Info Packet
for City Council Candidates

Introduction

This packet aims to provide an overview of the City's operations, legislative functions of the City Council, and highlight areas of collaboration between the Council and City Teammates.

Save the Date!

Please mark your calendar for the following important dates:

- **Filing for 2024 Municipal offices**:
  - o May 21, 2024, through June 4, 2024
  - o Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- **Election Dates:**
  - o Statewide Primary Election: August 13, 2024
  - o General Election: November 5, 2024
- **Orientation Week (if elected):**
  - o November 18, 2024, through November 22, 2024, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Questions?

To ensure equal access to information, we kindly request that you refrain from meeting individually with city teammates. Instead, please submit any questions using our Q&A Form, which ensures transparency and streamlines our communication process. Q&A Form Link:
https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/4e15aa0f35314db0af0ec4a08cbbb27d

If you're requesting public records or data, please submit a data request via our records center at
www.rochestermn.gov/records

Please note that most City Communications are considered public information. As such, the provided Questions and Answers will be posted on the City Website and on this report:
https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=455c214b7a6a458e9e83297408699452

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General Overview

About City Council

The City Council is a legislative body responsible for making and passing laws at the local level, overseeing the city's budget, and representing the interests and concerns of the community.
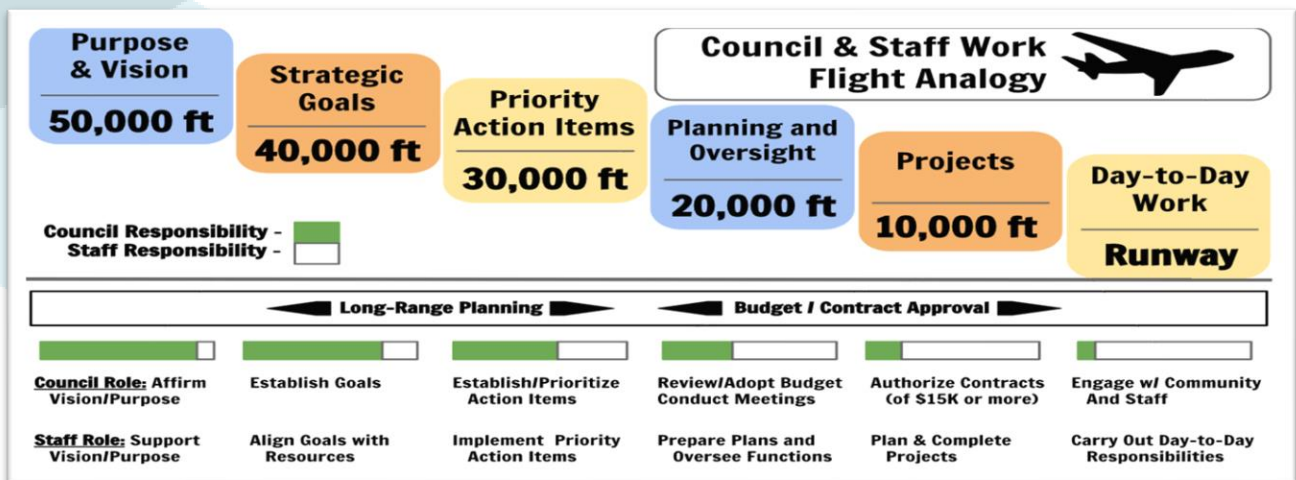
City Council Members, elected to represent specific geographic areas known as wards, play a vital role in articulating and addressing the needs of their constituents. The Council President oversees meetings, ensuring order and facilitating constructive discussion among members. Learn more on the City Council webpages.
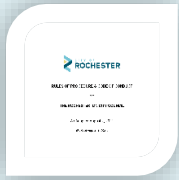
Forms of Minnesota City Government

Rochester operates under a Weak Mayor-Council system:

City Type	Subcategory	Description
Statutory *(derived from state laws, constraining autonomy & flexibility)*	Elected Clerked	Minimalist governance with an Elected Clerk, typically in very small cities.
	Administrator	Balanced approach with an Administrator for professional oversight. Examples include Apple Valley, Eagan, Lakeville, and Maple Grove.
	Manager	Professional management with a Manager, maintaining elected representation. Examples include Edina, Eden Prairie, Burnsville, Roseville, and Chanhassen.
Charter *(derived from a municipal charter, affording greater autonomy & flexibility)*	Weak Mayor-Council	Collaboration between mayor and council with limited mayoral powers. Examples include Rochester.
	Strong Mayor-Council	Mayor with substantial executive powers for larger municipalities. Examples include Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and St. Cloud.
	Council-Manager	Decentralized approach with a professional manager, promoting efficiency. Examples include Bloomington, Minnetonka, Plymouth, St. Louis Park, and Richfield.

Council & Staff Work Flight Analogy

Key Documents

Council Rules of Procedure & Code of Conduct
- Ensures fair and transparent decision-making processes during council meetings.
- Promotes respectful and civil interactions among council members, staff, and the public.
- Upholds ethical standards, maintains public trust, and contributes to effective governance of the community.

Comprehensive Plan 2040
- Serves as a long-term vision document that guides growth and development through 2040.
- Outlines goals, policies, and strategies related to land use, transportation, housing, economic development, environmental protection, and community facilities.
- Ensures coordinated and sustainable development, facilitates informed decision-making by policymakers, and helps us achieve desired future outcomes while preserving quality of life and our community's unique character.
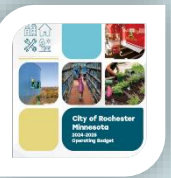
City Charter/Ordinances
- Functions as the City's constitutional document, defining its governance structure, electoral processes, and procedural rules for enacting laws and ordinances, and outlining legal parameters of authority for elected officials, departments, and administrative bodies.
- Promotes stability, accountability, and community empowerment in municipal decision-making.
- Rochester Code of Ordinances and City Home Rule Charter updates are distributed and retained in the office of the City Clerk and communicated quarterly to a select mailing list.

Strategic Priorities
- Strategic Priorities are key areas of focus identified by the City Council to guide decision-making and resource allocation. They provide a framework for addressing pressing issues and achieving long-term goals, ensuring alignment and coherence in city initiatives and projects.
- These priorities are typically reviewed during the 2-year budget cycle. The current Strategic Priorities are Affordable Living, Economic Vibrancy & Growth Management, and Quality Services.

Budget
- The City Council begins the 2-year budget cycle by adopting its priorities, goals, and strategies in the early part of the calendar year. The City Administrator guides the development of the operating budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in accordance with the City Council priorities. City Council votes on budget adoption.
- The Budget in Brief Document offers an overview of the annual budget, where the money comes from, where the money goes, & notable Capital Improvement Projects.

Action Plan
- Developed and supported by City Teammates, the Action Plan outlines goals, objectives, and tactics aimed at advancing the Strategic Priorities selected by the City Council.
- City Teammates provide Action Plan updates to the City Council every six months at City Council Study Sessions.

City Organizational Structure

Our City embraces a High Performance Organization (HPO) philosophy, prioritizing people, problem-solving, service optimization, and customer relationships to create an environment conducive to success. This philosophy takes a holistic approach, integrating culture, organizational structure, and team development.

Our operational framework is driven by three key components:

1) *The Forward Team* responsible for crafting vision and strategy;

2) *Impact Teams* dedicated to executing initiatives aligned with shared goals; and

3) *Leadership Forum* focused on fostering communication, learning, and unity among departments and key leaders.

This structure ensures a cohesive goal-oriented approach to municipal governance. Additionally, alongside this goal-oriented approach, our operational model includes a traditional hierarchy as depicted in the Organizational Charts document.

	Mission	Who	Frequency of Connection
Forward Team	• Vision • Strategy • Direction • Support: make others successful and achieve their full potential • Organizational health and culture (focus on people)	City Administrator and representatives of each standing Impact Team	Weekly connect and monthly strategy session
Impact Teams	• Align around common objectives • Create team cohesion around service areas • Implement initiatives and strategic service delivery • Clarify, communicate, share collective goals and clarify needs with the Forward Team	• Community Enrichment (Parks, Library, Public Music & Communications, Engagement & 311, Diversity, Equity & inclusion (DEI)) • DSI (PW &Community Development) • Public Safety (City Attorney, Fire & Police) • HPG (City Clerk, Finance, IT & HR) • Data & Evidence Based Decision Making	Weekly Impact Team meetings for Standing Teams
Leadership Forum	Focus on: • Organizational communication • Learning together • Trusted leadership relationships • Organizational unity	All department heads and other key leaders	Meets monthly

The following sections outline notable Impact Team Services. The hyperlinks in this section will direct you to related sections in this document.

Impact Team: Community Enrichment

Department	Services (hyperlinks indicate areas of Council-Teammate Interaction)
Public Music	• Community Concerts, Programming, & Partnerships • Supports Public Music Board
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion	• Equitable & Accessible delivery of City services • Equitable Policies and Programs
Library	• Information Access & Community Resources (Free Programs, WiFi, etc.) • Library Facilities & Operations Master Plan (in development) • Supports Library Board
Parks & Recreation	• Forestry • Parks & Trails • Park Master Plans (e.g. Silver Lake, Soldiers Field, etc.) • Program Coordination & Partnerships • Recreation Programs & Facilities • Supports Park Board

Impact Team: Development Services Infrastructure (DSI)

Department	Services
All DSI	• Local Option Sales Tax Referendum (RenewRochester.org) – including projects for the Economic Vitality Fund, Street Reconstruction, and Flood Control & Water Quality • Supports Regional Sports Complex site selection
Community Development	• Building Plan Review, Permits, Inspections, & Code Enforcement • Comprehensive Plan/Growth Management • Geographic Information System (GIS) • Housing & Neighborhood Services (Rental, CDBG, etc.) • Heritage Preservation • Land Use and Planning Applications • Long-Range Planning/Small Area Plans • Support Boards & Commissions (multiple) • Tax Increment Financing (TIF)/Economic Development • Urban Design • Zoning & Zoning Enforcement
Destination Medical Center (DMC)	• DMC Projects (LINK Bus Rapid Transit, Peace Plaza, Discovery Walk, Heart of the City, Riverfront Activation, DEED Grant Distribution, Downtown Sidewalks, 6th Street Bridge, Riverfront & Neighborhood, Active Transportation, WMBE compliance, etc.)

Public Works	• Engineering (Capital Improvement Projects, Traffic Management, Sidewalk Programs)
	• Environmental Services (Flood Control, Wastewater Collection & Treatment, Stormwater Management)
	    ○ Sanity Sewer Wastewater Master Plan
	    ○ Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP)
	• Fleet Management
	• Frequent Public Inquiries about Public Works Services
	• Frequent Requests for Council Action (RCAs)
	• Street Maintenance (Pavement Management, Street Sweeping, Snow Removal)

Transit & Parking	• Parking: On-street Parking, Off-street Parking • Parking Rate Study • Transit Development Plan • Transit: Fixed Transit, Paratransit, Future Link Bus Rapid Transit, Pilot Micro Transit

Impact Team: High Performance Government (HPG)

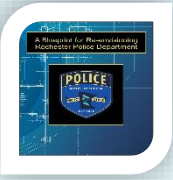| Department	Services
Administration	• Action Plan & Continuous Improvement • Capital Improvement Projects • Facility Management • Legislative Analysis & Policies
City Clerk	• Council Meeting Agenda & Packet • Elections • Licenses (Business, Liquor, Elections, etc.) • Records & Data Requests
Finance	• Budget (2024 budget: $509.4 million) • Strategic Finance
Human Resources (HR)	• Compensation, Benefits, & Safety (for ~950 City Teammates) • Labor Relations (19 bargaining units) • Organizational Development & Wellness
Information Technology (IT)	• IT Security, Network, & Software

Impact Team: Public Safety

Department	Services
City Attorney	• City Charter/Ordinances • Civil Litigation, & Criminal Litigation • Organizational Legal Advice
Emergency Management	• Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP) • Resiliency Coordination
Fire	• Community Risk Reduction: Inspections, Plan Review, Permits, Public Education, & Fire Origin and Cause Investigation • Response: Fire, Rescue, EMS First Response, Hazardous Materials, Lift Assist • Support Services: Traffic blocking, Public Event Support, Township Fire Coverage, Community Outreach, Strategic Planning
Police	• Blueprint for re-envisioning Rochester Police Department • Community Services • Investigations • Patrol • Support Services

Areas of Collaboration/Recent Projects

The hyperlinks in this section will open related web pages and documents. For those with printed packet, an appendix of the hyperlinks addresses is available on page 11.

Blueprint for re-envisioning Rochester Police Department

The Blueprint for re-envisioning the Rochester Police Department (RPD) embraces the six critical pillars outlined in the 2015 Final Report of The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Committed to fostering community partnerships and proactive problem-solving, RPD emphasizes the dynamic nature of community policing. To learn more, visit the Blueprint Report.

Boards & Commissions

Boards & Commissions serve as advisory boards for the City Council are comprised of community volunteers and are supported by City teammates. The Mayor interviews applicants and appoints members, subject to City Council confirmation. Selections are made as openings occur throughout the year. Learn more on the Boards & Commissions webpage.

Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP)

The CWSMP, set to replace the 1999 plan, is undergoing a three-phase process. Phase 1, completed in 2022, focused on scoping and information gathering. Phase 2, expected to conclude in 2024, entails plan development, while Phase 3, spanning from 2024 to 2026, involves drainage district modeling and ordinance updates. Key enhancements: expanding the scope to cover the entire drainage area, delineating 11 drainage districts, integrating social equity and climate resiliency, and emphasizing integrated stormwater management. For further insights, explore the CSWMP STORY MAP.

Council Meeting Agenda

The City Clerk manages the creation and distribution of all Council agendas and the publishing of official minutes and all related official notices and documents. The City Administrator exercises final approval over the content of all City Council agendas. Meeting materials are published several days in advance of the meeting to ensure adequate time for Council review. Learn more on the City Meeting webpage.

Elections

The City Clerk's Office is responsible for hiring all election judges for all federal and state elections as well as securing polling places in the required precincts of the City. Administration and coordination of all special City elections are run through the City Clerk's Office. In the event of a Special Election, responsibilities include all publications, printings, judges, precincts, and supplies necessary for a successful election. Learn more on the Elections webpage.

Flood Control

The Flood Control System, constructed during the 1980s and 1990s, safeguards assets valued at over $1.5 billion and is engineered to withstand a 200-year flood event. It utilizes seven reservoirs, six of which are city-owned, to retain 16% of floodwater for controlled release over 10 days. Consisting of levees, floodwalls, channels, and strategically located city lands, it effectively manages floodwaters. Developed with the Army Corps of Engineers and NRCS, it includes recreational and aesthetic enhancements. No property taxes funded its construction or maintenance; instead, funding came from Local Option Sales in 1983, 1989, and 2023. Explore further details on the Flood Control System Story Map.

Legislative Policies

City Teammates identify areas for Legislative opportunities, which are presented to the City Council for consideration. City Council votes to adopt Legislative Priorities. Learn more on the Legislative Priorities webpage.

Library Master Plan

The Library is beginning a Study in 2024 to develop current and long-range plans for library services delivery. This will be a first-of-its-kind plan for Rochester Library Services.

Library Strategic Plan

The Library Board sets strategic directions for the Library through the Library Strategic Plan. Focus areas include Equity, Connections, and Infrastructure. Learn more on the Library's Vision, Mission & Planning webpage.

Licenses

All annual regulatory licensing (such as gambling, contractors, transportation, massage, liquor, special events, etc.) are obtained and renewed through the Office of the City Clerk. Two major licensing periods throughout the year occur in the first and fourth quarters. Learn more by visiting the Licenses webpage.

Organizational Legal Advice

The Office of the City Attorney is responsible for all of the City's legal business. As such, the City Attorney serves as the legal advisor and representative for the City of Rochester. The City Attorney is the attorney for City officials and employees (for actions taken in the course of their public duties), City departments, boards, and commissions. The City Attorney cannot represent private citizens in their legal matters. Learn more on the City Attorney webpage.

Parking Rate Study

The Parking Rate Study, last conducted in 2020, is set for a comprehensive update in 2024. This study entails a thorough analysis of parking rates and associated factors, culminating in strategic recommendations to optimize parking management. Notably, Public Parking operates as an enterprise fund, where program revenue offsets operational costs, ensuring financial sustainability and effective service delivery to the community.

Park Master Plan

The Citywide Parks and Recreation System Plan was adopted in 2016. Park-specific Master plans are currently in development for the following parks: Soldiers Field Park, Silver Lake Park, and MLK Park. Following development, Master Plans undergo City Council review. Learn more by visiting the System Plan Project Webpage (2015-2016) and City Project Map.

Public Inquiries on Public Works Services

Many highly visible services generate public interactions and feedback to Councilmembers. Teammates assist Councilmembers in responding to these inquiries. Frequent topics include Traffic Concerns, Feedback about Snow Removal, Inquiries about Street Maintenance Activities, Stormwater Concerns, etc. View the Service Request Portal at www.rochestermn.gov/servicerequest.

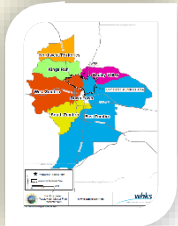## Public Works Request for Council Action (RCA)

Public Works generates a relatively high volume of RCAs for council consideration. Frequent requests include:

- Contracts for Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and maintenance projects
- Development agreements
- Easements, revocable permits, right-of-way changes, etc.
- Policy and ordinances updates

Public Music

Public Music provides the community with fun and memorable music events, including Riverside Concert Series, FORWARD, Sound School, and Passport Sessions.

The FORWARD series, established in 2019, features local music and local parks on Wednesday evenings in June and August. There's one concert per ward, co-hosted by Councilmembers in neighborhood parks. These free events highlight local bands and regional headliners and feature local food vendors, Rochester Public Library's Bookmobile, and Parks & Recreation's Mobile Recreation Trailer.

Sanitary Sewer Wastewater Master Plan

The Sanitary Sewer Wastewater Master Plan, adopted in 2020 from the Planning 2 Succeed Comprehensive Plan 2040, is a thorough strategy for our infrastructure needs. It assesses current sewer system capacity, infrastructure condition, and future growth projections. Split into 7 Sewer Districts, it plans for growth efficiently. The estimated cost for expansion and improvement projects is $362 million. It's in line with the Growth Management Map and follows a Capital Improvement Plan guided by Council priorities. Learn more on the Sanitary Sewer System webpage.

Transit Development Plan

The 2022 Transit Development Plan outlines a comprehensive 5-year strategy to shape transit services. With a focus on improving fixed route and paratransit services, managing capital assets, integrating advanced technology solutions, and ensuring sustainable fare structures and funding mechanisms, the plan aims to enhance accessibility and reliability for commuters. Additionally, it explores opportunities to introduce new services, aligning with evolving community needs and enhancing public transportation effectiveness. Learn more on the Transit Development Plan webpage.

Appendix of Hyperlinks

- Action Plan: https://www.rochestermn.gov/departments/administration/our-priorities
- Blueprint for re-envisioning Rochester Police Department: https://www.rochestermn.gov/home/showdocument?id=31055&t=638246826377970000
- Boards & Commissions webpage: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/boards-commissions/current-openings-how-to-apply
- Budget: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/finance-information-technology/reports/current-budget-summary-cip/2024-2025-budget-summary
- Budget in Brief Document: https://www.rochestermn.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/39976/638387527716200000
- City Attorney Webpage: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/city-attorney-new/duties-responsibilities
- City Charter/Ordinances: https://library.municode.com/mn/rochester/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTICH
- City Council Webpages: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/city-council
- City Meeting Webpage: https://www.rochestermn.gov/meetings/council-meetings
- City Project Map: https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/994827dfe7294f9fad84b1f990c1b180/page/City-Projects/
- Comprehensive Plan 2040: https://www.rochestermn.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/21252/636673451858130000
- Comprehensive Surface Water Management Plan (CSWMP): https://cswmp-rpu.hub.arcgis.com/
- Council Rules of Procedures & Code of Conduct: https://www.rochestermn.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/25837/637648882617370000
- Elections webpage: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/city-clerk/elections-4207
- Flood Control System Story Map: https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8556bb63d1954161af016d61261a7d4b
- FORWARD: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/rochester-public-music/events/forward-park-concerts
- Legislative Priorities Webpage: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/administration/legislative-priorities
- Library Strategic Plan: https://www.rplmn.org/about-us/about-rpl/vision-mission-planning
- Licenses Webpage: https://www.rochestermn.gov/licenses
- Organizational Charts: https://www.rochestermn.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/6327/638482760948830000
- Passport Sessions: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/rochester-public-music/events/passport-performances
- Public Works Service Request Portal: www.rochestermn.gov/servicerequest
- Q&A Form: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/4e15aa0f35314db0af0ec4a08cbbb27d
- Q&A Published Report: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=455c214b7a6a458e9e83297408699452
- Records Center: www.rochestermn.gov/records
- Riverside Concert Series: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/rochester-public-music/events/down-by-the-riverside
- Sanitary Sewer System Webpage: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/public-works/wastewater-management/sanitary-sewer-system
- Silver Lake Park: https://www.rochestermn.gov/Home/Components/Topic/Topic/11639/3986
- Soldier Field Park: https://www.rochestermn.gov/Home/Components/Topic/Topic/11767/3986
- Sound School: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/rochester-public-music/events/sound-school
- Strategic Priorities: https://www.rochestermn.gov/departments/administration/our-priorities
- System Plan Project Webpage (2015-2016): https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/parks-and-recreation/system-plan-project
- Transit Develop Plan Webpage: https://www.rochestermn.gov/government/departments/public-transportation/transit-planning/tdp-background