



Richfield's 2024 Legislative Priorities

December 12, 2023, Work session

2023 Legislative Successes

- \$12 million in state bonding for a new Wood Lake Nature Center facility.
- Authorization to hold a referendum for a local sales tax (LST) to support regionally significant park projects.
- Driver License for all legislation.
- Increase in Local Government Aid. (\$1.4 million increase)
- Historic Investment in affordable housing
- Many other successes.



Top 2024 Legislative Priorities

- **Support** a bonding request for \$10,000,000 for the Hennepin County's upcoming Nicollet Avenue (CSAH 52) reconstruction project.
- **Introduce and Support** limits on local contributions, ownership, and major maintenance responsibilities for County and State projects.
- **Support** local control of Emergency Medical Services (EMS).



Support a bonding request for \$10,000,000 for Nicollet Avenue reconstruction project.

- Hennepin County will reconstruct Nicollet Avenue from 66th Street to 77th Street in 2026.
- Staff anticipates a \$10,000,000 contribution will be required from Richfield, roughly 50% for local cost share and 50% for Richfield utilities.
- Without the award of bond funds, the City will be forced to sell street reconstruction and utility bonds and place an additional burden on taxpayers.



INTRODUCE & SUPPORT limits on local contribution, ownership, major maintenance or responsibilities for County and State projects.

- “One-size fits all” cost participation policies adopted by the State and Hennepin County are inequitable as they do not consider the financial ability of local agencies to pay.
- These projects are mainly focused on regional needs and facilitating travel and commerce through and not into a local community, yet the residents of the local communities are tasked with paying.
- Trends in cost share policies continue to add to the local burden every time a cost share policy is updated or developed.



Support local control of Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

- Allow local units of government to designate which providers may serve their communities to ensure the appropriate level of service.
- Local units of government should be provided with tools and authority to ensure transparency and responsiveness by EMS providers.





Administrative Services

- **OPPOSE** the elimination of the current Coleman Act that allows an open wholesale system for alcoholic beverages.
- **SUPPORT** continued funding for full reimbursement to cities for the cost of continued health insurance coverage for police/firefighters disabled or killed in the line of duty.
 - The recent appropriation to fully fund for the next five years is critical to cities trying to cover the shortfall: Since mid-2017, the City has paid \$302,498 towards continued health insurance benefits, of which only \$64,037 was reimbursed by the State.
 - We have submitted \$85,000 in reimbursement for 2022/23.

Administrative Services Continued...

- **SUPPORT** reimbursement to cities for the cost of covering employees out on military leave. Cities must pay for 15 paid military leave days and are obligated to pay for employee coverage for military leave through overtime expenses.
- **SUPPORT** legislation that would provide ongoing full state funding for the 2023 duty disability law to include paid time off for mental health treatment, emotional trauma training, programs that provide peer support and early intervention.



Administrative Services, continued...

- **SUPPORT** splitting revenue from mail or online vehicle transactions with deputy registrars and increase filing fees and appropriations to the vehicle services operating account.
- **SUPPORT** a modest CITY fee on companies using the public right-of-way for digital/video streaming services to support local communication work.
- **SUPPORT** a modest STATE fee on digital/video streaming services to be used to support local communication work.
- **SUPPORT** annual funding similar to state support of public radio and public television for local cable broadcasting.



Community Development

- **SUPPORT** legislation to clarify that cities' comprehensive plans are exempt from review under the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (MERA).
- **SUPPORT** ongoing support of Housing Infrastructure Bonds and other financing capital for affordable housing.
- **SUPPORT** amendment to the TIF statute to allow 10% of units at 30% of the Area Median Income in a Housing TIF District.
- **SUPPORT** legislation prohibiting housing discrimination of Section 8 and other rental assistance voucher holders.
- **SUPPORT** legislation to allow two-family and accessory dwelling units by-right but retain local autonomy in the development and approval of official controls.
- **SUPPORT** transfer of pooled tax increment to Affordable Housing Trust Funds on a permanent basis.



Finance

- **SUPPORT** maintaining and increasing Local Government Aid.
- **SUPPORT** the current formula and distribution of Fiscal Disparities and
- **OPPOSE** shifting to funds based on specific projects.
- **SUPPORT** state action to identify and strengthen state and local cybersecurity capabilities.



Fire

- **SUPPORT** efforts to ensure that firefighters are protected from the emerging threat of Lithium-Ion Battery fires.
- **OPPOSE** efforts to limit the use of residential fire sprinklers. We support working collaboratively with stakeholders to provide the safest and most cost-effective homes.
- **OPPOSE** efforts to legalize and expand fireworks within the state.
- **SUPPORT** continued funding of the Hometown Heroes Assistance Program.



Public Safety

- **SUPPORT** an update to MN Statute of 121A on use of reasonable force by SRO's or those that enter a contract with the school. This could be defining officers working on a contractual basis in an off-duty role as "An Agent of the school".
- **SUPPORT** Police Officer Safety, Health, and Wellness (Protecting the Protectors) legislation. This legislation would provide law enforcement agencies with training for emotional resiliency and understanding of trauma. It would create peer support groups, provide mental health checks, therapy, suicide prevention and awareness and family support to officers and their loved ones.
- **SUPPORT** legislation focused on retention and recruitment of law enforcement officers.



Public Works

- **SUPPORT** a state-wide, comprehensive, and stable water, wastewater, and stormwater infrastructure funding source to address Minnesota's aging infrastructure.
- **OPPOSE** any legislation that would eliminate or reduce the ability to use State Aid funds for local projects, including lane reductions.
- **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.





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.
- **SUPPORT** legislation that would designate all solid waste taxes to the state's SCORE fund to supporting sustainability efforts.
- **SUPPORT** legislation around extended producer responsibility for paper and packaging.



Questions?