



**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**  
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**Mayor Coleman**  
**2007 State of the City Address - Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center**  
**Remarks as prepared for delivery**

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Thank you President Lantry. You and your colleagues on the City Council have been true partners, and I appreciate your leadership.

I want to take a moment to recognize Councilmember Jay Benanav. Jay's father passed away on Saturday and he couldn't be with us today. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the Benanav family during this difficult time.

Honored guests, residents, elected officials, family, friends and employees of this great city, thank you for joining us this evening.

**A Stronger City**

Today, I'm proud to report that Saint Paul is a strong city, made stronger by our shared values of cooperation, responsibility and respect.

We are stronger because we have brought more voices to the table.

We are stronger because my administration listened to you when you said you wanted to see real long-term progress rather than short-term political expediency.

We are stronger because we are determined to resolve differences and find common ground.

We are stronger because we have asked people to share their greatest aspirations for our city and then asked them to help us achieve those dreams.

Today, we are blessed with an abundance of opportunity throughout our city.

Whether it is the development of the Central Corridor, the redevelopment of the Ford site or reinvestment in some of our most diverse and exciting neighborhoods, the work we are doing today will transform Saint Paul for the next century.

Never have there been so many transformative opportunities before us at one time.

Together, we will seize them and reshape Saint Paul's future.

Tying these opportunities together to weave a common vision for Saint Paul began with the development of a road map.

One year ago, my administration began work on the development of a long-term strategic plan. The goal of this plan is to make Saint Paul the Most Livable City in America. To do that, we have focused our work around five key areas:

- Economic Development
- Public Safety
- Education
- The Environment, and
- The Soul of our city

Each of these elements is critical to the successful future of our city. Each of our departments has been asked to assess their work plan against this plan. In my Inaugural Address, I stated that we must align our policies with our values. That is what we have done through this plan.

## **Economic Development**

### Central Corridor

In the past year, we have made enormous progress in the Central Corridor.

Next month we will release the final Central Corridor Development Strategy. This document was created through the work of two vibrant task forces and the Urban Strategies Group.

It will be one of the most important planning documents in our city's history.

It is bold.

It is forward-thinking.

It will help us enhance our public spaces, define areas of change and areas of stability, support transit related uses and renew the heart of downtown.

It is respectful of the voices that echo from the historic Rondo neighborhood.

Those voices have been at the heart of our work.

They've told a cautionary tale about the importance of listening to the voices too often ignored.

Those voices speak of a community where they were known by name, where folks got off the streetcar and brought their groceries at the corner store on their way home, and where music and theater and art flourished before the trench was dug for I-94 and the concrete poured.

We will use this opportunity to break up some of the concrete and create beautiful places, protect existing businesses and lift up the proposition that people and place both matter.

I would like to thank the members of the task forces, City staff and the team from Urban Strategies.

For more than 20 years development in the East Metro has lagged behind because our elected officials have failed to come together around a common vision for the future of our region.

That is set to change.

In February, elected officials and community members from the East Metro area formed the *Eastern Transportation Alliance*. This coalition will speak with a united voice on the transportation needs of our community. Together we will fight to build the Rush Line, The Red Rock Corridor, high speed rail to Chicago and other corridors serving our region.

Each of these lines will come together to form a seamless transportation network with its heart at Union Depot.

I am grateful for the leadership of Representatives McCollum and Oberstar, Commissioners Ortega, Carter, Bennett, the entire Ramsey County Board and Representative Alice Hausman, as well as the East Metro legislators, and their persistent fight on behalf of the Central Corridor and the Union Depot Multi-modal Transit Hub.

Saint Paul and the East Metro will be a transit hub, not a spoke off a West Metro transit system.

### Ford Site

In the days immediately after I was elected we received the news that I - and thousands of others - had hoped would never come. Ford Motor Company announced its plan to close the Saint Paul plant.

For eighty years, men and women spent their entire careers at that plant. They earned wages sufficient to support their families and they created a community of mutual support that extended into neighborhoods throughout Saint Paul and the entire east metro region. The members of the UAW did everything within their power to make that plant successful. They invented and innovated; they went the extra mile and were recognized as among the most productive in the country. But it turned out that it wasn't enough.

The news of the likely closure came like a swift kick to the gut. But it is not in Saint Paul's character to be paralyzed by bad news.

Three months ago I announced the formation of the Ford Site Planning Task Force.

Of the 16 cities that face the loss of a Ford plant, Saint Paul is currently the only city to move forward with a comprehensive planning and redevelopment process.

The Task Force will create a redevelopment framework for the site by the time the plant is slated to close in 2008.

I've set before them the legendary Chicago city planner Daniel Burnham's admonition: "Make no small plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood."

The elements of magic abound on the Ford site. Henry Ford, himself, recognized that when he visited in 1923 and reflected: "This is the finest location in the country."

There is magic in the opportunity that stretches out before us to position Saint Paul for the 22<sup>nd</sup> century. This site yields amazing potential, and we will look at all options of use: housing, retail, office space and green-manufacturing.

We cannot dream big enough.

I want to thank members of our Ford Site Planning Task Force for stepping up to serve. You have a big job ahead of you and you have my support.

### Downtown

There has been great progress in Downtown and along our Riverfront in recent years.

Today, much of our growth is centered around health care. The expansion at Regions Hospital will bring an estimated 450 construction jobs and at least 250 permanent jobs to their campus.

St. Joseph's new tower and expanded emergency room will bring new jobs to our city and expand their ability to serve the community they have served for more than 150 years.

United Hospital also continues to grow. Last year, we saw the opening of the Nasseff Heart Center. This state of the art facility is a critical addition to Saint Paul, enhancing our reputation as a thriving health care community.

We will build on the work already completed and capture the unrealized potential of our Downtown.

Nowhere is this potential clearer than at the former home of West Publishing. With its sweeping views of the Mississippi and its proximity to the Science Museum, the River Centre, the Xcel Energy Center and Rice Park, I believe that there is no finer opportunity in the region.

I will work in partnership with the Ramsey County Board to make redevelopment of this site a priority.

This spring, we will continue to move forward on several key projects. The new indoor farmer's market and the Market Flats will bring the vitality of the Saint Paul Farmer's Market to Lowertown year-round. The Penfield will change the post card of Saint Paul. Along the river, the historic head house - the nation's first successful farmers' cooperative grain terminal - will be reborn as a riverside restaurant and interpretive center.

From growing our healthcare industry to redeveloping the West building, to finishing the job at Cleveland Circle - the future of downtown is bright and I am committed to seizing the opportunities before us.

### Invest Saint Paul

When I ran for Mayor, I said that all of Saint Paul must prosper; that every one of our neighborhoods matter; and that our greatest strength lies within our neighborhoods.

One needs to look no further than a family-owned business on Payne Avenue or the bustling activity of a neighborhood clean-up in Mac Groveland to realize that our civic pride comes from our unique sense of place and from our connection to our neighbors and our city.

But, some of our neighborhoods have prospered while others have fallen behind.

To truly be a city of neighborhoods, all of our neighborhoods must matter - equally.

Frequently, urban redevelopment strategies start with the goal of *re-attracting* the middle-class to the city. Too often, the strategy ends there.

You cannot rebuild your city by displacing those who currently call it home.

You cannot create an economically vital community unless all prosper.

That is why we have launched Invest Saint Paul.

Invest Saint Paul was shaped by stakeholders from across the city, many of whom have the wisdom that comes from years of experience.

Invest Saint Paul will help us invest not just in bricks and mortar; but also the people who will live and work in those buildings.

We will rebuild our neighborhoods, not by attracting the middle class but by building it: by giving every child in Saint Paul the tools and resources she needs to succeed.

We will leverage all of our efforts and all of our partners to make every corner of our city a place where families thrive.

This year, the City will issue \$25 million in bonds to jumpstart key development projects in targeted neighborhoods.

This will allow us to move forward with a 54-unit affordable rental community at Rice and Winnipeg.

It will expedite the redevelopment of the old Globe Roofing Company site at Atlantic and East 7<sup>th</sup> to bring good jobs to the neighborhood.

It will help us build on the success of such projects as the new Smile Center on 7<sup>th</sup> and White Bear which will bring more than 90 jobs to the area.

These resources will allow us to build on the \$465,000 in funds from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to assist in cleaning up the old Hospital Linen site, and turn it into the future home of housing, jobs, and retail.

Our key partner in this effort is the Local Initiatives Support Corporation. Through better cooperation between organizations, whether city departments, non-profits or private business, we will bring an unprecedented number of resources to these targeted neighborhoods.

It has been said that if one generation plants trees, another gets the shade.

With Invest Saint Paul, we are planting the seeds of prosperity for all of Saint Paul.

Our city will be the city where all neighborhoods are strong.

### RNC

Much of our work over the next 18 months will focus on preparing for the biggest event to ever come to Saint Paul - the 2008 Republican National Convention.

With 45,000 visitors and 15,000 members of the media, we will have an unprecedented opportunity to tell the world about our community.

We will tell the world about this beautiful city on the banks of the Mississippi. We will showcase our vibrant arts & culture scene, our great restaurants and our wonderful hospitality.

Other cities that have hosted a national convention, Philadelphia, San Diego, Chicago and Atlanta trace a surge of economic growth back to their time in the international spotlight.

We will use this opportunity to attract corporate headquarters to Saint Paul. We will use this opportunity to enhance existing business. And we will use this opportunity to tell the world what we have known all along - that Saint Paul is a fantastic place to live, work and play.

Our biggest failure would be for us to settle for the ordinary. So I ask that we dream big, and that we act on our convictions and our love for this great city.

### **Public Safety**

In spite of a \$16.5 million shortfall this year, we continued to invest new resources in public safety. With the addition of 38 police officers, we'll have the highest level of officer strength in the City's history. We are well on our way of reaching our goal to hire 100 officers by 2010.

Overall, crime is down in Saint Paul.

But all of that is small comfort to a family...a neighborhood...a high school and a city reeling in the wake of last week's murders in the North End. In Friday morning's darkness, we saw the power of evil. And we will not let it stand. The Saint Paul Police will find those responsible for this cowardly act and bring them to justice.

We will not let evil define us.

We will not rest until every child in every neighborhood wakes up to the safety and security that is their birthright.

We must continue to be vigilant and develop a more modern, comprehensive public safety strategy to suppress and prevent crime. This will include strategies such as last summer's targeted overtime. The \$230,000 for this program allowed us to increase police presence and strengthen curfew enforcement in areas of the city that had historically seen increases in criminal activity over the summer months.

With \$20,000 in strategic safety grants to targeted community organizations we created new partnerships to give kids positive alternatives to getting in trouble.

While these two strategies clearly helped last summer, we will continue to find new ways of reducing crime throughout Saint Paul.

Saint Paul residents have come to expect nothing less than a world-class Fire Department that will provide emergency services quickly and equitably.

But the nature of the department has changed over the last several decades. Today, nearly 80% of the Department's runs are emergency medical services runs.

Tensions between the administration and the employees have created concerns about the level of service.

Let me assure you, when the alarm rings, the men and women of the Saint Paul Fire Department will answer the call. And they will do it as well or better than any other department in the country.

However, it is critical that we ensure the Fire Department continues to provide this level of service.

Last week, we received the results of a five month long study of the Department that included more than 100 recommendations.

We are now committed to reviewing these recommendations and developing a strategic plan based on them.

It is clear that immediate action must be taken to ease the tensions between the Fire Administration and the members of Local 3939 and Local 21.

I have asked the Fire Chief to make immediate changes to his management team to help resolve the conflicts. Additionally, I have asked the leadership of both unions to immediately recommit to the Labor Management Process.

I have confidence in all involved, and know they will act in the best interest of the City of Saint Paul. I will accept nothing less.

The report also recommended the appointment of a Director of Emergency Management. We have already taken steps to implement this recommendation.

To ensure that this document is not forgotten and that implementation of the recommendations occur, I have convened two teams, one external and one internal, to take a look at every recommendation in the report.

We are just beginning a long process of building a new, 21<sup>st</sup> century Fire Department that is well equipped, well managed, and one that will continue to provide world-class service to the residents of Saint Paul.

I ask the City Council, the Chief and the men and women of the Saint Paul Fire department to stand with me and seize this opportunity to build a stronger department.

### **Education**

In a recent editorial, David Brooks of the New York Times wrote that "we have to get over the definition of education as something that takes place in schools between the hours of 8 and 3, between the months of September and June, and between the ages of 5 and 18."

This is nothing new to us in Saint Paul.

For the past 15 months, we have worked to put together a team that views education as something that happens all day, every day. Building on University of Minnesota President

Robert Bruinink's report on out-of-school time, we have focused much of our work on assuring that every child has access to quality out-of-school opportunities.

Just as education is not an 8 to 3 proposition, it is not just the school district's job to educate kids.

While other cities are taking over their school districts, we have chosen instead to support the work of our schools.

In Saint Paul, we are setting a new standard for how cities and schools will work together.

Last fall we piloted a Second Shift No School Day program at the Hazel Park Rec Center to give children a safe place to learn and play when school was not in session. Over 300 children participated from Nokomis, Ames and Eastern Heights elementary schools.

Next week we will expand the Second Shift No School Days program to 5 more recreation centers, and we expect to go citywide at 30 recreation centers by the end of this year.

By restructuring hours at our libraries and rec centers, we are creating more opportunities for kids to be in a safe environment after school, where they can receive help with their homework, or have access to computers. Our great staffs at the libraries and the rec centers are organizing workshops and other youth programs. They are making a huge difference in the lives of these young people.

And our kids are stepping up as well.

Earlier this month two members of the Second Shift Youth Commission testified at the Capitol in favor of legislation to fund neighborhood circulators in Saint Paul. These circulators, modeled after the successful West Side circulator, will make it possible for kids to get to these wonderful programs.

Sahmad Nakumbe- a student at Humboldt High School - spoke of the difference that the West Side Circulator made in his life, allowing him to attend a leadership program at the Boys and Girls Club. Sahmad said that without the circulator, it would have been impossible for him to stay active and involved in leadership opportunities.

And Kalia Her - a student at Johnson High School - spoke from her own experience when she testified that a neighborhood circulator would make a huge difference and truly improve the lives of youth in her neighborhood, Dayton's Bluff.

When I sat and listened to this great youth leaders, I was reminded once again that our children will succeed as long as we give them resources they need.

I want to thank Shamad, Kalia and all of the Youth Commissioners for their leadership.

Much of our work has focused on reaching out to children even before they enter school.

Children who have the opportunity to participate in quality early childhood development programs have a reduced number of criminal offenses and arrests, reduced special education needs, and increased high-school graduation rates.

Research shows that children with the most risk factors who do not participate in quality preschool and childcare programs are 50-70% more likely to be arrested for a crime.

Today I'm proud to tell you that, thanks to a new partnership with the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation, we will establish an early childhood development scholarship program in Saint Paul.

Based on the model from Art Rolnick and Rob Grunewald at Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis, this pilot program will provide much needed scholarships so more children have access to quality early childhood care and education programs.

Saint Paul will be the first in the nation to pilot this particular model, and we will begin with families who live on the North End and in Frogtown.

The Early Childhood Development Program will provide two-year scholarships for families to use at a quality, early childhood program.

With this partnership, Saint Paul will continue to be a leader and a model for the rest of the country.

We will be the education city.

### **Environment**

With 2005 being the warmest year in Earth's history, and 2006 being the warmest year on record in the United States - it's clear that global warming is the largest, most widespread challenge of our time.

At current warming rates, the Arctic Ocean could be ice free and more than a million species worldwide could become extinct by 2050.

If we fail to act, global warming will cause Minnesota's climate to be warmer and drier. It will diminish the fresh water levels we depend on from the Mississippi River and our lakes. It will cripple our forestry and agricultural industries.

That's why I've made energy efficiency a priority for my administration.

In February of last year I signed the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement to strengthen the City's environmental policies.

Working with the City Council, we established the Energy Conservation Investment Fund. We'll invest \$1 million over the next several years to retrofit existing City buildings to conserve energy, reduce CO2 emissions and provide long-term savings for taxpayers.

This year we'll begin with the Linwood Recreation Center and Phalen Golf Course Clubhouse. The energy-efficient upgrades will have a 2-year payback and qualify for a \$15,000 rebate from Xcel Energy.

Earlier this year, we worked with the Council to pass a Green Building Design Standards resolution that requires new City-owned buildings to meet higher energy and environmental standards.

In 2007, we will hire a new Energy Coordinator who will manage all of the City's energy conservation initiatives. This investment will more than pay for itself by reducing the City's energy expenses.

Though we cannot solve global warming alone, it's clear that we cannot wait any longer for the White House to take action. In the absence of leadership at the federal level, Saint Paul will lead by taking action on the local level.

### **Soul of Saint Paul**

March is my favorite time of year in the City of Saint Paul - not just because of Saint Patrick's Day. It's tourney time. Families from all over Minnesota come to Saint Paul. They may come for the hockey, but they also go to the museums and to the State Capitol. They fill up the hotels and restaurants. They get to know their Capital City.

We will continue to be proud hosts of these events. But there is much more that we can do year round to support the impressive array of youth leagues, amateur clubs, and semi-professional and minor league teams that make Saint Paul home.

The Saint Paul Saints continue to be a great success. Even when the Twins' new stadium is built, they will continue to be an important destination for families. Their home, Midway Stadium, also serves as the site of many high school and amateur events. It is an aged facility in need of significant upgrades.

The Minnesota Thunder and the Minnesota Lightning Soccer teams have been playing without a true home for too long. They have traveled from site to site searching for a permanent location to play their games.

It's time to provide these athletes and fans alike with the facilities worthy of their passion.

My administration is working to develop an amateur sports complex that will not only provide for the needs of the Saints, Thunder and Lightning.

I have asked the Capital City Partnership to help us in finding the right solution.

We are also in the process of creating more opportunities for youth athletics. Three soccer fields near Como Park will have new turf installed that will extend the playing season by at least two months.

With a string of unusually warm winters, many kids are growing up in Saint Paul without ever having skated outdoors. In recent years, the Wells Fargo ice rink in Downtown has been the most reliable and smoothest ice in town. I believe we should expand this opportunity throughout Saint Paul.

This dream is shared by Ramsey County Commissioner Jim McDonough. It is our goal to bring 3 refrigerated outdoor ice rinks to Saint Paul by next fall.

Herb Brooks frequently complained that young hockey players were so structured that they were forgetting what the game was all about. He wanted more kids just playing old fashioned pick-up hockey. Herb was right. Let's dedicate these rinks to him and his vision.

Our arts and culture industry is equally critical to the soul of our city.

Our arts industry contributes more than \$838 million to our regional economy and brings millions of people into our community each year.

From our wildly successful Art Crawl to our growing theater community, the impact of the arts on Saint Paul is clear.

Opportunities to expand this industry abound. One key piece to this is the Palace Theater.

After years of sitting empty, there is a renewed interest in this great building.

In the coming year we will partner with the private sector to adapt this old vaudeville theater into a vibrant, modern venue for concerts. This new 2,500 capacity house in a historic theater will be one of the best places in the country to watch your favorite bands or see a new artist on the verge of making it big.

Whether we lift up our statewide tournaments at the Xcel, shows at the Ordway, or touring bands at the Palace, Saint Paul will be the arts, culture and entertainment capital of Minnesota.

### **Budget Challenges**

Last year at this time, I spoke about the looming budget crisis facing the city. For the 2007 budget, we ended up with a \$16.5 million shortfall. This deficit was the result of years of missed opportunities and substantial cuts in state and federal aid.

While it was unclear how we would meet this problem without massive cuts to City services, we rolled up our sleeves and went to work.

We enlisted a Blue Ribbon Commission of CEO's and business leaders.

We sought meaningful public input.

We looked for greater efficiency in every department, every program.

We called for innovation - ultimately, we transformed our Libraries, Parks and License departments to provide better service at a better price.

We solved the deficit for 2007, which brought us a step closer to our goal of solving the City's structural deficit by 2010.

Unfortunately, the picture for 2008 is not much better. Next year, we face an estimated deficit of no less than \$13 million dollars.

Last year, I called on the Governor and the state legislature to help Saint Paul and all cities throughout Minnesota deal with the impact of cuts in state aid. Help didn't come. As a result, property taxes on an average value home increased significantly last year. They have increased nearly 75% in just four years. This has to stop.

I have worked closely with our legislative delegation and with the leadership in both the House and the Senate to find the necessary resources to assist cities throughout Minnesota and to take the burden off of property tax payers.

Under the Governor's budget proposal, Saint Paul would actually receive \$2 million less in state aid in 2008 than in 2007. We are already more than \$16 million down from original projections.

Once again, I ask the Governor to deliver on his promise to help taxpayers throughout Minnesota. Restore aid to cities so that we can continue to put cops on the street and kids in our libraries.

We've never allowed the budget challenges to slow down the pace of our work. We are blessed in Saint Paul to have generous partners in all of our efforts.

If there has been one thing I've heard more than any other over the past year, it is that people want to be at the table. They want to be listened to. They want to be part of the solution.

Thanks to our partners at the Saint Paul, Bigelow and McKnight Foundations, we are investing \$1 million in preparing the Central Corridor for light rail.

For our education efforts, we've secured nearly a half-million dollars from Travelers, the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation, the Surdna Foundation and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

On behalf of our entire community, I want to thank these remarkable partners for their investments in our future.

Because of these great partners, we will continue to move Saint Paul forward.

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In 18 months we will tell the world the story of Saint Paul.

We'll tell the story of a city made stronger through cooperation, cognizant of our responsibilities and guided by respect for one another.

We will tell the story of a city protective of our environment, culturally vibrant and economically strong.

We will tell the story of a city where everyone can prosper, where children have the resources they need to succeed and where all are welcome.

We are a city that accepts the challenges before us and turns them into opportunities.

Together, we will seize this transformative moment in Saint Paul's history and we will truly be the Most Livable City in America.