



THE SOUTHWEST ANGLE

An Annual Report for Residents of the 13th Ward

A Few Final Thoughts

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Note on the Council Office Transition

On December 2, Council Member Lane retired from the City Council one month before the official end of the current City Council term.

Council Member-elect Betsy Hodges, who had been elected to succeed Council Member Lane, was sworn into office at the same time.

She will complete the current Council term and will be sworn in with the new City Council on January 3, 2006.

Both Council Members Lane and Hodges are pleased to share this Ward newsletter with you.

After six years, this is my last newsletter to you. During that time, we have seen significant change for our city, nation, and world. I was in City Hall on September 11, 2001 and like many others, will never forget it.

All levels of government resonate with the impact of those tragic events. Since then, our national and local capacity to respond to disasters has been tested repeatedly and, in the end, strengthened. I saw this in Alabama after Hurricane Ivan and in Minnesota as we responded to Katrina. While there are always exceptions, adversity brings out the best in Americans. The same is true in Minnea-

polis. While we do not face many of the acute problems that have beset other cities, we are not without challenges. Fiscal instability at the state and federal levels directly affects our ability to deliver basic services. Paying off the debt of the past means we have fewer resources today and into the foreseeable future.

Yet, as a community, we pull together to do what is needed for the City's long-term health and security. As I wrestled with the reforms needed to return our city to fiscal health, I knew that I could count on Ward 13 citizens for support. Reducing staff and services while continuing to increase taxes is not usually a strong

political hand. Yet, when I made the case that short-term sacrifices would result in long-term gains, you supported me. With it, we made progress toward restoring fiscal balance -- and realizing a stronger, more resilient city able to respond to a rapidly changing environment. The hard work is not done. Yet, I am confident that we will meet the challenges the future brings. If we temper our passion for our community and beliefs with kindness and respect for those who see things differently, if we take the long view and remember the things which unite rather than divide us, we will be well-equipped to face that future.

Thank You

Greetings. I am proud to be your new City Council Member. It has been a pleasure to hit the ground running and begin to work on issues of importance to our community.

I had the opportunity to meet many of you over the last few years. Through our conversations I know how much we all love Minneapolis and our neighborhoods. I also know there are a lot of things we'd like to see happen in our city in

the next four years. Issues such as sound fiscal practices, improving Minneapolis' relationships across the state, maintaining the vitality of our neighborhoods, and providing excellent city services are priorities for me and I have already begun to work on them.

I would also like to commend Council Member Lane's work for the city and thank him for his dedication to Ward 13 and the integrity with which he conducted his

business. His dedication to sensible budgeting, ethical practices, and the people of the City are remarkable and have made a difference to our community.

Please contact me about any issues you feel are significant to Ward 13 and the City.

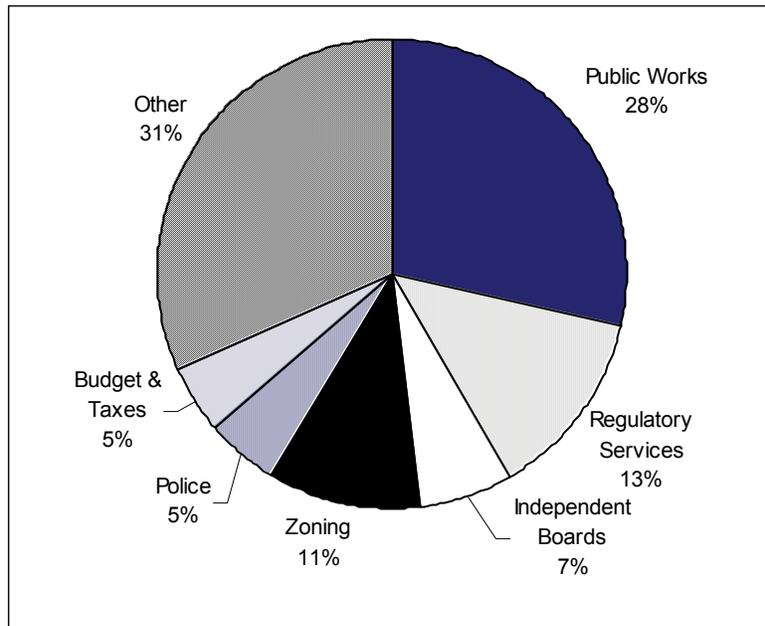
Six Years in Perspective

Serving our constituents does not include a finite list of services. Rather, the basic list of what people consider constituent service is pretty broad - housing and building inspections, zoning applications, pothole reports, requests for street cleaning and snow plowing, and assistance on where to turn for help. Then, there is the help we provide when people have become lost in the governmental maze and figure we might have an idea of where to go next. We happily help all of them—in one way or another.

We can refer requests for basic services to the appropriate City department for action. The less common requests we help with to the best of our ability. Sometimes it is the City's responsibility. Sometimes it involves referring callers to another organization or government entity. And, sometimes all we can provide is advice. We take all of these requests seriously.

However, to give residents some perspective about the work we do, we have extracted data from the database that records our constituent service contacts to give residents an idea of the type of requests we have responded to for six years (due to a database change, data is based on calls received after June 1, 2000). We hope you find this helpful—either in understanding some of what your council member and his/her staff do or to help you understand the broad range of assistance we are happy to provide.

We have been contacted about more than 5600 issues, topics, or requests for service. By that we mean that we have been given over 5600 reasons people have contacted us. These run the gamut from concerns about the neighbor who rakes leaves into the street to wondering how to get married by a judge. Some people have called about the same topic more than once and others



called about things like the smoking ban a single time. The pie chart above outlines the major themes about which residents have contacted us.

As the chart shows, the plurality of calls have concerned different aspects of Public Works, such as potholes, the impound lot, pipelining, and road construction. The two most popular topics within Public Works-related calls were about 50th Street and about snow and ice removal.

Regulatory Services and Zoning follow Public Works in terms of frequency of calls. Regulatory Services include housing and building inspections, parking enforcement, business licenses, and animal control. In this area, requests for housing inspections were the most frequent type of call or letter we received.

Zoning is always popular, due to the many home improvements occurring in the Ward. Close to half the calls about zoning concerned general questions such as what needs zoning approval, how to contact the Zoning department, or where to find materials about zoning. Others concerned specific zoning applications under consideration by the City.

Calls about independent boards concerned either the Park or Library boards.

The pie chart is very similar to the annual review of constituent calls we have included in past editions of the *Southwest Angle*. Public Works always leads the way with Regulatory Services frequently near the top. Calls about police or the budget are sometimes near the top and other years are not.

A quarter to a third of the calls received each year do not fall into a large topic. They run the gamut from individual concerns such as how to change a name on a birth certificate to why don't fire stations accept used batteries for recycling anymore.

Each year, the plurality of calls fall into the heart of what a government provides—roads, water, and public safety.

So, we hope this helps residents understand what concerns their neighbors and that they will turn to us or the new 311 line (see page 4), the next time they need help from their city.

Lyndale Avenue—The Next Generation

For the last few years, we have been updating you about our planning efforts to envision a new Lyndale Avenue, south of Minnehaha Creek, and about Hennepin County's plans to reconstruct Lyndale between Lake Street and 56th Street. We are happy to report that this year the City has taken crucial steps to move both of these efforts forward.

Lyndale Reconstruction

As many residents are aware, by the end of the decade, Hennepin County will reconstruct Lyndale Avenue between Lake Street and 56th Street. The current plans are to reconstruct the section north of 50th in 2008 and south of 50th in 2009.

For the last year, Hennepin County developed its design plans for the section of Lyndale north of 50th Street. This fall, the City Council approved those plans, but which are still subject to minor adjustments.

County staff will now begin to develop its plans for the sector south of 50th Street. A timeline for finishing the designs for south of 50th Street has not been finalized, but the City works closely with the County on this project and is kept informed of the progress of the design process.

Lyndale Avenue Renewal

Since 2001, the City has been working with Lyndale Avenue South Renewal—Creek to Crosstown (LASR-CC) to develop a new vision for Lyndale Avenue, south of Minnehaha Creek. LASR-CC is comprised of representatives of Kenny, Lynnhurst, Tangletown and Windom.

This year brought important achievements in this effort. Earlier this year, the City, in consultation with LASR-CC, hired the Hoisington Koegler Group (HKGi), a land use planning firm, to develop a master land use plan for the area.

A master land use plan lays out a vision of how the City would like the

area to develop over the next 15 to 20 years. This plan shows places where business and residential development would be preferred. It also shows where greenspace could be placed.

To develop the plan, a series of open houses at Richfield United Methodist Church and two lunches for commercial property and business owners were held during the spring and summer. In addition, HKGi, consulted with the City and LASR-CC. It also referred back to the neighborhood values that the community had established in 2002 to serve as the basis for all future land use plans.

The plan was presented to the community at another open house in October. The plan features business and residential development as well as the addition of green space. The main concept is to strengthen the business node that is currently clustered around 54th and Lyndale and develop another node around 58th Street. In the other sections of the corridor, housing and greenspace would be encouraged.

After the presentation to the community in September, the plan was submitted to the Minneapolis Planning Commission for approval. On December 20, the Commission approved the plan unanimously and made comments about how strong and important the community input process had been to this project.

The City Council is expected to approve the plan in January, at which point this plan will be City policy.

Highway 121

Since the mid 1990s, there has been discussion about moving Highway 121 to better use the land in the community. While the current placement of road allows the presence of greenspace, it is greenspace that cannot be safely accessed by the community and is not large enough to use for park land. Further, the road was built

to a carry of volume of traffic it has never achieved. As a result, discussion began over ways to better include the Highway 121 corridor in the surrounding community.

Although there have been a number of proposals about how to move and develop the area, none of those ideas ever moved forward.

As part of the master planning process for Lyndale over the last five years, we made the future of 121 an important part of the discussion.

After extensive review of the road by engineers, including a review of traffic growth, the future needs of 35W/Crosstown, and safety, City engineers proposed that the City work with MnDOT to move the road to the east, toward Bachman's.

Moving the road will open up enough land for single family home development. It will also allow the development of a path for pedestrians that will hopefully lead to Grass Lake.

As part of the master plan approval, it formally was recommended that the City begin the process of funding and designing the plans to move the road to the east. This is the first formal step the City of Minneapolis has ever taken in regard to changing Highway 121. When the master plan is approved by the City Council, Public Works will be able to begin the process of finding funding for the project, discuss the future of the roadway with MnDOT, (who currently controls the road), and develop design plans. It is the City's hope that this project will be underway by the end of the decade.

Therefore, after years of discussion and debate about this important part of Lyndale Avenue, we are happy to say that the future is looking bright.

To learn more visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/planning.

Who Do You Call? 311

The City has kicked off its new 311 system to assist residents, workers, and visitors in Minneapolis. Instead of having to figure out which one of hundreds of City phone numbers to call, residents only have to call one number for non-emergency assistance—311.

Whether you want to report a pothole, find out where to vote, report a stray dog, etc., call 311 and you will be assisted.

When you call, a call center agent will be able to a) answer your question, b) refer your concern, in an electronic work order, to the appropriate City department for service, and/or c) find the right person to help you. The call service agent will also give you a service number you can use to follow up your request and/or find out how your issue was resolved.

311 is accessible to non-English speakers. A number of the call center agents are bi-lingual, and if the appropriate agent is not available, the City can quickly obtain translation assistance.

By launching 311, Minneapolis is joining a growing number of Ameri-

can cities that have launched similar programs. Started in Baltimore, 311 is an easy way for residents to receive assistance from their city.

To launch the program, the City purchased software developed specifically for this type of service, built a 311 response center, and hired 34 employees—from both within and new to the City to train for this special type of service.

The customer service agents began training in early November and began testing the system in early December. All early indications are that the service will be a great success.

So, what is the difference between 311 and 911? 911 remains the city's emergency response line. If you need a public safety response from the police or fire department or need emergency medical assistance, call 911. If you need general assistance about other City departments and services or if you have a question related to city government or services, call 311.

So, next time you need help from the City of Minneapolis, please call—311.

Where's the website?

The City and Ward 13 websites are important sources of information about City services, City and Ward issues, and general information about working with the City and your community.

The main address for both sites is

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us

and the complete ward address is

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward13.

Please visit often.

Welcome to the Ward

With the January 3 swearing in of the City Council, the new Ward 13 boundaries will officially take effect.

West Calhoun, Linden Hills, Fulton, Armatage, and Kenny continue to be in the 13th Ward. Plus, the northeastern corner of Lynnhurst that was previously in Ward 11 will join the rest of Lynnhurst in Ward 13. The southern half of East Harriet/Farmstead, that south of 42nd Street, will also join the 13th Ward.

The ward grew geographically so that each ward in the City would meet ward population requirements.

Under the old ward boundaries, the 13th Ward had a population of 29,248. The population of the newly defined ward is 30,139.

To learn more about East Harriet/Farmstead visit the neighborhood section of the city website. Profiles of each neighborhood (except Kenny and West Calhoun, which are being developed) can be found there.

Also, to learn when East Harriet or your neighborhood association meets see the back cover of this newsletter. The associations love residents to attend their meetings.

Please Come to Breakfast

Council Member Hodges will continue the monthly Ward breakfast that both Council Members Minn and Lane hosted.

The breakfast will continue to be held at Pearson's Restaurant, 50th and Ewing, the third Wednesday of the month, at 8:00 am.

This monthly event is an opportunity for residents to come discuss whatever is on their minds.

Everyone is welcome. Please bring your questions or ideas to discuss, or just come to listen and meet your neighbors.

Neighborhood Safety

Over the last few months, there has been a lot of discussion about increasing crime in the 13th Ward. While crime has show some spikes in certain neighborhoods and some new patterns, the 13th Ward is still in good shape.

Over the past few years, except for Lynnhurst, crime in the ward has basically remained steady or declined. Comparing 2004 and 2005, January through November, crime in Armatage, Fulton, and Kenny has declined.

Linden Hills saw a spike in crime earlier in the year, but it has leveled off and crime has been equal to 2004 over the last six months. Lynnhurst has also seen a slight increase.

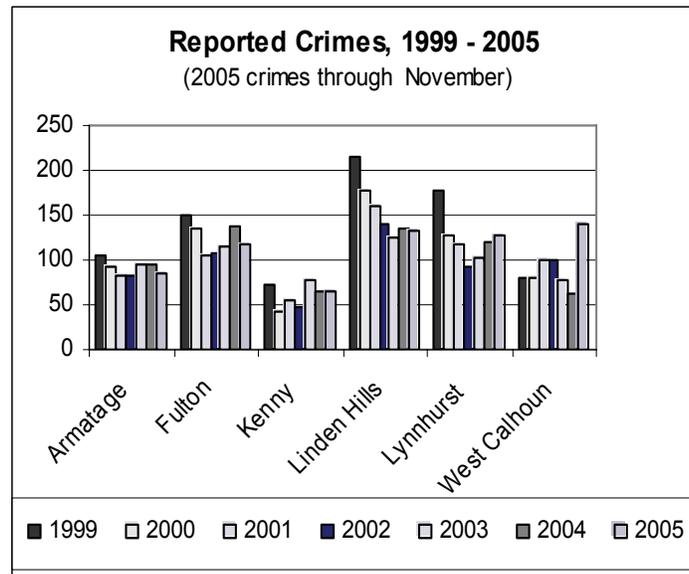
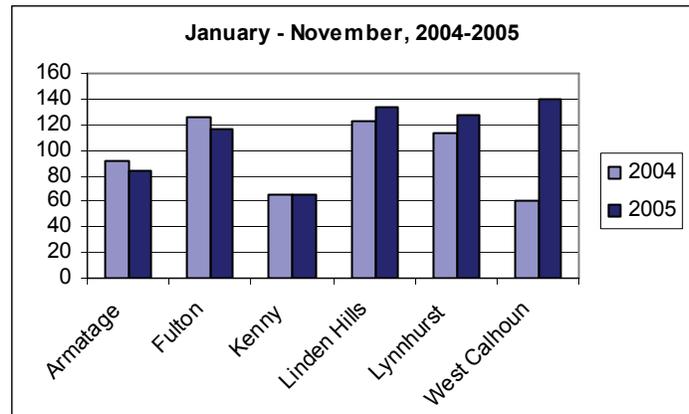
The neighborhood of biggest concern is West Calhoun, which has seen a large increase. Fortunately, the police have identified the cause of the increase and have been working to address it. This summer, the parkways and parking lots around Lake Calhoun saw a huge increase in theft from motor vehicle. Although many of these thefts occurred in the park, Minneapolis Police has been working with the Park Police to investigate and reduce thefts. Since the peak in July, the thefts have been declining.

This situation, however, points out the importance of taking steps to prevent crime. Theft from motor vehicle is always one of the most frequent crimes in the 13th Ward. The lakes, with their many visitors and unattended cars, are a perfect opportunity for criminals. We implore all residents—whether at the park or home—to take a few simple steps to avoid being victims of theft from motor vehicle:

- **Do not leave anything on your car seats**—particularly your laptop, cell phone, ipod, cds, or wallet. Thieves consider them invitations to steal.
- **Lock your car**—whether at the park, out shopping, or in your driveway. Thieves wander the neighborhoods at night looking for open cars.
- **If you have to take your wallet, purse, or something else that you will leave unattended in the car—put it in your trunk before leaving home.** At parks and parking lots, thieves look for those people who put their backpacks or purses in the trunk. Then, the thieves pop the trunk.

In 2006, the City will add 71 officers to the force, but we still encourage residents to take a few basic steps to prevent crime in the neighborhoods.

- **Lock your doors** and do not leave attractive items, such as wallets, near open windows. Criminals will take advantage of these opportunities.



- **Keep your garage door closed**—even if you are just running in the house for a second. Snow blowers and bikes can be stolen in less than a minute.
- **Call 911** if you witness a crime or see suspicious behavior.
- **Participate in your block club** and watch out for your neighbors. Contact CCP/SAFE for help in setting up or maintaining a block club. Call Jennifer Neale at 673-2819 (East Harriet/Farmstead, Lynnhurst, Kenny, Armatage, and Fulton) or Tom Thompson at 673-2823 (Linden Hills and West Calhoun).

We would also like to thank the police for increased traffic enforcement in the ward. They have been very responsive to residents' concerns about traffic.

Even with some changes in crime, Ward 13 is a very safe community. If we all take a few simple precautions we can keep it the envy of cities and suburbs alike.

THE SOUTHWEST ANGLE

An Annual Report for Residents of the
13th Ward

Betsy Hodges

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**Website: [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/
ward13](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward13)**

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Stop by the Neighborhood

Armatage Neighborhood Association

Armatage Park

3rd Tuesday, every other month, 7:00 pm

For information: 612/668-3206

East Harriet/Farmstead Neighborhood Association

Lyndale Farmstead Park

1st Wednesday of the month, 7:00 pm

For information: 612/824-9350

Fulton Neighborhood Association

Pershing Park

2nd Wednesday of the month, 7:00 pm

For information: 612/922-3106

Kenny Neighborhood Association

Coldwell Banker, 55th and Lyndale

3rd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 pm

For information: 612/392-4477

Linden Hills Neighborhood Council

Linden Hills Park

1st Tuesday of the month, 7:00 pm

For information: 612/926-2906

Lynnhurst Neighborhood Association

Lynnhurst Community Center

2nd Thursday of the month, 7:00 pm

For information: 612/822-7466

West Calhoun Neighborhood Council

Classroom—Whole Foods at Calhoun Commons

2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00 pm

For information: 612/928-3511