

Guide to Government

City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County



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The League of Women Voters of Saint Paul acknowledges with thanks the cooperation of the public officials and their staffs who supplied information for this guide. Much information from this guide was also found on the City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County websites, which have been listed so readers may access them for additional resources.

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Guide for Residents of Saint Paul

History: Saint Paul 1839 – 2012

Not only the Capital of Minnesota, St. Paul is a historical and cultural center for the state. St. Paul is a city of neighborhoods each with their own historical interest, cultural landmarks, ethnic heritage, and traditions. Today, many of St. Paul's neighborhoods retain their ethnic character. St. Paul has a long history of grassroots community organizing to maintain or improve its neighborhoods. Today many of these neighborhoods have their own festivals, newspapers, and recreational activities in addition to an official place in the political planning process as St. Paul's 17 District Councils.

The first residents of this area were Native American Indians, and in the area now occupied by St. Paul, they were comprised primarily of the Dakota or Sioux. St. Paul's first white settlement came in 1839 and was known as "Pig's Eye", the nickname for Pierre Perrant, a whiskey trader. Father Lucien Galtier, a Roman Catholic missionary, established a log chapel in 1841 dedicated to "St. Paul, the Apostle." This became the permanent name of the community.

The Mississippi River has been a major factor in St. Paul's development as a trade and transportation center. Tourists from the South and East took "fashionable tours" up the river. For decades the steamboat was the vital link between St. Paul and the world. In 1858 more than 1,000 steamboats docked at the St. Paul wharf, the head of navigation on the Mississippi.

Present river traffic consists of pleasure craft and large barges powered by diesel towboats. Barge traffic began to appear in the 1940s after the federal government constructed a series of 26 locks and dams along the Upper Mississippi to maintain a 9-foot navigational channel. World markets for mid-western grain rapidly increased St. Paul's waterborne commerce. Due to its history of industrial uses, the river experienced significant pollution, but with a new emphasis on environmental preservation and river beautification, it is being transformed into desirable recreational and living accommodations.

By 1859 Minnesota attained statehood and adopted its Constitution. St. Paul became the capital through much political maneuvering. In the 1890s architect Cass Gilbert designed the present capitol, which dominates the landscaped Capitol Approach lined with state government buildings.

Thousands of settlers came to the St. Paul area in the 1860s attracted by the prospect of a new trade territory and the Homestead Act land. The earliest white settlers came from French Canada and the Eastern states. The Germans and Irish formed the first wave of immigrants; next came the Scandinavians; then Poles, Italians, Jews, Eastern Europeans, and African-Americans, followed by Hispanics, Japanese and Chinese. Later Southeast Asians and most recently Middle Easterners and Africans have contributed to the cultural diversity of St. Paul.

As the city grows older, St. Paul has devoted itself to protecting its architectural heritage. During the 1950s St. Paul had renewal programs for areas around the Capitol, and in the 1970s, restoration and new construction transformed the city skyline. Now the downtown area is a central gathering place for the arts, cultural and sporting events. Civic dialogue continues in an attempt to reach a balance between benefits to individual neighborhoods and downtown.

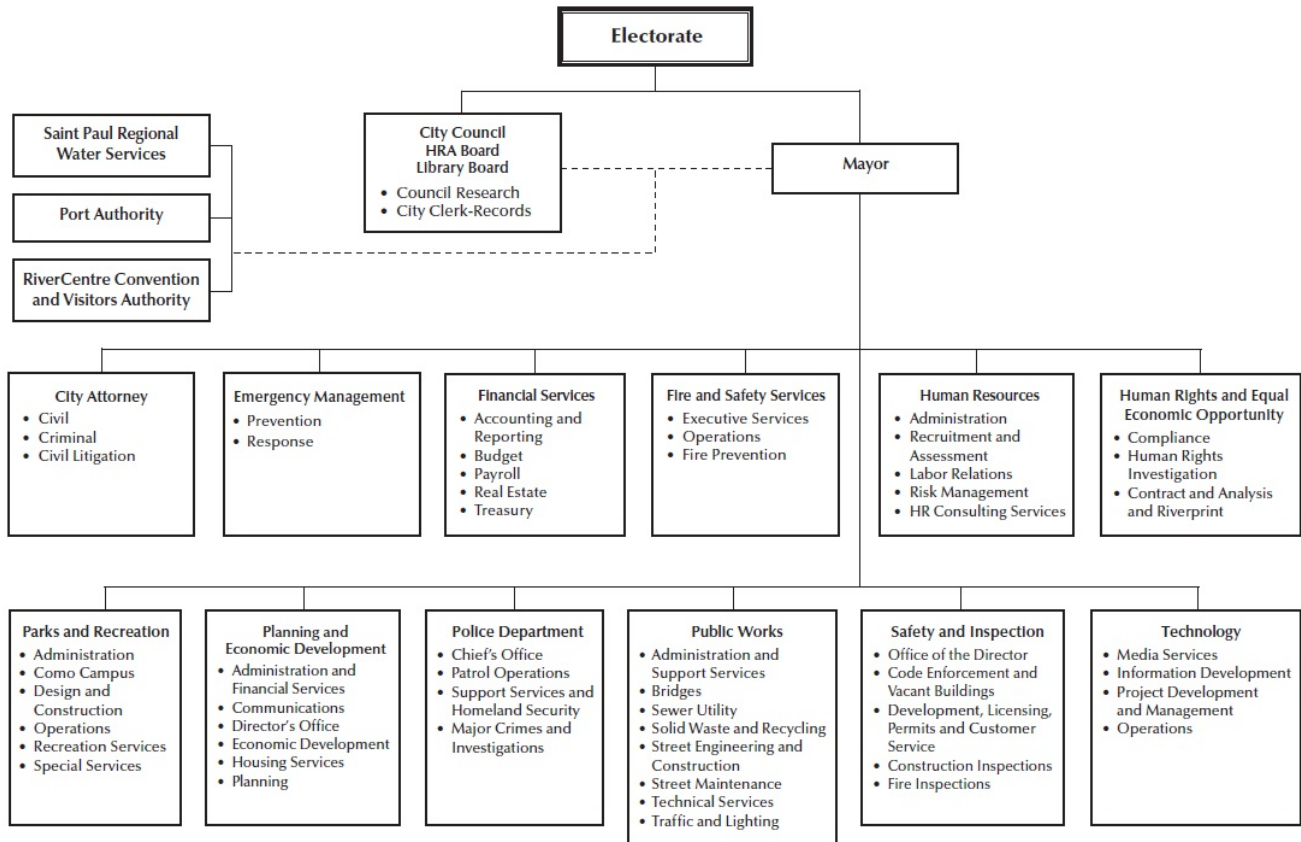
Saint Paul City Charter

An 1896 amendment to the Minnesota Constitution made home rule possible for any city, county, township or municipality. It gave citizens the right to choose their own form of government and to have a Charter Commission. Charter Commission members are appointed by the senior judge of the District Court to four-year staggered terms. The Commission members' job is to consider and propose changes to the charter. In 1970 the Saint Paul Charter Commission proposed a new charter with a strong-mayor council form of government, which was approved by voters and became effective in June 1972. The state Legislature has the ability to change charters and laws, but if any state law affects only a single home-rule charter, the legislature usually provides for approval by the local government or its citizens.

Amendments to a charter are made by: 1) a proposal of the city Charter Commission being placed on the election ballot and approved by 51% or more of those voting, 2) a proposal made by petition of registered voters being placed on the ballot and approved by 51% or more of those voting, 3) a City Council ordinance passed by a vote of 7 to 0 which must be reviewed by the Commission, subject to a petition for a referendum, or 4) a recommendation of the Commission and a unanimous vote of all members of the City Council, subject to a petition for a referendum.

City of Saint Paul, Minnesota

(Form of Government: "Strong" Mayor, with Seven Councilmembers Elected by Ward)



Source: 2012 Proposed Budget, City of Saint Paul

City Government

Following a 1970 amendment to the City Charter, the Mayor and City Council share government of the city of Saint Paul. The Mayor administers all city departments and the City Council sets city policy.

City Council - The Legislative Branch

Powers and Duties

The City Council is the legislative body of the city and is responsible for setting city policy through ordinances, resolutions, and adopting the city budget. City laws are created by the City Council through ordinances. An ordinance is read at four council meetings and becomes effective after it is passed by the council, approved by the Mayor and published in the Legal Ledger. All other official acts by the Council are done by passing a resolution, which becomes effective after passage by the Council and approval by the Mayor. Ordinances and resolutions are passed by majority vote (four or more members voting yes). The Mayor can sign the action, veto it, or let it become effective without his signature. If the Mayor fails to approve (vetoes), the Council can override this action with five or more votes.

The City Council also acts as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) for the City of Saint Paul. The HRA is a legally distinct public entity that undertakes housing and commercial development activities. Council members also serve on a number of other boards and commissions of intergovernmental agencies such as the Saint Paul Port Authority and River Centre Authority.

At the request of the City Council the 2002 Legislature passed legislation allowing the City Council to serve as a library board with taxing and bonding authority. The director of libraries is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Mayor. Funding for libraries appears on real estate tax statements as a separate item.

Council Meetings

The City Council meets four Wednesdays a month at 3:30p.m. in the City Council Chambers, 3rd floor, City Hall, 15 West Kellogg Boulevard Saint Paul. In the event of a fifth Wednesday, no meeting is held. Members of the public can attend any of these meetings. An agenda for the meeting may be obtained from the receptionist in Suite 310 at City Hall. It is also available online the Friday before the meeting. Council meetings can be seen live on cable television on channel 18 in Saint Paul or streamed online.

Public Hearings

Public hearings are conducted at 5:30 p.m. after the regular Council meeting, on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. The Council is required to hold public hearings on proposed ordinances, public improvements, property acquisitions, special assessments, utility charges and the city budget, as well as other issues as the need may arise. The opportunity to be heard comes when the Council President announces the public hearing on a particular matter. At this point, anyone wishing to speak may step forward. The Council may limit the time allowed for public testimony.

Mayor and Administrative Departments - The Executive Branch

The Mayor is the chief executive of the city and directs the administration of the city. The Mayor has the right to attend and participate in council meetings and to take part in discussions, but does not vote, and may also make recommendations to the council. The Mayor delivers the State of the City address each year to the Council and the public. Another role of the Mayor is to appoint people to the positions of city attorney, city clerk and the heads of the executive departments (see organization chart).

City Finances

Budget Process

The Mayor and his or her staff are in charge of developing the city budget each year. The Mayor is required to submit a budget proposal to the City Council by August 15. The council then begins hearings to determine what changes are needed in the proposed budget and determine the maximum tax levy, as required by state law. Municipal agencies are allowed to change the budget, and therefore tax levels, but they must remain below the maximum tax levy set by the state. Between September and October public hearings are held on the budget. A joint public meeting of the City Council, the County Board and the Board of Education is also held. By mid-December, the City Council adopts the final budget. The budget is then passed back to the Mayor, who can veto separate items, called a line-item veto.

Contact Information

Website: www.stpaul.gov
Mayor: Room 390 City Hall
15 W Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55102
(651) 266-8510

Council Members:
Room 310 City Hall
15 Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55102
(651) 266-8560

Saint Paul City Elections

Saint Paul City elections are held to elect the Mayor, seven City Council members, and seven members to the Board of Education of Independent School District #625. All candidates for city offices run without party labels, but the parties often endorse candidates for one or more offices. City Council members are voted on by the residents of their district. The Mayor and Board of Education members are elected by the whole city.

A City Council term begins in January of years divisible by four (for example 2008, 2012, and 2016). The mayoral term begins in January of even-numbered years not divisible by four (for example

2006, 2010, and 2014). Board of Education terms are staggered with three members being elected one year and four members elected two years later.

City elections are held in the fall of odd-numbered years, before the start of each term, usually in January. The general election is held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

Ranked Voting

Rank-choice voting is a recent method of voting in Saint Paul local elections. In 2009, voters approved Ranked Voting to elect the Saint Paul Mayor and members of the City Council. No primary is held. Voters are able to rank up to six different candidates in order of the voters' preference. Candidates win the election by getting a majority of the voter's first choices. If there is not a majority once the voters' first choices have been totaled, the candidates receiving the fewest votes or without a mathematical chance of winning are eliminated. Those ballots' next highest choices for candidates who remain are counted toward that candidates' vote total. This process continues until a candidate receives a majority of the remaining ballots. If two candidates are left, the candidate with the most votes is declared the winner.

School Board elections are conducted at-large with plurality winners. Voters are allowed to vote for up to the number of seats to be filled; those with the highest votes are elected. Depending on the year, the school district may or may not hold a primary election.

Details on Saint Paul City and Board of Education Elected Position

Office	Number Elected	Term (years)	Hours	Procedure
Mayor	1	4	Full-time	At large
Council Member	7	4	Part-time	By district
Board of Education Member	7	4	Part-time	At large Staggered terms

Source: St. Paul Code of Ordinances

Saint Paul Public Schools (Independent School District #625)

With approximately 39,000 students, Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) is the state's largest school district. The SPPS is governed by the Board of Education, which has powers granted by state law to all independent school districts, including the power to tax. The Board of Education is made up of seven members, elected for staggered terms by city voters at large. Each year the board elects a chair, vice-chair, clerk, and treasurer. The Board of Education establishes the overall mission and vision of public education in Saint Paul. They hire the superintendent of schools who develops and implements strategies for the thirteen secondary schools, forty-three elementary schools, and various other educational facilities in the district.

The Board also has seven committees which deal with matters referred to them by the Board: Budget and Finance, Personnel and Evaluation, Building, Grounds and Maintenance, Community Relations, Curriculum and Instruction, Goals, Rules and Legislation, and the Committee of the Whole. Board meetings are held monthly in the District Administration Building and are open to the public. Exact meeting times are available online at www.boe.spps.org or by calling (651) 767-8149.

Budget and Finance

The budget of the School District is developed both centrally and within each school. Site councils, Parent Teacher Organizations, committees of staff, parents and community members from each school make recommendations to the site principals for allocation of funds. The remaining budget is centrally controlled and allocated for services such as transportation, teacher payroll, information and computer systems and test assessment.

Each spring the Board of Education sets funding priorities. After the administration presents the preliminary budget to the Board, public hearings are held and revisions are made. The budget for the following school year must be adopted by June 30. The School District is funded by three main sources: about 71% of the district's revenue comes from the state; around 12% from the Federal Government and about 18% from local sources, such as tax levies, referenda and bonds. Educational and support programs make up about 83% of the District's expenditures. Other expenses are debt service, transportation, nutritional services, community education and employment and training programs.

Contact Information

Website: www.spps.org or email: communications@spps.org

Telephone: 651-767-8100

Address: Saint Paul Public Schools District Administration Building

360 Colborn Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Board of Education
651-767-8149
www.boe.spps.org

Guide for Residents of Ramsey County

Ramsey County Government

Saint Paul is one of nineteen cities and townships in Ramsey County, the smallest and most densely populated county in the state. Ramsey County is also the only county to be governed by a home rule charter. The charter spells out the duties and responsibilities of county government.

The Board of Commissioners

With seven members, the Board of Commissioners governs Ramsey County. Other elected county officials are the County Attorney and Sheriff. The Board of Commissioners hires a professional county manager who oversees the staff and daily operations of the county.

Duties and Operations

The County government provides a wide range of services. The Board of Commissioners operates on a committee system, with most matters being considered in committees before being brought to the Board. Commissioners also serve on related agencies like the 911 Emergency Telephone Board.

The Board determines policy, passes laws and resolutions (all other official acts), appoints boards, commissions, and officials, sets salaries, makes purchases and borrows money for county business.

The State Legislature delegates many responsibilities to the counties including:

- Property tax collection
- Law enforcement
- Road upkeep
- Emergency services
- Child support and protection
- Services for immigrants and refugees
- Public transportation
- Voter registration and election services
- Welfare

Ramsey County also provides other services not required by the state including:

- Libraries
- Parks and recreation programs
- Hazardous waste collections
- Recycling

Other Elected Officials

Ramsey County also has an elected County Attorney and Sheriff. The County Attorney prosecutes adults charged with felonies and juveniles charged with crimes in Ramsey County. The County

Attorney collects child support for children living in Ramsey County. The office also provides legal advice and representation to county government.

The Sheriff is the law enforcement officer for the county, except in cities with their own police department. This 500-member department provides service to an urban community of over 500,000 people. The department is organized into 5 main divisions: Public Safety Services, Court and Security Services, Detention Services, Administration, and Regional and Special Services.

Initiative and Referendum Process

Under the Home Rule Charter, citizens of Ramsey County can use the initiative process to propose an ordinance on any subject listed in the county charter. Citizens also can use a referendum process to repeal any ordinance that has been passed by the Board of Commissioners after November 6, 1992. The procedures for the initiative and referendum process to propose or repeal county laws are available by calling the county office or by visiting the website.

County Finances

Each year the County Manager prepares an annual budget for the County Board. The Commissioners hold public hearings, review, revise and adopt the budget. They must then determine the property tax levy to pay for county services.

Either the state or federal government mandates most of the services provided by Ramsey County. Money for services comes from property taxes, the state and federal governments, and fees charged for services. Sometimes the federal or state government requires the county to provide for services, but does not provide all the funding needed.

Ramsey County is responsible for collecting all property taxes, including those for the city, school district, and other agencies. The county spends about one-third of the taxes collected. The other two-thirds support city services, school districts, and agencies such as Metro Transit, Mosquito Control District, and the Saint Paul Port Authority. Property tax statements show the portion of tax dollars that go to each agency.

Meetings

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners generally meets four Tuesday per month at 9am in the Council Chambers on the third floor of the County Courthouse. All meetings are open to the public. Minutes must be published and are available at all Saint Paul and Ramsey County libraries, each city hall in the county and on the Ramsey County website.

Contact Information

Website: <http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us>
Telephone: (651) 266-8500
Address: Ramsey County Courthouse
15 W. Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Ramsey County Elections

As in Saint Paul City elections, candidates for all County offices run without party labels, but political parties sometimes endorse candidates. If more than two candidates run for the same seat, a primary election is held, and the two candidates with the most votes run in the general election.

County Commissioners are elected by district while all other county seats are elected at large. Although District Court judges run at large, each seat is numbered and the candidate must announce the seat number being sought. Elections for County Attorney and Sheriff are held in the fall of odd-numbered years between presidential elections. The terms of all other offices are staggered, with at least half the seats on the ballot every two years.

Details on County Elected Official Positions

Office	Number of positions	Term (years)	Procedure
Commissioner	7	4 staggered	By district
County Attorney	1	4	At large
Sheriff	1	4	At large
District Judge	27	6 staggered	At large
Soil & Water Conservation District Board	7	4 staggered	Nominated by district, elected at large

Source: <http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us>

Ramsey County Court System

None of the material in this section is intended as legal advice. Only an attorney can give legal advice.

All courts in Saint Paul and Ramsey County are part of the Ramsey County District Court, which has three branches: criminal, civil, and special courts. There are 29 judges elected to the District Court for staggered six-year terms. Cases may be handled in different courtrooms, but all are part of the District Court. The chief judge makes the assignments. The District Court is legislatively mandated to maintain a suburban court site, located in Maplewood. Most other cases are handled in courtrooms in the Ramsey County Courthouse or in the Juvenile and Family Justice Center.

Criminal Court

All criminal cases in which the government accuses someone of a crime, (except for some juvenile cases) are handled in this court. They include misdemeanors, gross misdemeanors, and felonies. The prosecutor represents the government in criminal cases. A criminal defendant always has the right to an attorney. If a person is accused of a crime and cannot afford an attorney, a lawyer from the Public Defender's Office will represent that person without cost.

Civil Courts

Civil courts handle disputes that do not involve the charge of a crime. The parties involved may be individuals, organizations, or businesses and there is no limit on the amount of money involved. The case starts when a person or his or her lawyer files a suit in the Clerk of Court's office, or when someone files a claim against another person. Most cases are settled by negotiation before the trial starts. If someone has been sued and doesn't have a lawyer, the Attorney's Referral Service, run by

the Ramsey County Bar Association, will provide a lawyer for a small fee to discuss the case briefly and to consider options. The telephone number for this service is: (651) 244-1775.

Conciliation Court handles cases involving claims of up to \$10,000. Its rules are simpler than those of regular civil court and many people handle their own cases without a lawyer in this court, which has no juries. A person may also hire a lawyer for a claim in the Conciliation Court and the opposing person or business may also have a lawyer.

Special Courts Division

Juvenile Court is concerned with people 19 years and younger, and is in the Juvenile and Family Center. Juvenile Court handles criminal charges brought against juveniles, the protection of children, help for developmentally disabled children, adoptions, divorces, domestic abuse and paternity suits. *Probate Court* handles wills and estates, guardianships of mentally incompetent adults, orphans, or children whose parents cannot provide appropriate care for them. *Housing Court* handles evictions, housing code violations and rent escrows which arise when a tenant wants legal assistance in making a landlord remedy poor conditions in the residence.

Juries

One of the most important civic duties of a citizen is to serve as a juror. There are two kinds of juries: *petit juries* and *grand juries*. Members of both are chosen randomly from a list that includes registered voters and persons with drivers' licenses or state identity cards. Jurors must be citizens and fluent in English. Jurors are paid for the cost of travelling to and from the courthouse, and also receive nominal pay for their services. If a person is 70 years or older, he or she may ask to be excused from jury service.

Petit juries hear evidence at public trials and vote in secret. They hear witnesses for both sides and in criminal trials their verdicts must be unanimous. In minor criminal cases and most civil cases, there are six persons on the jury; in serious crimes and some civil cases, the number of jurors is twelve. *Petit jurors* serve for a week or until the case is finished.

A *grand jury* decides whether to bring an indictment against a defendant for a serious crime. Twenty-three grand jurors serve for six months at a time, meeting once a month or as needed. A majority vote of the Grand Jury is required to bring an indictment. Jurors hear evidence from witnesses brought by the county attorney. Grand Jury proceedings are private.

Contact Information

Website: <http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us>

Telephone: (651) 266-8500

Addresses: Ramsey County Courthouse
15 W. Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Juvenile and Family Center
25 W. 7th St
Saint Paul, MN 55101

Guide to Citizen Participation

Voting In Elections

Voting Eligibility

In order to vote in Ramsey County on Election Day, one must be:

- 18 years of age or older
- A US citizen
- A Minnesota resident for at least 20 days before the election
- A resident of Ramsey County and the precinct in which you wish to vote
- Not a convicted felon
- Not under the guardianship of a person in which the court order provides that the ward does not retain the right to vote
- Not found by a court to be legally incompetent

Registering to Vote

A person must register to vote if he/she has never voted before, has not voted in the last four years or has moved or changed his/her name since the last vote. Registration is available before Election Day in person or by mail at the Ramsey County Elections Office or any City Hall in the County. If a first time voter and the person registers by mail, he/she may be asked to provide identification on or prior to Election Day. The deadline for preregistration is 21 days before Election Day.

Same-day registration is also available at polling places. The voter must show ONE of the following:

1. Minnesota driver's license, learner's permit or Minnesota identification card (or a receipt for any of these documents) that includes the voter's current address.
2. Notice of late registration mailed to the voter by Ramsey County Elections.
3. Evidence of prior registration at another address in the same precinct.
4. Oath of a registered voter in the same precinct who can vouch for the voter's residence in that precinct.
5. If the voter is a college student:
 - a. Current student identification card, registration card or fee statement that includes current address.
 - b. Current student fee statement with current address and a photo identification card.
 - c. Current student identification card including photo (if college has provided a list of students to Ramsey County Elections).

OR, One document from EACH of the following two groups:

1. Group A: *These documents must include your name and photo.*
 - a. Minnesota driver's license or identification card
 - b. U.S. passport
 - c. U.S. military identification card
 - d. Student identification card from a Minnesota college

2. Group B: *These documents must include your name and current address, and have a due date within thirty days of the election.*
 - a. Original bill for gas, electric, telephone, cable TV, water, sewer or solid waste services

Voting Assistance and Polling Place

An election judge, relative, friend or neighbor may assist voters with voting. Your polling place is near your home. To find the exact location, contact Ramsey County Elections or visit their website.

Election Time

City, County and Board of Education elections are held in the fall. Primary elections are in September while general elections are in November. Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Election Day. By State Law, all employees eligible to vote have the right to be absent from work for the purpose of voting during the morning of Election Day, without penalty of deduction from salary or wages.

Absentee Ballots

Absentee ballots are available from Ramsey County Elections. Voters may vote by absentee ballot if they are unable to vote in person on Election Day for the following reasons:

- Voter is away from home
- Voter is ill or disabled
- Voter is an election judge serving in another precinct
- Voter is unable to go to the polling place due to a religious holiday or belief
- There is an eligible emergency declared by the governor or quarantine declared by the federal or state government

If the voter is serving in the Armed Forces or otherwise living outside the United States, a parent, spouse, sibling or adult child can apply for an absentee ballot on the voter's behalf. Plan for at least two weeks time for the ballot to be mailed and another two for it to be returned to the County.

Election Judge

Election judges help guarantee that the rights of voters are protected on Election Day. They supervise election procedures in the voting place and get paid for their work. Visit the County's website to apply.

Contact Information

Website: www.co.ramsey.mn.us/elections

Telephone: (651) 266-2171

E-mail: elections@co-ramsey.mn.us

Address: Ramsey County Elections
90 West Plato Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55107

Joining a Political Party

The legally recognized political parties in Minnesota are those that have received votes in every county and at least 5% of the total vote cast in the last general election. These parties are required by state law to hold a caucus for every election precinct in each general election year. Anyone who will be qualified to vote on Election Day may participate in the party's caucus in the local precinct.

The caucuses begin the process required to adopt party platforms, which state what the party supports and believes in, select party officers, and endorse candidates of their choice. In a presidential election year, delegates to the national conventions are chosen at precinct caucuses.

Observing Government Meetings

Minnesota law requires all meetings of all governmental units to be open to the public. There are a few specific exceptions such as disciplinary proceedings, some collective-bargaining negotiations, discussion of a pending lawsuit with an attorney, and training sessions. The public must be given adequate notice of the time and place of public meetings. Votes taken at these meetings must be recorded in an official journal, which is available for public inspection.

Appointment to Advisory Boards

Advisory committees engage citizens in important decision-making processes. Most units of government in Minnesota have such groups and are committed to notifying the public of openings on them. There is a great variety in qualifications for appointees and in the ways they are appointed. With the approval of the City Council, the Mayor appoints Saint Paul residents to the City, County and regional citizen advisory boards. Subjects include affirmative action, aging, investment, preservation, housing and development. Citizens apply to the Mayor's office. Open seats and applications can be found on the City's website under *Join a Committee, Board or Commission*.

Contact Information

Website: www.ci.stpaul.mn.us

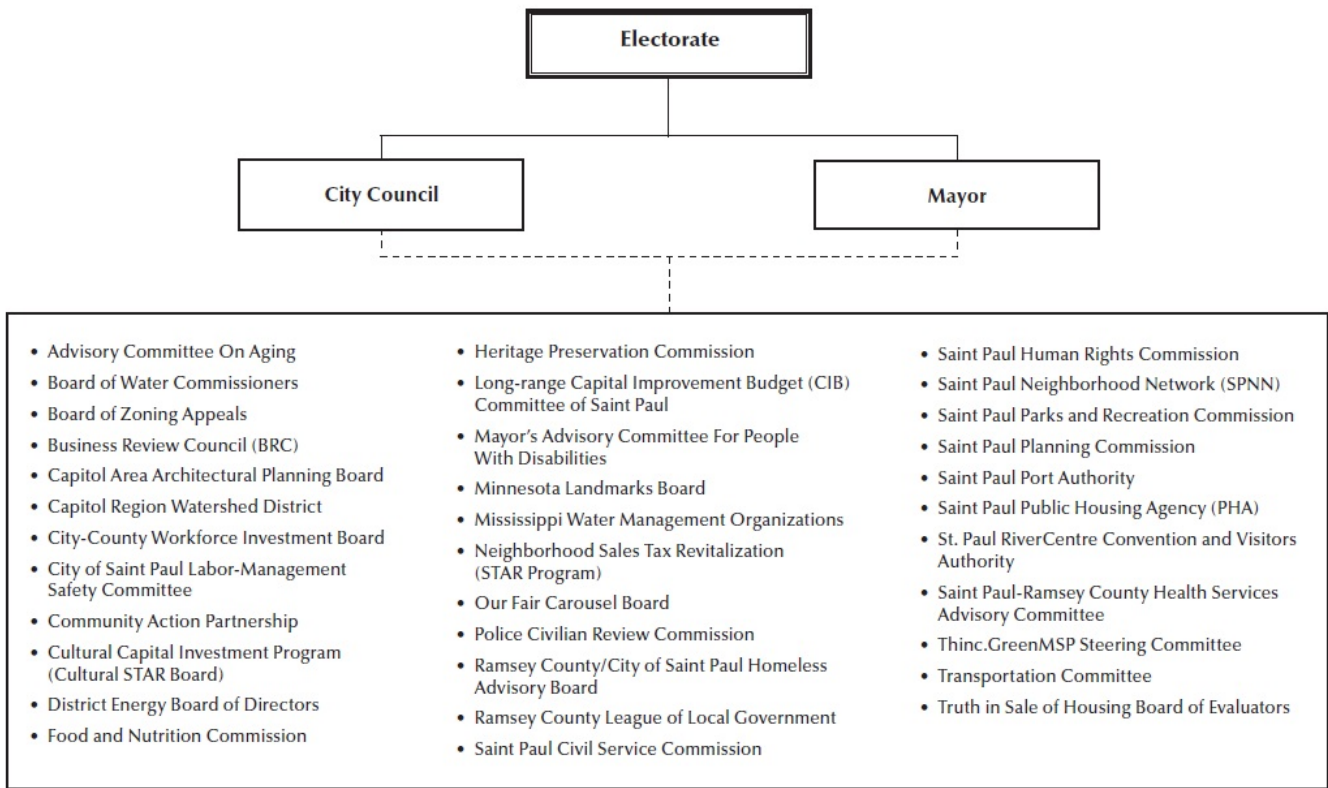
Telephone: (651) 266-8989

Address: City Hall

15 West Kellogg Boulevard

Saint Paul, MN 55102

City-Appointed Boards and Commissions



Source: 2012 Proposed Budget, City of Saint Paul

Involvement in Neighborhood District Councils

District Councils

In 1975 the city of St. Paul was subdivided into 17 different districts to better serve the residents of each area. An elected council leads each district. The Councils are separate non-profit organizations that receive funding from the city. District Councils initiate plans for their area's housing, recreation, transportation, health, safety, and shopping centers. They meet monthly to review plans and project changes being considered for the area by other public and private groups and individuals. The Saint Paul City Council makes the final decisions, but it considers district recommendations in planning and the capital improvement budget process.

Contact Information

Website: www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?nid=1859

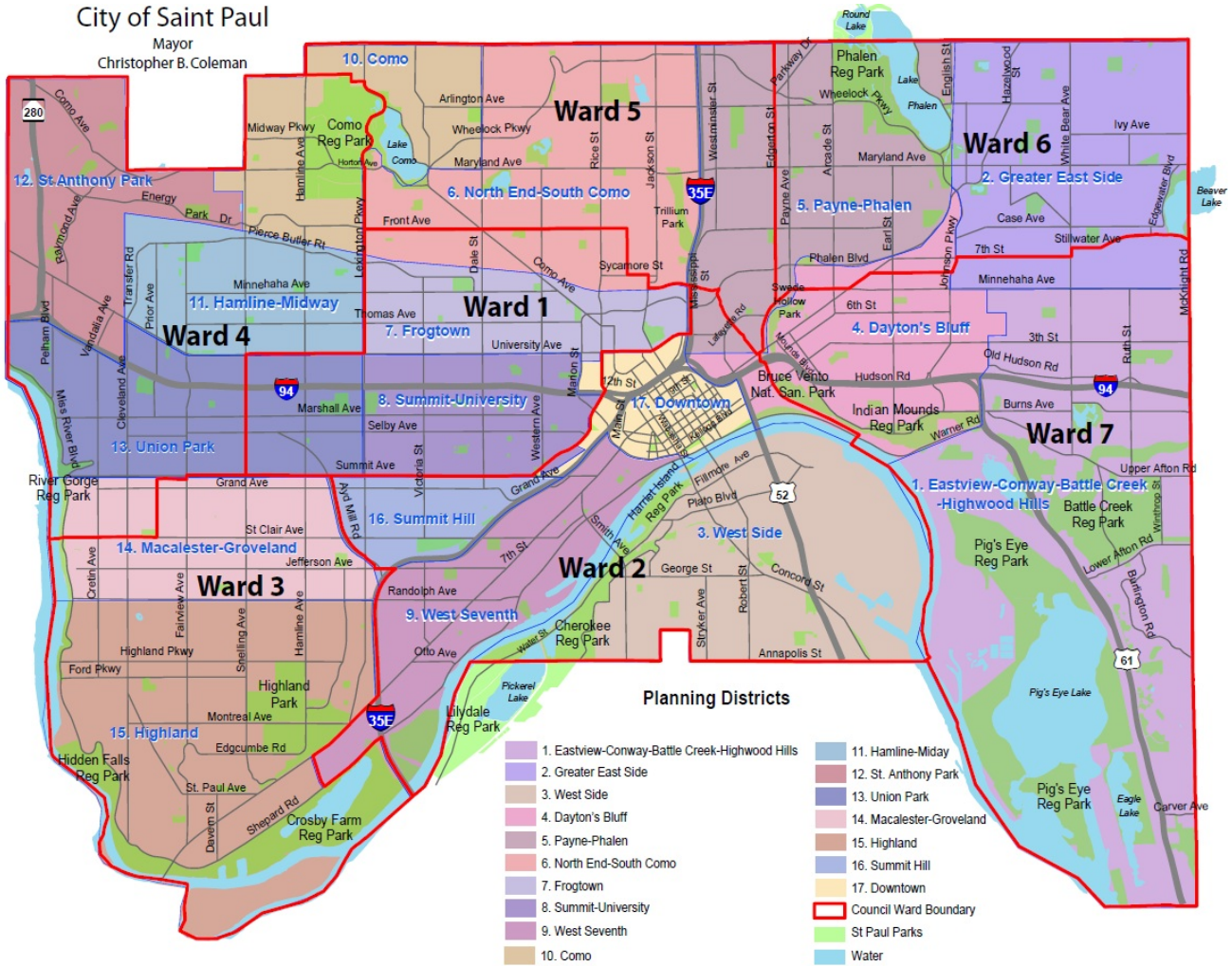
Telephone: 651-266-8572

Address: 310 City Hall

15 Kellogg Blvd., West

Saint Paul, MN 55102

District Council and City Council Ward Map



Source: City of Saint Paul website

Note: The Saint Paul City Council approved a district boundary shift on March 21, 2013 that will take effect January 1, 2014. A section of District 6 will be shifted to District 10. At the time of publication the new District Council Map was not available.

Guide to Regional Government

Metropolitan Agencies

The Twin Cities metropolitan area has hundreds of units of government in the counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott and Washington. The Legislature has created several metropolitan agencies to enable inter-governmental action on problems crossing these political lines. Among the agencies which affect St. Paul are:

Metropolitan Council: The Council consists of one citizen member appointed by the governor from each of 16 districts and a chair who serves at the pleasure of the governor. The Metropolitan Council coordinates planning and development in the seven-county area. It is authorized by state and federal law to plan for land use, transportation, sewers, parks and open space, airports, air and water quality, and housing. It also operates regional services including wastewater treatment and collection, transit and metro HRA-subsidized housing assistance for low-income families. It has an active system of advisory committees in every field of interest. All meetings are open to the public.

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission: The Commission works to support the Metropolitan Council and ten regional park implementing agencies in developing long-range plans and acquisition and development programs for regional parks.

Metropolitan Airports Commission: The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) owns and operates the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and six smaller airports in the Twin Cities metro area. The MAC chairman and 14 commissioners meet monthly and citizens are welcome to attend the meetings. The Governor appoints the chairman and 12 commissioners while the remaining 2 are appointed by the Mayor of Minneapolis and the Mayor of Saint Paul to represent each city. The commissioners serve staggered terms of 4 years.

Contact Information, Resources

City of Saint Paul

Website: www.stpaul.gov
Telephone (Mayor): (651) 266-8510
(Council Members): (651) 266-8560
Addresses: Mayor
Room 390 City Hall
15 West Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55102

Council Members
Room 310 City Hall
15 West Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55102

Saint Paul Boards and Commissions

Website: www.stpaul.gov
Telephone: (651) 266-8989
Address: Citizens Service Office
15 West Kellogg Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Saint Paul Public Schools

Website: www.spps.org
Telephone: (651) 767-8100
Address: District Administration Building
360 Colborne Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

School District Site Councils

Website: www.spps.org/OSBI
Telephone: (651) 767-8347
Address: Office of Site Based Improvement
360 Colborne Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Ramsey County Government

Website:
<http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/home/index.htm>
Telephone: (651) 266-8500
Address: Ramsey County Courthouse
15 West Kellogg Blvd
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Ramsey County Courts

Website: <http://www.mncourts.gov/district/2/>
Telephone: (651) 266-8266
Address: 15 West Kellogg Blvd
St. Paul, MN 55102

Ramsey County Elections

Website:
<http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/elections>
Email: elections@co.ramsey.mn.us
Telephone: (651) 266-2171
Address: 90 West Plato Blvd. Suite 160
Saint Paul, MN 55107

League of Women Voters of Saint Paul

Website: www.lwvsp.org
Email: mail@lwvsp.org
Telephone: (651) 789-0118
Address:
The League of Women Voters of Saint Paul
Minnesota Women's Building
550 Rice St.
Saint Paul, MN 55103