts that will remove barriers and provide incentives for expanding local food production, thereby increasing our food security, expanding green jobs, and reducing our carbon footprint.
- Support efforts to shift to a more sustainable food system that will increase consumption of healthy foods, thereby improving nutrition and reducing obesity and chronic disease.
- Support efforts to ensure equitable distribution of food and expand access to healthy, sustainably produced, locally grown food for people with low incomes.

Green Chemistry

- Support incentives for manufacturers to stop using chemicals and instead look towards sustainable products and processes. Not only would this legislation protect our health and environment, but it would also promote business and job growth in this clean industrial sector.

Electric Vehicles

- Support efforts to promote electric vehicles and charging stations development in Minnesota

Jobs and Economic Development

Priority issues for Minneapolis:

Redevelopment and Economic Development

Minneapolis supports state financial assistance for redevelopment-related infrastructure improvements and economic development for cities throughout the state. The assistance should incorporate policies encouraging green manufacturing, and sustainability. Therefore the 204011 Minnesota Legislature should:

- increase resources for the redevelopment fund
- provide resources for sustainable development including green manufacturing;
- provide additional resources for the brown field cleanup program

- authorize a tax credit for high technology and bioscience companies that conduct research and development
- ~~— approve a historic tax credit.~~

Workforce

The City of Minneapolis has operated a jobs and training program that assists youth and adults in obtaining jobs skills and employment. The programs are funded with state and federal resources. Since 2006, the City has received a state appropriation for summer youth employment. The appropriation has provided approximately 1000 young people with jobs. The City supports:

- increased funding for the summer youth employment program and adult job training and employment programs.

Minneapolis supports:

- Statewide Tax Increment Financing (TIF) legislation for redevelopment districts that will facilitate the clean-up and redevelopment of property and transit-oriented development.
- Authorizing the transfer of the proceeds of contamination tax to the clean-up grant account.
- Continuation of the Livable Communities Act programs.
- Increase funding for the Minnesota Historical Society's ~~Local Preservation~~ Historical and Cultural Grant Program.
- Extension of the state emergency unemployment benefits for those persons who do not qualify for federal benefits because they do not meet federal minimum earnings requirements.
- The legislature directing the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDoT) to provide opportunities for private businesses to lease air rights on MnDoT properties.
- Legislation creating employment guidance for state transportation projects and state bond funded projects regarding the recruitment and engagement of individuals and companies from communities experiencing high rates of unemployment, including from communities of color.