



**WORK SESSION
RICHFIELD MUNICIPAL CENTER, BARTHOLOMEW ROOM
NOVEMBER 9, 2022
5:45 PM**

Call to order

1. Consider the City's proposed legislative priorities for 2023.

Adjournment

Auxiliary aids for individuals with disabilities are available upon request. Requests must be made at least 96 hours in advance to the City Clerk at 612-861-9739.

**STAFF REPORT NO. 28****WORK SESSION****11/9/2022**

REPORT PREPARED BY: Chris Swanson, Management Analyst

DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR REVIEW:

OTHER DEPARTMENT REVIEW:

CITY MANAGER REVIEW: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager
11/2/2022**ITEM FOR WORK SESSION:****Consider the City's proposed legislative priorities for 2023.****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Annually, the City of Richfield legislative priorities have been compiled in collaboration with various City departments and stakeholders. The priorities are a list of policy positions and measures the city supports at the state and regional level and bonding requests for city projects. This list of priorities is a summary document to help steer the City's legislative advocacy and outreach in the coming year.

City staff has pulled together a proposed list of legislative priorities for the City Council to review. Based on prior discussions with the League of Minnesota Cities (LMC) and Richfield's contracted lobbyist, it is recommended the City legislative platform includes to 3-5 top priorities, that all items are within the scope of the City's purview, and that the City Council adopt the legislative priorities formally. City staff is available to answer any questions City Council has on the priorities.

Proposed Top Legislative Priorities

Support a bonding bill that includes item H.F. 664 / S.F. 1308 that appropriates \$10,000,000 to deconstruct the existing nature center building at Wood Lake Nature Center and renovate the site, and to predesign, design, construct, furnish, and equip a new nature center building. The project also includes landscaping around the new center and renovation of the trails. This beloved and vital regional asset is 50 years old and is in need of a new building and improved trail system that meets the demands of its high-use, award-winning environmental education program and essential urban green space.

Support legislation which would provide the City of Richfield the authorization to propose a local sales tax (LST) to support regionally significant park projects. If the LST legislation is approved, the regionally significant park projects will be sent to voters for approval via referendum. This priority will be discussed further at a work session on December 8, 2022 to determine what projects will be included in the final legislative platform.

Support local control of Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The current laws do not provide meaningful oversight of the ambulance service providers. There are no response time requirements or control of ambulance billing rates within the Primary Service Areas. We support local control to determine who is best able to provide EMS services in our community.

Staff has also included a list of additional legislative positions which are attached to this report. City staff is available to answer any questions City Council has on the priorities.

Final Adoption

The final list of legislative priorities will be brought to the City Council for adoption at the December 13 City Council meeting. By adopting the legislative platform formally, the City Council shows these priorities are in the best interest of the community and provides increased visibility for the issues.

Legislative Breakfast

We will present the City's adopted legislative platform to elected representatives at the annual legislative breakfast scheduled from 7:45 a.m. through 9:15 a.m. on December 20th. The representatives will have time to ask staff follow up questions about the City's platform and present their priorities for the 2023 legislative session.

DIRECTION NEEDED:

City Council should provide feedback and direction on the proposed 2023 legislative priorities

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

A. **HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

B. **POLICIES (resolutions, ordinances, regulations, statutes, etc):**

C. **CRITICAL TIMING ISSUES:**

D. **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There may be public expenditures associated with the priorities if specific projects are selected to receive the requested funding from the State. If that occurs, the actual funding structure will be presented at a future City Council meeting.

E. **LEGAL CONSIDERATION:**

ALTERNATIVE(S):

City Council may choose to not adopt the legislative priorities as a whole, or adopt a modified list of priorities.

PRINCIPAL PARTIES EXPECTED AT MEETING:

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
▢ 2023 Draft Legislative Priorities	Exhibit



(DRAFT) CITY OF RICHFIELD 2023 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

THE CITY OF RICHFIELD...

Support legislation that addresses the widening existing economic, racial, health and education gaps, and the adverse impacts a warming climate will have on our most vulnerable communities. As a city, we are providing local tools and support for residents, but there is need for more relief and legislation beyond city-level jurisdiction. We continue to support collaborative efforts with its representatives on legislation that expands labor rights, housing affordability and protections, as well as access to affordable healthcare.

Support local officials who know what tools and programs best support our residents. We support local decision-making authority and oppose statutory changes that erode local authority and decision making.

Oppose the imposition of legislative mandates that increase local costs without a corresponding state appropriation or funding mechanism. Unfunded mandates may increase local property taxes and this additional cost impedes cities' ability to fund traditional services.

Contact: *Maria Regan Gonzalez, Mayor, 612-500-3862, MRegan@richfieldmn.gov*
Katie Rodriguez, City Manager, 612-861-9702, KRodriguez@richfieldmn.gov

TOP LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES-

Support a bonding bill that includes item H.F. 664 / S.F. 1308 that appropriates \$10,000,000 to deconstruct the existing nature center building at Wood Lake Nature Center and renovate the site, and to predesign, design, construct, furnish, and equip a new nature center building. The project also includes landscaping around the new center and renovation of the trails. This beloved and vital regional asset is 50 years old and is in need of a new building and improved trail system that meets the demands of its high-use, award-winning environmental education program and essential urban green space.

Support legislation which would provide the City of Richfield the authorization to propose a local sales tax (LST) to support regionally significant park projects. If the LST legislation is approved, the regionally significant park projects will be sent to voters for approval via referendum.

Support local control of Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The current laws do not provide meaningful oversight of the ambulance service providers. There are no response time requirements or control of ambulance billing rates within the Primary Service Areas. We support local control to determine who is best able to provide EMS services in our community.

Contact: *Katie Rodriguez, City Manager, 612-861-9702, KRodriguez@richfieldmn.gov*
Chris Swanson, Management Analyst, 612-861-9712, CSwanson@richfieldmn.gov



(DRAFT) CITY OF RICHFIELD

2023 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

EXECUTIVE

- The city supports legislation which allows cities greater flexibility for remote participation for city council, board and commission members under the Open Meeting Law, while addressing the public's needs to be fully informed of city decision-making. Specifically the Legislature should amend the Open Meeting Law to allow city council, board and commission members to participate in meetings without making their remote location open and accessible to the public, allow the medical exception to be used without a declaration of a state of emergency, and remove the cap for the medical and military exceptions.

Contact: *Katie Rodriguez, City Manager, 612-861-9702, KRodriguez@richfieldmn.gov*

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

- **Oppose** the elimination of current Minnesota Law (Coleman Act) that allows an open wholesale system for alcoholic beverages (spirits). Elimination of the Coleman Act would result in exclusivity brand ownership and ultimately raise wholesale and retail consumer prices, compress the municipal liquor store's profit margins, and lower service levels in all distribution channels.
- **Support** full reimbursement to cities for the cost of providing continued health insurance coverage for police and firefighters disabled or killed in the line of duty. From 7/1/17 to today, the City paid \$302,498 towards continued health insurance benefits, of which only \$ 64,037 was reimbursed by the State.
- **Support** reimbursement to cities for the cost of covering employees who are out on military leave. While employees are out, cities have to pay for 5 paid military leave days in a calendar year. Additionally, cities are obligated to pay for employee coverage for military leave through overtime expenses. The City of Richfield has seen a number of employees out on military leave for an extended period of time, which leads to increased cost with no reimbursement.
- **Support** legislative action to address increasing workers' compensation costs and the presumptive clause for coverage for Police Officers and Firefighters for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Due to the rise in employee PTSD cases and their associated cost, we request a revision of the language currently in the Senate Bill and Department of Labor regulations in order to review the presumption in worker's compensation cases.
- **Support** policies that provide opportunities for employees diagnosed with PTSD to receive treatment for PTSD that could result in continued employment with the local government. We also support the League of Minnesota Cities duty disability working group recommendations relating to mental health wellness within local government.
- **Support** splitting revenue from mail or online vehicle transactions with deputy registrars and increase both filing fees and appropriations to the vehicle services operating account. This increased must be redistributed as processing revenue for deputy registrars.

Contact: *Sack Thongvanh, Assistant City Manager, 612-861-9708, SThongvanh@richfieldmn.gov*

Richfield staff is available to provide detailed information on any of the items listed on this handout and to provide testimony.



(DRAFT) CITY OF RICHFIELD

2023 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- **Oppose** legislation or rule change that limits local authority related to the decision-making functions performed by cities when setting city budgets to provide city services. The City supports authority for cities to charge fees that are reasonably related to the cost of providing the service, permit or license. We oppose legislation that would require specific methods to pay for city services or would place caps on city fees.
- **Support** Housing Infrastructure Bonds for affordable housing.
- **Support** legislation for the preservation and rehabilitation of naturally occurring affordable housing properties.
- **Support** local autonomy in the development and approval of comprehensive plans and official controls.
- **Support** an amendment the Minnesota State Building Code to allow cities to require electric vehicle infrastructure in new construction.
- **Support** amendment to the TIF statute to allow 10% of units at 30% of the Area Median Income in a Housing TIF District.

Contact: Melissa Poehlman, Community Development Director, 612-861-9766, MPoehlman@richfieldmn.gov

FINANCE

- **Support** maintaining and increasing Local Government Aid.
- **Support** current formula and distribution of Fiscal Disparities and oppose shifting to fund projects.
- **Support** state action to identify and strengthen state and local cybersecurity capabilities. We support funding to evaluate local government cyber vulnerabilities, single points of failure, and fixes, and, the ability for municipal governments to apply for grant funding or assistance to solve these weaknesses.

Contact: Kumud Verma, Finance Manager, 612-861-9723, KVerma@richfieldmn.gov

FIRE

- **Support** continued funding of the Hometown Hero's Assistance Program.
- **Oppose** efforts to limit the use of residential fire sprinklers. We support working collaboratively with the stakeholders to provide the safest and most cost effective homes.
- **Oppose** efforts to legalize and expand fireworks within the state.

Contact: Mike Dobesh, Fire Chief, 612-243-4502, MDobesh@richfieldmn.gov

PUBLIC SAFETY

- **Support** additional regulation of products containing hemp-derived THC or cannabinoid products. There is a need for more legislation to address regulatory, public safety, employment, taxation, and public health concerns arising from the new law enacted during the 2022 legislative session allowing the sale of certain edible products containing hemp-derived THC.

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(DRAFT) CITY OF RICHFIELD

2023 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

- **Support** Police Officer Safety, Health, and Wellness (Protecting the Protectors) legislation. This legislation is similar to the Hometown Heroes Act that was recently passed to protect the fire personnel. This legislation would provide law enforcement agencies with training for emotional resiliency and understanding of trauma. Additionally, it would create peer support groups, provide mental health checks/therapy, suicide prevention/awareness and family support.
- **Support** legislation that provides a way for all persons to obtain a Driver License (regardless of citizenship status.) Individuals will learn the rules of the road and become qualified to safely operate a motor vehicle. Auto insurance is required to be a licensed driver.
- **Support** the **Arbitration Revision Act**, creating a more objective arbitration process by having the Office of Administrative Hearings handle all the police officer termination grievances.
- **Support** the **Officer Integrity Act**, allowing for a Minnesota Licensed Peace Officer to be terminated from public employment without opportunity to challenge the remedy of termination should the basis for termination be willful or intentional dishonesty, deception, or similar unethical or illegal conduct that is deemed sufficient to imperil their credibility in court testimony. We oppose limiting an officer's due process right to arbitration.
- **Support** legislation focused on retention and recruitment of law enforcement officers.

Contact: Jay Henthorne, Public Safety Director, 612-861-9828, JHenthorne@richfieldmn.gov

RECREATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

- **Support** efforts for the proper labeling of compostable products and not allow products with misleading claims to be sold or distributed in the State (H.F.1165 / S.F. 2243).
- **Support** Hennepin County funding that would expand infrastructure at the local level for the creation of compost processing sites and/or anaerobic digesters.
- **Support** legislation that would designate all solid waste taxes generated to the state's SCORE fund to support sustainability efforts.

Contact: Amy Markle, Recreation Services Director, 612-861-9354, AMarkle@richfieldmn.gov

PUBLIC WORKS

- **Introduce/Support** a maximum local contribution to County and State projects and limit long-term ownership and major maintenance responsibility placed on local agencies. Cost participation requirements related to trunk highways and county state aid projects place too high of a burden on local agencies, promoting inequality and disparities in cities like Richfield.
- **Support** a state-wide, comprehensive and stable water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure funding source to address Minnesota's aging infrastructure to ensure Minnesota communities remain a great place to live and competitive place to do business.
- **Introduce/Support** legislation that would create or increase grant programs for local agencies statewide to combat Emerald Ash Borer on public and private property.
- **Oppose** any legislation that would eliminate or reduce the ability to use State Aid funds for local projects, including lane reductions.

Richfield staff is available to provide detailed information on any of the items listed on this handout and to provide testimony.



(DRAFT) CITY OF RICHFIELD

2023 LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

- **Oppose** any legislation or rule change that limits local authority related to use of public rights-of-way (small cell, for example).
- **Support** state laws that provide limited liability to commercial salt applicators that are certified through an established voluntary salt applicator certification program.

Contact: *Kristin Asher, Public Works Director, 612-861-9795, KAsher@richfieldmn.gov*