



RICHFIELD 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



HELLO!

FROM YOUR COUNCIL MEMBERS

Looking back on 2023, what are you most proud of?



Mary Supple, Mayor

msupple@richfieldmn.gov

612-866-8829

I am proud of how all levels of government worked together for Richfield in 2023. It was great to see the 77th Street underpass finally reach completion, and I am grateful to our state and federal partners

for their help with funding for the Wood Lake Nature Center project.

What are you looking forward to in 2024? It will be great to see everyone during all of the wonderful community events our city hosts throughout the year. I'm also excited to experience the Farmers Market, our new Taft Bike Park and the soon to be constructed splashpad at the pool."



Simon Trautmann, Ward 1
straumann@richfieldmn.gov
612-205-6822

I'm so proud of the way our state and federal partners showed up for Wood Lake Nature Center in 2023. The \$15M that has been committed to the new building will help create an incredible space for all

the people that benefit from spending time at Wood Lake Nature Center.

What is your favorite thing about Richfield? I love that I get to raise my kids in the same community where me, my parents, and my grandparents also lived. I love that this community represents all generations and cultures, and that our city is better than it has ever been!

Sean Hayford Oleary, Ward 2
shayfordoleary@richfieldmn.gov / 612-605-8837

I am really proud of the work we finished in January, to update our zoning code to allow smaller lots and duplexes in most of the city, as we did when most of Richfield was first built out. I am also proud of the detailed process that made sure new houses, whether duplex or single-family, are good neighbors to the other houses on the block.

What was your favorite community event of 2023?

The community bike ride with Joyful Riders was my favorite memory from last summer. It was great to meet families and residents who may not be regulars at City Hall, but use and enjoy our parks, bike trails and community amenities. We even had a few folks who don't live here anymore but grew up in Richfield and came just for the ride!



Ben Whalen, Ward 3
bwhalen@richfieldmn.gov
612-316-1563

I am most proud of our advancements on sustainability. We worked with expert consultants to prioritize our Climate Action Plan, centered on what would actually make the biggest impact on reducing our greenhouse gas emissions. Then in the fall, we allocated ongoing funding in our budget to ensure our staff can do the work we're asking of them.

What was your favorite community event of 2023? I was honored this past year to lead the ribbon-cutting at the grand opening of the Taft Bike Park. It was a crowded event with folks of all ages. Everyone was excited to be outside practicing and showing off their biking skills on this great new feature within Richfield parks.



Sharon Christensen, At-large
schristensen@richfieldmn.gov / 612-402-0122

During my first year on city council, I have made many new connections in the community. Those connections have impacted the decisions I have made, and will make, as a council member. I also loved my time as a liaison to the Richfield Historical Society and the Arts Commission.

What is your favorite thing about Richfield? I have been associated with Richfield for about 50 years, although we only moved here in the last few years. Soon after we moved, my husband passed away. I live in a fabulous neighborhood and love all my neighbors. They rallied around my family during that difficult time and still do. I wouldn't think of living anywhere else but Richfield.



BUDGET

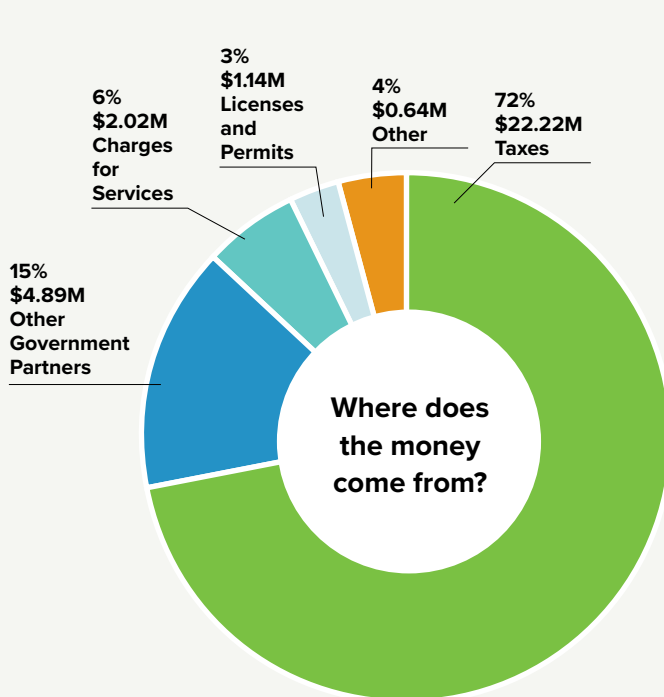
The Richfield 2024 budget reflects the five priorities of the city's Strategic Plan: operational excellence, community development, sustainable infrastructure, high-quality workforce and equity and inclusion. These priorities include progress on needed technology and infrastructure improvements, a focus on staff development and the city's commitment to sustainability. The city uses its strategic priorities to balance the desires of the community with its finite resources.

Find out more at: richfieldmn.gov/strategicplan

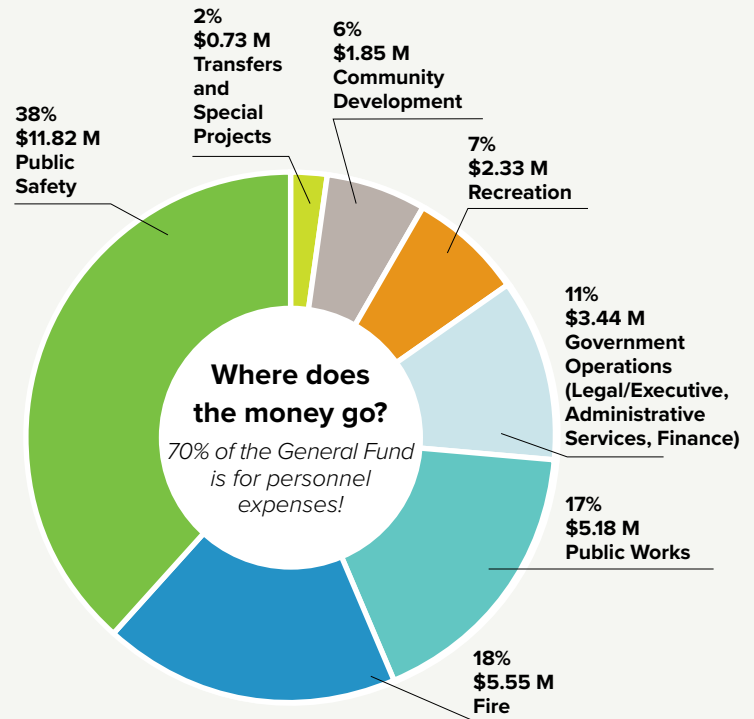
The General Fund supports most city services:

\$30.89M

+6.76% increase over 2023.



Total General Fund Revenues



Total General Fund Expenditures

Where do my tax dollars go? For every property tax dollar spent...



EQUITY

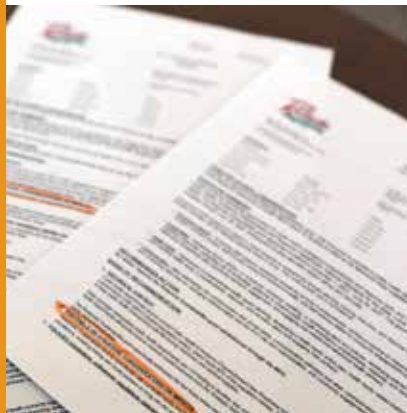


City welcomes new Equity Coordinator

In July, the city welcomed Brittany Bartlett as the new Equity Coordinator. Brittany comes to the city from Minneapolis Public Schools, where she was a teacher, union steward and a leader for equity work at her site. She will act as a resource to assist departments in continuing to provide exceptional service to all residents, especially those from historically excluded communities.

Equity in action

In 2023, the city acted on their commitment to racial equity by creating an equity lens for staff to refer to when asking for council action or recommendation. This tool helps staff and the city council think about potential impacts for residents from underserved populations and is reflected in all staff reports.



Legal Aid Kiosk added at Municipal Center

In 2023, Richfield partnered with the Minnesota Legal Service Coalition to bridge the digital divide faced by members of the community. Since the pandemic, many legal transactions have moved to online formats, or require the scanning and emailing of documents. Residents can now use the legal aid kiosk to attend court hearings, get online legal advice, scan and submit legal documents and connect to legal services at no cost.



**OUR
LEGACY
OUR
FUTURE**

Richfield's Park and Rec Investment Plan.

Last year, the city took a major step forward with its plan for the next generation of parks and recreation for Richfield. The 2023 state legislature authorized the city to seek a local half-percent sales tax to help finance a new Wood Lake Nature Center building, improved amenities throughout Veterans Park and a brand-new Community Center with expanded activities and programs.

On November 5, local voters will consider three ballot questions requesting a 20-year, half-percent sales tax to raise an estimated \$65 million to help finance these important projects. A sales tax allows residents and nonresidents to share the cost of regional amenities when they make purchases in the city.

More information at: www.OurLegacyOurFuture.org.





Fun at the Community Center

Starting in October 2023, the Community Center opened for two new Saturday programs: Tots Winter Play Dates and Richfield Game Nights. Over the winter, Tots Winter Play Dates saw up to 120 parents and toddlers gather for a fun morning of play and socializing inside, protected from the cold winter weather. The Richfield Game Nights brought together an intergenerational group of gamers with a variety of skill levels to play games both new and old. Both new Saturday programs will be offered through May of 2024.

Grand opening of Taft Bike Park

In Fall of 2023, Richfield Recreation staff opened the new Taft Bike Park. A first of its kind facility in the Twin Cities, it offers mountain bike riders of all abilities a place to gather and practice their skills. The grand opening celebration in September drew more than 200 riders of all ages for a night of fun and runs around the park.



RECREATION SERVICES

The 2024 Recreation Fee Assistance Program

The Recreation Fee Assistance Program offers financial assistance to qualifying Richfield households accessing recreation programs and facilities. The annual application allows qualifying residents to receive:

- A \$50 credit for each family member to spend on recreation program fees or facility rentals.
- Half-price season passes to the Richfield Outdoor Pool.
- Free snowshoe & cross-country ski rental at Wood Lake Nature Center.
- Discounts & free entry to select Wood Lake Nature Center programs & events.
- Free open skating admission & skate rental at the Ice Arena.
- A 75% discount on Richfield Community Garden plot rental.

More at: richfieldmn.gov/recreationfeeassistance



Approved: Active Transportation Action Plan

In 2023, the city council approved an Active Transportation Action Plan to continue work on walking, biking and rolling infrastructure. Plan development was made possible through a grant from the Minnesota Department of Transportation and was a collaborative effort featuring city departments, local partners and the public.



PUBLIC WORKS

That's a Wrap: 65th Street Reconstruction

Everyone gave thanks in late November when the 65th Street Reconstruction Project wrapped up the bulk of its work! The project, which began with engagement work in 2018, aimed to replace deteriorating sidewalks, improve pavement conditions and upgrade aging underground utilities. Prioritizing the movement of pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles through the area was paramount, adhering to the city's Complete Streets vision of projects that serve the needs and values of the community. The last items will be completed in Spring 2024.

Richfield adopts 4" Snow Emergency threshold

Following a historic winter season in 2022-2023, the city of Richfield officially changed the Snow Emergency ordinance to go into effect after 4 inches of snow have fallen, or by designation of the City Manager. This change follows a two-year pilot program to study ways to make snow emergencies less burdensome for residents. In addition to the change, the city also offers special snow emergency parking areas along Cedar Avenue.



Focused on the Missing Middle

Last year, in recognition of the housing crisis facing the region, the city council voted to allow duplexes throughout low-density, single-family residential areas. An additional ordinance change to minimum lot sizes brought 93% of Richfield housing into compliance with the current code. These changes provide homeowners with more options for adapting their homes to fit their needs. Additionally, as the city continues to age and diversify, households are expanding to add aging parents, young adults and extended family into the home. Thus far, two new duplexes for multi-generational families have been approved.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Remodeled Home Tour returns

Last October, the Richfield Remodeled Home Tour returned after a COVID-related hiatus. The free, self-guided tour featured remodeling projects from six Richfield homes. Approximately 350 people attended the tour to learn how homeowners transformed their cramped kitchens, dated living spaces and mismatched additions into functional and beautiful homes. The tour is hosted by the city's award-winning housing team and program staff! **Check them out at: richfieldmn.gov/housing**

Richfield welcomes Economic Development Manager

With a reliable source of funding and a Strategic Plan that includes goals for a

vibrant downtown and increased commercial tax base, the city added a new Economic Development Manager position in 2023. Hired last spring, Jan Youngquist has been working to connect with existing and prospective business owners, provide resources and develop new programming.

More at: richfieldmn.gov/EconDev





Fast response garners huge savings

While Fire “saves” typically include flames and CPR, the department has the chance to make impacts in other important ways too. One such instance occurred in July, when RFD was called to Woodlake Point Condominiums to deal with a significant water crisis. A leaking hot water line on the 12th floor had triggered the fire alarm and sprinkler system for the entire building, leaking all the way down to garage-level. While 17 units in the building and most hallways were affected by the water, most only suffered minimal damage because of the quick and clever response of RFD. The Woodlake Point Board of Directors estimates that costs would have doubled if not for their actions and conveyed their sincerest thanks to the crews.

A happy outcome

Last winter, RFD was delighted to have a visit from Richfield resident Frank Berg, who had been treated with lifesaving measures by Firefighters Swiggum, O’Connell and Faint in January 2023. Berg had suffered a massive cardiac arrest in his driveway and was resuscitated by RFD and later transferred to the hospital for open-heart surgery. Patient outcomes are not routinely shared with fire crews, so staff was thrilled to visit with Frank and his family and hear about his recovery.

FIRE



Aircraft fire training at MSP

Last spring, Richfield Fire joined fellow firefighters from Bloomington and MSP Airport to conduct live fire simulations on a mobile aircraft trainer. This training provides a better understanding of the dynamics and operations of battling aircraft fires and allowed RFD to train alongside one of its mutual aid partners, MSP Airport Fire.



Summer Fun at Bike with a Cop

On a hot night in June, residents and the Richfield Police Department joined together at Veterans Park for the 2023 Bike with a Cop event. The event included beginner bike riding lessons, as well as a 3.5 mile ride for more experienced bikers, along with local resources, helmet giveaways, snacks and prizes. Officers also discussed safe riding techniques, bike safety checks and how to properly fit your helmet.

PUBLIC SAFETY



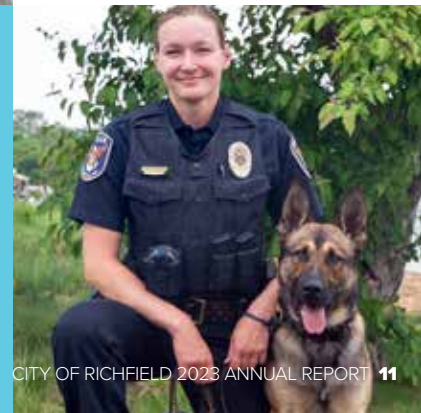
RPD refreshes emergency vehicle operations

In September, Richfield police officers completed their emergency vehicle operations refresher course, which is required training every five years. The department has several in-house instructors who put on the two-day course at a nearby driving track. Officers work on emergency braking, parking, evasive maneuvers and pursuits. This is a great opportunity for officers to challenge themselves and learn the skills necessary to be safe and confident when operating their squad cars in a variety of situations.



K9 officers join the team

RPD welcomed two new police canines as part of the force this summer! K9 Riggs (left, with Officer Macabe Stariha) and K9 Orion (right, with Officer Hailey Quanbeck) are multipurpose working dogs able to assist officers with apprehension, tracking, area searches and drug detection. Welcome to the team, pups!





WOOD LAKE NATURE CENTER

Major progress for WLNC building project

In 2023, the Wood Lake Nature Center building project moved forward in large leaps and bounds! The city received a \$3 million grant from the federal government in late winter and \$12 million in bonding money from the state of Minnesota. The state money was the second highest award in the state. The project team has chosen HGA as the architects of the new building and looks forward to engaging the public and stakeholders over the next year.



Whooooo's there?

During the Winter of 2022-2023, to the delight of staff and visitors alike, a family of Great-horned owls called Wood Lake home! The nesting pair were able to successfully raise 2 owlets a short distance from the nature center building. This provided a fun opportunity to learn more about these secretive birds and how they benefit from important green spaces such as Wood Lake.

Swimming in syrup

Despite a slow start to the 2023 maple syrup season, Wood Lake Nature Center staff, with the help of many school classes and volunteers, were able to install 87 taps and collect over 800 gallons of sap between March 6 and April 6. After the sap was cooked down, they finished with a record 22 gallons of locally produced maple syrup!



Chiming in on the future splashpad

Recreation staff created an online survey last summer to pick residents' favorite splash pad design to be installed at Veterans Park, with 900 online votes tallied. In addition, staff held an engagement session outside the outdoor pool to gather more feedback, with 130 people making in-person votes. The overwhelming winner of the survey was for the nature-inspired design, which will be installed and ready for splashing by late summer.



Tuesday night fun with the Summer Concert Series

The 2023 Entertainment in the Park summer concert series featured a variety of performances, ranging from children's music, magic shows, solo artists, full bands and concert groups. Approximately 1,400 guests visited the bandshell during the summer concerts. Concerts are held at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays during the summer.



VETERANS PARK

Richfield Outdoor Pool
Summer Stats

40,000+
summer admissions

5,300
season passes

540,000
gallons of water

60
staff



RICHFIELD LIQUOR



Richfield Liquor: Teaming up with Parks & Rec

In 2023, purchases at the four Richfield Liquor stores provided enough profits to transfer more than \$450,000 into Richfield parks. This annual transfer helps offset the cost of unexpected expenses and special projects throughout the city's parks.

In addition, each quarter, customers are given the opportunity to 'round up' their purchase to support a specific cause. Past projects have included the off-leash dog park, butterfly gardens at local parks and Wood Lake Nature Center's bus scholarship program for local schools.

The roundup campaigns from 2023 raised \$7,226 and funded:

- **E-bike stretchers:** This equipment enables Richfield Fire to respond to emergencies in places that vehicles cannot easily reach (crowds, running races, etc.). The six-month round-up campaign ran from October 2022 through March 2023.
- **Recreation Fee Assistance Program:** This newly updated program helps offset the cost of recreation programs and facilities for eligible Richfield families. The campaign ran last year from April - June and again from October – December.
- **New trees:** The funding helped replace dozens of trees lost to Emerald Ash Borer in Donaldson Park. The campaign ran last year from July through September.

Remember, a portion of all sales go right back into the community! Thank you for shopping at Richfield Municipal Liquor!

Growing again: Richfield launches new community garden

Richfield's community garden pilot program had a great first season! Over two dozen gardeners put hours and hours of hard work into growing fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs and more at individual plots at Veterans Park. Residents also helped plan and plant pollinator gardens to help attract more bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects to the area. Staff are excited to continue these community connections in 2024! In 2024, qualifying Richfield residents can sign up for a community garden plot at 75% off with the Recreation Fee Assistance program.

418 tons
of organics diverted from landfill in 2023

SUSTAINABILITY



Making strides on the Climate Action Plan

In 2023, after a citywide greenhouse gas emissions inventory was conducted, the City Council officially prioritized four action steps for advancing the Climate Action Plan (CAP). These actions included implementing the recommendations of the municipal building energy audits, conducting an Electric Vehicle (EV) fleet assessment to identify replacement opportunities and establishing a communication/education CAP campaign.



Community hosts first Juneteenth celebration

Last June, a collaboration between the Human Rights Commission, the Richfield Leadership Network and the city brought the first citywide Juneteenth Celebration to Veterans Park. The event kicked off with a Freedom Walk beginning at the All Veterans Memorial followed by festivities at the bandshell. More than 100 people attended and were able to enjoy foods from black-owned businesses, as well as performances by JAJABAND, Frank & Judah Gardner and Kimberly Brown. The emcee, Bukata Hayes and other guest speakers spoke about the history of Juneteenth and the importance of the day to the community.



A fun-filled night for Lil' Sparkler!

The Lil' Sparkler event saw beautiful weather and a great turn-out in 2023. Food trucks, a vehicle display, an enthusiastic kids dance and a movie in the park offered the community a fun opportunity to gather and celebrate the 4th of July.



Cardboard boat races debut at Poolapalooza

On July 22, the Richfield Outdoor Pool hosted a favorite summer event, Poolapalooza. Guests enjoyed an afternoon of DJ music, swimming and yard games. More than 25 boats registered for the first ever cardboard boat race contest. Pool staff saw about 500 guests at the event and can't wait to put on this great event again in 2024!



Unity in the Community draws hundreds

In August, hundreds of families and visitors came together to celebrate at the annual Unity in the Community event. Organized by the Richfield Police Department, the evening brings together local schools, organizations, churches, businesses and community members to celebrate the diversity of Richfield. The event also helps families prepare for the upcoming school year by providing school supplies and resources and attracts more than 1,500 visitors each year.



Grand opening for Highway 77 Underpass

Last summer, a celebration was held to officially open the Highway 77 Underpass! Current and former Richfield employees joined policymakers, advocates and advisors to celebrate the culmination of this long-awaited project. A huge thanks goes out to Senator Melissa Wiklund, Representative Michael Howard, Hennepin County Commissioner Debbie Goettel and all the current and former staff and policymakers that have supported this effort over the years.



Smiles abound at Half-Haunted Halloween

More than 1,500 visitors attended Wood Lake Nature Center's beloved Half-Haunted Halloween last fall! There was much laughing, dancing, candy, cookies, cocoa and amazingly cute costumes! Thank you to the 40 volunteers who helped put on such a great event.



WINTER EVENTS



Holiday Lights Parade: making spirits bright

On a December evening, staff from across the city joined together with local partners to present the Holiday Lights Parade for Richfield residents. Vehicles from Public Works, Fire, Public Safety and Recreation Services were decked out in lights, along with partner vehicles from the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, Academy of Holy Angels, Richfield Public Schools and Seven Hills Preparatory Academy. Thanks to everyone who came out for this memorable holiday event!

Festive Fun at the Winter Market

From May to October, the Richfield Farmers Market livens up Veterans Park each Saturday morning, with delicious local foods, handcrafted goods and many loyal customers. When the outdoor season ended on October 28, vendors moved inside the nearby park building while B&J Evergreen set up their annual Christmas tree lot under the pavilion. For three Saturdays in December, winter market vendors offered hot coffee, snacks, seasonal local foods and beautiful handmade gifts to capture the holiday spirit. In addition, several new vendors from the 2023 winter market will be joining us this summer.

Learn more: richfieldmn.gov/farmersmarket



Welcoming the new year with Candlelight & Ice

Wood Lake Nature Center's Candlelight & Ice event continued to be popular, attracting nearly 1,400 people for the luminary walk on December 31. The event included a story book trail, live animal shows, a NYE-themed photo station, sponsor tables, food trucks and even an elk antler ring toss! Thank you to the stellar volunteers and staff who kept the fires burning, the hot cocoa flowing and the marshmallows roasting to ring in the new year.



BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS



Thank you to our many city board and commission members for dedicating their time to serve their community. Recruitment for Boards and Commissions begins in the fall. Residents, both adult and youth, are encouraged to apply!

Advisory Board of Health

Hawo Abdullahi Jama
Joel Schleisman
Katrina DeVore, Chair
Kelly Hauer
Pixie Pixler
Rebecca Case
Stephanie Mockobee

Arts Commission

Ann Bieganeck
Aric Bieganeck, Chair
Cheryl Gunness
Janie Mork
John Blackshear
Luke Smith
Stephanie Jacobson
Stephanie Kopp

Charter Commission

Bill Bullock
Brandt Krueger
David Gepner
David Lamberger
Donna Drummond
Gordon Vizecky
Kenneth Severson
Larry Ernster
Lisa Rudolph
Martin Kirsch, President
Michelle Dowell
Reed Bornholdt
Rori Coleman-Woods
Sarah Musgrave
Sidney Rehwaldt

City Council

Ben Whalen
Mary Supple, Mayor
Sean Hayford Oleary
Sharon Christensen
Simon Trautmann

Civil Service Commission

James Frechette
Jeffrey Bruzek, Chair
Mary Stratton

Community Services Commission

Adam Kerekes
BJ Skoog
David Vrieze Daniels
Grace Bronken
Hayley Tompkins
Jeff Klein
Jessica Johnson-Kreps
Jim Reilly
Kristine Torgeson Anderson
Michael Devane
Tessa Johanson, Chair

Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Economic Development Authority

Erin Vrieze Daniels, Chair
Gordon Hanson
John Young
Mary Supple
Sean Hayford Oleary

Human Rights Commission

Beatriz Hernandez Guerrero, *youth commissioner*
Callmie Dennis
Dana Specht
Karole Kelly-Anstedt
Madeline Vukson
Mara Glubka
Maria Anderson
Maya Ervasti, *youth commissioner*
Michael Zazzera
Tiffany Bighley
Timothy Garvey
Tyler Olson, Chair
Valerie Hurst-Baker

Planning Commission

Ben Surma
Brendan Kennealy
Brett Stursa
Cole Hooley
Eddie Holmvgig-Johnson, Chair
Matt Taraldsen
Stephanie Hollman

Sustainability Commission

Adam Burnside
Amanda Kueper, Chair
Amanda McKnight
Craig Heinen
Helen Burk, *youth commissioner*
Logan Thein
Matthew Dobratz
Santwana Dasgupta

Transportation Commission

Adam Knosalla
Alexander Valle-Osornio, *youth commissioner*
David Gepner
Eli Straub
Husniyah Bradley, Chair
James Mahoney
Jaz Warren
Louis Dzierzak
McKenzie Burke
Rory Cook

Members active as of 2/7/24

More at:
**[richfieldmn.gov/
commissions](https://richfieldmn.gov/commissions)**

CITY CONTACTS

City Hall Main Line	richfieldmn.gov/cityhall	(612) 861-9700
City Manager	richfieldmn.gov/citymanager	(612) 861-9702
Business Licensing	richfieldmn.gov/businesslicensing	(612) 861-9870
Communications	richfieldmn.gov/communications	(612) 861-9184
Community Center	richfieldmn.gov/communitycenter	(612) 861-9385
Community Development	richfieldmn.gov/communitydevelopment	(612) 861-9760
Fire Department	richfieldmn.gov/fire	(612) 243-4500
Human Resources	richfieldmn.gov/HR	(612) 861-9706
Ice Arena	richfieldmn.gov/icearena	(612) 861-9350
Inspections	richfieldmn.gov/inspect	(612) 861-9860
Outdoor Pool	richfieldmn.gov/outdoorpool	(612) 861-0667
Passport/Motor Vehicle	richfieldmn.gov/motorvehicle	(612) 861-9730
Public Safety	richfieldmn.gov/publicsafety	(612) 861-9800
Public Works	richfieldmn.gov/publicworks	(612) 861-9170
Recreation	richfieldmn.gov/recreation	(612) 861-9385
Wood Lake Nature Center	richfieldmn.gov/woodlake	(612) 861-9365

CONNECT
WITH
US

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**CITY
COUNCIL**

www.richfieldmn.gov

