



2024 City of Ramsey Legislative Priorities

Local Priority: Sales and Use Tax Exemptions for Water Treatment Plant Trunk Watermain Improvements

During the 2023 legislative session, state sales and use tax exemptions were approved for the purchase of materials for the new Water Treatment Plant. Unfortunately, sales and use tax exemptions were not approved for the necessary Trunk Watermain improvements so the City is seeking legislative approval in 2024 for state sales and use tax exemptions for the necessary Trunk Watermain improvements.

- In 2023, sales and use tax exemptions were approved for the Water Treatment Plant.
- The City will work with legislators to amend the approved language to authorize applying sales and use tax exemptions to the necessary Trunk Watermain improvements.

Local Priority: State Funding for Water Treatment Plant Trunk Watermain Improvements

During the 2022 and 2023 legislative sessions, the City of Ramsey requested \$10M in state bond funds for construction of a Water Treatment Plant to address a public health need. In 2019, the Minnesota Department of Health informed the City that its water supply contained unsafe levels of manganese. In 2021, the City completed a feasibility study that recommended constructing a Water Treatment Plant to address this public health need. In 2023, the City began constructing a \$42M Water Treatment Plant. During the 2023 legislative session, \$3.2M was awarded for the Water Treatment Plant. The City respectfully requests the remaining \$6.8M be awarded in 2024 to help fully fund construction of the Water Treatment Plant by 2025, as well as the necessary Trunk Watermain improvements that will be constructed in 2024.

- In 2023, Ramsey received \$3.2M in state bond funds for the Water Treatment Plant.
- The City requests an additional \$6.8 million in state bond funds to fully fund the Water Treatment Plant, as well as the necessary Trunk Watermain improvements.
- The City will work with legislators to amend the approved language to authorize applying awarded funds to the necessary Trunk Watermain improvements.

Local Priority: Tax Increment Financing District 14 (TIF 14, The COR)

Language in the original 2010 legislation included, but did not limit to, the city's share of the costs necessary to provide for the construction of the Northstar Transit Station and related infrastructure as eligible expenditures. This included structured parking, a pedestrian overpass and roadway improvements. State Statute requires interfund loan resolutions when a city borrows funds to a district for improvements with plans to repay itself back through future tax increment. However, these expenses were funded without the required interfund loan resolutions pursuant to the TIF statute. Special legislation did not exempt the City from the interfund loan requirement.

- The City will work with legislators to amend the special TIF 14 legislation to exempt the interfund loan requirement. Thus creating the potential repayment of such interfund loans through TIF 14 revenue through 2040.

Local Priority: Funding for continued study of Ramsey/Dayton Mississippi River bridge project

- The feasibility study for a new Mississippi River bridge was completed in 2021 with funds allocated by the 2020 legislature. Staff will work with local legislators to secure the funding for the next step in pursuit of this project. These next steps may include establishing a location of the crossing, in which will be used when developing parcels impacted by a future river crossing. It should be noted, the City of Dayton recognizes the likelihood of a future crossing and are developing a master plan to incorporate such crossing in the future.

Local Priority: Metro Mobility Service Area

- Introduce legislation that will add Ramsey to the service area for Metro Mobility.
- Over the years some residents have expressed an interest in getting door-to-door Metro Mobility Service in Ramsey.
- City residents annually pay \$352,000 to the Metro Transit Taxing District that the City was required to enter when the NorthStar Station was completed.
- Inclusion in the Metro Mobility service area requires a state statute and was last extended to the City of Lakeville in 2019. The cost of the service is covered by the state.

Local Priority: Closed landfill legislation to allow economic development

- Staff will work with the PCA and local legislators to determine what, if any, legislation will allow closed landfill property to be put back on the tax role for private development opportunities.

State-wide Policy Priority:

- **Employee Sick and Safe Time (ESST)**

In 2023 the State of Minnesota passed legislation requiring employers to provide employees sick and safe time (ESST). The law provides employees who meet a certain threshold of hours worked within a year to earn paid sick and safe time. The law does regulate acceptable uses for the time, but generally these eligible uses are more flexible than the city's existing sick leave policy. The City of Ramsey had existing leave benefits within policy prior to the new legislation that encompassed sick time, vacation, funeral leave, etc. The existing policies allowed many of the employees to earn more paid leave throughout the year than the new law requires. Ramsey believes the new law is challenging to administer along side existing paid leave policies due to the record keeping and the definition of an employee. Furthermore, small businesses within the community have expressed concerned about the cost of the new law when implementing it into their business operations.

- The City will monitor discussions by legislators and support amendments to the law that redefines an employee. The City would support the removal of temporary or seasonal positions and paid on call positions from being eligible to earn the paid leave under the ESST law.
- The City would support and amendment to the law that exempts small businesses from being required to follow the legislation.

State-wide Policy Priority:

- **Exemption of residential gardens from water emergency restrictions**

Staff will work with legislators to research possible legislation to ensure that, in the event the governor declares by executive order a critical water deficiency, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 103G.291 implementing mandatory emergency water conservation measures and mandatory restrictions upon nonessential water use is enforced and outdoor irrigation is prohibited, that gardens created by Minnesota residents for the cultivation of vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers for food and medicinal purposes will not be subject to water restrictions, nor shall they be limited to reclaimed water.

State-wide Policy Priority:

- **Statewide licensure of massage therapy**

Support legislation that seeks to adopt a state license requirement for massage therapists. Lack of a statewide license for massage therapists has hampered law enforcement's ability to regulate illegal activities across municipal boundaries related to this profession.

State-wide Policy Priority:

- **Amend remote open meeting law requirement (MS13D.02) that requires notification of a remote place accessible to the public**

Support legislation that will simplify the remote meeting process for local elected bodies, such as, the requirement that all remote locations be advertised and accessible to the public.

State-wide Policy Priority:

- **Lift hospital moratorium**

Support legislation that seeks to increase the availability of hospital beds and allow a free-market for hospital construction.

State-wide Policy Priority:

- **Local Government Aid (LGA)**

Local Government Aid for Ramsey has fluctuated (see chart below) from a high of \$396,382 in 2001, to the current level of \$0 in 2017 and beyond. The basic formula was changed in 2014 and some level of LGA was restored for the next three years (approximately \$100,000 per year), however the same formula has now resulted in the elimination of all LGA for Ramsey and similar developing suburbs.

FY 2000 - \$359,771
FY 2001 - \$396,382
FY 2002 - \$303,894
FY 2003 through 2013 - \$0
FY2014 - \$91,381
FY 2015 - \$110,352
FY 2016 - \$111,311
FY 2017 through 2023 - \$0

Background:

Support legislation that revises the LGA formula and recognizes the needs of developing suburbs, restoring LGA to developing suburbs for long-term capital needs.

- No changes were made to the LGA funding formula in 2022.
- The City should consider working with legislators to determine if there is an opportunity to revise the LGA formula in the future to provide greater resources to developing suburbs.
- A couple of LGA bills were introduced in 2021 that may have impacted Ramsey, but failed to become law:
 - LGA adjusted for unpaid local assistance costs HF 1052/SF 749 (Rep. Jim Nash, R-Waconia, and Sen. Bill Weber, R-Luverne) would have allowed cities that have not been reimbursed by another city for local assistance costs to submit an application for reimbursement through a reduction in the LGA of the recipient city.
 - LGA minimum distribution HF 1096/SF 1238 (Rep. Jerry Hertaus, R-Greenfield, and Sen. David Osmeck, R-Mound) would have provided for a minimum per capita LGA amount for all cities that otherwise would receive no LGA, and increased the LGA appropriation to cover the additional amount.

- During the 2022 session, discussions occurred regarding updating the LGA formula. Based on a draft formula, Ramsey would have received funds.
- The most recent LGA adjustments left Ramsey with \$0 LGA contributions.

State-wide Policy Priority:

- **Metropolitan Council Committee Membership**

Support legislation that seeks to adjust Metropolitan Council Committee membership qualifications and membership determination. Currently there are 16 geographical Council Districts and one chair. Members are comprised of a representative who resides in the district they represent, with the chair serving at large. All members are interviewed by a nominating committee created by the governor, and the final appointment is determined by the governor.