

**City of Richfield**

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**LEGISLATIVE  
PRIORITIES**

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**2023**







# Richfield experts



## TOP PRIORITIES

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## ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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## FINANCE

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## FIRE

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## PUBLIC SAFETY

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## PUBLIC WORKS

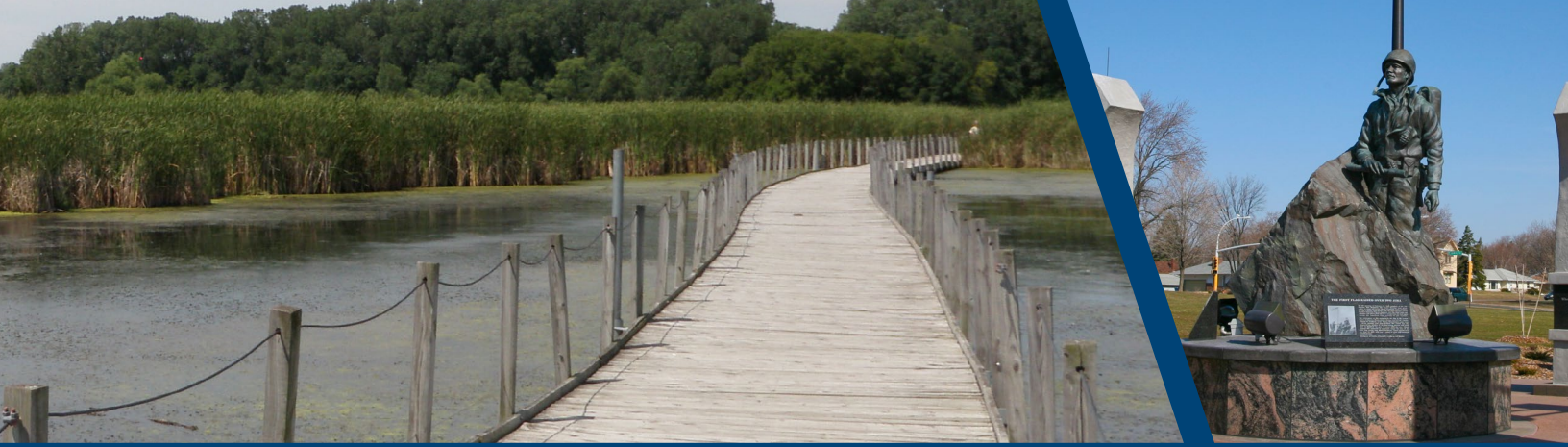
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## RECREATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

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



# Guiding Principles



## REDUCE ECONOMIC, RACIAL, HEALTH & EDUCATION GAPS

Support legislation that addresses the widening existing economic, racial, health and education gaps for 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 that expands labor rights, housing affordability and protections, as well as access to affordable healthcare.



## SUPPORT LOCAL DECISION MAKING

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 UNFUNDED MANDATES

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.

# Who we are

### POPULATION:

Total: 36,994

- White alone, non Latinx: 59.3%
- Hispanic or Latinx: 19.5%
- Black alone, non Latinx: 11.3%
- Asian alone, non Latinx: 5.5%
- Multiracial (3.7%), American Indian (.22%) or Other (1.24%)

### EDUCATION (highest level):

- High School or less: 28.6%
- Some college/Associate's Degree: 27.7%
- Bachelor's Degree or higher: 43.6%

### HOUSEHOLDS:

Total: 15,925

- Median Household Income: \$74,300
- Single person households: 32.9%
- Families with children: 23.2%
- Owner-occupied households: 62.5%
  - » *Owner-occupied households that are cost burdened: 19%*
- Renter-occupied households: 37.5%
  - » *Renter households that are rent burdened: 42%*

Source: Metropolitan Council Community Profiles, [stats.metc.state.mn.us](https://stats.metc.state.mn.us)





# Priority: Finance a new Wood Lake Nature Center

★ **Support a bonding bill that includes item H.F. 664 / S.F. 1308 that appropriates \$12,000,000 to:**

- Deconstruct the existing nature center building at Wood Lake Nature Center
- Renovate the site
- Predesign, design, construct, furnish, and equip a new nature center building
- Landscape around the new center
- Renovate the trails

This beloved and vital regional asset is more than 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.







## Priority: Local Sales Tax (LST)

- ★ **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.**
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## Priority: Local Control of EMS

- ★ **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.





# Executive

- ★ **SUPPORT 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.

# Administrative Services

- X **OPPOSE the elimination of the current Minnesota Law (Coleman Act)** that allows an open wholesale system for alcoholic beverages. Elimination of the Coleman Act would result in exclusive 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.** Since mid-2017, the City has 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, 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 increase must be redistributed as processing revenue for deputy registrars.





# Community Development

- ★ **OPPOSE** legislation or rule changes that limit 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 to 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.

# Finance

- ★ **SUPPORT** maintaining and increasing Local Government Aid.
- ★ **SUPPORT** the current formula and distribution of Fiscal Disparities and **OPPOSE** shifting to fund based on specific 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.





## Fire

- X **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.
- X **OPPOSE efforts to legalize and expand fireworks** within the state.
- ★ **SUPPORT continued funding of the Hometown Heroes Assistance Program.**

## 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 last year allowing the sale of certain edible products containing hemp-derived THC. Cities must be included in the discussion and regulatory framework of these products going forward.
- ★ **SUPPORT Police Officer Safety, Health, and Wellness (Protecting the Protectors) legislation.** Similar to the Hometown Heroes Act, 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 and awareness and family support to officers and their loved ones.
- ★ **SUPPORT legislation that provides a way for all persons to obtain a Driver License, regardless of citizenship status.** Through licensing, 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.**





## Public Works

- X **OPPOSE** any legislation that would eliminate or reduce the ability to use State Aid funds for local projects, including lane reductions.
- X **OPPOSE** any legislation or rule change that limits local authority related to use of public rights-of-way (small cell, for example).
- ★ **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.
- ★ **SUPPORT** state laws that provide limited liability to commercial salt applicators that are certified through an established voluntary salt applicator certification program.

## Recreation & 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 to the state's SCORE fund to support sustainability efforts.







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