

Ward 11 Newsletter

Council Member Scott Benson

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Council votes to encourage legislature to extend NRP funding

The Minneapolis City Council unanimously approved a resolution on Friday, March 21 to urge the State of Minnesota to enact legislation that would effectively fund the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) beyond 2009.

Specifically, the resolution urges the legislature to extend the pre-1979 tax increment districts in the Minneapolis Common project that are used to fund NRP. Additional funding from the extension would also go to pay off the Target Center debt for which the city is responsible.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a redevelopment tool authorized by State statute and used by cities and development authorities. When a TIF district is established, the tax capacity of the properties located within the district are "frozen," and for the duration of the district, the property taxes resulting from any increase in the tax capacity above the frozen level are available to the city. The 15 pre-1979 tax increment financing districts in Minneapolis are set to decertify in 2009.

Council Member Benson developed a plan which encourages Minnesota Legislature to act to extend the TIF districts that are set to decertify in 2009. The resolution asks the legislature to extend the districts for the minimum time necessary to cumulatively provide \$100 million to fund the needs of a neighborhood revitalization program that includes support for neighborhood organizations and neighborhood-direction action plans after 2009. The resolution also calls for the TIF district extension to fund \$100 million to repay Target Center bonds and fund capital improvements at the center.

Public and community leaders originally conceived of the NRP in the late 1980s as a way to invest in neighborhoods and quell the trend of people moving from urban areas into the suburbs. The NRP was established through state legislation in 1990 and is governed by a joint-powers agreement between five government jurisdictions: the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Minneapolis Public Schools, and (originally) the Minneapolis Public Library.

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Important
Phone Numbers
Ward 11 office
673-2211
35W/Crosstown
Construction
Hotline
1-866-743-6590



Watch where you park: street sweepers are coming!

With the winter snow piles retreating, it's time for the City to clean up all the dirt and grime the melting snow and ice left behind on Minneapolis streets. Crews are set to begin the comprehensive spring street sweep in mid-April.

Over the course of five weeks, Minneapolis Public Works will send sweepers down all 1,100 miles of city streets. Weather permitting, the spring street sweeping will begin on Tuesday, April 15.

To make sure the sweepers can do the best job possible, temporary "No Parking" signs will be posted at least 24 hours in advance to make sure streets are clear of parked vehicles. Residents need to follow street sweep parking rules or they may have their cars ticketed and towed.

"No Parking" signs – As the sweep gets underway, City crews will post "No Parking" signs at least 24 hours before sweeping any streets. Parking will be banned from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on the day a street is swept. The "No Parking" signs will be removed as soon as possible after a street has been completely swept to allow people to resume parking. Vehicles not in compliance with "No Parking" signs will be ticketed and towed to the Minneapolis Impound Lot.

Phone calls to residents – In addition to the "No Parking" signs that will be posted the day before sweepers come through, the City will make about 3,500 automated phone calls each evening to let residents know their street will be swept the next day.

Interactive Web tool – Starting a few days before the sweep begins, folks will be able to use a tool on the City's Web site to find out when the sweepers are coming through their neighborhoods. By going to www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/streetsweep, residents can find out which week their street is scheduled to be swept. The weekend before that week, they can revisit the city to find out which of the five days of the work week that the sweeping will occur.

Minneapolis is known for its sparkling lakes and waterways, and we want to keep it that way. That's why protecting and enhancing our environment is one of the City's top priorities. Street sweeping is one way we work to protect our 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.

Upcoming meetings will have answers to property tax questions

Property tax notices were recently nailed out. Home valuations and property taxes can be confusing, so the Minneapolis City Assessor's Office wants to help you understand everything you need to know about them. It's hosting meetings to give you the opportunity to have your questions answered.

Minneapolis property owners can learn more about how the property tax system works, and how they can make sure they're getting the credits for which they're eligible. The meetings will also include an explanation of property tax relief programs, and residential and commercial appraisers will be present to answer questions from property owners.

Wednesday April 9, 4:30-7:00 PM
Pearl Park neighborhood Center
414 East Diamond Lake Road

Trees for your yard

Make Minneapolis (and your yard) a greener place by ordering a tree! 1,000 trees are available for just \$25 each through the City Trees program

The City of Minneapolis is making 1,000 trees available to city residents for planting this spring. Minneapolis funds the City Trees program, which is in its third year, to provide a low-cost way for folks to help build the city's urban tree forest.

Research has proven that trees are a valuable investment and improve urban quality of life. Healthy trees increase property values, help improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon dioxide, save energy, keep the city cooler, provide homes for wildlife and help manage storm water.

To make the City Trees program a reality, Minneapolis partners with Tree Trust, a local nonprofit that works to improve the community environment.

Ordering a tree:

The trees cost \$25 each, and are approximately 6-to-10 feet tall with a 1 inch trunk. Residents can order one tree per household, and the 1,000 trees will be made available on a first-come, first-served basis. Residents can choose from five tree varieties, including Bicolor Oak, Fall Fiesta Sugar Maple, Pagoda Dogwood, Japanese Tree Lilac or Welchi Juniper.

Orders can be placed online before April 11 by visiting Tree Trust at www.treetrust.org or by picking up an order form from your neighborhood group or local library. Tree pick-up dates are May 10 and 11 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and May 12 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the former Franklin Middle School East parking lot at 1501 Aldrich Avenue N. Volunteers will be available to help load your new tree and complimentary bag of mulch in to your vehicle.

Information will be available online and at the tree pick-up site that will explain how to plant a tree the right way, how to care for it, and the benefits it will provide.

For more information on how to order a tree, contact Tree Trust by visiting www.treetrust.org or by calling (651) 644-5800. You can also contact Tree Trust to receive hard copies of the applications if you would like to be able to distribute them to your group. It is anticipated that the 1,000 trees will again go quickly so please encourage people to call as soon as possible.

Green building and renovation Web site

If you're building or renovating, you can save money, have a healthier home and protect the environment by planning green options into your construction project. Many green options cost the same as conventional construction, and most of those that cost more will save you money in lower energy bills or lower maintenance bills over the lifetime of the investment. If you plan to sell your home in a few years, you should know that real estate companies are starting to plan special marketing tools to advance the sales of green homes.

The City of Minneapolis has developed a new Web checklist to walk you through some of the ways you can take advantage of more sustainable options for your home. Before you start planning your next project, make sure to visit:

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/mdr/GreenBuildingOptions_home.asp.

Monthly Community Meetings

<p>Field Regina Northrop FRNNG.org Meets Third Wednesday 6:30 PM Lake Nokomis Presb.</p>	<p>Hale Page Diamond Lake HPDL.org Meets Fourth Monday 7:00 PM Emmanuel United Methodist</p>	<p>Kingfield Kingfield.org Meets Second Wednesday 7:00 PM Martin Luther King Park</p>
<p>NENA Nokomiseast.org Meets Fourth Thursday 7:00 PM NENA Office</p>	<p>Tangletown Tangletown.org Meets Third Monday 7:00 PM Fuller Community Center</p>	<p>Windom Windomcommunity.org Meets Second Thursday 7:00 PM Windom Community Center</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.

April 3	Betsy's Backporch 5447 Nicollet Ave	June 5	Anodyne 4301 Nicollet Ave
May 1	Sister's Sludge 4557 Bloomington Ave	July 3	Mike's Corner Store 5601 Chicago Ave

Open Appointments

The City of Minneapolis has more than 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.

[Minneapolis Planning Commission \(closes 4/4/08\)](#)

For more information:

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

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 and put the words "E-mail Update" in the subject line.