

Saint Paul STRONG

St. Paul STRONG is a nonpartisan, community-led organization dedicated to improving open and representative government in Saint Paul by encouraging and supporting open and transparent public processes at City Hall, engaging and empowering resident participation, and building a stronger, more inclusive Saint Paul.

Saint Paul STRONG (SPS) invited Saint Paul mayoral candidates to review these SPS six principles and tell us in writing if they support them.

SAFETY: We pledge to make public safety our top priority, maintaining efficient and effective first responder systems and enhancing citizen/community relationships with police, fire, and other city departments.

TRUST: We will work to make sure full and informed citizen participation comes before decisions are made —not after—and put the interests of all the people, including the affected communities and the intended beneficiaries, ahead of personal or partisan interests.

RESPONSIBLE: We believe city officials must be accountable to all citizens—including persons of color, seniors, persons with disabilities, low-income residents, immigrants, and refugees—and that they must be fully engaged to the public, not parties, and must respond to citizen concerns in a timely and nonpartisan fashion.

OPEN: We will break down the barriers that exclude citizen participation and bring decision-making back into the public arena where it belongs; ensuring taxpayers are fully informed and have an opportunity to participate meaningfully in decision making.

NEIGHBORHOODS: We pledge to strengthen community voices and to work—across ward boundaries— to foster stronger neighborhoods with equal right and access to the resources and amenities of our city.

GENERATIONS: Understanding that our city was built by generations of people who loved it as we do, we pledge to build a stronger, safer, and more beautiful city for the generations that will come after us.

Here are the candidates' responses received by SPS:

Sharon Anderson: Yes

Elizabeth Dickinson: Yes :)

Tom Goldstein: Your core principles are at the heart of my campaign.

Pat Harris: Thank you for this opportunity! Please see my thoughts on the Saint Paul STRONG principles below:

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to Saint Paul STRONG's principles and for the work you are doing to bring accountability and transparency to government. I am proud to consider many Saint Paul STRONG members as both friends and mentors.

The priorities of my campaign and the very principles on which I live my life are rooted in Saint Paul STRONG's principles. I am committed to Saint Paul receiving the **most effective public safety services** by ensuring our police and fire departments are fully funded, receive the best training in the state, and reflect the diversity of our city.

As with Saint Paul STRONG's principle on Generations, I believe strongly that **our children's future and our City's future** depend on a better partnership with schools and the school district, smarter resources, and long term investments in our parks and libraries. As the parent of four Saint Paul Public School children, I am and will be a vigorous advocate for improved and smarter resources. I have demonstrated this leadership over 30 years of service and I have specific and innovative ideas to move Saint Paul forward.

I also agree that Saint Paul's neighborhoods are the heart of our city - the unique qualities, histories, and challenges of each neighborhood are equally important. I believe **Saint Paul needs to work for all**. I will continue my work with community members, advocates, and employers to ensure all residents have equitable access to education, living wage jobs, and affordable homes.

I agree with Saint Paul STRONG that **our government and our elected officials must be responsible and ensure an open process**, and I appreciate the work Saint Paul STRONG is doing to put a face on many important issues. My City Council office was open and transparent, with our office as a regular gathering point for many in our community. On key issues facing our community, such as the Ford site, when I felt that not all of the voices were being represented in the process, I spearheaded the Ford Plant Site Task Force with a charge to initiate a planning process for the re-use of the site and a corresponding charge to assess the impact to the surrounding community.

Overall, **trust is inherent in the success of our community**. My commitment and values as a lifelong Saint Paul resident are rooted in this belief.

Thank you again for this opportunity! I appreciate your support.

Tim Holden: I agree 150% with everything STP STRONG envisions and represents. ALL politicians should wear body cameras!! Transparency & accountability to all PEOPLE! KEEP UP THE WONDERFUL WORK!! SAVE SAINT PAUL

Chris Holbrook: Yes, I support the principles of Saint Paul STRONG, unless some translation of a point into a refined specific case were to further increase the tax burden upon residents.

The lack of transparency and input in publicly financed projects, programs, and decisions in Saint Paul is downright shameful. The exclusionary process and priorities of the Mayor and City Council have repeatedly demonstrated a pattern of secretive crony negotiations that are pre-planned to benefit a few, at a cost to many. Public outreach, accountability, and overspending is addressed with lip service after the fact and does not take place in good faith. Exposure and reform is needed.

Public neighborhood services are sacrificed for private entertainment developments, funded with annual 'maximum-levy-increased' property taxes and budget deficits laid at the feet of Saint Paul residents. This is causing people, business, and jobs to leave the city. This gross mismanagement is either by omission or commission, and neither is acceptable. I have previously stated the overdue need for an audit of every city department that will be a top priority, should I be elected Mayor.

Dai Thao: Thanks for doing this. I really appreciate your leadership and am happy to endorse the Saint Paul STRONG principles. I also am looking forward to meeting you all and working with you.