

The Plan to Reignite Minnesota (aka The Big Beautiful Basic Boring Plan)

Introduction: The Plan to Reignite Minnesota

Minnesota faces a choice.

For generations, our state worked because it focused on the fundamentals. Minnesota offered a simple, powerful promise: if you worked hard, followed the rules, and contributed to your community, you could build a good life. Affordable living. Strong schools. Safe neighborhoods. Opportunity for the next generation. A government that, while never perfect, generally worked well.

That promise is now fading.

Costs are rising faster than paychecks. Families feel squeezed despite doing everything right. Employers face uncertainty and complexity. Schools consume more resources while delivering weaker outcomes. Public safety has become uneven and unpredictable. Government has grown larger, more expensive, and less accountable, while delivering less, and trust has eroded.

These challenges are not random, and they are not inevitable. They are the result of policy choices in St. Paul that reflect years of drifting away from fundamentals and toward complexity, ideology, and process over results.

This Plan is built on a different approach.

It starts with a simple belief that government exists to serve the people of Minnesota, not to manage their lives or excuse poor performance. Good government focuses relentlessly on outcomes. It sets clear priorities, measures results honestly, fixes what is broken, and stops doing what does not work.

This Plan is not a collection of slogans or temporary fixes. It is a practical governing framework grounded in logic, focused on execution, and oriented toward long-term results. It organizes Minnesota's challenges around five core responsibilities that matter to every family, regardless of how they vote, what they look like or where they live:

- Making Minnesota affordable again
- Growing a strong, diverse economy
- Fixing education by focusing on outcomes
- Restoring public safety and the rule of law

- Making government work again

These are not partisan issues. They are fundamental responsibilities. When they are neglected, everything else becomes harder. When they are executed well, opportunity expands and confidence returns.

Minnesota does not need radical experiments or performative politics. It needs disciplined leadership, clear priorities, and the courage to tell the truth about what is working and what is not. This Plan is an invitation to focus and build a Minnesota that works for the people who live here.

The Five Pillars of the Plan

Pillar I – Making Minnesota Affordable

The Challenge

For generations, Minnesota offered a strong bargain: work hard and be good citizens, and in a high quality of life at a reasonable cost would follow. That balance has eroded. Housing prices and rents are rising faster than incomes. Childcare costs rival mortgage payments. Energy bills are volatile and increasingly expensive. Healthcare premiums and out-of-pocket costs strain family budgets. Taxes and fees continue to climb, even as many families feel they are falling behind.

For too many Minnesotans, especially the working middle, the math no longer works. Families are doing what they were told would lead to stability: working hard, saving responsibly, raising children, and contributing to their communities. Yet they feel squeezed between rising costs and a growing government footprint. This affordability crisis is not inevitable. It is the product of accumulated policy choices.

The Principle

Government should help make life more affordable, not more expensive. When regulations, mandates, taxes, and delays multiply, costs are passed directly to families. A government serious about affordability disciplines itself to ask a simple question before acting: will this make it easier or harder for Minnesotans to afford their lives?

The Plan

Restoring affordability requires sustained focus across multiple cost drivers:

- **Expand housing supply through reform, not mandates.** Increasing supply is the most reliable way to stabilize housing costs. Streamline permitting, shorten approval timelines, and reduce duplicative reviews that delay construction and raise costs. Empower local communities with flexibility to meet housing needs rather than imposing one-size-fits-all solutions from St. Paul.
- **Provide tax and fee relief for working families.** Minnesotans should not feel punished for working, saving, or staying in the state. Slow the growth of taxes and fees and prioritize relief for middle-income households who are least able to absorb rising costs.
- **Lower childcare costs by expanding options.** Reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens that drive up childcare prices while maintaining safety and quality. Encourage a wider range of childcare models so families can choose what works best for them.
- **Ensure reliable, affordable energy.** Policies that drive up energy costs function as a regressive tax on families, seniors, and small businesses. Minnesota needs energy policy that prioritizes reliability and affordability alongside environmental stewardship.
- **Apply cost-of-living discipline inside government.** Require agencies to evaluate how new rules and mandates affect household costs and small businesses before they are adopted.

The Outcome

When Minnesota becomes affordable again, families regain stability and choice. Young adults can buy homes and start families. Parents can afford childcare and save for the future. Seniors can remain in their communities. Affordability restores confidence, opportunity, and long-term economic health.

Pillar II – Growing a Strong, Diverse Economy

The Challenge

Minnesota has long benefited from a diverse and innovative economy, but momentum has slowed. Job growth and population growth lag peer states. Employers face rising regulatory complexity, labor shortages, and increasing costs. Too often, state policy sends mixed signals: Celebrating workers while, at the same time, making it harder for businesses to invest, expand, and hire.

A slowing economy limits opportunity, suppresses wage growth, and increases pressure on public assistance and state budgets. Economic growth is not abstract or ideological. It

directly affects whether families can find good jobs, whether wages rise, and whether the state can fund core responsibilities without raising taxes.

The Principle

Economic policy should reward work, encourage investment, and remove unnecessary barriers to growth. Workers and businesses succeed together. A state cannot sustainably raise wages, expand opportunity, or strengthen neighborhoods and municipalities without a competitive private sector.

The Plan

This Plan advances a practical, pro-growth economic strategy:

- **Restore Minnesota's competitiveness.** Minnesota must compete for jobs and investment, not assume they will stay by default. Modernize tax strategy, reform regulations, streamline permitting, and reduce unnecessary complexity so businesses can plan, invest, and expand with confidence.
- **Align workforce systems with real jobs.** Better connect education, training, and workforce programs to the needs of employers so Minnesotans can move efficiently into good-paying careers.
- **Focus on retention before recruitment.** Supporting existing employers is often the most effective economic development strategy. Keeping jobs here matters as much as attracting new ones.
- **Target growth where Minnesota is strong.** Build on existing advantages in manufacturing, agriculture, healthcare, technology, logistics, and energy rather than chasing trends without a foundation.
- **Promote opportunity statewide.** Ensure economic growth reaches Greater Minnesota as well as the Twin Cities, recognizing that a healthy state economy depends on strong regions working together.

The Outcome

A growing economy creates more jobs, higher wages, and broader opportunity. It reduces reliance on government programs and provides the revenue needed to fund core services responsibly. Growth restores confidence, independence, and long-term prosperity for Minnesotans.

Pillar III – Fixing Education by Focusing on Outcomes

The Challenge

Minnesota was once a national leader in education. Today, that reputation no longer matches reality. Reading and math proficiency have declined, achievement gaps persist, and too many students graduate without the skills needed for college, careers, or service. At the same time, education spending has increased and the system has grown more complex.

Parents feel the disconnect. Graduation rates may be high, but families know when their children are not truly prepared. Teachers face growing mandates and paperwork that pull time away from instruction. Employers struggle to find graduates with basic skills and work readiness. The system has become focused on compliance and process rather than student outcomes.

The Principle

Education policy should be judged by results, not intentions. The goal of public education is simple and non-negotiable: every student should graduate with strong foundational skills and a clear path to opportunity. Empower educators to teach, give families meaningful options, and hold the system accountable for outcomes.

The Plan

This Plan refocuses Minnesota's education system on fundamentals and performance:

- **Make literacy and numeracy the top priorities.** Ensure every child can read proficiently and perform math at grade level, starting in the earliest grades. Early intervention matters, and honesty about progress matters even more.
- **Set clear standards and measure them honestly.** Maintain rigorous academic expectations and transparent assessments so parents, educators, and policymakers know whether students are actually learning.
- **Reduce mandates and restore classroom focus.** Streamline requirements that do not improve student learning so teachers can spend more time teaching and less time on compliance.
- **Support innovation and family choice.** Expand access to high-performing charter schools and innovative models that demonstrate results, especially for students who are being left behind.
- **Strengthen career and technical pathways.** Build strong pathways to skilled trades, manufacturing, healthcare, and technology so students can move directly into good-paying careers if college is not the right fit.
- **Align education with workforce needs.** Coordinate K-12, higher education, and workforce systems so education leads to real opportunity.

The Outcome

Students graduate with real skills and real options. Parents regain confidence that schools are preparing their children for the future. Teachers are empowered to focus on instruction. Employers gain a workforce ready to succeed. Education once again becomes a ladder of opportunity and a cornerstone of Minnesota's prosperity.

Pillar IV – Restoring Public Safety and the Rule of Law

The Challenge

Public safety is a core responsibility of government, and in too many Minnesota communities it has weakened. Violent crime and property crime increased, response times lengthened, and clearance rates fell. Police recruitment and retention suffered as expectations became unclear and support inconsistent. Confidence in the justice system eroded as enforcement varied by jurisdiction, creating uncertainty for residents, victims, officers, and businesses alike.

These conditions hurt those least able to absorb them. Neighborhoods with the fewest resources experience the greatest harm when disorder rises and accountability falters. Small businesses hesitate to invest, families change routines, and trust breaks down. This is not inevitable; it reflects leadership gaps, mixed signals, and poor system coordination.

The Principle

Public safety and civil liberties advance together. A fair system enforces the law consistently, protects constitutional rights, and treats people with dignity. Compassion without accountability fails victims and communities; accountability without fairness undermines legitimacy. Minnesota must restore balance, clarity, and professionalism.

The Plan

This Plan restores safety through leadership, coordination, and accountability:

- **Set clear statewide expectations.** Establish uniform standards for lawful enforcement and professional conduct so officers, prosecutors, and courts operate with clarity and consistency—regardless of ZIP code.
- **Recruit, retain, and train professionals.** Support law enforcement with competitive recruitment, modern training, and clear backing when officers act within the law—paired with real accountability when standards are violated.
- **Coordinate the justice system end-to-end.** Improve alignment among law enforcement, prosecutors, courts, corrections, and supervision so serious and repeat offenders are identified early and handled consistently.

- **Focus on victims and prevention.** Center policy on the safety and rights of victims while expanding proven prevention strategies that interrupt violence and reduce recidivism.
- **Use data to target what works.** Deploy evidence-based strategies to concentrate resources on violent crime, repeat offenders, and hot spots; measure outcomes and adjust quickly.
- **Support communities and businesses.** Pair enforcement with visible community presence and rapid response so neighborhoods and commercial corridors can recover and grow.

The Outcome

Minnesotans feel safe in their homes, neighborhoods, and workplaces. Officers are respected, professional, and accountable. Victims are prioritized. Businesses invest with confidence. Restoring public safety restores freedom, opportunity, and quality of life statewide.

Pillar V – Making Government Work Again

The Challenge

Minnesotans are paying more but getting less. Over time, state government has grown larger, more complex, and more expensive, yet outcomes have not improved. Spending has increased faster than population and inflation. Major programs have expanded without clear performance measures. Highly publicized cases of fraud and waste have gone undetected or unaddressed, eroding public trust.

For families and small businesses, this failure shows up in higher taxes and fees, slower services, and less confidence that government can execute competently. When government does not manage resources well, it crowds out priorities, drives up costs elsewhere, and undermines confidence in public institutions.

The Principle

Taxpayers deserve results. Government exists to serve the public, not itself. The measure of good government is not how much it spends or how many programs it runs, but whether it delivers clear outcomes efficiently, transparently, and honestly. Accountability, discipline, and competence are not partisan ideas. Rather, they are prerequisites for trust.

The Plan

This Plan brings a results-driven, executive approach to state government:

- **Establish clear goals and performance metrics.** Every major agency and program should have defined objectives, measurable outcomes, and regular public reporting so Minnesotans can see what is working and what is not.
- **Prevent, detect, and prosecute fraud.** Strengthen internal controls, auditing, and interagency coordination to stop fraud before it starts and aggressively pursue cases when taxpayer dollars are misused.
- **Review and sunset programs.** Require regular evaluation of programs to determine whether they are effective, duplicative, or outdated, and end those that no longer deliver value.
- **Restore executive accountability.** Clarify responsibility within agencies so leaders are accountable for results, timelines, and budgets—not just process.
- **Simplify and modernize government operations.** Reduce unnecessary bureaucracy, modernize systems, and streamline processes to deliver services faster and at lower cost.
- **Focus spending on core responsibilities.** Prioritize safe streets, strong schools, affordability, and economic growth before expanding government into new areas.

The Outcome

Government becomes smaller where it should be, stronger where it must be, and focused on results everywhere. Fraud and waste are reduced. Services improve. Trust is rebuilt. Minnesotans once again have confidence that their government is competent, accountable, and working for them.

Conclusion: Restoring Minnesota's Promise

Minnesota's future is not predetermined.

The state we become over the next decade will be shaped by the choices we make now, by whether we continue to drift, or whether we recommit to the fundamentals that made Minnesota strong in the first place.

This Plan is grounded in a simple conviction: **when government does the basics well, families thrive.** Affordability improves. Opportunity expands. Schools prepare students for real futures. Communities are safe. Trust in public institutions is restored.

None of this requires reinventing Minnesota. It requires remembering what works and having the discipline to execute it.



Restoring affordability means respecting the reality of family budgets. Growing the economy means recognizing that workers and businesses succeed together. Fixing education means measuring success by what students actually learn. Restoring public safety means clarity, professionalism, and accountability. Making government work again means demanding results for every dollar spent.

This Plan does not promise that governing is easy. It promises that governing should be serious.

Minnesotans are capable, resilient, and practical. They do not ask for perfection. They ask for honesty, competence, and leadership that focuses on solving problems rather than managing narratives. They want a government that works as hard as they do.

A better Minnesota is within reach, but it requires leadership willing to make clear choices, set priorities, and be accountable for results.

This Plan is a commitment to do exactly that.

To focus on fundamentals.

To restore trust.

And to ensure that Minnesota once again delivers on its promise, for today, and for future generations.

