

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

2023 STATE PLATFORM



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RAMSEY COUNTY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Residents First: Effective, Efficient and Accessible Operations

Advancing Racial and Health Equity and Shared Community Power

Putting Well-Being and Community at the Center
of Justice System Transformation

Advancing a Holistic Approach to Strengthen Families

Responding to Climate Change and Increasing Community Resilience

Intergenerational Prosperity for Racial
and Economic Inclusion

Aligning Talent Attraction, Retention and Promotion

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LEGISLATIVE **TOP PRIORITIES**

Family and community stabilization:

- Investing in housing stability—affordability and transitions out of homelessness.
- Addressing racial disparities in out-of-home displacements.
- Preventing and responding to youth violence through innovative community programming and investments.
- Funding an increase in County Program Aid.

Systems transformation:

- Improving mental and behavioral health systems and support.
- Reforming criminal justice approaches, centering community.

Economic competitiveness and inclusion:

- Funding transportation, including new revenues for transit, roads and bridges.
- Investing in workforce supports for all residents.
- Responding to climate change by prioritizing adaptation and resiliency.
- Funding for Ramsey County bonding requests.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT REQUESTS

RAMSEY COUNTY BONDING REQUESTS

The Park at RiversEdge	\$26M
Rice Street Revitalization	\$3.9M
Bruce Vento Trail Extension	\$5M

PRIORITY SUPPORT FOR OTHER BONDING REQUESTS

East bound Kellogg RiverCentre Bridge, City of Saint Paul	\$26M
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SUPPORT FOR OTHER BONDING REQUESTS

Gibbs Farm-Pathways to Dakota & Pioneer Life, Ramsey County Historical Society	\$9M
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Advancing Racial and Health Equity and Shared Community Power

INCREASED HEALTH CARE ACCESS

- Support legislation to address racial disparities in health care access, quality and outcomes.
- Support legislation to increase Minnesota Eligibility Technology System funding to develop needed technological improvements that help county financial aid workers more efficiently and accurately determine public program eligibility, amidst increased demands for services and state-mandated data matching activities.
- Oppose legislation that would change or remove key Affordable Care Act provisions such as coverage for dependents up to age 26 and prohibiting the denial of coverage for preexisting conditions and the use of lifetime caps for coverage.

MENTAL HEALTH

- Support legislation to develop additional community-based mental health placement options and services to shorten stays in state facilities and reduce costs after inpatient care is no longer necessary.
- Support legislation to address the comprehensive mental and behavioral health needs of the community, foster coordination among partners and ensure parity in services across populations.
- Support policy changes to provide clarity within the use of force protocol regarding transport holds for individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. Individuals who are in crisis due to mental illness where a transport hold is requested but not enforced are more likely to be arrested and funneled through the correctional system than given proper medical care.
- Support legislation to address student health needs, including increased reimbursement for school-based clinics as well as embedding social workers in schools to assess needs and support mental health. The social workers would also ensure families had information about and direct access to county services.
- Support legislation to resolve the gaps between the criminal court process and a person's access to mental health care when the court deems someone incompetent to participate in their defense due to a mental illness. This includes increased capacity for Rule 20 evaluations, increased community-based supports and increased local hospital capacities to quickly readmit people who either resume drug abuse, discontinue prescription medication compliance or otherwise decompensate, so that they can obtain necessary care and avoid any further police interactions.
- Pursue adequate ongoing funding support for the Youth Mental Health Urgency Room created by the 2022 legislature.

Ramsey County will develop a countywide approach to improve race-based disproportional outcomes by deconstructing systemic and institutional barriers to be more fair, inclusive and transparent in how we share decision-making power with residents, communities and employees to build a more equitable organization and remove organizational barriers to create fairer, more inclusive government.

COMMUNITY-CENTERED CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS

- Support legislation that further reforms the investigation and prosecution of fatal shootings and wrongful actions by police, increases police accountability and transparency, raises standards of conduct and supports officer excellence, partners officers with the communities they serve, repairs and builds community trust, and enhances community-centered public safety.

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

- Support the ratification of the ERA to bolster pay equity, domestic violence laws and pregnancy discrimination protections, among other equity goals.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESPONSE SUPPORT

- Support funding resources directed to infectious disease response, including, but not limited to: building and maintaining our workforce, specifically for our 24/7 facilities, community education, engagement and outreach, case investigation and contact tracing, testing, delivery of essential services, and distribution of vaccines with specific focus on underserved communities, kids, youth and young adults.

RACIAL EQUITY IN BUDGETING

- Support legislation to develop a state-based racial equity budgeting tool that will help provide racial equity impacts for legislative budgeting decisions.

Residents First: Effective, Efficient and Accessible Operations

DATA PRACTICES ACT AND PRIVACY REFORMS

- Support maintaining flexibility in local governments' data retention schedules and reporting requirements to avoid overwhelming local technical capabilities.
- Support legislation that considers local costs and improved public access when considering updates to the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and address the use of intentionally disruptive and expensive data requests that provide little or no public benefit.

HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

- Support legislation to ensure state compliance with federal background check requirements that endanger Title IV-E reimbursements to foster care providers.
- Support continuing program modifications that demonstrate administrative efficiency and support the modernization of human services programs and processes to improve outcomes and service delivery.
- Support a health care eligibility system that serves as a sustainable platform for performing health care functions and fully integrates with other technology systems.
- Support legislation to simplify and modernize the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), General Assistance and Minnesota Supplemental Aid reporting requirements in order to align budgeting methods with nationwide best practices, encourage earned income and employment, and create equity across the program. This includes adjusting MFIP so that families report on their income every 6 months, rather than monthly. This will allow for longer periods of stability and decrease the likelihood of MFIP recipients becoming income-ineligible due to a brief increase in income.
- Support legislation, to address workforce challenges and resource shortages in the home and community-based services and disability services system, including increasing wage minimums and other incentives, to expand the worker pool of personal care assistants, nurses, social workers and other support staff, and county employees to enroll residents in these necessary services.
- Support substantial investment in new, modern technology infrastructure to streamline health care, financial assistance and social service program administration, enhance data and program integrity, and promote efficient service delivery, with a focus on programs connected to MNBenefits applications.
- Support funding to add triage capabilities and improve responsiveness for technology systems tied to the MNBenefits application program.

Ramsey County will center residents to meet the needs of community and ensure that county services, applications and programs are inclusive, accessible, efficient and provided with exemplary service.

FUNDING FOR LIBRARIES

- Support legislation to increase Regional Library Basic System Support funding for residents' access to digital and database resources.
- Support library construction and remodeling grants to fund safety and renovations at libraries.
- Oppose reductions to Arts & Cultural Heritage Legacy funding for regional public library systems to support arts, arts education and arts access, and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage.

LIBRARY GOVERNANCE CHANGE

- Pursue legislation, in partnership with Anoka County, to establish the county library board as an advisory committee to the county board, mirroring a governance structure currently used by five counties across the metropolitan area, that ensures that county services most effectively support residents and employees.

FUNDING FOR PARKS AND TRAILS

- Support legislation to ensure that the Ramsey County park system receives a fair share of revenues from Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment funding, Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources funding or other environmental stewardship grants.
- Pursue \$5 million in bonding for the extension of the Bruce Vento Trail.
- Support inclusion of \$50 million in state bonding for capital projects for Metropolitan Regional Parks and Trails, which leverages Metropolitan Council dollars and benefits projects in Ramsey County.

COUNTY PROCUREMENT CHANGES FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

- Support legislation that would authorize the county to expand the amount for bids to no greater than \$500,000. Currently, the county can solicit small businesses for bids no greater than \$250,000. This change will enable counties to increase its overall spending with small businesses, which includes businesses owned by women and people of color. Increasing county expenditures with small BIPOC-owned businesses is an important part of Ramsey County's overall strategy to reduce racial disparities.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

- Pursue and support state and federal efforts and funding for digital inclusion and equity to ensure all residents have access to affordable broadband choices, computing devices and training and internet-safety skills. This includes, but is not limited to: increasing the federal standard for broadband speeds; increasing the availability of high-quality and competitive broadband choices for residents in single-family homes, public housing, and apartment buildings and condominiums, particularly in urban digital desert census tracts; and supporting perpetual funding of the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and other affordable, sustainable and subsidized device ownership programs and multilingual digital literacy navigation and skills training that ensure all residents can participate in the economy and digital life.

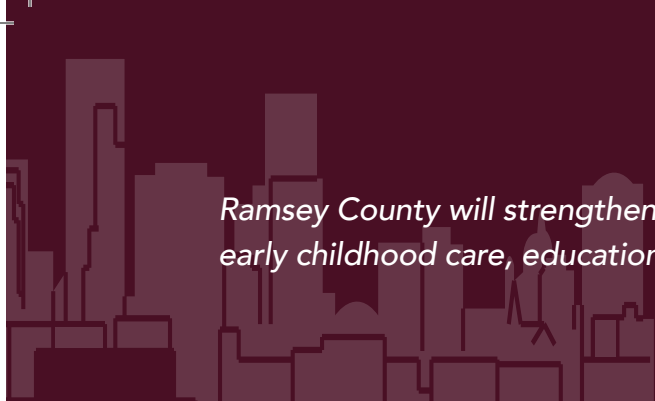
Advancing a Holistic Approach to Strengthen Families

CHILD PROTECTION REFORMS

- Support African American Family Preservation Act legislation encouraging county case management and support services to accommodate cultural differences, address challenges and build on strengths to remedy the disproportionate placements of children of color into foster care and other out-of-home displacements.
- Support Families First legislation allowing states and counties to use federal Title IV-E funds to focus child protection efforts on engaging families, building support networks and providing culturally informed services that help avoid compounding the trauma out-of-home displacements often cause.
- Pursue legislation to create an exception or variance to the background check policy, enabling county staff to make an informed placement decision without relying on the state.
- Pursue legislation to allow autonomy to determine which applicants to Ramsey County's Children's Services Review Panel have been impacted by our system, represent the community we serve and should be selected to participate on the panel. Current law requires approval from the county board and DHS to accept new members.
- Support legislation requiring coordination between law enforcement and county child protection agencies to occur prior to a child being removed.
- Support legislation to increase required training for law enforcement officers on child protection and the use of emergency holds, particularly regarding the impact of child protection removals on children and families.
- Support child protection and foster care systems change and reform developed in partnership with community.

CHILD CARE REFORMS

- Support child care licensing practice improvements to simplify rules and promote improved relations between providers and regulators.
- Support efforts to implement refinements to training, county liability insurance requirements and other requirements to foster best practices in all child care settings.
- Support additional state investments in child care infrastructure, wages and workforce needs.
- Support legislation to make permanent strategic waitlist changes that allow more families who have not used MFIP to access essential work-related support.



Ramsey County will strengthen families by expanding access to quality consistent early childhood care, education and access to nutritious foods, resources and opportunities.

HUNGER RELIEF

- Support additional funding and policy changes to address hunger and food insecurity relief needs in Ramsey County for children and adults. As a result of systemic racism and other long-standing issues exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity continues to disproportionately affect our racially and ethnically diverse communities.
- Support state funding to allow community-based organizations to significantly expand food and crisis services for people in Ramsey County.
- Support legislation to permanently provide no-cost school lunch to all children in Minnesota schools.

ECONOMIC SUPPORTS TO FAMILIES

- Support legislation to provide cash payments or other economic supports, like the federal child tax credit expansion, to families in a way that will not make them ineligible for income, food or medical assistance, with the goal of removing barriers so families can self-stabilize.

Intergenerational Prosperity for Racial and Economic Inclusion

THE PARK AT RIVERSEDGE

- Pursue \$26 million in bonding for the Park at RiversEdge. RiversEdge is an innovative public-private project revitalizing the historic riverfront and expanding public access to the Mississippi River. The funds are for acquisition, design, furnishing and construction of a land bridge extension of the public realm space called The Park at RiversEdge. This new nine-acre urban park space includes: expanded public access to the river from the downtown bluff to the shoreline, community gathering space for public events, and trails that connect to the river and to other downtown destinations and park trail systems.

STATE-LOCAL FISCAL PARTNERSHIP

- Support efforts to maintain County Program Aid (CPA) with indexing funding and increasing the base appropriation after the COVID-19 economic recovery.
- Support an early 2023 omnibus bonding bill that addresses the backlog of the state's growing public infrastructure needs and invests in important regional projects.

REGIONAL WORKFORCE INVESTMENTS

- Support efforts to align local, regional and statewide investments for workforce development programs to ensure the unique needs of businesses are met while supporting job seekers with career pathways needed to obtain family sustaining wages and benefits.
- Support legislation to address existing economic, racial and gender disparities, especially among Black/African American, American Indian and other racially/ethnically diverse communities, by coupling training and education with equity efforts in housing, transportation, child care and other stabilizing factors.
- Support legislation to dedicate sufficient, ongoing state funding to provide workforce programming targeted to those who are unemployed, under-employed or under-represented in the workforce as a means to reduce disparities and to promote a diverse and inclusive workforce.

AFFORDABLE AND STABLE HOUSING

- Pursue legislation in partnership with the continuum of care Heading Home Ramsey to fund homelessness work over the next five years until more affordable housing comes online. This funding will support:
 - Shelter capacity for single adults.
 - Shelter capacity for families with children.
 - Day service shelter capacity.
 - Development of a "Familiar Faces" program to address frequent users of shelter and emergency services.
 - Critical supportive services for individuals and families seeking shelter.
- Support budget and bonding legislation that increases public funds and brings attention to the preparation for homeowners and the production and preservation of affordable housing.
- Support legislation that advances policy and practice reforms that reduce barriers to affordable homeownership, such as reducing the cost of production.
- Support new state funding of more loan counseling for the refinancing of special loans, such as rehab/down payment assistance. Currently there is not enough organizational capacity for the amount of refinancing that is happening in the market.

Ramsey County will create pathways to intergenerational prosperity for racially and ethnically diverse communities that have historically experienced wealth extraction, with an emphasis on Black/African American, American Indian and other racially/ethnically diverse communities. This countywide approach will focus on racial and economic inclusion in racially and ethnically diverse communities with intentional and strategic investments in residents and businesses.

- Support increased funding for affordable housing and housing programs focused on specific populations in need of additional assistance, including those experiencing mental illness, or other disabilities, individuals with criminal records, large families, families seeking reunification, veterans and those who are homeless.
- Support housing infrastructure bonds for buildings that are 50% Area Median Income (AMI) with at least 10% of units at 30% AMI in order to better leverage American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.
- Support legislation to create a dedicated fund for the development of affordable housing that enrolls private investors into the production of affordable housing to benefit local businesses, creates jobs and contributes to the overall growth of the economy.
- Support expanding the Housing Support Demonstration capacity to include all seven metro-area counties to increase access to Housing Support for traditional rental assistance and support services for people experiencing homelessness. Consider legislative changes that would allow distributing vouchers based off priority populations in order to maximize ARPA and Housing and Redevelopment Authority funding.

PROPERTY TAX ASSISTANCE

- Support transitioning the special property tax refund to a property tax credit that is automatically calculated and issued to qualifying homeowners on their annual property tax statement, thereby reducing property tax regressivity and helping keep home ownership affordable. Currently, state statute requires homeowners to apply for the special property tax refund.

ACCELERATED FORFEITURE FOR TARGETED NEIGHBORHOODS

- Pursue special legislation allowing Ramsey County to retroactively cancel forfeitures that occurred in 2022 under this program, and to apply the three-year redemption period to properties that will be impacted by this in the future. This special legislation will allow for all properties across Ramsey County to have the three-year redemption period uniformly applied, beginning in 2022, thereby eliminating the disparities caused by the statutory accelerated forfeiture provision.

FEDERAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS FOR HOMESTEAD APPLICATIONS

- Pursue legislation to allow use of Federal Identification Numbers in lieu of social security numbers on homestead classification applications to expand access to Minnesota's Property Tax Homestead Credit Refund.

INTEREST RATES ON TAX-FORFEITED PROPERTY

- Support legislation to allow flexible interest rates on contracts for deed for tax-forfeited properties to reduce barriers for low-income families interested in purchasing or repurchasing these properties and provide a low-barrier pathway to homeownership for those with more modest incomes.

EVICITION PROTECTIONS

- Support creating a right to counsel for tenants in cases brought by landlords alleging breach of lease in public housing evictions, which tend to raise more complicated issues that are harder for tenants to address without a lawyer's help.

TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT FUNDING

- Support statewide transportation funding that adequately invests in the long-term sustainability of local communities and addresses deferred basic maintenance, safety concerns, mounting congestion and missed economic growth opportunities for businesses and commuters. A comprehensive, balanced and sustainable transportation solution should include robust funding for a multimodal transportation system including roads, bridges, sidewalks/trails and transit and address the varying needs in different parts of the state.
- Pursue \$3.9 million in bonding funds for reconstruction of the Rice Street Revitalization Project from Wheelock Parkway in Saint Paul to County Road B in Roseville and Maplewood. These funds would offset \$7.805 million in county and city construction costs currently programmed in the Ramsey County 2021-2025 Transportation Improvement Program.
- Pursue legislation alongside Hennepin County to amend the Motor Vehicle Leased Sales Tax (MVLST) to include Ramsey and Hennepin counties as recipients so revenues can be spent in the metro-area counties where most funds are collected.
- Support investments in MnDOT's Local Bridge Replacement and Local Road Improvement Programs to fund the replacement, rehabilitation or removal of deficient bridges on the local road systems and for the construction or reconstruction of local roads.
- Oppose attempts to shift transit costs to counties. The Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority has been approving the maximum levy for the last several years, and Ramsey County has adopted a 0.5% sales and use tax for the development of the transitways within the county, including:
 - Green Line Light Rail Transit.
 - Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit.
 - Purple Line (Rush Line) Bus Rapid Transit.
 - Riverview Transitway.
- Support federal and state funding for major transportation and transit projects in Ramsey County that are extremely complex in nature, involve multiple jurisdictions and communities, span many years for project development, and require funding from multiple sources to complete. Some of these include:
 - I-35E/County Road J interchange.
 - Highway 36/Century Avenue (Highway 120) interchange.
 - Purple Line (Rush Line) Bus Rapid Transit.
 - Riverview Corridor Transitway.
 - Rondo Community Land Bridge.
 - UP Railroad /BNSF Railway grade separation adjacent to Westminster Junction.
- Support for equity in funding of transportation development that helps to repair and acknowledge past wrongs with infrastructure investments.
- Support state legislation alongside MnDOT and the Great River Rail Commission to fund future operations of the Second Train to Chicago (TCMC).
- Support legislation that would authorize MnDOT to spend Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding on state road construction and also provide new funding for state matching funds for IIJA grant programs.

Putting Well-being and Community at the Center of Justice System Transformation

Alongside the leadership of the community and systems, Ramsey County will strategically align its justice system transformation with community values.

RESPONSE OPTIONS FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED YOUTH

- Pursue legislation to create culturally appropriate, intensely therapeutic, community-based home placement options for youth involved in the justice system.
- Pursue funding for the creation of family support groups and resources to support families during the time a young person is placed out-of-home and support the family through the period of post-placement reentry.
- Pursue funding for the creation of community-based sites for conflict or crisis de-escalation to prevent incarceration or further systems involvement.

COMMUNITY SUPERVISION FUNDING TRANSFORMATION

- Support changes to the community supervision funding model so that state fund allocations are transparent, needs-based, and equitable among county and state supervision providers. Counties need a substantial increase in community supervision funding to achieve this model.

PROBATION REFORMS

- Support legislation to codify the Sentencing Guidelines Commission guidance to cap probation lengths to five years, address racial disparities and give offenders the best shot at positive community and family involvement while improving public safety and saving taxpayer dollars.

EXTENSION OF POST-CONVICTION RELIEF

- Support legislation to extend the current two-year post-conviction relief time limit for immigrants who face deportation proceedings or are otherwise unable to apply for immigration benefits due to improper, defective or outdated misdemeanor convictions.

FELON VOTING RIGHTS

- Support legislation to clarify the reestablishment of voting rights for residents with felony convictions who are living, working and paying taxes in their home communities so they do not have to complete extensive probationary and supervised release periods before they are able to vote.

GUN SAFETY

- Support mandated background checks for all firearm purchases to reduce firearm-related crime.
- Support legislation to provide a legal means for families and others to initiate the temporary seizure of firearms from an individual who is exhibiting erratic and violent behavior.
- Support legislation that reduces gun violence through a community-centered approach to violence prevention, as well as supporting funding for the development of new response types and enhancements to dispatch countywide resources.

UNIFORM COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES OF CONVICTION ACT

- Support legislation that gives those who have become permanently or temporarily ineligible for employment, housing or some licenses a means to apply for a restoration of their rights and notifies individuals when they are criminally charged, and again when they are sentenced and released, about the sanctions that apply to them.

FINES & FEES

- Support legislation to increase flexibility to waive fines and fees charged in the criminal justice system.
- Pursue legislation to eliminate the removal of a driver's license as a penalty for past due medical payments or allow counties the authority to waive the debt owed to them. Low-income workers whose drivers' licenses are suspended can lose their jobs, leaving them unable to earn the income necessary to pay their court debt or meet other basic expenses such as groceries and rent.

CASH BAIL REFORM

- Support legislation to eliminate the harm to community caused by the cash bail system by allowing the use of a risk assessment tool to release individuals back into the community if they are determined not to be a risk to society.

EXPUNGEMENTS

- Support legislation to centralize and automate the process of sealing criminal records for low-level felonies and lesser crimes after the waiting periods in the expungement statute. Criminal records and the collateral consequences that follow long after people have fulfilled their obligations to the justice system serve as barriers to jobs, housing, education and more, preventing people from serving as productive members of our community.
- Support legislation to align with federal action to pardon or expunge state convictions for people charged with having a small amount of cannabis in their possession, with no intent to sell or distribute it. The charge must also not be connected with any additional crime, such as robbery or assault.

PROSECUTOR-INITIATED RESENTENCING

- Pursue legislation to enable prosecutors to initiate a motion to the court to reduce a person's sentence based upon their success in programming, abiding by conditions of supervised release, furthering their rehabilitation, and/or other factors that have subsequently reduced the person's risk for recidivism or indicate that a sentence reduction is in the interest of justice.

Responding to Climate Change and Increasing Community Resilience

Climate change continues to impact the health and well-being of Ramsey County residents, with severity in racially and ethnically diverse and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities. Ramsey County is committed to leading in the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, elevating environmental justice and fighting against the disparate impacts, particularly in Black/African American, American Indian and other underrepresented communities across the county.

EQUITABLE CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND RESILIENCE

- Support legislation that addresses climate change, protects and enhances natural environments, addresses the need to expand adaptation and resilience efforts, responds to the potential impact of severe weather events, and promotes sustainability in county operations.
- Support legislation that focuses on increasing use of local energy to create jobs and diversify the local economy.
- Support legislation and funding that addresses reforestation needs for local governments impacted by the Emerald Ash Borer.

WASTE AND ENERGY EFFORTS

- Support legislation to encourage the development and use of new technologies to address organic waste and create renewable energy resources, including by streamlining and adopting modern permitting requirements to implement new technologies.
- Support the legislative efforts of the Partnership on Waste and Energy and the Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy Board.

Aligning Talent Attraction, Retention & Promotion

Ramsey County will ensure that it is recognized as the premier public sector employer of choice within the Twin Cities region.

EMPLOYEE SUPPORTS

- Pursue legislation to make any necessary changes to Ramsey County statutes in order to implement initiatives that advance our primary goal of attracting, retaining and promoting talented employees across races, classes, cultures, genders, ages and abilities.
- Support legislation that allows county assessors to use more virtual and online tools in their appraisal work.

RAMSEY COUNTY **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**



Trista MatasCastillo
District 3, Chair
651-266-8360
Trista.MatasCastillo@ramseycounty.us



Nicole Joy Frethem
District 1
651-266-8362
Nicole.Frethem@ramseycounty.us



Rafael E. Ortega
District 5
651-266-8361
Rafael.E.Ortega@ramseycounty.us



Mary Jo McGuire
District 2
651-266-8356
MaryJo.McGuire@ramseycounty.us



Mai Chong Xiong
District 6
651-266-8365
Maichong.Xiong@ramseycounty.us



Rena Moran
District 4
651-266-8364
Rena.Moran@ramseycounty.us



Victoria Reinhardt
District 7
651-266-8363
Victoria.Reinhardt@ramseycounty.us

RAMSEY COUNTY **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**



Jennifer O'Rourke
Director of Government Relations
651-724-3461
Jennifer.O'Rourke@ramseycounty.us



Melissa Finnegan
Government Relations Specialist
651-278-8374
Melissa.Finnegan@ramseycounty.us

RAMSEY COUNTY **SUPPORT OF OTHER POSITIONS**

In addition to the initiatives contained in this platform, the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners generally supports the legislative recommendations of the local units of government within the county and organizations in which it holds membership, including, but not limited to:

- Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) and its associated professional organizations, including:
 - Local Public Health Association of Minnesota (LPHA).
 - Minnesota Association of County Social Services Administrators (MACSSA).
 - Minnesota Association of County Officers (MACO).
 - Minnesota Association of Community Corrections Act Counties (MCCAC).
 - Minnesota County IT Leadership Association (MCITLA).
 - Solid Waste Administrators Association (SWAA).
 - Minnesota Association of County Veterans Service Officers (MACVSO)
- Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers (AMEM).
- Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA).
- Minnesota Association of Watershed Districts (MAWD).
- Minnesota County Engineers Association (MCEA).
- Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB).

The county board may choose to take a different position on individual items within the platforms of these and other organizations whose platforms they generally support. The county board may also consider additional positions in response to issues that emerge during the legislative session.



LEGISLATIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These legislative guiding principles provide a foundation for the specific initiatives and support items that are included in the 2023 State Legislative Platform. In a field as dynamic as the legislative session, these basic tenets inform Ramsey County's response to legislative proposals as they are introduced and move through the process.

RESIDENTS-FIRST FOCUS

- Prioritize support for legislative proposals that clearly improve how government works with and serves Ramsey County residents.
- Evaluate the impact of legislative proposals on residents and provide opportunities for affected communities to publicly discuss and influence legislation.

RESPONSIBLE, RESPONSIVE GOVERNMENT

- Communicate openly with the public and operate transparently.
- Observe good data practices to protect individual privacy and provide access to public data.
- Equalize access to government resources, opportunities and services across all communities.
- Respond proactively to address the needs of vulnerable children and adults and at-risk families who are experiencing instability and difficulty in meeting basic needs.
- Tend to ongoing maintenance and planning for future infrastructure needs.
- Advance information/data technology and ongoing updates that support program integrity and efficient service delivery.
- Increase citizen access to the polls and voter participation.
- Engage in good stewardship of natural resources.
- Encourage inter-governmental collaboration built on the goals of improving performance, increasing efficiencies and building trust across programs, government agencies and communities.
- Support local authority to define local priorities.

STABLE, SUFFICIENT, FLEXIBLE FUNDING

- Allocate sufficient state funding to counties to carry out state mandates.
- Distribute funding equitably, based on fair and practical distribution formulas.
- Acknowledge county costs for existing or new state mandates.
- Support county innovations in the delivery of mandated service when efficiencies can be gained.
- Respect local government control of their resources and budgetary processes.
- Expend funds for the purposes for which they are collected or allocated.

PRACTICE-BASED POLICY

- Invest in practice-based policies that include ongoing assessment and adjustments to improve effectiveness of services and to save tax dollars.
- Emphasize prevention and early intervention.
- Promote stable families, safe neighborhoods, public safety, health and wellness by engaging individual and community strength.
- Foster economic development, broad access to education and training, and growth of living-wage jobs.
- Pursue policy that is not impinged by excessive, unnecessary regulation.

Vision

A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive.

Mission

A county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life.

Goals



WELL-BEING

Strengthen individual, family and community health, safety and well-being

through effective safety-net services, innovative programming, prevention and early intervention, and environmental stewardship.



PROSPERITY

Cultivate economic prosperity and invest in neighborhoods with concentrated financial poverty

through proactive leadership and inclusive initiatives that engage all communities in decisions about our future.



OPPORTUNITY

Enhance access to opportunity and mobility for all residents and businesses

through connections to education, employment and economic development throughout our region.



ACCOUNTABILITY

Model fiscal accountability, transparency and strategic investments

through professional operations and financial management.

Information about how the county is pursuing its mission and goals is available in the county's strategic plan at ramseycounty.us/StrategicPlan

Information about performance measures related to the county's mission and goals is available in the county's Open Data Portal at opendata.ramseycounty.us



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS 250 Courthouse, 15 West Kellogg Blvd, Saint Paul, MN 55102

ramseycounty.us