



# IMPLEMENTATION






The numbered strategies, policies, figures, and pages in the citywide plans of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* all employ the following abbreviations as a prefix to distinguish among these elements of the other citywide plans:

- IN - introduction;
- LU - Land Use Plan;
- H - Housing Plan;
- HP - Historic Preservation Plan;
- PR - Parks and Recreation Plan;
- T - Transportation Plan;
- W - Water Resources Management Plan; and
- IM - Implementation.

## Introduction

**The City will undertake action steps in the implementation sections of the six citywide plans and in the Implementation section.** 

Preparation of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* began in Autumn 2006 and early Winter 2007, when the Planning Commission appointed task forces to study the issues in each subject area. Each of the six task forces was comprised of people with expertise in the subject, as well as residents knowledgeable about Saint Paul and its communities.

Prior to the task force phase, the Planning Commission prepared two documents designed to inform the process. *A Lens for the Future: Saint Paul for the Next 25 Years* describes how Saint Paul has evolved during the previous 25 years and lays out the challenges for the next 25 years, including how the unique characteristics of the city are a supporting mechanism for dealing with the challenges facing the city. The Scoping Report is an analysis of the policies in the previous *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*, as well as a description of the overarching issues that, at the time it was written, were expected to shape the policies in the plan update.

The Planning Commission held public hearings on each of the citywide plans. The Parks Commission held a separate public hearing on the *Parks and Recreation Plan*, while the Heritage Preservation Commission and the Planning Commission held a joint public hearing on the *Historic Preservation Plan*.

Following review by the Metropolitan Council, the Planning Commission on February 5, 2010, recommended adoption of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*. The City Council adopted the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* on February 24, 2010.

This section outlines how the policies in the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* will be implemented. State statute requires that the City's ordinances, programs, and fiscal tools be consistent with the policies in the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*. This is one objective of an implementation program.

Just as importantly, action steps are critical to City efforts to connect the policies of individual citywide plans with each other. Achieving this nexus between components of the built environment (e.g., land use, transportation, and housing, etc.) will be instrumental in implementing the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*.

Each of the six citywide plans in this document includes a section outlining action steps for implementing the policies in the plan (see pages LU-36, T-25, PR-35, H-28, HP-29, and W-32).

### HIGH PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Certain imperatives stand out for implementation of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*, high priorities for action without which Saint Paul's potential cannot be realized. These high priorities are also important for the city's ability to be an effective collaborator in the region.

**Provide housing choices for everyone.**

As Saint Paul's demographics change, particularly as the numbers of couples without children, empty nesters, and large immigrant families increase, it is critical to have a diverse housing stock in mixed income communities.

**Strengthen neighborhoods hurt by mortgage foreclosures.**

Foreclosures and the vacant houses they produce make families more vulnerable and jeopardize the future of affected communities.

**Capitalize on the potential of the Central Corridor.**

The construction of light rail transit in the Central Corridor provides opportunities for the city to realize its potential as a complex, sophisticated urban center with denser housing and employment centers.

**Lay the foundation for more jobs that pay a living wage.**

The City and its development partners must provide for land, cleaned of contamination from decades ago and with the infrastructure needed for the information-based economy, so that businesses are able to establish themselves and grow and provide jobs with a living wage.

**Maintain public infrastructure and facilities.**

Saint Paul has a sizeable investment in facilities and infrastructure — streets, utilities, parks and recreation centers, and libraries are examples. For the city to remain vibrant and be a vigorous urban center, these must be well maintained to extend their useful life.

**Secure an expanded transit system.**

Saint Paul needs a transit system that provides more frequent service and more routes, particularly through parts of the city that are not well served. There are greater numbers of transit dependent people living in the city and the cost of energy is making vehicular travel too expensive.

**Pursue projects and programs to reduce the carbon footprint.**

Although reducing the carbon footprint involves global and national strategies, the City can contribute to the effort by managing development activities so that buildings are constructed to reduce the amount of energy used during their operation. Moreover, the City can encourage residents and employees to reduce their use of vehicles and to rely more on transit in order to reduce the emissions that contribute to global warming.

**Provide opportunities that enrich residents' lives.**

Schools, parks and recreation centers, and libraries all create avenues for people of all age groups to pursue interests and desires for learning, for play, and for participation in the community.

### **Protect cultural and historic resources.**

Cultural and historic resources enhance the lives of Saint Paul residents and visitors by defining the character of the city and creating a strong link to its rich past. Protecting these resources through the use of historic preservation tools will minimize such threats as lack of maintenance, development pressures, and challenges to finding appropriate uses for contemporary times.

### **Protect natural resources.**

The Mississippi River runs through Saint Paul and is the most obvious natural resource in the city. There are also lakes (i.e., Como, Phalen, and Beaver) as well as dozens of parks, thousands of boulevard trees, and miles of trails. All contribute to the ecology of the city and to enriching the lives of residents.

## **MANDATED IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS**

State law mandates that a comprehensive plan include specific features and components related to implementation:

- Official controls. These are ordinances, fiscal tools, and other programs;
- Capital Improvement Program. The five-year CIP is a list of infrastructure projects, including estimated costs and funding sources; and
- Housing implementation program. It includes the programs and fiscal tools that implement the housing policies.

### **Official controls.**

*Zoning ordinance.* The *Saint Paul Zoning Code* will be revised to be consistent with the plan, as required by state law. A number of zoning studies, each intended to implement specific policies in the Land Use, Housing, and Parks and Recreation Plans, are listed in the implementation sections of these plans. Studies identified in the *Land Use Plan* will specifically focus on permitted densities in existing or new districts, which can be used to achieve growth targets for the city. Zoning regulations for the Critical Area, implementing the *Mississippi River Corridor Plan* (2002), have been recommended by the Planning Commission and are pending before the City Council.

*Subdivision ordinance.* The Subdivision Ordinance provides for the orderly development of land. Provisions in the ordinance also address such issues as providing adequate public facilities, protecting ecological features, and promoting the development of affordable housing.

*Heritage preservation ordinance.* Heritage preservation is provided for in the Preservation Ordinance, Chapters 73 and 74 of the *Saint Paul Legislative Code*, which is authorized by state statutes, including the *Municipal Heritage Preservation* (Section 471.193) and the *Minnesota Historic District Act of 1971*. The ordinance establishes the Heritage Preservation Commission and gives it the authority to survey historic resources, designate historic resources, and review alterations to designated properties. In 1984 the City became a Certified Local

Government, part of the national *Historic Preservation Program*, meaning Saint Paul's commission meets federal and state standards. The City also works with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for federal and state review of proposed projects, including the Section 106 process and environmental reviews. The *Historic Preservation Plan* recommends revisions to the ordinance and its provisions (see Policy HP-1.1).

*Fiscal tools.* The City uses three fiscal tools to fund development projects and capital improvements:

- Capital Improvement Bonds (CIB) provide the most basic funding for yearly investment in capital facility improvements;
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is used for brownfields remediation and re-development of a core city. Extraordinary public costs are needed to remove blight that otherwise prevents redevelopment and job creation. However, there are legislative restrictions that limit the use of TIF. The City supports changes in the regulations to better facilitate the use of TIF; and
- The Sales Tax Revitalization Program (STAR), also known as the "½ cent sales tax program," is a flexible funding program intended to provide support for RiverCentre, cultural activities, and community based and neighborhood oriented development opportunities through an open and public competitive processes. The STAR board, as well as the Mayor and the City Council in their reviews, considers *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* policies when awarding STAR funds for projects.

Options for funding City development projects and capital improvements have become more limited in the last decade. To address this issue, the City must develop approaches and mechanisms that respond to the loss of fiscal tools and declining resources. To that end, the Planning Commission will establish an Infrastructure Task Force to study innovative financing for municipal infrastructure. The task force, staffed jointly by the departments of Planning and Economic Development (PED), Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Financial Services will be comprised of citizens with expertise in the fields of infrastructure and finance, as well as community representatives.

### **Capital Improvement Program (CIP).**

The CIP is developed through the Capital Improvement Budget process, a bi-annual process that includes recommendations from the community based Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) Committee, proposals by the Mayor, and approvals by the Council. Projects are eligible if they finance the acquisition and physical development of City-owned land and buildings and have a useful life of at least 10 years. Many of the redevelopment and neighborhood revitalization proposals in this plan will require capital improvement investments by the City. The CIB process relies, in part, on the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* and individual neighborhood plans to identify capital projects that will further the objectives in the City's plans.

The City maintains a five-year capital improvement program. The current program for the years 2008-2012, is detailed on the City's website at [www.stpaul.gov](http://www.stpaul.gov).

### **Housing implementation program.**

The Housing and Land Use Plans lay out a broad range of programs and tools intended to implement their policies:

*Affordable housing.* Strategy H-3 includes policies that will facilitate the construction and preservation of affordable housing and expand housing options. Moreover, the strategy acknowledges the City's share in the regional need for low and moderate income housing and assures, insofar as possible and given market considerations, the production of lifecycle housing, and housing at all income levels.

Specific housing programs focused on affordable housing are administered by the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), assisted by PED. These programs focus on the development and preservation of affordable housing, the promotion of private market housing development, and assistance to low and moderate income households to purchase and rehabilitate housing units:

- Emergency shelter grants;
- Low-income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC);
- Tax-increment financing (TIF);
- Multi-family housing revenue bonds;
- City Living for mortgage loans and home improvement loans;
- The American Dream down payment initiative;
- Don't Borrow Trouble campaign; and
- Mortgage foreclosure prevention program.

*Fiscal tools.* The City uses such tools as tax increment financing (TIF) and revenue bonds to finance housing projects.

*Official controls.* Title 6 of the *Saint Paul Legislative Code* and Chapter 717 of the *Administrative Code* provide regulatory guides for housing programs managed by the HRA. In addition, the *Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances* are frameworks for the construction of new housing units, including affordable and life cycle housing. In particular, the Traditional Neighborhood zoning districts include design provisions that facilitate higher density housing.

The City enforces codes to regulate the construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance of housing. These national building, electrical, and plumbing codes have been adopted by the State of Minnesota.

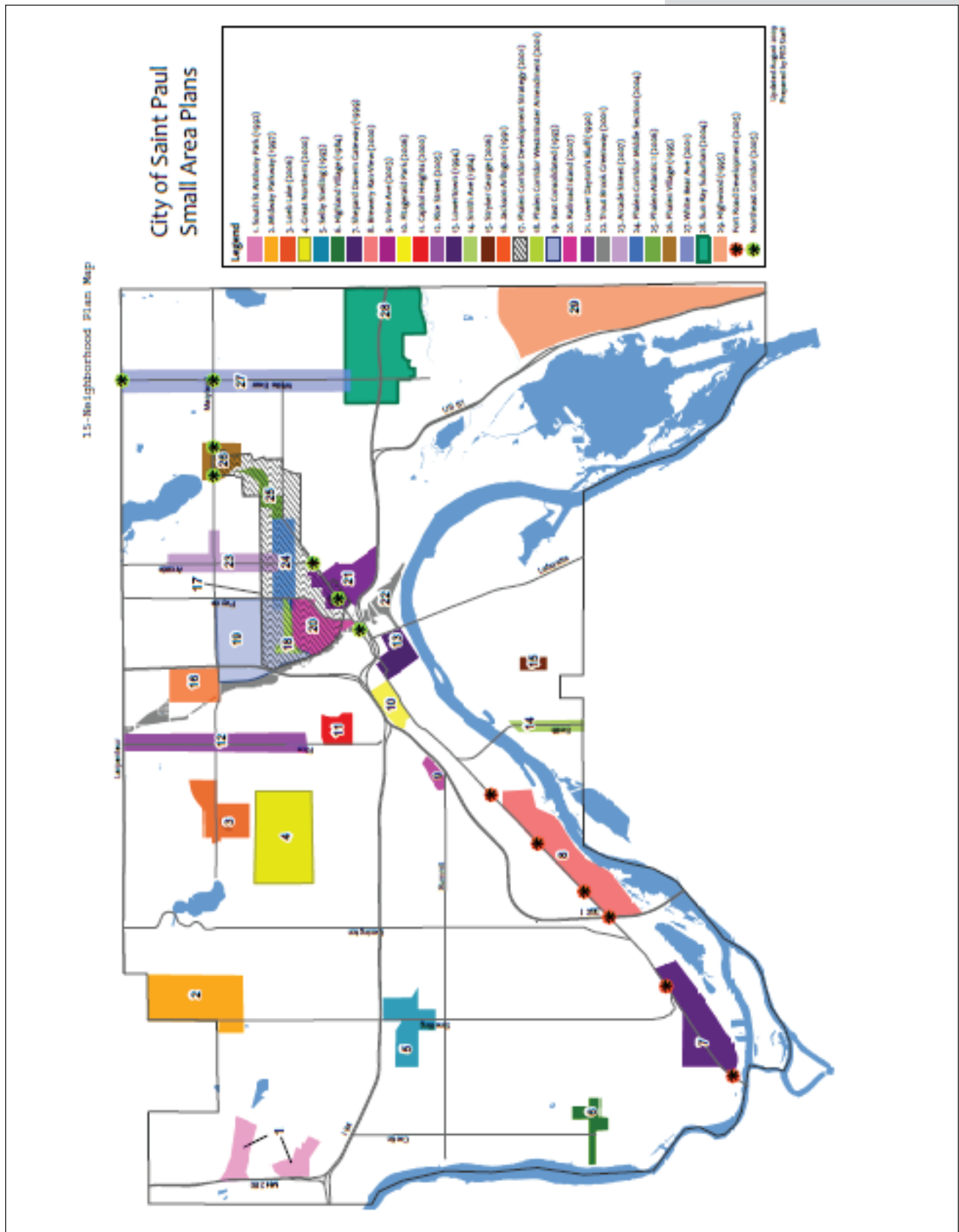
*Higher density development.* Both the Housing and Land Use Plans include policies that guide the development of housing in specific areas of the city where higher density housing is intended to facilitate the construction of affordable housing.

### **OTHER IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS**

#### **Small area plans.**

The six citywide plans of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* lay out broad approaches on key elements of the built environment. Those policies are applicable throughout Saint Paul, but they need to be translated

FIGURE IM-A. CITY OF SAINT PAUL SMALL AREA PLANS



into recommendations that address issues in specific communities and neighborhoods and that are integrated into small area plans, district plans, and plans for special districts. The City has adopted and will continue to adopt summaries of its geographic plans as addenda to the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*. The summaries will include the policies and action items that are consistent with that already-adopted plans that comprise the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* and relate to the City's development policy. Moreover, the summaries will identify policies and action items that refine land use and other policies for the specific geographic area.

Figure IM-A depicts the location of adopted small area plans; Figure H-F of the *Housing Plan* depicts the location of the 17 district planning councils, all of which have prepared or are preparing updates to their district plans.

Figure LU-B, *Generalized 2030 Land Uses*, and the policies in the six citywide plans of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* incorporate by reference land use recommendations from adopted neighborhood plans. While efforts have been made to ensure consistency between the six citywide plans of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* and these neighborhood plans, there may be occasional discrepancies. Any discrepancies between the six citywide plans of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* and a small area plan reflect updated direction since the small area plan was adopted. By statute, the citywide plans of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* overrule the small area plans in these instances.

The City will continue to use, and strengthen as appropriate, the following procedures to prepare small area plans and other geographic plans:

- Guidelines for the preparation of geographic plans, including coordination between the City and individual communities, to ensure the objectives of the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* are realized.
- A strengthened review process to ensure internal consistency with the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*. Adopted geographic plans are addenda to the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*. Review of each plan will use an interdisciplinary focus by staff from several City departments to assure that, when they are adopted, discrepancies between them and adopted citywide plans are reconciled.
- Broad participation, including district councils, community development corporations, local businesses, non-profit organizations, and organizations that reflect Saint Paul's diversity.
- The *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* incorporates the policies of adopted small area plans adopted since 1983 and district plans. Citywide plans will be published and posted on the City's website; neighborhood plans will be posted on the City's website.

#### **Economic development.**

The City, working through the HRA, assists developers with redevelopment, rehabilitation, and contamination cleanup of commercial properties. In addition, the City also provides financial and technical assistance to commercial businesses, non-profit organizations, developers, and neighborhood groups.



### Site plan review.

Site plan review, which is under the authority of the Planning Commission, is a coordinated, inter-departmental process that considers a range of development issues, including, but not limited to, zoning, design, utilities, emergency vehicle access, traffic, stormwater management, parking, and landscaping. Site plan review considers all development proposals with the exception of single one- and two-family residential structures.

### Intergovernmental grants.

When appropriate, the City seeks funding from a variety of governmental sources for specified redevelopment activities. Sources include, for example, the tax base revitalization accounts managed by the state Department of Employment and Economic Development and the Metropolitan Council, and federal funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency.

## SAINT PAUL IN THE METROPOLITAN REGION

Saint Paul and other urban centers can neither exist nor flourish in the absence of close working relationships with other cities in the region, as well as with other government agencies and private non-profit organizations. Collaboration between these entities is critical to implementing the objectives in the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* so the city's future can be realized. Moreover, collaboration is necessary because so many issues cut across municipal boundaries. These issues are complex and are becoming increasingly so. Resolving them requires government and organizations to work together purposefully and creatively to forge relationships and devise approaches that may not have been tried previously, or tried previously and abandoned.

Elements of Saint Paul/metropolitan collaboration are:

- a. Continue the partnership between Saint Paul and Minneapolis. The two cities are currently involved in two high profile efforts, reducing the carbon footprint and dealing with foreclosures. Sustainable Saint Paul is a compendium of projects and programs, many of them replicated in Minneapolis, to address the climate change issue and institute more green practices. The National Community Stabilization Trust — four national organizations focused on solutions to the foreclosure problem — selected Saint Paul and Minneapolis as a pilot area for coordinating the acquisition of foreclosed properties so they can be rented or sold, primarily to low- and moderate-income families. The work of the trust is funneled through the Minnesota Foreclosure Partners Council, which includes both cities, the Family Housing Fund, the Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation, Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Service, and Local Initiatives Support Corporation;
- b. Begin a dialogue with first-ring suburbs on concerns they share with the two core cities. First-ring suburbs face many of the same issues as do Saint Paul and Minneapolis, including an aging housing stock and the need for contemporary employment centers for businesses in the information-based economy;

- c. Pursue legislation that will enable urban centers to pursue redevelopment vigorously. More intensive use of the existing urban fabric of urban centers is critical for the success of the region in the 21st Century. Issues such as climate change and shifts in the economy necessitate that policy makers find solutions that encourage reinvestment. Saint Paul will pursue changes to state and federal policies, including a revision of the existing limits on the use of eminent domain, to enhance the opportunities for core cities and older suburbs;
- d. Work with the Legislature and the Metropolitan Council to contain sprawl. Development at the fringes of the metropolitan area, without attention to its impact on core cities and first-ring suburbs, has the potential to dilute efforts to reinvest in the core cities;
- e. Secure an expanded, more efficient transit system. Climate change, dwindling energy supplies, and the cost of energy are compelling reasons to expand the existing transit system, both in the frequency of service and the numbers of routes;
- f. Restore the Mississippi River Corridor. Minnesota's two largest cities lie on the Mississippi River, providing a key element of their identities and a focal point for redevelopment efforts; and
- g. Confront the gaps in the lives of our residents. The *Mind the Gap* report, produced by the Itasca Project in collaboration with several foundations based in the metropolitan area, laid bare the discrepancies many residents face. Twin Cities Compass, a project of Wilder Research, is extending the effort begun in the report by collecting data and organizing them in ways that government and non-governmental organizations can use to improve the lives of people who live here.