

Replant, restore, revere our urban forest

What should be done next

Strengthen the City ordinance and develop additional tree guidelines.

- Amend the City ordinance so we can quickly take out infected ash trees. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources should develop a model ordinance so cities don't have to start from scratch.
- Develop guidelines for builders; the Great River Greening Project could serve as a model.
- Change some of our existing private land guidelines into regulations. Private land is more significant to the urban forest because there's more private land than public land.
- We need "tree cops" to make sure our process for protecting trees is followed.

Lobby the State to do tree care firm licensing and make the information available online.

- Cities should throw their weight behind statewide licensing and enforcement of tree care contractors.
- Place the list of registered certified arborists on the City's and Park and Recreation Board's Web sites so homeowners can do their own homework and hire qualified tree care firms.

Create a tree planting plan to replace ash trees as we lose them.

- Adapt our removal and replacement strategy to view ash losses with a disaster response plan.
- Think systematically about what we're going to replant.

Encourage others to plant trees or pay for tree planting.

- The watershed district, which has levy authority, should underwrite tree planting because trees help reduce sediment runoff.
- Use a multi-jurisdictional approach to pay for tree planting.
- Find ways to do more tree planting on County rail corridor property.

Review our tree planting policies and assumptions.

- Do aerial mapping to update our baseline tree canopy report.
- Rethink our urban forest investment assumptions. Right now, boulevard trees get all the attention, but a street tree is a 30-year tree while a park or yard tree is a 60-year tree. Pay attention to who will water and care for trees so the trees we plant will last.
- Put more effort into planting trees downtown even if they present liability issues. Downtown trees offer livability benefits while improving air quality and lessening the urban heat island effect.

Find more ways to involve people.

- Reach out to kids via technology (texting, for example).
- Create an eco-mentoring program for schools.
- Create a green team of parents and kids to pull weeds and remove invasive species.
- Enhance Arbor Day by adding curriculum and class work.
- Reach out to charter and private schools, not just public schools.
- Use Earth Day volunteers to plant and care for trees on Earth Day.

"Other than insect pests, the biggest threat to our urban forest is tree care firms that don't know what they're doing. Bad contractors harm a tree for life, and the pool of bad contractors is huge."

- Arborist



Arts – large & small – abound & surround

What's working

Art is everywhere and art opportunities are available to everyone.

- Visual art is now seen along the Hiawatha light-rail line and on bridges and other public structures.
- The 8th Ward art mapping project alone identified 1,300 artists who live or work in the 8th Ward, and that total didn't count amateur artists and performers.
- There are many opportunities to be involved in the arts as an adult without being involved professionally.

The City is committed to incorporating public art into projects and promoting the arts.

- Public art is fully integrated into our infrastructure process. The commitment to involving visual artists early in the planning process leads to better results.

For example, art was integrated into the new public library from the beginning.

- The mayor called together the five directors of the art institutions that recently completed major capital projects. He got people to work together to get national and international media attention. As a result, they promoted the entire Minneapolis arts scene as a tourist attraction.
- We took advantage of the media exposure generated by the Republican National Convention to promote Minneapolis' arts and culture scene. The riverfront media party and Spark 24's marathon of free performances and exhibits convinced visitors that our arts scene is special.

\$500 million in arts capital expansions occurred within an 18-month period.

What isn't working

Small and mid-size arts groups need more attention and funding.

- The City, foundations and private donors focus on the large institutions instead of supporting the whole arts ecosystem. We don't pay enough attention to small arts organizations or minority arts groups. For example, the City's land write-off to help with a parking garage went to a large organization.
- The City's focus on capital projects doesn't help small organizations that are struggling to pay the rent.
- The City doesn't view small arts organizations as businesses.
- Funding is an issue for small and mid-size arts groups. Little pieces of restricted money only keep them on life support. Nobody supports the administration of arts organizations.

Artists need implementation assistance.

- Arts people are high idea people but they don't always know how to move from the visioning stage to implementation.
- The City doesn't have a sustainable model to advocate for artists and the arts.
- Arts people don't know how to connect with local government.

There's not enough coordination among arts organizations.

- Arts organizations have such skeletal staffs that they don't have the time or resources to coordinate calendars or arrange shared services.

We don't project our diversity.

- It's a "big white" arts scene. There is diversity, but people don't know it's here.
- We squelch the whole idea of outreach by assuming that diversity is only for an audience comprising a specific minority group.

We don't tell people what's going on.

- The City over-relies on its Web site. You can't pick up a catalog and see what's happening on any given day.
- There's no single place to get arts information. Meet Minneapolis has a portal to everyone else's site, but it needs to be updated.
- The Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association's one staff person updates the organization's Web site with event information, but the artists don't update their own Web pages.
- We don't communicate what the City is doing to promote and support the arts.

Our abundant arts scene presents its own challenges.

- There may be too many theaters in Minneapolis. Will these groups have to merge to survive?
- Instead of too many groups, maybe there are too many physical spaces? We can't maintain them all.