



REQUEST FOR ACTION

**University of Minnesota Rochester Strategic Growth
Plan Preview (5:30 to 6:30 p.m.)**

MEETING DATE:

April 27, 2026

ORIGINATING DEPT:

City Administration

AGENDA SECTION:

Presentation Items

PRESENTER:

**Josh Johnsen and
Chancellor Carrell**

Report Narrative:

The University of Minnesota Rochester was established in 2006 as a community driven effort to create a University of Minnesota presence in Rochester, with a focused mission to prepare students for high demand health careers through applied learning. Since opening in 2009, UMR has grown from 52 students to more than 1,100, becoming a key contributor to the local workforce pipeline and downtown activity.

UMR is nationally recognized as an “Opportunity University,” ranking among the top institutions for advancing student success and economic mobility. Its impact includes nearly 90 million dollars annually in economic activity, along with a strong downtown presence and innovative programs like College in 3 that align education with employer needs.

UMR has now reached full capacity, limiting further enrollment growth. To address this, the University has developed a three-part expansion strategy focused on increasing academic space, supporting student life, and strengthening its role within Rochester’s life sciences ecosystem:

- **Discovery Square Lab Expansion Immediate Priority:** Expanding lab and classroom space to support near-term enrollment growth and deepen integration with Rochester’s life sciences ecosystem
- **Academic Building:** Creating a centralized heart of campus to expand instructional capacity, student support services, and collaborative learning environments
- **Student Housing and Recreation District:** Developing housing and wellness amenities near Soldiers Field to support student life and continued growth

The immediate focus is the Discovery Square lab expansion, with anticipated funding requests to Destination Medical Center and City sales tax resources dedicated to UMR growth. If approved, construction could begin in Summer 2026, enabling increased enrollment by Fall 2027.

Study Session Purpose: This presentation is intended to preview forthcoming requests for City sales tax utilization to support the Discovery Square lab expansion, as well as to provide early visibility into future phases of the UMR expansion plan. Additional updates on the academic building and student housing components will be brought forward as project details are refined and approvals are received from the University of Minnesota Board of Regents.

Priorities & Foundational Principles:

Transformational Capital Projects

Prepared By:

Joshua Johnsen

Attachments:

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