



Fourth Ward Report

Council President Barbara Johnson

Minneapolis City Council

March 2009

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Minneapolis 311

Dial 311 from any phone in the City limits. Outside of the City call: 612-673-3000

E-mail 311:

Minneapolis311@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

311 Online Services:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/311/online-services.asp>

4th Ward Neighborhood Group Links

Cleveland

Folwell

Lind Bohanon

Jordan

Shingle Creek

Victory

Webber Camden

Neighborhood & Community Engagement Commission

The Minneapolis City Council and Mayor R.T. Rybak approved the City's appointments to the new Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) on Friday, Feb. 6. The seven appointees approved by the Mayor and City Council will join eight people appointed by Minneapolis neighborhoods and one person appointed by the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board to form the NCEC. In September 2008, City leaders approved establishing a Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission, a group of 16 residents appointed to oversee the City's relationship with neighborhoods, community organizations and the crucial link between City services and its residents. The commission will be charged with providing direction to the next phase of community engagement in Minneapolis and be primarily responsible for the review of neighborhood plans. The commission will also make recommendations to the City Council on allocation of a variety of types of funding to neighborhoods. The Mayor and City Council's appointees are Tony Anastasia, Audubon Park; David Crockett, Stevens Square/Loring Heights; Crystal Johnson, Near North; Ed Newman, Loring Park; Matt Perry, East Harriet/Farmstead; Breanne Rothstein, Windom; Jeffrey Strand, Shingle Creek (4th Ward). To learn more about Minneapolis' Community Engagement work, visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/communityengagement.asp

Minneapolis Charter Change Proposals

Council Member Paul Ostrow recently proposed 3 significant changes our Minneapolis City Charter. The first would eliminate the independent Minneapolis Park Board. The second would replace the City Coordinator with a City Administrator and put him/her in charge of all of the City's departments. The third would eliminate the Board of Estimate and Taxation. I oppose all of these changes and will comment on each in the future, but the one I want to highlight this month is the idea of elimination the Park Board. I believe this is a terrible idea. The Minneapolis park system is a nationally recognized treasure. It was planned by some of the foremost landscape architects of their time. Absorbing this natural resource based system into the City as another department competing for dollars with police, fire and public works would be a disaster. I will be testifying at the Charter Commission meeting on March 4 in opposition to these changes. If you wish to comment in writing, please send your comments to:

Minneapolis Charter Commission
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Minneapolis, MN 55415

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Mayor's Revised Budget

Despite facing \$30 million in state funding cuts, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak announced on Monday, Feb. 23, that his revised 2009 budget for the City of Minneapolis will not include significant cuts to public safety or public works.

The proposed budget, which will now be considered by the City Council, includes cuts to every City department. While every effort was made to reduce job losses, the magnitude of the needed cuts means that staff reductions are unavoidable. In the Mayor's revised budget, he called for 59 positions to be eliminated, about half of which are management positions. Of those 59 positions, 33 are currently filled.

However, the expected money from the Federal Stimulus package will allow the City to protect vital public safety function from deep cuts, at least in the short term.

Numerous strategies used to prevent public safety cuts in 2009

If allocated equally across the city, the Governor's proposed cuts to Minneapolis for this year would have led to the elimination of 161 jobs, including 57 sworn officer positions and 19 civilian positions in the police department and 27 firefighter positions. Mayor Rybak's proposed budget avoided those deep cuts by:

Using \$7.6 million freed up by paying down City debt - In the past six years the City has paid down or avoided almost \$90 million in debt, meaning there is an additional \$7.6 million to spend on basic city services this year.

Focusing cuts on management positions - Of the 59 city staff positions eliminated in Rybak's proposed budget, nearly half (27 positions) are more expensive management jobs.

Eliminating some City services - Mayor Rybak is proposing to eliminate a lab in the health department and shift discrimination complaint services to the State. He also proposed that the City cut maintenance to State highways that run through Minneapolis.

Federal Stimulus - The Mayor is proposing to use one-time funds provided by the Federal Recovery and Reinvestment Act to pay for 76 positions in the police department, including 57 sworn officer positions which would have otherwise been cut.

As a result of these strategies, there will be no layoffs in the police or fire departments; six vacant fire department positions will not be filled. The City Council is expected to vote on a final 2009 budget in early March. For more information on Mayor Rybak's revised 2009 budget, visit [CityTalk](#) or the [2009 budget page](#) on the City's public Web site. The Mayor's budget address will be rebroadcast on Channel 79 on Feb. 23 at 6 p.m. and Feb. 27, 28, and 29 at 9 a.m.

[Mayor's 2009 Supplemental Budget Slide Presentation \(PDF\)](#)



Top 5 Fourth Ward Service Requests to 311

Minneapolis 311 is a simple, three-digit number residents, businesses and visitors can call to reach the City to inquire about services, report problems, check the status of issues, or get information.

[Between Jan 1, 2009 and Jan 31, 2009]

- 1 Public Works - Sidewalk Snow & Ice Complaint - 275
- 2 Police - Abandoned Vehicle - 56
- 3 Regulatory Services - Residential Conditions Complaint - 49
- 4 Public Works – Snow & Ice Complaint (street/alley) - 37
- 5 Regulatory Services – Exterior Nuisance Complaint – 30