

Request for Board Action Details

File #: 2020-623
Type: Administrative Item **Status:** Passed
In control: Board of Commissioners
On agenda: 12/22/2020 **Final action:** 12/22/2020
Title: 2021 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform
Sponsors: Communications & Public Relations
Indexes:
Code sections:
Attachments: 1. 2021 State Legislative Platform, 2. Resolution

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
12/22/2020	1	Board of Commissioners	approved	Pass

Sponsor: Communications & Public Relations

Title
2021 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform

Recommendation

1. Approve the 2021 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform.
2. Authorize county representatives to work with members of the Ramsey County legislative delegation, Governor Walz's office and agencies; and other interested parties to promote legislation reflective of the positions contained in the platform.

Background and Rationale

On December 1, 2020 the Legislative Committee of the Whole met and reviewed a draft of the 2021 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform, which had been prepared by the Government Relations staff. The draft contained earlier changes suggested by the members of the board at the County Board Workshop on November 10th, 2020. The Legislative Committee of the Whole approved the proposed platform as presented and asked staff to incorporate changes based on the discussion around mental and behavioral health as a top priority. Staff were also directed to strengthen the language for parks funding and add more for housing stability. Additionally, the 2021 State Legislative Platform draft includes Legislative Guiding Principles, Ramsey Funding and Policy Priorities, and a statement of support for platforms of other organizations.

The Legislative Committee of the Whole recommends the draft of the Ramsey County State Legislative Platform be submitted to the County Board, as summarized below.

CAPITAL INVESTMENT BONDING PRIORITIES**Ramsey County Capital Investment Requests**

1. Riversedge Deck, \$40 million
2. Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit Project, \$2.5 million
3. Riverview Corridor, \$2.5 million

Support of Other Capital Investment Requests

- Twin Cities to Milwaukee/Chicago Second Train, \$10 million, MnDOT

- Gibbs Farm-Pathways to Dakota and Pioneer Life Program, \$7.13 million

FUNDING AND POLICY PRIORITIES

Racial and Health Equity

- Increased Healthcare Access
- Mental Health
- Equal Rights Amendment
- Criminal Justice Reform
- COVID-19 Response Support

Residents First

- Data Practice and Privacy Reforms
- Human Services Program Improvements
- Funding for Libraries and Parks

A Holistic Approach to Strengthening Families

- African American Family Preservation Act
- Families First
- Court-Appointed Counsel for CHIPs Cases
- Childcare Reforms
- Child Support Reforms

Economic Competitiveness and Inclusion

- State-Local Fiscal Partnership
- Regional Workforce Investments
- Flexibility for SNAP Employment and Training Programs
- Transportation and Transit Funding
- Riversedge Deck

Justice System Outcomes

- Civil Commitment and Competency Reforms
- Probation Reforms
- Extension of Post-Conviction Relief
- Felon Voting Rights
- Gun Safety
- Uniform Collateral Consequences of Conviction Act
- Increase Flexibility for Fines and Fees
- Cash Bail Reform
- Automatic Expungements
- Prosecutor-Initiated Resentencing
- Extended Juvenile Jurisdiction

Housing Stability

- Affordable and Stable Housing
- Federal Identification Numbers for Homestead Applications
- Interest Rates on Tax-Forfeited Property
- Eviction Protections

County Goals (Check those advanced by Action)

☒ Well-being ☒ Prosperity ☒ Opportunity ☒ Accountability

Racial Equity Impact

The racial equity impacts of each item or position included in the draft of the 2021 State Legislative Platform were considered as part of the solicitation for proposed items and positions from service teams, departments

and staff. Government Relations required that a form be completed for each proposed item, with a specific request for information regarding the impact of the proposed item on racial equity. Most of the proposed items have direct impact on racial equity, particularly those items that provide increased access to services or benefits specifically targeted to low-income individuals, families or communities, which disproportionately include more people of color and American Indians. These services or opportunities include improved access to health care, stable housing, childcare subsidies, employment opportunities and program and service refinements designed to positively engage cultural values. These efforts are reflected in the proposed top legislative priorities of the platform draft, which include COVID-19 response, transit funding, housing stability and affordability, addressing racial disparities, and prioritizing mental health.

Community Participation Level and Impact

Government Relations attended several Ramsey County advisory committees and discussed the platform this summer and fall with other county organizations and advocacy groups. Additionally, department staff hold town hall meetings in early December to hear first-hand community testimony regarding issues of importance to Ramsey County communities and explain how to be involved in virtual Session this year. These meetings will be held for both staff on December 7th and the public on December 9th.

☒ Inform ☒ Consult ☒ Involve ☐ Collaborate ☐ Empower

Fiscal Impact

Many of positions in the state platform have financial implications and would require county appropriations, if legislation is enacted. The platform items that require county expenditures may do so in the form of a state-imposed maintenance of effort, a required local funding match (which is common for bonding projects), or through a new or revised operating cost. When there are implications for the current budget, necessary budget adjustments can be brought before the Board via a Request for Board Action; or through adjustment to the current fiscal county budget; or through changes to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), depending on the specifics of the funding change. When there are implications for the next county budget, these adjustments are communicated to staff and the Board through the regular budget process.

County Manager Comments

The Legislative Committee recommends the State Legislative Platform to the County Board. County Board action is required to establish legislative positions and priorities.

Last Previous Action

On December 15, 2020, the County Board tabled the approval of the 2021 Ramsey County State Legislative Platform.

On December 1, 2020, the Legislative Committee of the Whole took up the draft State Legislative Platform, discussed and asked staff to make some changes, such as adding mental health as a top priority and adding more to the housing stability positions.

On November 10, 2020, a County Board workshop was held on the State Legislative Platform.

Attachments

1. 2021 State Legislative Platform