

# Community 11 Connections

news from Council Member John Quincy



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## Quincy's Corner

**Hang in there folks. . . Spring is coming!** As the temps rise and the snow melts, our public works department will be out as quickly as possible to patch streets and fill those ever present and growing potholes. You can help this effort by calling 311 or going online to report locations, so we can map and cap those dreaded potholes! The City of Minneapolis asks residents and visitors to call the 311 phone number to help the City plan for spring pothole repairs and make permanent repairs. If you see a pothole on a Minneapolis street, call 311 to report the problem. You can also [report a pothole](#) online.



The issue of *Community Connections* this month touches on how we have effectively used more than \$60 Million of Federal Stimulus funds to grow jobs, provide important services, and enhance our community. Also in this issue, as the State Legislature is now in session, I want to touch on the city's legislative agenda, as well as, pitch the importance of passing an aggressive bonding bill.

Both versions of the Senate and House Bonding Bills are chock full of valuable infrastructure projects, delayed maintenance on public facilities and properties and, important enhancements to our community's environmental agenda. It is a prime time to take advantage of low interest rates, make important and long overdue improvements, and more importantly than anything, put people to work. These are home-grown jobs providing local stimulus that will generate the greatest possible long and short-term growth.

The pressing issue facing the city this month is how we can address a drastic cut in our state's sales tax revenue sharing plan—more commonly referred to as Local Government Aid (LGA). Governor Pawlenty has proposed a cut that translates to \$29 Million for this year. This worst case scenario requires city leadership to propose a solution as soon as final cuts are known. The longer we have to wait, the more drastic the cuts will be to make up for a shortening timeframe—as these cuts will have to all be made this year.

Thanks!

**P.S.** March is "Minnesota Food Share Month," a time for folks throughout our state to help bring food to the tables of local families in need. During the month, the Minneapolis Fire Department is partnering with the Salvation Army in an effort to give back to the community and express appreciation to that organization's charitable work. Minneapolis fire stations will be drop-off points for accepting food donations. Firefighters and the public can bring non-perishable food items to any of the [City's 19 fire stations](#).

## City Focus

### Minneapolis Recovery with Stimulus Dollars



**Watch us work!** Visit [www.minneapolisrecovery.us](http://www.minneapolisrecovery.us) to see what is happening around Minneapolis.

As of January 15th, **Minneapolis has received \$60.3 million in Recovery Act Funds.** We are using these funds effectively to grow jobs, provide important services, and enhance our community.



#### Energy & Environment.

The city was awarded \$3.9 million in Energy Efficiency Community Block Grants that will fund home energy audits by the Center for Energy and Environment, provide loans for small businesses so they can make energy efficient upgrades, and fund the ideas that neighborhood groups have through climate change projects. Over \$5 million will be spent in energy conservation projects at city buildings.



#### Community Development.

The city received \$3.6 million for community development projects such as the Chicago Avenue Fire Arts Center, Shubert Theater, Van White Memorial Boulevard improvements, and lead paint removal in South and Central Minneapolis neighborhoods. Funds are also being used to winterize boarded and vacant properties and to reroof Fire Station 20.



#### Foreclosures & Homelessness Prevention

\$5 million for homelessness prevention including providing legal services and relocation services to tenants in foreclosing properties, help short-term shelter residents with rental deposits, rental applications and move in costs. Prevent homelessness including pay back rent, assist with utilities that have been shut off, legal assistance for bad credit, or minor repairs of a vehicle used to get to work.



\$20 million to combat the impact of foreclosures, including down payment and closing cost assistance to help homeowners purchase foreclosed properties, rehabilitation of residential foreclosed properties, and the acquisition and razing of condemned properties to provide land for new infill homeownership opportunities.

#### Employment & Public Safety

The city has received money to add 500 summer jobs for youth, expanded services at workforce centers for over 5,000 displaced workers and received funding for a green jobs training initiative.

The city was granted \$8.1 million in public safety funds to keep 56 police officers on the street.



**AND MORE:** The City of Minneapolis maintains a website that tracks the progress of the Recovery Act. The site is [www.minneapolisrecovery.us](http://www.minneapolisrecovery.us)

## City Links

[Minneapolis Home Page](#)

[Hennepin County Libraries](#)

[Minneapolis Public Schools](#)

[City of Minneapolis Jobs](#)

[Garbage Service](#)

[Maps of Minneapolis](#)

[Separating Your Recycling](#)

[Snow Emergency](#)

### Online Services

[Apply for Block Party Permit](#)

[Home Improvement Permits](#)

[Pay Your Utility Bill](#)

[Property Information](#)

[Report Graffiti](#)

### Address-Based Lookups

[Council Ward Finder](#)

[Garbage](#)

[Recycling Schedule](#)

[Police Precinct Finder](#)

[Property Information](#)

[Spring & Fall Street Sweeping Schedule](#)

[Snow Emergency Parking Rules](#)

[Voting Precinct Finder](#)

On February 16th, Gov. Tim Pawlenty released his proposal to close a \$1.2 billion deficit in the State's budget. His plan includes slashing aid to local governments throughout Minnesota by a quarter billion dollars. **For Minneapolis, that would mean a \$29 million cut in the City's 2010 budget.**

Just last year, the governor cut funding to Minneapolis's 2010 budget by \$21 million. Combined, the \$50 million in cuts represents a 56 percent cut in the Local Government Aid that Minneapolis was supposed to receive from the State in 2010.

A cut of this magnitude would have a significant impact on services the City provides. Even the elimination of many important functions of municipal government wouldn't be enough to compensate for the lost funding:

- The City could stop prosecuting crimes, and that would save only \$7.7 million
- The City could stop filling potholes and other street maintenance for a year, and that would save only \$9 million.
- The City could shut off streetlights and save only \$2.9 million.
- The City could stop plowing and sanding streets for a winter, and that would only save \$9 million.

In other words, eliminating all of the services listed above would still fall short of saving enough money to cover the \$28.9 million Gov. Pawlenty proposed cutting from the City's State aid.

#### Seven years of State cuts

Since 2003, Local Government Aid to the City of Minneapolis has been reduced by more than \$300 million, yet the City

## State Budget Woes Affect Minneapolis

has never waived from making public safety its number one priority and has worked tirelessly to find new and innovative ways to provide core city services. However, the governor's current proposal would be extremely damaging to the City, and comes at a time when City leaders have already cut our services to the bone.

Even in these tough economic times, City leaders have taken significant steps to streamline City services, find efficiencies, and eliminate more than \$116 million in debt. Minneapolis has successfully practiced long-term financial management in an era of diminishing resources but the City is now at the point where any additional cuts in aid would need to come at the expense of core City services, like law enforcement and road maintenance.

#### What's next?

At this point, City leaders don't know how the State Legislature will approach the governor's proposal to fix the Minnesota's budget crisis and what cuts the City of Minneapolis may actually realize. However, it is important to act quickly to minimize the impact later on.

For this reason, City leadership has begun work to develop a proposal to the City Council for a supplemental 2010 budget. This process is at its earliest stages.

The [City's Web site](#) will soon have more information about the process for developing a supplemental 2010 budget and how cuts could impact core city services. In the meantime, check out [the top 10 things to know about Minneapolis's budget](#).

Each year, the City of Minneapolis passes its Legislative Agenda, telling state and federal elected officials about our priorities for the coming year.

Highlights are below:

#### Local Government Aid (LGA)

In 2010 the city was scheduled to receive \$69 million in LGA. However, the \$1.3 billion State deficit could result in a slashing of city aide.

The City of Minneapolis recommends that the 2010 legislature refrain from further reductions in Local Government Aid.

#### Environment

- Pass legislation that adopts California's auto emissions standards (including greenhouse gas standards).

- Provide equal access to healthy, sustainably produced, locally grown food for low income residents.

- Create incentives to stop using chemicals and instead look towards sustainable products and processes.

#### Jobs & Economic Development

- Provide resources for sustainable development including green manufacturing.
- Provide additional resources for cleanup of polluted brown fields.
- Authorize a tax credit for high technology and bioscience companies that conduct research and development.

- Approve a historic tax credit to encourage rehab of older homes in Minneapolis.

- Increase funding for the summer youth employment program and adult job training and employment programs.

#### Affordable Housing & Homelessness Prevention

- Improve notices of foreclosures to Cities and renters.
- Permit continued occupancy of foreclosed properties during the redemption period.
- Modify the foreclosure process to provide additional time prior to the sale.

- Maintain owner occupancy of foreclosed homes by current or new owner-occupants.

- Provide funding for local governments or non-profits to purchase homes for owner-occupancy.

- Continue review of the property tax code to encourage affordable housing production.

- Provide state income tax credits for affordable housing.

(continued on page 4)

## Minneapolis's 2010 Legislative Agenda

### Minneapolis's 2010 Legislative Agenda (continued)

(continued from page 3)

- Initiate a state-supported land trust project.
- The initiatives proposed by the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless to prevent homelessness by improving transitions from corrections.
- Legislative action to eliminate tax incentives encouraging conversion of single

family housing to rental property.

- Prospective repeal of the relative homestead property tax classification.

#### Public Safety & Human Trafficking

- Create a statewide coordinated plan for dealing with released sex offenders that addresses the concentration of offenders.

- Prohibit handgun possession with a blood-alcohol concentration of .08 or more.
- Streamline statutes in order to more effectively prosecute prostitution-related offenses.
- Pass legislation for funding treatment and creation of transitional housing programs to support survivors of human trafficking.

- Support legislation creating tougher penalties for offenders convicted of tagging, which includes the suspending of drivers' licenses for up to one year; and also support a statewide age limit on the purchase of spray paint.

## Neighborhood Notes

### Calling 911—A Message from the MPD

When 911 was created in 1968, it was designed to be used solely in the event of emergencies such as robberies, house fires, and heart attacks.

Forty-two years later, this is no longer the case. 911 can be used as a general number in all cases to contact public safety responders. The personnel at Minneapolis 911 are highly-skilled professionals who are trained to triage incoming calls. During busy times you may be greeted with, "Minneapolis 911. Is this an emergency or can you hold?" An operator will get back to you as soon as high priority calls have been handled. Please don't hang up. This creates more work for the 911 operator as they have to call back every hang up call.

Here are some helpful hints to keep in mind when calling 911. When the 911 call is answered, **be prepared to answer several questions.**

- **Try to give an exact address** or location where the incident is occurring.

- **Be patient with the 911 operator.** All the questions are important to the safety of the responders and the public. Help can be sent while you are speaking with the operator.

- **Stay on the line** if necessary.

- **Call back** if you have any further information, the situation changes, or emergency personnel are no longer needed.

- **Be patient while waiting for an officer.** Calls for service are dispatched on a priority basis. Crimes in-progress, life-threatening situations, or calls which require medical assistance are considered high priority and will be dispatched before lower priority calls.

- If you are unable to speak during a 911 call, try to give some indication that help is needed. In almost every case, the address you are calling from will appear on the 911 operator's screen.

- If you are calling from a cell phone, it is very important to give the operator a location. Cell phones only transmit an approximate location or intersection to the 911 call center. Help can still be started but the chances of being located are drastically reduced without specific location or address information.

- The Minneapolis 911 Center is equipped to handle calls received from TTY/TDD devices. Translation service is also available for non-English speaking callers.

- If the call is medical in nature, you may be transferred to HCMC or North Memorial dispatch to receive pre-arrival assistance. While you are on the phone with pre-arrival, an ambulance can be started.

**The Bottom Line: If you're unsure whether or not you should call 911, CALL!**



#### Ward Neighborhood Associations

[Field, Regina, Northrop Neighborhood Group](#)

3rd Wednesday, 6:30-8:30 pm, Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church

[Hale, Page, Diamond Lake Community Association](#)

4th Monday, 7-8:30 pm, Emmanuel United Methodist Church

[Kingfield Neighborhood Association](#)

2nd Wednesday, 7-8:30 pm, Martin Luther King Park

[Nokomis East Neighborhood Association](#)

4th Thursday, 7-8:30 pm, NENA Office

[Tangletown Neighborhood Association](#)

3rd Monday, 7-8:30 pm, Fuller Park

[Windom Community Council](#)

2nd Thursday, 7-8:30 pm, Windom Community Center

## Emerald Ash Borer Found in Minneapolis



In February 2010, the Emerald Ash Borer was spotted in Minneapolis for the first time. Officials from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture confirmed the presence of the beetle in two trees in Tower Hill Park, which is in the Prospect Park/East River Road neighborhood. This infestation is within a mile of where the Emerald Ash Borer was found in Saint Paul in 2009. An intensified search of all ash trees in the surrounding area is now being conducted.

The Emerald Ash Borer is a non-native species that bores under the bark of ash trees to lay eggs. The larvae that hatch live under the bark, feeding on the tissue layer there. This disrupts water and nutrients from reaching all sections of the tree, eventually causing its death.

The Emerald Ash Borer has already killed more than 40 million ash trees nationwide, primarily in southeast Michigan. Minnesota has the potential to lose 867 million trees, because it has one of the nation's highest volumes of forestland ash on public property. Minneapolis's 200,000 ash trees make up 20 percent of all trees on public and private land in the city.

Emerald Ash Borer adults don't fly far (only about two miles) so they travel farthest when people move ash logs, ash firewood, or infested ash trees from nurseries. The Minnesota

Department of Agriculture has issued a state quarantine on firewood, ash trees, and ash tree products in Hennepin, Ramsey, and Houston counties to slow the

spread of Emerald Ash Borer to other areas.

### Prevention

- **Watch for signs of infestation in your ash trees.** Emerald Ash Borer kills trees over a period of one to four years. The larvae live under the bark of the tree and feed in the tissue layer directly beneath the bark. This can cause a major thinning of a tree's canopy, with up to



one-half of a tree's branches dying during the first year of infestation. Trees generally try to compensate for the loss of limbs by sprouting new growth below the level of infestation. At this time the bark may begin to split.

Eventually the adult beetles emerge from the bark. In the process of emerging as adults, they leave a "D" shaped exit hole that is about one-eighth of an inch wide. The most revealing sign of Emerald Ash Borer infestation is woodpecker activity in an otherwise healthy-looking ash tree. If you suspect your ash tree could be infested by the

Emerald Ash Borer, visit the [Minnesota Department of Agriculture Web site](#) and use the "Do I Have Emerald Ash Borer?" checklist. Residents who suspect that a tree is infested with Emerald Ash Borer can also contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's "Arrest the Pest" Hotline at (651) 201-6684.

- **Firewood: Buy it where you burn it.** Don't transport firewood, even within Minnesota. Buy or harvest your wood near the area where you are going to burn the wood. In Minneapolis, you may buy bundled firewood at gas stations, which are regulated by the State. To confirm whether a fuel dealer is licensed, call 311.

can still travel on wood and branches, make sure to dispose of larger ash branches and wood properly. Hennepin, Ramsey, and Houston Counties have compiled a [list of sites](#) where you or your tree-servicing company can take your ash wood.

- **Start making tree planting plans.** Whether you are preventively replacing an ash tree or simply adding a tree to your yard, start planning for your spring planting. Consider where in your yard you will plant the tree and the type of tree you want. Consider the height, whether a tall or medium type of tree would work better in that location. Decide between deciduous or evergreen – a deciduous tree on the west or east will block summer sun to save you cooling costs. Evergreens on the north or west will help block the coldest winter winds. Also consider variety when deciding what kind of tree to plant; while in the past the same kind of tree would have been planted extensively in an area, diversity is now preferred to avoid the kind of devastation caused by Dutch Elm Disease and the Emerald Ash Borer.

- **Fall and winter are the seasons to trim or remove your ash tree.** The Emerald Ash Borer is active only from May through Labor Day. If you need to prune or remove your ash tree, fall is the best time to do it. If you are a City of Minneapolis garbage customer, you may dispose of smaller branches through the City's regular yard waste pickup program, which runs during the Fall.

Since a dormant Emerald Ash Borer



## Neighborhood Notes

### 35W/Crosstown Construction Related Road Closures

**60th Street Daytime Closures: March 2nd and 3rd (Tentative)**  
 60th Street at I-35W will close from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm on Tuesday, March 2nd and Wednesday, March 3rd. The closures are needed to place bridge beams on the northbound I-35W bridge over 60th Street. Motorists will still be able to exit southbound I-35W at 60th Street during the closure, but will **not** be able to cross under I-35W on 60th Street. Motorists should follow the posted detours.

**Lyndale Ave Daytime Closures: March 4th and 5th (Tentative)**  
 Lyndale Ave at Hwy 62 will close from 6:30 am until 3:30 pm on Thursday, March 4th and Friday, March 5th. The closures are needed to place bridge beams on the I-35W/Hwy 62 bridge above Lyndale Avenue.

All freeway ramps at Lyndale Avenue will remain open during the closures. I-35W and Highway 62 will also remain open during the closures. Mo-

torists should follow the posted detours.

**Minnehaha Parkway and Creek:  
 Closed Through March 2010**

Minnehaha Parkway and Creek at I-35W remain closed through early March 2010 as crews reconstruct the northbound I-35W bridge above the parkway. At least one pedestrian or bike path along Minnehaha Creek at I-35W will remain open; how-

ever, the path may be intermittently closed to safely conduct work.

Motorists should follow the posted detour route. During the closures, access across I-35W will be available at the 42nd Street bridge, 46th Street bridge, 50th Street bridge, Diamond Lake Road bridge, and the 60th Street underpass.

For more information on this and other MnDot projects click [here](#).

## Calendar

<b>March 6th</b>	10 am-3 pm: <b>South Minneapolis Housing &amp; Home Improvement Fair</b> at South High School (3131 19th Avenue S)
<b>March 10th</b>	7-8:30 pm: <b>Kingfield Neighborhood Association Meeting</b> at Martin Luther King Park (4055 Nicollet Avenue S)
<b>March 11th</b>	7-8:30 pm: <b>Windom Community Council</b> at Windom Community Center (5843 Wentworth Avenue)
<b>March 12th</b>	9:30-11:30 am: <b>City Council Meeting</b>
<b>March 13th-17th</b>	Council Member Quincy is in Washington D.C. for the National League of Cities Congressional City Conference
<b>March 13th</b>	9:30-11:30 am: <b>Second Saturday with Rep. Jean Wagenius</b> at Mayflower Church (106 Diamond Lake Road E)
<b>March 15th</b>	7-8:30 pm: <b>Tangletown Neighborhood Association Meeting</b> at Fuller Park (4800 Grand Avenue S)
<b>March 17th</b>	6:30-8:30 pm: <b>Field Regina Northrop Neighborhood Meeting</b> at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church (1620 46th Street E)
<b>March 22nd</b>	7-8:30 pm <b>Hale Page Diamond Lake Community Association Meeting</b> at Emmanuel United Methodist Church (5144 13th Avenue S)
<b>March 25th</b>	7-8:30 pm: <b>Nokomis East Neighborhood Association Meeting</b> at the NENA Office (3000 50th Street E)
<b>March 26th</b>	5:30-6:30 pm: <b>Happy Hour with John</b> at Kings (4555 Grand Avenue S)