



CITY OF RAPID CITY

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA 57701-2724

Office of the Mayor

300 6th Street

605-394-4110

E-mail: mayorsoffice@rcgov.org

September 24, 2019

Rapid City Common Council
300 6th Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

Re: Youth City Council Proposal

Dear Council Members:

I was recently contacted about a proposal to start a youth city council. Attached to this letter you will find the proposal for this project.

The council would meet once a month, on a Tuesday night at 6:30 P.M. An appointment would be made of one council liaison who would be a non-voting member. Members would address issues that are relevant to the youth in Rapid City and perhaps, could even sync the youth city council agenda with the City Council agenda. There would also be an opportunity for the youth council members to give a report at City Council meetings on any item of interest to the youth group.

I believe it is important to emphasize the goals for the youth city council. The council hopes to encourage better youth engagement by giving youth a voice in city affairs. It is also anticipated that the committee will cultivate interest in public service with city youth.

At this point, I would appreciate your input as to whether or not a youth city council would be advantageous for Rapid City to explore and potentially implement. If you have any questions or require further information please let me know.

Sincerely,

Steve Allender, Mayor
Rapid City, South Dakota

Enclosed: Summary of Youth City Council proposal

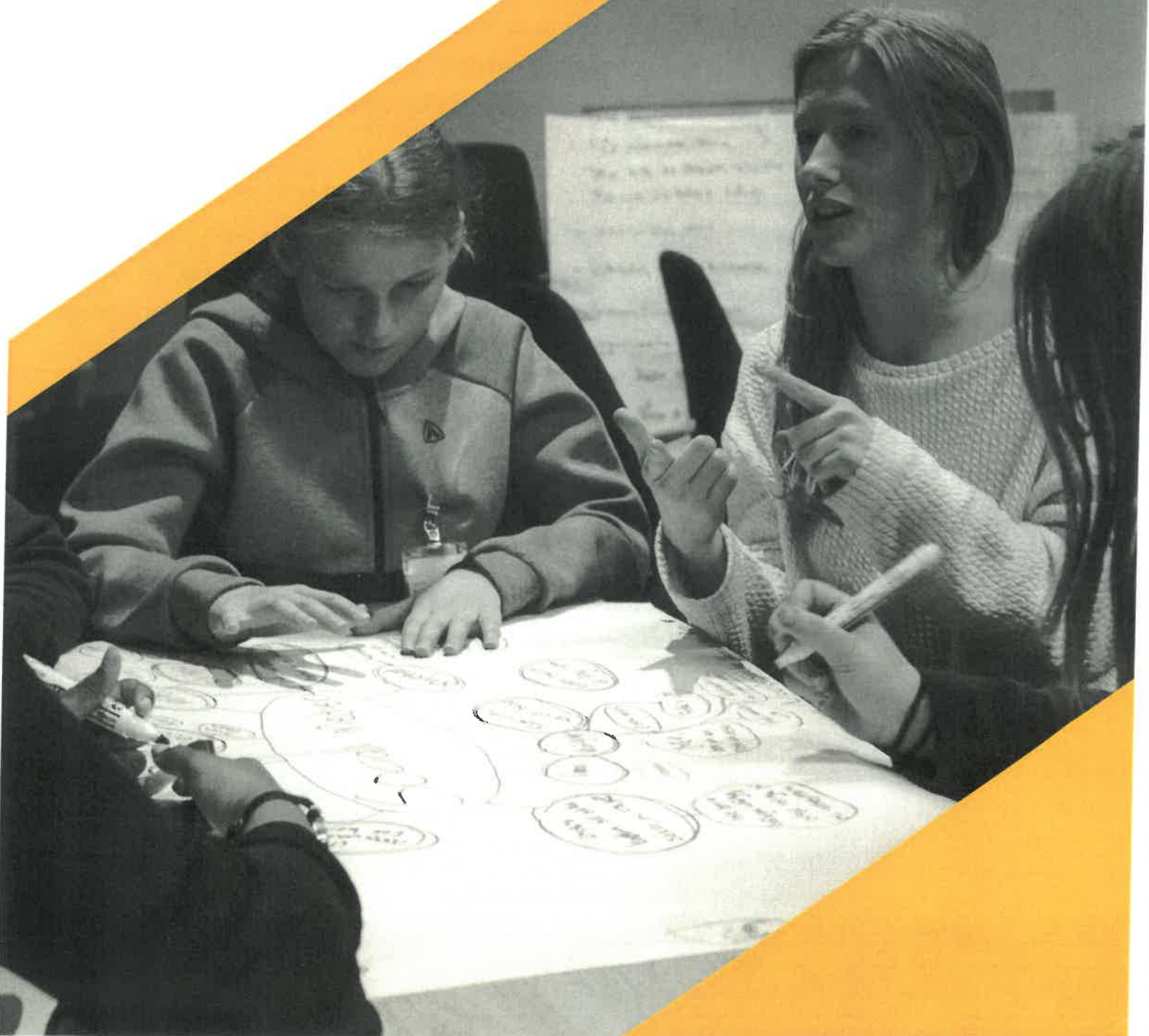


EQUAL HOUSING
OPPORTUNITY

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

YOUTH CITY COUNCIL

PROPOSAL



OVERVIEW

Rapid City strives to be a vibrant community where all citizens can prosper and enjoy our quality of life¹. In support of this vision statement this document proposes the adoption of a Rapid City Youth City Council. In 2018 a group of Rapid City area youth gathered to collectively advance the idea of authentic youth engagement. From these youth lead efforts the Rapid City Youth City Council framework was developed. The goals of this framework reflect the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education and Families actions on youth engagement.

“Youth councils or youth advisory boards can provide an effective way to engage youth in city government. Youth councils provide a conduit for youth voice to city leadership, help promote civic engagement and community service, and foster an understanding of how municipal government works.”²

The Rapid City Youth City Council provides youth with an understanding of the various processes and departments of city government. Youth are able to review and discuss council agendas to gain knowledge and insight on important community issues. The Rapid City Youth City Council works to spark interest in City Government and provide youth with opportunities to gain experience in a potential career path. Most importantly the Rapid City Youth City Council creates an accessible channel for open communication between the Rapid City Council and youth in the community.

PURPOSE/MISSION

To be an accessible channel for open communication between the Rapid City Council and youth in the community; with opportunities to spark civic engagement and gain valuable experience.

1. Rapid City Office of the Mayor and City Council. (2019). *Vision*. Retrieved from <https://www.rcgov.org/departments/mayor-s-office-city-council.html>.

2. National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education and Families. (2019). *Youth Engagement. Starting a Youth Council*. Washington, DC.

STRUCTURE

The Rapid City Youth City Council seeks to be established as a committee established by ordinance.

Purpose

To be an accessible channel for open communication between the Rapid City Council and youth in the community; with opportunities to spark civic engagement and gain valuable experience.

Composition and Qualifications

The Rapid City Youth City Council shall consist of up to eighteen (18) voting members, with at least two (2) members per academic grade level. Youth members shall be between the ages of fourteen (14) and nineteen (19) and attend a secondary school that services city residents, live within the city and are home schooled, or have dropped out after attending a school servicing city residents. The Common Council shall select one (1) member to serve as a non-voting liaison. In cooperation with the Rapid City Area Schools the schools' Youth Engagement Coordinator, or appointed designee, shall be appointed as a non-voting administrative support.

No adult who has been convicted of a crime against a minor shall be permitted to serve on or with the youth commission.

Terms of Office

Voting members shall serve two (2) year terms, ensuring appropriate staggering of terms. Members may serve more than one (1) term but no more than two (2) consecutive terms. Filling an unexpired term due to vacancy shall not count toward the term limit. Any vacancy on the committee shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as required for a regular appointment. Youth members who reach the age of nineteen (19) while in office shall be deemed to have resigned their position as of the date of their birthday. The Common Council liaison term shall coincide with the organization meetings of the Common Council. The appointed Rapid City Area Schools Youth Engagement Coordinator, or appointed designee, shall have no term limits in serving as administrative support.

STRUCTURE

Organization

The committee shall, at its first organizational meeting and at each first meeting in January of subsequent years, elect from its membership the officers it may deem necessary; to include a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary. The Vice-Chair shall act in the absence or disability of the Chair. In case the Chair or Vice-Chair vacates their appointment, the Committee shall immediately select a replacement.

Quorum

More than one-third (1/3) of all voting members must be present to constitute a quorum.

Meetings

The committee shall establish its regular meeting time and location, which shall be not less often than monthly, and shall hold additional meetings as necessary. A meeting agenda shall be posted in accordance with current City policy and procedure.

Bylaws

The committee shall adopt bylaws and rules of procedure to govern its operation. No bylaw or rule of procedure shall be effective until approved by the Common Council. The bylaws and rules of procedure may be amended at any time by the committee with the approval of the Common Council.

Duties

The Rapid City Youth City Council shall have the following nonbinding duties:

1. Advise the Common Council on matters related to youth.
2. Promote civic engagement among youth.
3. Provide of its membership at least one (1) member to attend public Common Council meetings as a monitor to relay review of information back to the committee.

SELECTION PROCESS

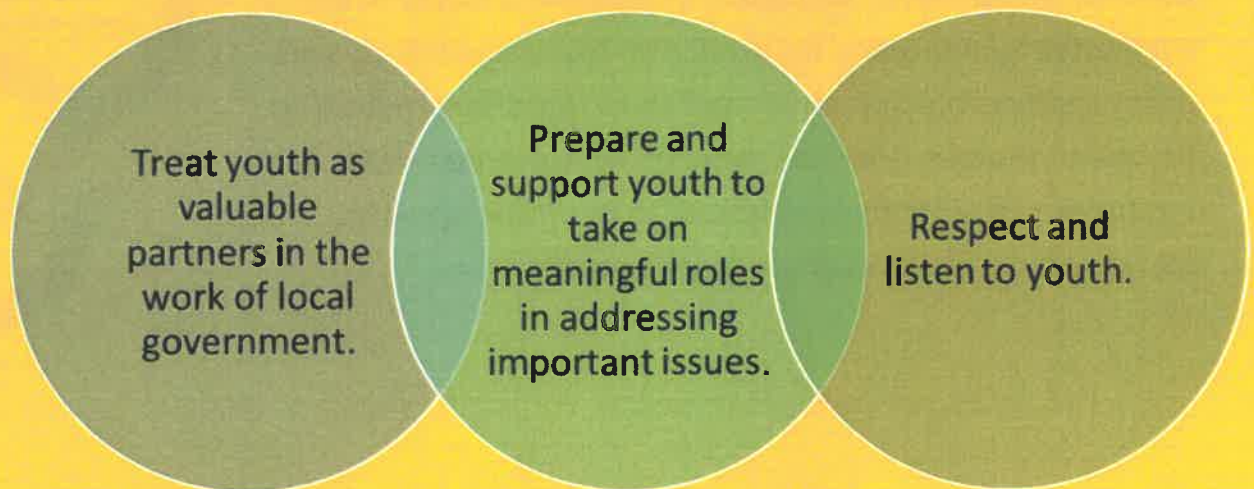
Annually, in accordance with ensuring staggered terms, members will be selected from a pool of applicants to serve on the committee. A standard application will be established to elicit interested and qualifying individuals. The application process will remain open year round, allowing a pooling of applications, with an annual deadline established each October 31st. Every November the pool of applicants will be reviewed by a board of judges including the Rapid City Youth City Council Chair, Rapid City Youth City Council Vice Chair, the Common Council liaison, the Rapid City Area Schools Youth Engagement Coordinator (or appointed designee) and at least four (4) community members. The board of judges will select based on established qualification for service on the committee as-well-as the applicants response to application questions. Selection for vacant positions shall be made by the November 30th, with notification of selection announced in December annually. Allowing for terms to begin January annually.



RATIONALE

It should seem obvious, youth are important to the life of our city. In order for Rapid City to fully realize the City Council's vision *to be a vibrant community where all citizens can prosper and enjoy our quality of life*³, we must make the wellbeing of our youth a priority. According to the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education and Families, "One of the basics of ensuring your city is meeting the needs of its young people is to actively and authentically engage your local youth in the process."⁴ Through the implementation of the Rapid City Youth City Council our community will doing just that, engaging youth in the process.

⁴ To create and sustain authentic youth civic engagement, city leaders and staff can follow three core values:



3. Rapid City Office of the Mayor and City Council. (2019). *Vision*. Retrieved from <https://www.rcgov.org/departments/mayor-s-office-city-council.html>.

4. National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education and Families. (2019 March 08). Program Initiative. *Authentic Youth Civic Engagement*. Retrieved from <https://www.nlc.org/program-initiative/authentic-youth-civic-engagement>.

CONSIDERATIONS

Resources

The Rapid City Youth City Council presents with a small resource foot print. In consideration of resources needed the following has been addressed.

Space The City of Rapid City would provide an internal meeting space for monthly meetings.

Housing of Application Process Provide for the publication of the application and storage of application submissions via City website.

Marketing Provide marketing support for Rapid City Youth City Council (recruitment/applications, webpage, sharing highlights, etc.).

Financial

The Rapid City Youth City Council does not present with a budgetary financial need.

Informational

A large part of the Rapid City Youth City Council is the education and preparation of youth. Therefore support is requested in working with city departments to provide speakers and information during the monthly meetings.

Impact on Existing

The Rapid City Youth City Council only stands to enhance existing programs and initiatives. This committee is an opportunity for the City of Rapid City to fully realize the potential behind full youth engagement.

RESOLUTION

It is fully realized by the authors of this proposal that any such resolution or ordinance will be subject to the process detailed in Chapter 2.28 of the Rapid City Code of Ordinances. In a full display of youth civic engagement the following is provided as suggested resolution.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE RAPID CITY MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING SECTION 2.XX ENTITLED YOUTH CITY COUNCIL TO TITLE 2.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Rapid City strives to make Rapid City a vibrant community where all citizens can prosper and enjoy our quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Rapid City recognizes that cities benefit when youth are empowered, supported, and informed so that they can be productive members of the community; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Rapid City seeks to treat youth as valuable partners in the work of local governments; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the city of Rapid City in an effort to realize its commitment to youth, by the adoption of this Ordinance establish the City of Rapid City Youth City Council.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF RAPID CITY AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The Rapid City Municipal Code is hereby amended by adding Section 2.___ entitled Youth City Council to Title 2 to read as follows:

Chapter 2.___: Youth City Council

2.___.010 Created-Purpose

To be an accessible channel for open communication between the Rapid City Council and youth in the community; with opportunities to spark civic engagement and gain valuable experience.

2.___.020 Composition and Qualifications

The Rapid City Youth City Council shall consist of up to eighteen (18) voting members, with at least two (2) members per academic grade level. Youth members shall be between the ages of thirteen (13) and nineteen (19) and attend a secondary school that services city residents, live within the city and are home schooled, or have dropped out after attending a school servicing city residents. The Common Council shall select one (1) member to serve as a non-voting liaison. In cooperation with the Rapid City Area Schools the schools' Youth Engagement Coordinator, or appointed designee, shall be appointed as a non-voting administrative support.

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RESOLUTION CONTINUED

2.__.030 Terms of Office

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2.__.040 Organization

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2.__.050 Quorum

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2.__.060 Meetings

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2.__.070 Bylaws

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RESOLUTION CONTINUED

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YOUTH CITY COUNCIL

PROPOSAL

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