



[April, 2012]

Hiawatha Signal Lights - Things are Happening!

Improvements to the signal lights on Hiawatha Avenue are becoming a reality. In just a few weeks, new controllers will be installed at 46th Street to test the new equipment. This equipment has been closely scrutinized. Public Works and the lead engineer for this project, Allan Klugman, investigated nine different products and then conducted a detailing screening of four products.

The selected controllers were tested in the Minneapolis shop through computer simulations of Hiawatha Avenue conditions. This signal equipment is used extensively in Portland and contacts in that city give it high marks. A key feature needed from the new equipment is the ability to change the phasing of signals depending on other factors, such as which leg of the intersection got the turn last. So, if a train goes by, the cycle of signals does not have to start at the same place again. Instead, it could favor the cars that have been waiting the longest. This is just one aspect of the new, more sophisticated equipment. The goal is to have a new system installed and operational by this fall.

Vikings Stadium

Last week I indicated my support for the stadium proposal being promoted by Mayor Rybak, Council President Johnson and Governor Dayton. As I expected, many people were happy and many were not.

My reason for supporting this proposal is very specific – property tax relief. I didn't focus on keeping the Vikings in Minnesota, or the value of professional sports to the state and city, or even job creation. I examined the proposed financing and I could see that this plan does offer the potential for significant property tax relief. Many people have asked how this could be.

This proposed plan lets Minneapolis benefit from the sale taxes collected here. It is true that Minneapolis residents contribute to those sale taxes, but a lot of the taxes result from convention business and those visiting Minneapolis from all parts of the region for all kinds of arts and entertainment or to work. Those activities and the sales taxes collected are the result of investments made by Minneapolis property tax payers. I think it is about time that our City benefits from those taxes.

The money for the stadium would come from the extension of existing sales taxes; a city-wide .5% sales tax and some sales taxes that are just collected downtown, usually referred to as "hospitality taxes." In Minnesota, sales taxes are created for a specific purpose under the authority of the State. The revenue is then collected by the State. Minneapolis doesn't get to decide what happens to that revenue. Under this proposal, Minneapolis would be given specific authorization to use some of that money for other needs – including paying off Target Center debt and capital investments.

Earth Day is April 22



Check the Calendar at the bottom for details about Earth Day events.

More Stuff for the Recycling Bin in Minneapolis

You should have received a mailer recently outlining the items that now can be recycled in Minneapolis. The expanded list includes

- plastic containers numbered 1-7 such as molded plastics (yogurt containers, pudding cups, microwave food trays and deli containers)
- food and beverage cartons like milk and juice cartons (please rinse them.)
- pop and beer cartons

You may NOT recycle pizza boxes or other paper soiled with food.

We have about 5 million dollars of property taxes going to the Target Center each year. If we can pay that debt with the sales taxes then we can put 5 million dollars into the general fund which eases the overall burden on taxpayers. Based on the projections I have seen we can continue to support the needs of the Convention Center and there should still be enough revenue to pay the Target Center debt and more. So, the potential tax relief goes beyond that approximately 5 million per year.

To be clear, this funding proposal depends on the extension of existing sales taxes – not a new sales tax. The money does not come from property taxes.

I know that some residents were very disappointed because I have said that I would not go around the referendum required by the Charter about stadium. However, the City Attorney has informed the Council that the referendum is not triggered here. That's a reality that I need to deal with. The opinion does make sense to me since the sales taxes that this plan depends on are collected within Minneapolis but the State exclusively determines how the funds can be used.

For the last few months I have been getting tons of input on the issue of a stadium and the proposed financing. I studied the issues, read your e-mails and considered your phone calls and I appreciated them.

Some people speculate that I succumbed to pressure from one interest or another. The only people that I need to answer to are my constituents and myself. I came to the conclusion that this was a good deal for my constituents and for Minneapolis so I decided to support it. It would have been easier to simply say "no" and politically expedient, but I don't think that is a responsible way to govern.



**Mayor's Forum on Stadium Proposal:
Nokomis Community Center, April 10**

The Mayor is hosting a community discussion about the stadium. If you would like to hear more about the plan and share your views, please attend on April 10. Council Member Colvin Roy will be in attendance for the discussion.

Topic: Stadium Proposal

Date: Tuesday April 10th

Time: 7:30pm – 8:30pm

Location: Nokomis Community Center

2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy., Minneapolis, MN 55417

Please share this notice with others who may be interested. If you have any questions, contact the Mayor's Community Outreach Director, at

Andrew.holmaas@minneapolismn.gov .

Controlled Burns at Lake Nokomis Ponds

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District wanted to provide you notice that as part of the MCWD's vegetation management, we are planning prescribed burns of the buffer vegetation at all three Lake Nokomis Ponds. MCWD's contractor, Minnesota Native Landscapes will be acquiring the necessary permits and performing the burns sometime in April to mid-May as weather conditions allow.

Unfortunately, the dates of this activity are not known now but MPRB says they will be sending out notices to nearby residents.

Progress on Airport Noise

You may have already seen this information on the Standish Ericsson e-democracy or if you are on my e-mail list for people interested in airport specific issues. On March 21, the City made formal requests of the Metropolitan Airport Commission and the Federal Aviation Administration through the MAC's Noise Oversight committee (NOC).

The NOC agreed to advance all of the actions the City was seeking. Those actions include: moving certain flights with northern destinations (approximately 32 per day) from the 360 degree heading to a 340 degree heading in order to ease the barrage on the 360 track, something that can be done relatively quickly. They also agreed to forward a request that MAC and FAA re-commit to the Runway Use System which calls for using runway 17 rather than 30R and 30L when the wind conditions allow it (calm wind days). They agreed to ask the FAA to implement using multiple different (divergent) headings so that plane traffic is more fanned out over impacted areas.

According to MAC staff, the NOC recommendation was passed by unanimous vote today at the MAC Planning, Development & Environment committee. Final Commission action will be at the Full Commission meeting on April 16.

Minneapolis also asked that NOC recommend a return to a departure profile that favors homes near the airport (it favors getting altitude fast rather than getting out of the airspace fast). On that issue, a staff report is expected in May and the NOC will consider it at that time.

There are other avenues being pursued to improve things for the neighborhoods north of Lake Hiawatha that suddenly saw an increase in noise last year but we saw an opportunity to take some actions in the short term and we wanted to do so right away. We are still exploring other ways to get planes to go straight off the runway longer and achieve greater altitudes over homes.

In other good news, after the City brought the issue of the health impacts of airport noise to the attention of the NOC and MAC and brought in expert speakers on the topic, MAC agreed to volunteer MSP to participate in a national study being conducted on health impacts of airport noise.

If you would be interested in getting more detailed or more frequent information about what the city is doing regarding airport noise contact 12th Ward Aide, Loren Olson at loren.olson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us or 612-673-2378.

Reminder - Transition to Compostable Bags for Yard Waste

Just a reminder in case you missed it last month. State law requires that residents use compostable bags for yard waste (if bags are used). The change starts April 9 but there will be a grace period.

The old bags will be collected until May 4. Residents who use the old bags will receive a tag informing them of the change.

You may also use a reusable container for yard waste if it is:

- 33 gallons or less
- Has sturdy handles
- Weighs less than 40 pounds when full

You can request a sticker to identify your reusable container as yard waste by calling- 612-673-2917.

Want more info? Go [HERE](#).



Changes Encourage Urban Farming and Access to Local Food

On March 31, the City Council approved a number of changes to the zoning code which make urban farming more accessible to all residents and will increase access to locally grown, healthy food. Today, the Mayor signed the action at the oldest community garden in Minneapolis - Dowling Gardens in the Howe neighborhood.

Under the new code, regulatory barriers are removed that make it difficult to establish land uses for agriculture in the city. Urban agricultural land uses are now expanded in all zoning districts. One of the key measures will allow urban farmers to sell their goods to the community at their farm locations. With a temporary use permit, they may sell their product 15 times per year. There are smaller changes too which make it easier for residents to grow their own food by using raised beds or hoop houses.

“I was happy to support the Urban Agriculture ordinance changes that came out of long discussion and work by the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council” said Council Member Colvin Roy. “These changes should allow market gardeners to extend the growing season. Imagine, real tasting tomatoes in Minneapolis early in the year! And they will not have to take a long ride to get here.”

The ordinance changes were reviewed by the Food Council as part of the [Homegrown Minneapolis](#). Homegrown Minneapolis is a City and community partnership established to develop and implement strategies that will increase and improve the growing, processing, distributing, eating and composting of healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods. It brings together partners from government, businesses, community organizations, nonprofits and residents to leverage the food system to optimize resident health, environmental health and economic vitality.

One proposed amendment that was brought up late in the process would have added the ability for schools to keep fowl or small animals. However the issue had not been discussed in committee, or reviewed by the Food Council and there were too many unanswered questions. The issue was referred back the Zoning & Planning Committee to gather more information. It was also important to Council Member Colvin Roy and others that Minneapolis Public Schools were engaged in the conversation before an amendment of this nature is passed.

Minneapolis Participates in Earth Hour

As part of the worldwide Earth Hour initiative, the City turned off all municipal building electricity uses that were not required for life, safety or operations from 8:30 to 9:30 p.m., Saturday, March 31. In addition, the City Hall clock tower's neon lights and the decorative lighting on the underside of the Stone Arch Bridge were turned off for the night.

Participating individuals, businesses, governments and organizations around the world turn off their lights for one hour – Earth Hour – to make a global statement of concern about climate change and demonstrate their commitment to finding solutions. Earth Hour has grown from a one-city initiative in 2007 to a 5,251 city strong global movement, last year reaching 1.8 billion people in 135 countries across all seven continents. To learn more, visit www.ourearthhour.org.

Electricity use in Minneapolis accounts for 38 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to global climate change.

Stormwater Improvement, Temporary Closure - Portion of Winchell Trail

A segment of the Winchell Trail at East 36th Street and West River Parkway will be temporarily closed while the City works on storm water management improvements at a nearby outfall. The closure will begin on April 3 and the trail should re-open on April 15. The nearby parking lot will also be closed for equipment storage and staging. The paved biking and walking trails will not be closed however there may be some equipment crossing those paths so pedestrians and bikers should use caution.

An outfall is the place where stormwater, carried from area homes and streets, goes to be absorbed into the land or directed towards the river. The work being done at this outfall will stabilize the land where the water is released and slow down the flow of water in order to reduce erosion. Dissipating the energy of the water and reducing erosion not only benefits the land, it helps the health of the Mississippi by reducing the amount of sediment going into the river.

Join the Pedestrian Advisory Committee

The Pedestrian Advisory Committee was created in 2006. The committee is charged with advising the Mayor and City Council on policies, programs, and actions for improving pedestrian safety, mobility, accessibility, and comfort; for promoting walking for transportation, recreation, and health purposes; and for strengthening the linkage between the pedestrian environment and public transportation.

There are seven Council appointed vacancies for terms beginning 07/01/2012 and expiring June 30, 2014 and one Council appointed vacancy for a term beginning 07/01/2012 and expiring June 30, 2013. Applicants must be community members. All community members must reside or own a business in the City of Minneapolis. Open until filled, **application review process will begin Friday April 13, 2012**

The committee is composed of 15 voting members who reside or own a business in the City and who have an interest in promoting walking and improving the pedestrian environment in Minneapolis. The voting membership as a whole should represent the following perspectives on pedestrian issues:

- distinct pedestrian user groups, such as people with disabilities, senior citizens, parents or people who work with children, and transit riders;
- caretakers of the pedestrian environment, such as property owners, neighborhood groups, business owners, and business associations;
- people with relevant technical expertise, such as traffic safety, urban design, and public health;
- people representing diverse social, cultural and economic groups in the City; and
- people representing distinct geographic areas of the City, including at least one member from each of the five sectors of the City (Downtown, East, North, South, and Southwest).

The committee also includes non-voting members from City Departments and partner agencies with an interest in and impact on pedestrian issues to provide expertise on pedestrian issues and to serve as a liaison between the committee and City departments and partner agencies.

For an application, go [HERE](#) or call the City Clerk, Julie Meintsma at 612-673-3358.

City-wide Street Sweeping Begins April 10

Weather permitting, a comprehensive sweeping of all city streets will begin on April 10. Sweeping of parkways and alleys is already taking place. Drivers should watch for temporary “no parking” signs along these roadways to avoid a ticket and tow.

During the month of April, sweepers will take care of all 1,100 miles of city streets and parkways. “No Parking” signs will be posted at least 24 hours in advance to make sure streets and parkways are clear of parked vehicles. In addition to the signs, automated phone calls will be made to residents in the affected area. There is also a [tool on the City’s Web site](#) to find out when the streets are being swept. The information should be up-to-date the weekend before that week.

Minneapolis is known for its sparkling lakes and waterways. Protecting and enhancing our environment is one of the City’s top priorities. Street sweeping protects the environment because it keeps leaves and debris from clogging our storm drains and polluting our lakes and rivers. It also helps keep our neighborhoods clean and livable.

Residents should not push leaves, grass clippings, or other debris into City streets – it’s bad for our lakes and waterways and it’s against the law. Anything that goes down a storm drain flows directly into our lakes and river, and decomposing plant material in the water encourages the growth of harmful aquatic plants and algae.

Animal Care and Control Launches Rewards Program

Minneapolis pet owners have something new to purr about. All pet owners who license or renew their license will receive a "[I Love My Pet Rewards Program](#)" card for free. The card can be used at [participating businesses](#) to receive special discounts and promotional items. Perks include a 10% discount off pet toys and treats at Urbanimal, as well as discounts on pet grooming, pet training, and pet daycare. For pet owners, there are 10% discounts available at Longfellow Grill, Edina Grill, or Holy Land Deli, a free wine tote bag from Surdyk's, or 10% off any item at Corazon.

The city requires all dogs and cats over four months of age in Minneapolis to be licensed. Rabbits and ferrets are also required to be licensed. Licensed pets found in Minneapolis get a free ride home instead of going to the shelter, and are three times more likely than unlicensed pets to be reunited with their owners. A full list of license fees can be found on the [Minneapolis Animal Care website](#). Owners can license their pet online or by calling 311 or by calling (612) 673-3000. License applications can be downloaded and mailed, or picked up at your local veterinary clinic or pet store.

Events & Special Meetings

Raingarden Workshops for Clean Water

Get ready for spring by planning a garden that beautifies your yard and helps keep our water clean. Register now for a two-part workshop series, taught by landscape design specialists. Workshops will be offered from early April to mid-June. To register, visit www.metroblooms.org or call 651.698.1390. Fee: \$10/workshop. Sponsored by the City of Minneapolis.



Abandoned Vehicles

Crime Prevention

Utility Billing

Housing Inspections

Metro Transit

Report Graffiti

Animal Control

USI Wireless



LCC

NENA

SENA



Mayor Rybak Hosts Stadium Forum

April 10, 7:30-8:30 pm, Nokomis Community Center, 2401 East Minnehaha Parkway. Residents are invited to attend and learn more about the proposed Vikings stadium plan. For further information, call Andy at 673-2109.

Sweet on School Dance

April 13, 4-6 pm, Hiawatha Community School, 4201 42nd Ave S. Celebrate the school and students. Event is free and open to the public. Children must be accompanied by a parent or adult. Broadcast live on KFAI 90.3 FM and 106.7 FM

Nokomis East Business Association

April 17, 6:30 pm, Nokomis Square, 5015 35th Ave S. Area business owners are invited to the inaugural meeting of NEBA. Attendees will elect board members and sign up to work on projects.

Nokomis Healthy Seniors 10th Annual Clean-A-Thon

April 21, 8 am – 1 pm, Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Ave S. Volunteers spend a Saturday morning cleaning the homes of seniors in the Nokomis Community after by collecting pledges to raise money for NHS Teams work until noon then return to the NHS offices for pizza and prizes. If you want to volunteer, or if you are a senior requesting assistance with a cleaning project, call Nokomis Healthy Seniors at 729-5499.

Earth Day Watershed Cleanups – Join the Tradition

Start spring by helping to clean up our lakes, creeks, and river.

April 21, 9:30 am – Noon, no need to pre-register, pick up supplies at multiple locations and return for community celebration.

West River Parkway at either 36th Street & or 44th St
Minnehaha Falls Park, 4801 South Minnehaha Park Drive
Lake Nokomis Community Center, 4701 E. Minnehaha Parkway
Sibley Park, 1900 East 40th Street

Nokomis Library Authors Talk

April 21, 1 pm, Nokomis Library, 5100 34th Ave S. Guest is Kate DiCamillo, author of *Because of Winn-Dixie*, *The Tiger Rising*, *The Tale of Despereaux* and more. Learn about other upcoming Library events at:

<http://www.hclib.org/AgenciesAction.cfm?agency=Nk>

Roosevelt High School Pancake Breakfast

April 22, 8 am – 1 pm, Roosevelt High, 4029 28th Ave S. This yearly event raises funds for student scholarships and educational grants. Tickets \$5 for adults, \$3 for children age 10 and under.

No Pie Charts! Only Pies! Longfellow Community Council Annual Meeting

April 25, 6-8 pm, Minnehaha Academy-North Campus, 3100 West River Parkway. The meeting includes Board elections, a resource fair, a sneak preview of the *Take a Look at Longfellow* Campaign, a presentation of results of East Lake Market Study and, of course, pie!

Boards & Commissions Openings

There are currently many openings on the City's Boards, Commissions & Advisory Committees. Applications are accepted in the spring and fall.

Please visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for application information.

I am honored to serve the residents of the 12th Ward. If you have any questions or comments please call me at 612-673-2212 or e-mail me at Sandra.Colvin.Roy@minneapolismn.gov

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