



2019 SAINT PAUL VOTER GUIDE

A guide to city council and school board candidates



The League of Women Voters of St. Paul is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed to civic engagement.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 1



Anika Bowie

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**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing. Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Anika is an artist and educator, President of the MN NAACP and serves as the St. Paul Police Civilian Internal Affairs Review Commissioner for Ward 1.

**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing. Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Liz is a personal care attendant for children and individuals with disabilities, is a field organizer and campaign staffer and is a systems advocacy coordinator at Sexual Violence Services.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 1 Continued



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Dai Thao

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Priorities include community-based solutions, where the residents/community most impacted are the ones driving the solutions. Community safety through police accountability. If elected, Abu will create an independent civilian board that will create an environment where the public feel that police are held to a high standard. If elected, will have a participatory budget process which will allow community members to have an active role in shaping the budget. He will also prioritize basic infrastructure such as a reasonable trash policy and fixing the roads.

Abu serves as board member on the District 7 – Thomas Dale/Frogtown Neighborhood Association, he is a Frogtown Community Advocate and Founder of the Saint Paul Data Initiative.

Priorities include a focus on economic development, affordable housing, improving street maintenance, environmental and social justice, early childhood education and increasing investments in youth development.

If re-elected, he will address the housing shortage by increasing density in transit-oriented corridors and options in single family housing districts with accessory dwelling units or ease the use of duplex, triplex, and quad-plex, and support inclusionary zoning.

While in office, he led the City on body-worn police cameras and successfully pushed for the removal of police officers from a civilian review board. Supported the Chief in the review of de-escalation training and use-of-force policy.

If re-elected he will engage with residents to craft policy by hosting community meal and quarterly community coffee sessions. He will work to understand constituent needs and concerns.

Dai is a former community organizer and has a background in IT. Dai is the incumbent and has served City Council for 2 years.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 2



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Priorities include senior, public safety, city taxes and real estate issues. If elected she will work to address the housing shortage by exposing the city's negligence to be held accountable.

Sharon is a self-described whistle blower and former candidate for public office.

Bill feels that property tax, fee and assessment increases are out of control. The power of increased taxation needs to be given to citizens in the form of referendums. If elected, Bill would work to increase public participation in City policy making by updating the City's website by clarifying "direct" and "public" emails. The update would also allow citizen voting on all public hearings, commission and board matters. He believes the destruction of salvageable houses should stop and that the City should play a more active role in revitalizing vacant properties. He would work closely with citizens to craft new policies designed to restore power back to the people and reign in City Council.

Bill is an artist, gallery owner and former candidate. Bills serves on the District 17-Downtown Capitol River Council.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 2 Continued



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Helen believes that working people must organize and act independent of ruling capitalists, their political parties and their state. If elected, she would work to build a movement with a fighting program to confront the economic, social and moral crisis caused by capitalism. Only by organizing workers to act against every manifestation of capitalist oppression can working people wake up to their worth and develop the confidence in our fighting capacity. She would organize workers to fight against police brutality. She would demand that cops who murder and brutalize be fired, prosecuted and jailed. Fighting racist discrimination and the entire capitalist injustice system with its frame-ups, "plea bargains," onerous bail and outrageous prison sentences, all of which disproportionately hit workers who are black.

Helen is a retail worker, a member of the United Auto Workers and United Food and Commercial Workers Union. She participated in the Civil Rights Movement and the fight to end the Vietnam War.

Priorities include bringing strong action to the voice and priorities of neighbors and local businesses, who have been overlooked or disregarded. When looking at issues like: roads & basic infrastructure, increased tax levies, city trash, public safety, problem properties, "affordable" living, density, rezoning, business advocacy, fireworks, and resources for education, seniors and veterans, there has been a band-aid approach, a lack of strategy, gross overspending & a lack of true thoughtfulness to how the community will benefit.

If elected, she will bring community engagement, voice, strong strategy, intelligence and true community benefit considerations to these issues. She will look at ways to develop more homes (smaller homes) in different areas; and will look at ways to incentivize starter homes initiatives.

Lindsay has a background in marketing and advertising. She is a marketing advocate for local small businesses.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 2 Continued



Rebecca Noecker

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Priorities include supporting working families through the following initiatives:

Saint Paul 3K - a city-led effort to ensure that all families in St. Paul have access to high-quality, affordable early childhood education.

Affordable housing - exploring policies that will allow greater infill density, reduce the cost of new affordable housing and make it easier for low-income residents to own their own homes.

Creation of a working capital fund to help small businesses adapt to changing economic and regulatory environments and weather hard times.

Streamline city permitting processes so developers can get out of the red tape. This is the work of our Open for Business initiative, which Noecker helped start at the beginning of her first term.

Rebecca has worked internationally in India and Uganda and as a middle school teacher. She is the incumbent candidate.

Ward 3



Patricia Hartmann

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Priorities include:

Government accountability: although the City holds public meetings, the citizen comments are carefully filtered by city staff. These staged “listening sessions” are no substitute for authentic citizen engagement

Public Safety: the budget cuts for the police and fire departments are evidence of the city’s misplaced priorities. Given the increasing levels of violent crime, we should be increasing the funding for our first responders.

Responsible neighborhood development: the city repeatedly grants zoning variances for construction not consistent with our neighborhoods. The city favors the interests of corporate developers over its own residents and local businesses.

Fix the streets. We need a safe space for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

Patty serves on the Macalester Groveland Community Council. She is an attorney in private practice mainly in the areas of personal injury and professional liability.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 3 Continued



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**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing.
Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Chris is a member of Ramsey County League of Local Governments Board, Saint Paul Children's Collaborative, Board of Water Commissioners and Saint Paul Library Board. He is an attorney and the incumbent candidate.

Ward 4



Chris Holbrook

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Priorities include:

Liberating Saint Paul from City Hall, fixing trash, free parking and safe police. The trash contract needs to be undone to save citizens money, parking spaces and roads need to be created and maintained instead of sacrificed, and policing can become safer with community involvement, oversight, and insurance.

Get City Hall off the backs of homeowners, NOAH owners, apartment owners, and developers. Mandates, regulations, and taxes have become a very heavy burden which only increases the cost of living and/or building in Saint Paul.

Community policing - interactions need to be safer in both directions, need to consider police professional liability insurance and other creative ideas as a community. We need to change interactions with City Hall from a one-way discussion to engagement. It should never be Us vs Them, it should always be We.

Chris is an account manager for a building materials wholesaler and is a longtime independent and tax-paying community member.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 4 Continued



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Tarrence Robertson-Bayless

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Priorities include increasing our affordable housing, building community wealth, promoting environmental sustainability and transportation, and achieving community-first public safety through police alternatives and accountability.

If re-elected she will work to create an all-the-above supply strategy combined with strong tenant protections and significant zoning and land use reform to meet the severe housing needs of our growing community.

She embraces a combination of police accountability and a culture shift toward investing in alternatives to traditional policing, strengthening the PCIARC (civilian review board), ensuring our community-informed use-of-force and other policies are upheld, and pushing SPPD to engage in more regular and detailed data release, while also working with our community on alternatives to traditional policing.

Mitra has a background as a teacher and as an organizer at the St. Paul Federation of Teachers. She previously worked as an outreach director for Rep. Keith Ellison and is the incumbent candidate.

Priorities include rebuilding the trust between residents and our city government through transparency, accessibility, and accountability. Stopping the crippling tax hikes on renters, homeowners, small businesses, which make it more difficult for folks on a fixed income to get by.

If elected, Tarrence would work with community partners to expand options for equitable, safe, and affordable housing and not allow developers to continue building market-rate apartments without provisions on affordability.

He would continue to support events such as Safe Summer Nights, explore residency-requirements for hiring of new officers, co-screening of police by community members and listening/learning sessions to promote harm reduction.

He would also put the power back into our District Councils as well as expand options for involvement via technology.

Tarrence is a Bronze Star and Combat Action Badge Recipient. He worked as a combat medic and in Resilience and Suicide Prevention Program in MN Army National Guard and is a transgender service member and LGBT advocate.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 5



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**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing.
Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Bob is a member of the Red Lake Nation, is a social justice advocate and environmentalist, he works at Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light and owns Solar Bear which specializes in solar power.



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**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing.
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Amy's background includes working as a mediator and spokesperson for Minnesota's Attorney General Office and as a marketing director for Children's Home Society and Family Services. She is the incumbent candidate.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 5 Continued



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Priorities include public safety, fixing the trash system, infrastructure and housing.

Without safe neighborhoods, our communities cannot thrive and grow to their full potential. We also have to bring residents and law enforcement together to talk about issues and work towards solutions together. St Paul should have reliable trash services that are cheaper than private services at every level of usage, have the same per gallon waste cost at every level, have no penalties and leave carts standing in proper places. Potholes and other road problems are major safety issues for drivers. When it comes to budgets, we must not waste money on things that are unnecessary and pay for the things that. We must work towards sustainable housing and look at all options that can serve our residents.

Jamie runs the North End Free Pantry. She has a background in health care, human services and education. She worked on the Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood initiative.

If elected, Suyapa would ensure that housing is a human right. It is essential to survival and integral to everyone's ability to access education, health care, food, jobs, and transportation. Everyone benefits when all residents have stable housing.

Ensure that our neighborhoods have access to fresh and healthy foods, public green spaces and opportunities to engage in recreation. Ward 5 is rich in talent and ingenuity but too often residents — particularly people of color — don't have access to the resources to create and sustain businesses in our community.

Work with stakeholders to identify and fund community-based strategies (beyond policing) to address and prevent crime so that people in St. Paul can feel safe in their city. The approach cannot begin and end with policing.

Make sure that St. Paul streets are safe for all types of travel, from walking and biking to taking the bus, and that people have public transit options that give them the freedom to move around our city and the region.

Suyapa is the Vice Chair of the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability. She is the former Executive Director of the Saint Anthony Park Community Council and served on the North End Neighborhood Organization.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019



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Priorities include:

Expanding our mental-health unit and explore new and effective officer training with emphasis on de-escalation, and use-of-force regulations. Abolishing the trash program in its entirety, and establish a development (non-gentrifying) policy that is considerate and conscious of the actual and existing community.

If elected, he will advocate that every child under the age of 5 should receive complimentary childcare and will institute a Green Community Policy throughout the city including rooftop and green spaces and a city-wide pollinator initiative with special consideration for open green spaces and vacant lots. Additionally, he will advocate for rent control, rent stabilization and renter's rights and "ban the box" on rental applications for single family rentals.

Alexander is a political consultant and entrepreneur. He formerly served on the Childhood & Family Learning Foundation board. He is a 2014 Spotlight on Success Honoree.

If elected, Kassim will work to redevelop the Hillcrest Golf Club and develop additional housing. He will push for the addition of 1000+ homes to housing supplies of Saint Paul within the next 2 years. He will invest in programs like Community Ambassadors that encourages direct community engagement with the police department. He will encourage more police/community activities. He will hold community meetings in the communities, not downtown, to discuss important topics and get feedback. He will encourage developers to redevelop the 503 vacant homes in St. Paul.

Kassim is a community activist and the Director of Minnesota Dawah Institute and a youth violence prevention consultant. He worked as a Community Ambassador to help build relationships between youth and the police department and was appointed to serve the remainder of Dan Bostrom's term.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 6 Continued



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**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing.
Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Public Safety: maintain current staffing level of the St. Paul Police Department. Public Works: Capital Budget \$36 Million to address streets decay crisis.

Eliminate Barriers to Housing Construction, Jobs and Business Investment to Reduce Poverty in Saint Paul. Also, stop demolition of existing housing and create incentives for redevelopment of existing housing stock including apartments.

Protect Saint Paul City Charter and citizens' rights to referendum Work to eliminate statutory caps on Housing Tax Credit Investment Programs to attract maximum private investment to public housing bonds issued by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency to address the housing supply crisis market demand for new affordable housing.

Broadcast ALL City Council meetings on the City's Cable TV station and schedule regular community forums in the wards with the Mayor, City Council and Police Chief as well as local Police Commander.

Greg has a background as the City Manger of Maplewood. He owned the General lines Insurance Agency and founded the Liberty Resources Corporation.

**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing.
Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Danielle is a community organizer and advocates on issues of zoning and ordinances.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 6 Continued



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Priorities include, increasing economic development and opportunity; maintaining and preserving housing affordability; and creating great and safe neighborhoods.

If elected, she will develop housing on the over 100 empty lots in Ward 6, encourage housing density in redevelopment sites such as the Hillcrest Golf Course and Hafners sites. Ensure just and transparent policing by engaging with residents and law enforcement to develop community-based strategies to reduce crime, and advocate for a community-centered policing approach.

Terri spent her career doing deep engagement in community and believes in co-governance. She plans to continue this with residents on upcoming policies and will seek feedback and hold forums and online engagement opportunities.

Terri serves on the St. Paul Planning Commission and is the Program Director of an organization that train leaders of color. She has served as Chair for several local non-profits.

**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing. Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Nelsie is a community organizer with TakeAction MN. She serves as a board member for Hmong Americans for Justice, MaivePAC and Our Revolution.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 7



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Kartumu works as a Canvas Supervisor with MN Voice. She also has experience working with community radio: 104.7 FM WEQY.

If re-elected, Jane will work to address the housing crisis facing the city, including an unprecedented number of youth and families who are experiencing homelessness, and build prosperity for the community through the creation of jobs and affordable housing.

She will work with public and private partners, across public jurisdictions and with the philanthropic sector to immediately increase the supply of deeply affordable housing, and work with a cross-sector coalition including community advocates and homeless youth and families to end family homelessness. Also, in addition to holding monthly coffees in her ward and attending every event to which she is invited, Prince continually works on ways to be more accessible and responsive to the people she represents.

The Saint Paul Police Department launched a Community Engagement Unit; and in 2018, a Community Outreach And Stabilization Unit, consisting of the mental health resource team, and the recovery access and homeless outreach programs. Prince supports these community public safety initiatives to strengthen the community's trust in officers as guardians, not warriors.

Jane has a background as an attorney with *Weinblatt & Gaylord PLC*. She is a former consultant and community relations worker. She is the incumbent candidate.

Saint Paul City Council Candidates 2019

Ward 7



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David Thom

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**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing. Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Mary Anne is a youth organizer and arts and community activist. She opened the Roots Cultural Center in 2015 and Kalpulli Yaocenoxltli in 2006.

**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing. Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

David is small business owner and resident of St. Paul.

Saint Paul School Board Candidates 2019



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Charlie Castro

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Chauntyll is an education assistant, basketball coach and community leader for Black Lives Matter. She is a youth advocate and previously worked in a high crisis facility for child protection.

Priorities

First, work to address the school to prison pipeline as it relates to code of conduct and discipline. Second, work with teachers and other faculty to get them the resources they need in their classrooms and schools. Finally, Castro would work to bring services into the school setting where it's most needed.

St. Paul Schools need to exist for every student to receive a world class education. Castro would work to recruit teachers that reflect those students in our diverse community and would push the community to take an active role in the schools in their neighborhood.

We all work better when we consider all points of view before making a decision, that said Castro doesn't believe that most people know what a School Board Member does. She will hold more town hall events to reach more parents and concerned citizens in shaping what St. Paul Schools should be for their students.

Castro is systems analyst and professor in the State Colleges system. She has been a resident of St. Paul for 11 years.

Saint Paul School Board Candidates 2019



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Tiffany Fearing

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Priorities

Ensure that the district's Gender Inclusion Policy is fully implemented and that we have accountability structures in place. Work with our students on trans & non-binary inclusive sex-ed, consent ed, and comprehensive sex education. Work with the superintendent and activists to update current policies, write new policy as needed, and implement a program that better supports culturally relevant curriculum. Prioritize positive change through accountability, the strategic plan, and evaluation of the superintendent. Make sure district collaborates with families — engagement isn't checking a box, it's a journey together, based on trust. Move student achievement through talking about racial disparities, and the work we're doing as a district to address and improve outcomes.

Zuki is the PTO President of JJ Hill Montessori School, a national trainer for the Parent Home Visits to build connection between school and home. Zuki is an incumbent candidate.

Priorities

Make sure all students feel safe and welcomed at school. One way to do that would be to have monthly meetings between counselors and students; a way to check in and see how every student is doing.

Find out what happened with the remodeling, why did it go so far over budget?

Have courses that reflect our students, and teachers to teach them. Fearing wants to see our graduation rate hit 80%.

Fearing would look at dropping or reducing homework. A lot of our families don't speak English at home so students aren't able to get the help they need. She would spend more time listening to our students, and teachers.

Fearing is West End resident who works as an administrative assistant in a St. Paul law firm.

Saint Paul School Board Candidates 2019



Elijah Norris-Holliday

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**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing. Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Elijah is SPPS graduate who works for Securian Financial Services. He is currently pursuing a master's degree at Mankato State University.

Priorities

Build a welcoming, accessible, and responsive district and board, develop effective, sustainable community/city/county partnerships, and support diversity and innovation in teaching and learning. These priorities are designed to address achievement disparities and improve family and community engagement.

Encourage and practice robust collaboration, innovation, and engagement and use experience as a parent, teacher, school-based advocate, and community organizer to advance policies and priorities that support students, families, and educators.

Make it easier for families and communities to be aware of, and participate in, committees that advise the board and district on policy.

Begin annual conversations about schools in every St. Paul neighborhood by developing community-based work groups to include a broad base of partners to identify assets and challenges and opportunities for collaboration.

Jessica is leader in Hamline PTA, serves on multiple community coalitions and communities, is a high school mentor with YMCA and Minneapolis Parks and Rec. She has a background in middle and high school English education.

Saint Paul School Board Candidates 2019



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Jennifer McPherson

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Priorities

Hold SPPS accountable for implementing the plan to address racial disparities in achievement & discipline; strengthen connections with the community; stabilize the district's long-term fiscal health; and accelerate the shift to safer, more respectful learning environments, with increased use of restorative practices.

Focus the district's efforts, in terms of staff and fiscal resources. The SPPS Achieves strategic plan addresses many of the long term concerns expressed by community members (achievement gaps, school climate, cultural relevant teaching, etc.), but needs support and oversight to be implemented effectively.

He would like the Board to develop a more strategic and focused effort to engage residents through community meetings, focus groups and surveys. He believes he needs to hear from perspectives that reflect the diversity of our student body and community, not just those who routinely reach out with input and comments.

Marchese is a member of the St. Anthony Park Elementary School Site Council, Commissioner of the MN Civil Rights and St. Paul Civil Service Commission. He an incumbent candidate.

**This statement was not approved by candidate prior to publishing. Candidate did not respond to questionnaire. **

Jennifer is SPPS parent and works for TPT member services.

Saint Paul School Board Candidates 2019

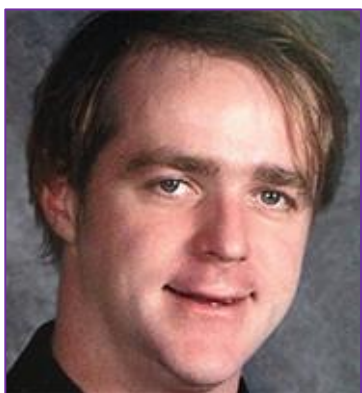


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**The candidate did not respond to our attempts at communication. All background information is courtesy of the Saint Paul Pioneer Press. **

Omar is a pharmacy technician and owner of Chilly Time Coffee.

Priorities

Update SPPS policy for physical restraints of students to ensure all instances of physical restraint is documented. Update the restraint policy to guarantee hourly workers on the clock time to take part in the mandatory documentation and debriefing for restraints of students. Work to ensure schools are safe and accessible for all.

Update transportation safety policies to meet the state's requirements and have the board designate a School Transportation Safety Director. The Transportation safety policy must include a provision for the qualifications, training and duties of bus monitors, who assist students with special needs on the bus.

Assist the district with the construction financial crisis. The board must step in to oversee the solutions. With the costs spiraling out of control we must prioritize ADA accessibility over aesthetic beauty.

Fully restore the rights of our students with disabilities. Will fight to enforce the labor protections and standards for our employees and will be open and honest with all communities that need outdated policies updated.

Ryan has a background as an Associate Educator at Seward Montessori, MPS District child care worker and St. Paul Public Schools educator.