



# 9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

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## City expands electric vehicle fleet



The City of Minneapolis acquired its first two electric cars – an e-ride and a ZENN – in November 2008. The City is now applying for a grant for additional electric cars from Ford.

With funding from the federal stimulus bill, the City of Minneapolis will receive 18 electric vehicles for city

crews. The city partnered with Ford Motor Company and Xcel Energy for funding from the U.S. Department of Energy towards a fleet of electric vehicles at fraction of retail cost. Minneapolis will invest \$360,000 in charging infrastructure including solar stations as well as charging areas in parking ramps and on the street. In exchange, Ford will provide the city with 18 vehicles, valued at \$1,170,000. Minneapolis is not allocating any additional funds for this project, but is using funds already set aside to replace aging vehicles.

As part of the overall agreement, Xcel Energy will also invest in Smart Grid research and infrastructure. Smart Grid technology matches users' need and demand with electrical production in the most efficient way possible, reducing the need for additional power plants. "This grant is some of the first federal stimulus dollars to reach Minneapolis that will help the City to reduce energy costs and be more green," said Council Member Gary Schiff.

## Banking contract considers community investment

The City of Minneapolis is releasing a [request for proposals](#) for banking services. The contract will cover cash management services, credit card processing and trust and custody services.



Changes to the city's banking service bid process will include community investment as a consideration.

Expanded criteria will consider bank [financial soundness](#), community reinvestment rating and participation in city economic development programs. The current contract for banking services is held by US Bank and Wells Fargo. Wells Fargo was [recently listed as eighth out of twenty five banks](#) that made subprime loans deemed to have contributed to the nation's recent economic woes. "It's important that for any money we spend at the city, we try to find partners to work with who can show how they give back to Minneapolis," said Council Member Gary Schiff.

For a bank submitting a bid to provide banking services for the city, it must show community support in a number of ways. This includes the bank showing how it helps to meet the credit needs of the entire community, programs it is a part of to improve Minneapolis, and commitments to participate in public supported housing and economic development programs. As part of federal legislation called the Community Reinvestment Act, federal agencies evaluate banks to encourage that they meet the credit needs of their local community, consistent with safe and sound operation. The bank's rating from their last Community Reinvestment Act review will also be considered as part of the bid process.

## **Honeybees now have a home in Minneapolis**



Minneapolis has joined St. Paul in legalizing bee keeping.

On April 24<sup>th</sup>, The Minneapolis City Council [voted unanimously](#) to permit the keeping of bees, a practice that had been prohibited in Minneapolis

is since 1975. The new ordinance language draws upon St. Paul's beekeeping ordinance as well as the model honey bee ordinance from the Minnesota Hobby Bee Keepers Association. The application process includes satisfying an educational requirement and obtaining approval from 100% of the immediate neighbors prior to receiving a permit.

"I raise bees because I believe they are an important part of our food web, providing much needed pollination for urban gardens and trees, while increasing the availability of locally produced food," said Ninth Ward beekeeper, Elise Kylo. On a typical city lot, the maximum number of hives will be two. Flyway barriers will be required when the hive entrance is less than 25 feet from a property line. Hives must be surrounded by barrier and the grounds around the hive clean of wax comb or other material.

Applications for keeping hives are expected to be available around June 1. For more information call Minneapolis Animal Care and Control at 612-370-4970 or visit their [webpage](#).

## **Breakfast with Gary: Light rail and property values**

This month's Breakfast with Gary will look at the effect of light rail transit on property values.

The increase in property values by the light rail line amounts to over \$46 million.

Professor Ed Goetz from the Humphrey Institute led a recent study to measure changes in the value

of residential property within a half-mile radius of stations along the Hiawatha Light Rail Corridor. At the breakfast, Goetz will share his findings, including which areas had the greatest increase in value. "We estimate that the increase in property values produced by the Hiawatha line amounts to over \$29 million for single family homes and almost \$17 million for multifamily housing," said Professor Ed Goetz, director of the study through the Humphrey Institute.

Panelists will also include Tom Streitz, Director of Housing Policy & Development for the City of Minneapolis and Lea Schuster with Transit for Livable Communities. Breakfast with Gary is a monthly meeting for 9th Ward constituents held from 7:30 to 9:00am the final Friday of the month at the [Mercado Central](#), 1515 East Lake Street. \$5 buys breakfast.

## Midtown Farmers' Market opens, looks to the future



Fruits and vegetables sold at the Midtown Farmers' Market are from local farmers in Minnesota and Wisconsin (photo courtesy of Midtown Farmers Market).

The [Midtown Farmers' Market](#) kicked off its seventh season on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. As in past seasons, the market will be open every Saturday from 8am-1pm. In May, events include Native Plant Day on May 16th. The market features a seasonal mix

of sustainable and organic produce, meat, cheese, bread, bedding plants, and artisan crafts all locally produced in Minnesota or Wisconsin.

The site of the market is owned by the Minneapolis Public Schools, which announced earlier this year an intent to market

the site for redevelopment. "We are committed to working with the community and have partnered with the City on this redevelopment," Minneapolis Public Schools Chief of Policy and Operations Steve Liss said. "We are hopeful that the Midtown Farmer's Market will have the opportunity to make the site its permanent home."

The Midtown Revival plan, approved by Corcoran neighborhood and the Minneapolis Planning Commission, calls for a public market and mixed income housing on the site. City Council Member Gary Schiff says he is committed to requiring a long-term low cost lease for the market on the site in exchange for any affordable housing subsidies. Schiff said, "Any developer that is interested in developing the site is going to have to show a passion for a permanent home for the market in order to receive city support for funding. This market is a community asset, and it deserves to stay."

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