

MINNEAPOLIS

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey says he'll run for third – and final – term

Frey says he's running for one last term to "see this job through." He faces several challengers.

By Deena Winter
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Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey gives his State of the City speech to a crowd at the Northstar Center in Minneapolis on May 7, 2024. (Renée Jones Schneider/The Minnesota Star Tribune)

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Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey says he's running for a third term, which would be his last four years at the helm of a city he led through a pandemic and police brutality case that rocked the world.

Frey served on the City Council from 2013 until he was elected mayor in 2017, and was in the job for two years before the COVID-19 pandemic struck and Minneapolis police killed George Floyd in 2020.

"I'm running because I love this city, and we got to get the job done, and our city has come through the adversity of big city challenges over the last several years, and we're coming back with real results," he said in an interview. "I want to see this job through. I want to see the work through to set the next mayor up for success, and the city up for success."

He said if re-elected, he would not run for a fourth term.

"This will be my final term," he said.

Frey has become a controversial figure in the Democratic stronghold of Minneapolis. Those on the far left, including those in control of the City Council, regularly clash with him over issues such as [homeless encampments](#), [a call for a ceasefire](#) to the Israel-Hamas war and [how much Uber and Lyft drivers' pay should increase](#).

"Right now, we need people with the courage to tell their own side what they don't want to hear," Frey said. "Say what you want about me: I've had the guts to stand up and do what's right, even when it's tough. And the positions that I've taken may not have been immediately popular, but over time, they've been proven to be the right thing for our city. Not some special interest group, but our city."

For example, he said, he [opposed rent control](#) because "it doesn't work," and [told a throng of people who showed up at his doorstep he wouldn't support defunding the police](#).



“It was not easy to tell 2,000 people outside my apartment that I wasn’t going to do the thing they were demanding, but it was right,” he said.



Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey listens as Police Chief Brian O'Hara speaks during a press conference announcing the launch of a multi-year, comprehensive recruitment campaign for 911 and Minneapolis Police Department positions at the City of Minneapolis Public Service Building in Minneapolis last March. (Aaron Lavinsky/The Minnesota Star Tribune)

Progress on affordable housing, policing

Frey touts the city as a national leader in providing affordable housing, creating 8.5 times more affordable homes than in the past.

He also points to the rebuilding of the police force after a wave of resignations and retirements in the wake of Floyd’s murder by police. Last year was the first time in five years that the Minneapolis Police Department ended the year with a net increase of officers, adding 36 officers after a recruitment campaign and significant pay increase.

He also points to another change, creation of a new Office of Community Safety. The city now diverts about 9% of its calls for service to alternate responders, such as a behavioral crisis response team.

People often come into office thinking they’re going to change it, but instead more often the office changes them, Frey said.

“What you get over time is you get thicker skin, and you get the courage to do the right thing, even when it’ll subject you to a pummeling at times from both sides,” he said. “What we can’t have right now is people that flip their positions all over, depending on when the political winds are blowing.”

He is being challenged in the election by the Rev. DeWayne Davis, state Sen. Omar Fateh, City Council Member Emily Koski, Jazz Hampton and Brenda Short.

Experience dealing with Trump administration

As Donald Trump begins his second term as president, Frey notes he’s been here before, having been mayor during Trump’s first tumultuous term.

“I’ve heard quite a few people on the council and beyond talk about having to counter Donald Trump by pushing further left,” he said. “The opposite of extremism is not the opposite extreme.”


Even though Trump will undoubtedly rock the city’s boat in various ways, Frey vows this year Minneapolis is staging a comeback.




“I think this year will be very much like, you know, it’s been like the duck paddling furiously beneath the surface, but people can’t see the work that’s happening. 2025 will be the year that a lot of this work comes to fruition. People will truly start to see things rebound in a beautiful way.”

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