



Shepard M. Harris

SENIOR GOVERNMENT RELATIONS SPECIALIST

St. Paul

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Services

Government Relations

Shep is a seasoned lobbyist who develops and executes government relations strategies with a deep understanding of government and relationships with key government officials in multiple areas including racial justice and equity, capital investment, education, workforce development, Legacy funding, local government and health and human services.

With 20+ years in politics and the government sector, Shep is known for his broad knowledge base of all government levels, strategic relationships with government officials and as a tireless advocate matching business or non-profit needs with government solutions. He has developed a level of public policy expertise in multiple areas including racial justice and equity, education, workforce development, Legacy funding, health care, human services, capital investment and local government.

He has a unique and diverse government relations background, campaigning and working for elected officials on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, and at the State Capitol, as well as lobbying at all levels of government. He has been Mayor of Golden Valley (MN) for 11 years and has worked for and served on the boards of non-profit advocacy organizations.

This distinctive perspective, understanding the outlook of elected officials and the mindset of client needs, helps Shep be a creative problem solver for the individual or organization who requires assistance addressing challenging public policy situations in a politically charged environment.

Experience

Lobbyist

Shep has successfully worked with clients, elected officials and stakeholders at the Minnesota Legislature to:

- Secure more than \$54 million in workforce development and job training initiatives for BIPOC communities around Minnesota.
- Authorize \$6.2 million in planning and outreach to reconnect St. Paul's historic Rondo Neighborhood with a quarter-mile land bridge "lid" over Interstate Highway

94.

- Allocate more than \$4 million in transportation funds for township roads.
- Direct \$1 million in ARPA funding for supplemental STEM programming to benefit middle and high school BIPOC girls. Obtain capital investment dollars and Legacy funds for the Perpich Center for Arts Education.
- Gain \$2 million in ongoing funding for Extended Employment support services for people with disabilities.
- Establish close to \$1 million cumulatively in Legacy arts/cultural heritage funding for East African communities.
- Reinstate statewide physical education standards for K-12 schools, creating avenue for schools to access federal grants.
- Save two east metro art-science integration schools from closures.
- Increase security posting flexibility and minimize risk of PTSD liability for Minnesota counties and cities and commercial self-insured workers compensation groups.
- Raise awareness and education of key legislative issues by creating an annual "Session Outlook" with media and legislative leaders.
- Establish and/or strengthen relationships between clients and key legislators and stakeholders.

Non-Profit Advocate

- Chief advocate for the Twin Cities Jewish Community's 12 social service agencies and schools at all government levels on human services, workforce development, education and public safety.
- Acquired more than \$1 million in federal, state and county funds for senior citizens, employed people with disabilities and anti-terrorism funds.

Political Insider

- Primary caucus advisor to 40 Minnesota Senate DFL legislators on health care, local government and "Gen X" issues.
- Key policy advisor for U.S. Rep. Corrine Brown on health, human services, judiciary and commerce issues.
- Coordinated economic development opportunities on behalf of U.S. Sen. J. Bennett Johnston between federal agencies and elected officials from Louisiana.

Political Strategist

- Provided strategic guidance to Robbinsdale Area Schools Legislative Action Coalition for increased education funding and policy improvements.
- Campaign Manager for 1998 campaign of future MN Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives, Rep. Margaret Anderson Kelliher.

- Campaign Manager for 1994 campaign of future Maryland Assemblywoman Cheryl Kagan.
- Campaign staff for 1990 U.S. Sen. J. Bennett Johnston re-election, defeating former infamous KKK leader David Duke.

Golden Valley Mayor

- Collaborated with Golden Valley legislators to obtain \$6.5 million in bonding for construction of a pedestrian underpass at Highway 55 and Douglas Drive.
- Organized and directed racial justice and equity efforts which have led to creation of a city racial equity task force, equity coordinator staff, police accountability task force, formal community relations with the Black Community and removal of racial covenants on property deeds.
- Helped build private-public sector coalition with Members of Congress, the Governor and state legislators, local municipal officials, the Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority to stop a Burlington Northern Santa Fe - Canadian Pacific "connector" which would have transported Bakken oil through densely populated suburban areas.
- Led lobbying effort with Golden Valley state legislative delegation to re-open city's Motor Vehicle Department.
- Successfully lobbied Hennepin County Board to grant city access to County 911 Dispatch, saving city over \$150,000 in annual costs.
- Directed passage of city's Locally Preferred Alternative and Municipal Consent processes for the proposed Bottineau Light Rail Train.
- Welcomed President Obama to Golden Valley in 2012.

Credentials

Education

- American University, B.A., 1994

Recognition

- "The Batter That Matters" Sweet Potato Comfort Pie Award, 2021
- President's Award, Minnesota Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (now Minnesota SHAPE), 2010
- Professional of the Year, Association of Jewish Community State Government Affairs Professionals, 2005

Civic & Professional

Professional Activities

- Public Affairs Council, Member, 2010-present
- Minnesota Government Relations Council, Member, 1999-present;
- Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, Member, 2006-present
- Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce, Member, 2012-present

Other/Previous Career Activities

- Golden Valley Mayor, 2012-present
- Golden Valley Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Commissioner 2012-present
- Regional Council of Mayors, 2012-present
- Blue Line (Bottineau) Light Rail Train Policy Advisory Committee, Member, 2012-present
- Golden Valley Fire Relief Association, Ex-Officio, 2012-present
- Robbinsdale Area Schools Legislative Action Coalition, Executive Committee, 2005-2011
- Association of Jewish Community State Government Affairs Professionals, Member, 1999-2006

Community

- Sons of The American Legion (Post 523), Member, 2012-present
- Golden Valley Rotary, Member, 2012-present; President, 2023-present
- Golden Valley Historical Society, Member, 2012-present
- People Responding In Social Ministry, Advisory Board Member, 2013-present
- Harry Kay Leadership Institute, Participant, 2016-2018
- Quad Communities Beyond the Yellow Ribbon, Executive Committee Member, 2013-2015

Publications & Presentations

Moderator, *Conversation on Race, Racism & Equity in Our Cities*, Regional Council of Mayors Panel, 2021-2022