

# Ward 11 Monthly Newsletter

Council Member Scott Benson

Aug 2006

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## Mayor Submits Budget Proposal

Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak delivered his 2007 budget address on Aug. 15, 2006 at a special session of the Minneapolis City Council. The Mayor's proposal calls for nearly \$200 million in public safety programs for the next year, restores the City's police force to 893 officers, and equips police with cutting-edge camera technology. The proposed budget also provides additional funding for reducing homelessness and preventing domestic violence, while holding the property tax levy increase to 8 percent.

The realignment of Highway 121 was included on the Capitol Improvement Plan (CIP) for construction in the years 2010 and 2011. This project should serve as the catalyst for implementation of the master plan for south Lyndale Ave.

The City Council will begin budget deliberations in September with final approval of the budget expected in December. You can view the Mayor's recommended budget at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2007recommended/>.

The budget address will be rebroadcast on Minneapolis cable channels 79 on Fridays following the regular live Council meeting broadcasts through Sept. 15, 2006 and via Webcast at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/webcasts/>.

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## Citywide WiFi approved

The Minneapolis City Council voted on September 1st to move forward with a citywide WiFi network. The vote authorizes city staff to negotiate with US Internet corporation to construct a citywide WiFi network, for which the city government will be the main customer. Once the network is operational, US Internet will sell access to the network to city residents at a rate of \$19.95 per month. There will also will be hotspots at various public locations.

### Important Phone Numbers

- Ward 11 Office  
673-2211



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The network will allow city employees to communicate and share data in real time no matter where they may be in the city. There is a wide variety of uses that various departments will utilize. For example, city inspectors will be able to complete their paperwork and access files from their cars allowing them more time in the field, and firefighters will be able to download floor plans for major buildings while they are responding to a fire call.

Construction of the network, which will cover all 54 square miles of the city, will begin this fall and is expected to take about a year. For up-to-date information on Wireless Minneapolis, visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/wirelessminneapolis/index.asp>.

# A Living Wage for Minneapolis

According to the 2005 Living Wage and Job Linkage Status Report released by Community Planning and Economic Development in July, nearly 87% of the 5,699 employees hired during the year earned wages at or greater than the living wage of \$10.23 per hour. 111 businesses participated in this survey of their 2005 hiring activity. Over 2000 of these hires lived in Minneapolis.

"The 2005 living wage of \$10.23 per hour helped our residents afford housing and other basic necessities of life," said Council Member Scott Benson, "We are pleased that our partnership with Minneapolis companies has grown during the past several years and resulted in so many jobs at a living wage."

The 2005 Living wage was defined as 110% of the federal poverty level for a family of four equaling \$ 21,278 annually. By comparison the current federal minimum wage is \$5.15 per hour or \$ 11,460 annually. The state's minimum wage is \$6.16 per hour or \$13,748 annually.

The Minneapolis Job Linkage Program was adopted by the Minneapolis City Council in 1995 and has always been an integral part of the City's Living Wage policy. Job Linkage agreements ask businesses that receive city economic development assistance to establish five-year goals for job creation and retention. Businesses are also asked to work with one of the Neighborhood Network workforce organizations to train and place job applicants. Living wage jobs and Minneapolis residency are preferred in these agreements. The agreements are voluntary and do not contain penalties if the business fails to meet its job goals.

The 2005 job totals showed sizable increases over 2004 in every category including total hires, living wage jobs, and jobs held by Minneapolis residents. The number of Minneapolis companies participating in this survey has increased 117% during the past five years from 51 companies to 111 companies. This is indicative of the wide assortment of employment, development and finance programs the City offers to Minneapolis businesses. The number of companies is impressive.

In 2001 the Political Economy Research Institute, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, singled out Minneapolis in a national study of living wage business assistance programs: According to the report, "What makes the Minneapolis case stand out is the extent to which you have utilized your living wage policy in conjunction with you Job Linkage agreement. Minneapolis has reached many times more subsidy recipients through a combination of living wage and job linkage than all other cities with similar clause combined."

2005 was the most successful job hiring year for job linkage businesses in the program's history.

# Park Board Long Range Planning Meetings

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) invites city residents and park visitors of all ages to attend town meetings to be held throughout the city. The town meetings kick off the Park Board's efforts to gather information from the community as the MPRB develops its long-term comprehensive plan for the park system.

The MPRB wants to know what the community values about the park system, what it sees as the park system's strengths, and how the MPRB can best serve the public's park and recreation needs. The information gathered at the town meetings, along with information gathered from questionnaires, focus groups, a phone survey and community leader workshops, will guide the development of the comprehensive plan.

Children and teens are also invited to the town meetings. MPRB staff will provide fun, engaging, age-appropriate activities designed to capture kids' thoughts and ideas about today's and future parks.

Community members and park visitors are also encouraged to complete a brief MPRB questionnaire. The questionnaire will be available online at [www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org) and at all 49 MPRB recreation centers from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

For a recorded message about public input opportunities, call the Comp Plan hotline at 612-230-6597. To learn more about the comprehensive plan, find out about opportunities to participate, or fill out an online questionnaire (beginning mid-September) go to the MPRB website at [www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org).

## THE TOWN MEETINGS NEAREST THE 11TH WARD INCLUDE:

**11 a.m. – 1 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 23, Lynnhurst Park Community Center, 1345 W. Minnehaha Pkwy**

**11 a.m. – 1 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 30, Nokomis Park Community Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy**

## June Crime Statistics

NEIGHBORHOOD	TOTAL	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft	Arson
Diamond Lake	11				1	1	6	3	
Field	9			1	1	1	4	2	
Hale	15					4	10	1	
King Field	26			3	2	7	7	6	1
Northrup	17					6	10	1	
Page	3					1		2	
Tangletown	14					1	11	2	
Wenonah	16			1		6	6	3	
Windom	21			4	2	3	7	5	

Definitions of the types of crimes and statistics from other months can be viewed at:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/police/crime-statistics/>

## Electronic Newsletter

Council Member Benson publishes an electronic newsletter to keep you up to date on what is happening at City Hall. If you would like to receive this update, please e-mail me at

[scott.benson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:scott.benson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) and put the words "E-mail Update" in the subject line.

## Monthly Community Meetings

<p><b>Field Regina Northrop</b> Meets Third Wednesday 6:30 PM Lake Nokomis Presbyterian 46<sup>th</sup> St. &amp; 17<sup>th</sup> Ave</p>	<p><b>Hale Page Diamond Lake</b> Meets Fourth Monday 7:00 PM Emmanuel United Methodist 5144 13<sup>th</sup> Ave S</p>	<p><b>Kingfield</b> Meets Second Wednesday 7:00 PM Martin Luther King Park 4055 Nicollet Ave S</p>
<p><b>NENA</b> Meets Fourth Thursday 7:00 PM NENA Office 3000 E. 50<sup>th</sup> St</p>	<p><b>Tangletown</b> Meets Third Monday 7:00 PM Fuller Community Center 4800 Grand Ave S</p>	<p><b>Windom</b> Meets Second Thursday 7:00 PM Windom Community Center 5821 Wentworth Ave S</p>

## Coffee With Scott

Whatever is on your mind, you can sit down with **Scott Benson** and talk about it over a cup of coffee, from **8:00 AM until 9:00 AM** at coffee shops around the 11th ward.

Sept 7	Sister's Sludge 4557 Bloomington	Nov 2	Mike's Corner Store 5601 Chicago Ave
Oct 5	Anodyne @ 43rd 4301 Nicollet	Dec 7	Betsy's Backporch 5447 Nicollet

### Open Appointments

The City of Minneapolis has more that 45 boards, commissions and advisory committees. These organizations, composed of citizen volunteers, advise the City on current issues and assist the City in policy development and administration of services.

[Civil Rights Commission \(closes 9/8/2006\)](#)

[Minneapolis Empowerment Zone Governance Board \(closes 9/8/2006\)](#)

[Zoning Board of Adjustment \(closes 9/15/2006\)](#)

For more information: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/open/>