

Ward 11 Monthly Newsletter

Council Member Scott Benson

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Ten Year Transportation Plan

The Department of Public Works is currently preparing a ten-year transportation action plan, which will be completed by Fall 2006. This plan will be focused on specific actions that can be undertaken in the next ten years, and especially in the next 1-2 years, to improve transportation throughout the City. Metro Transit/Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation have contributed funding to the project and will be active partners in plan development and implementation. A Project Steering Committee has been established that will work closely with Public Works staff and the consultant team throughout development of the plan. There are nine citizen representatives on the PSC along with representatives from a number of agencies and organizations.

The City Council and the Project Steering Committee have informally supported a transportation vision for the city, based on the policies in the Minneapolis Plan, that can be summarized as:

The City will be a vital and thriving metropolitan urban center.

- People will have good transportation choices.
- The transportation system will serve future growth with access to destinations by all modes (pedestrian, bicycle, transit, automobile, freight).
- Transit will be the mode of choice downtown and throughout the City.
- The City will be livable and walkable.

The Action Plan is a citywide plan that will focus on the major streets in the city and on the downtown area. The plan will be a multi-modal plan, addressing pedestrians, bicycles, transit, automobiles and freight movement. There will be four key products: (1) a web-based transportation fact book, (2) a transit and street system operations plan for downtown, (3) new street design guidelines using place-based criteria, and (4) a citywide transportation action plan.

A Street Planning and Design Framework will be developed that is place-based, multi-modal and responsive to movement patterns. This will result in a system plan and street design guidelines that respond to the varied character of districts and neighborhoods in the City. The outcome will be easier decision-making, design guidelines that are more suitable for a core city, and better alignment of movement and place, jurisdiction and function, and funding and design criteria.

One of the goals of the plan is to develop a primary transit network that provides service every 15 minutes or better for at least 18 hours per day. The emphasis on these primary corridors will be actions that can achieve very reliable speeds and a level of service that is competitive with the automobile. The primary transit network is expected to carry about 80 percent of the transit riders in the city and will result in better service at a lower cost per rider.

Transit service in downtown faces some significant challenges. Both citywide all-day transit service and peak hour commuter service are concentrated in downtown. The existing bus lanes are congested and average bus operating speeds are very low. Therefore, major changes in how transit flows into, through and within downtown will be evaluated. Operating strategies that will be evaluated include: (1) a system of transit stations intercepting commuter service and connecting to downtown via a high-frequency shuttle service, (2) two-lane transit-only lanes or streets coupled with skip-stop operation, and (3) some combination of these two operational concepts.

For additional information on the Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan, go to:
<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/10YrTransportHomePWIntro.asp>

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Important Phone Numbers

- Ward 11 Office
673-2211
- Graffiti Hotline
673-2090
- Housing Inspection
673-5858
- Garbage/Recycling
673-2917

New water ultrafiltration plant

Minneapolis drinking water is among the safest in the nation with the opening of a new state-of-the-art water treatment facility. The City's new plant, which on Sept. 1 began supplying water to customers in Minneapolis and some neighboring suburbs, uses cutting-edge ultrafiltration technology that filters and cleans drinking water beyond federal standards.

In ultrafiltration, particles as small as viruses get filtered out of the water. This is in addition to chlorination, which kills harmful pathogens that can cause typhoid and other diseases. Ultrafiltration does not affect the taste, which Minneapolis water customers have appreciated for years.

This new plant is the largest ultrafiltration plant in the Western Hemisphere. About 70 million gallons of water will be filtered each day. Only two other plants in the world, one in Singapore and the other in Kuwait, filter more water using this process than the Minneapolis plant. The original water filtration plant, which was built between the years 1913 and 1918, is now being phased out. Once all water production moves to the new plant, the older facility will be maintained as a backup system for a number of years before being dismantled.

Completion of the new plant ends the first phase of a program to replace all of the City's water filtration plants. The second ultrafiltration plant is being planned to replace a water facility that was built in 1925. When the second plant goes into production at the end of this decade, close to 165 million gallons of water will be filtered each day making it the largest producer of filtered water using the ultrafiltration process.

More information on the new ultrafiltration plant is available at: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/water/plant_home.asp.

Legislative Success for Minneapolis

In spite of the perceived contentiousness of the last legislative session, it proved to be a fairly successful one for the City of Minneapolis. Council Member Benson, through his position as chair of the Intergovernmental Relations Committee, worked very closely with our Intergovernmental Relations staff as they advocated on behalf of the city at the legislature. Successes at the legislature this session include:

- An increase in Local Government Aid (LGA). This was a top priority of the city as it directly affects the number of police officers and fire fighters the city has. Statewide LGA increased by \$48 million, and the increase to Minneapolis was \$15 million. This increased allocation allowed the Mayor and the Council to authorize the hiring of 71 additional police officers.
- Extension of Limited Market Value. One of the pressures on property taxes has been the phasing out of Limited Market Value. This limited the amount that the taxable value of a property could increase each year. The legislature had previously voted to eliminate limited market value by 2007, but this last session they extended the elimination until 2009.
- Bonding projects. The city had four priorities for bonding, the Planetarium, Schubert Theater, University Research Park and the Midtown Exchange (former Sears site). The Planetarium and Schubert both directly received bonding money, though the Schubert received less than requested. Even though University Research Park and Midtown Exchange did not receive direct funding, they are both eligible to compete for funding through bonding dollars dedicated for bioscience and redevelopment.

These are just the highlights of a successful legislative session for Minneapolis. To find out more about these or other activities at the legislature that affects the city, you can see the full 2005 Legislative Summary on the city website at:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/legislativeaffairs/>

Minneapolis ranks as Midwest's fittest city and among the top five in the nation

Minneapolis is the fittest city in the Midwest and the fifth fittest city in the nation, according to a survey by the [Men's Fitness magazine](#). In its [2005 survey](#), the magazine looked at a number of factors to determine the country's "fattest" and "fittest" cities.

Minneapolis was cited for its residents' high life expectancy, fruit-and-vegetable consumption, low smoking and heart-disease deaths, healthy habits and good health-care access. The survey utilized data from the U.S. Census Bureau and a federal Health Resources and Services Administration report among other sources. Minneapolis ranked #18 in 2004.

Other factors considered were jogging and bike trails, gyms, fitness centers, basketball and tennis courts, the availability of healthy food and parks and open spaces. For more information on the 2005 fitness survey, click on the links below:

<http://www.mensfitness.com/rankings/4> (2005 Survey Rankings)

<http://www.mensfitness.com/rankings/35> (Why Minneapolis ranked #5)

Environmental Studies for 35W/Crosstown complete

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (Mn/DOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have determined that the environmental documentation completed last year for the project satisfies state and federal environmental review requirements. A combined federal Environmental Assessment and state Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EA/EAW) was prepared to analyze potential impacts of the project resulting from design changes since the approval of the Final EIS in 1995. The EA/EAW was available for review in July 2004 and a public hearing was held July 22, 2004. The comment period closed August 19, 2004.

After reviewing comments received on the EA/EAW, Mn/DOT and FHWA determined that the project does not have the potential for significant environmental effects. Mn/DOT issued a Negative Declaration and FHWA issued a Revised Record of Decision, both documents concluding that a Supplemental EIS is not required. The record of these decisions is supported by the Findings of Fact and Conclusions document, which is available for review at the Washburn Public Library -- 5244 Lyndale Avenue, Minneapolis. The Findings of Fact and Conclusions document is also available for viewing and downloading on the project Web site at <http://projects.dot.state.mn.us/crosstown/>. Additionally, a written copy of the document can be obtained by contacting John Griffith, Mn/DOT project manager at (651) 582-1206.

The final design plans are being prepared for an April 2006 contract letting. Construction on this \$240 million project is expected to begin in July 2006, with completion by fall 2009.

Loud Plane

Council Member Benson's office received several calls about a very loud plane landing at the airport on the evening of August 25th between 9:30 PM and 10:00 PM. Some said it sounded as if there was a plane flying much lower than normal. Inquires with the MAC indicates that the likely cause was three FA-18 Naval Fighter jets landing at the airport. Since they are not commercial aircraft they are not subject to the same noise muffling standards. The fighter jets left on the afternoon of the 26th.

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.

Monthly Community Meetings

<p>EHFNA Meets First Wednesday 7:00 PM, Lyndale Farmstead Park 3900 Bryant Ave S</p>	<p>Field Regina Northrop Meets Third Wednesday 6:30 PM Lake Nokomis Presbyterian</p>	<p>Hale Page Diamond Lake Meets Fourth Monday 7:00 PM Emmanuel United Methodist</p>
<p>Kingfield Meets Second Wednesday 7:00 PM Martin Luther King Park 4055 Nicollet Ave S</p>	<p>Lynnhurst Meets Second Thursday 7:00 PM Lynnhurst Community Center 1345 Minnehaha Pkwy</p>	<p>NENA Meets Fourth Thursday 7:00 PM NENA Office 3000 E. 50th St</p>
<p>SENA Meets Second Monday 7:00 PM Our Redeemer Lutheran Church 4000 28th Ave S</p>	<p>Tangletown Meets Third Monday 7:00 PM Fuller Community Center 4800 Grand Ave S</p>	<p>Windom Meets Second Thursday 7:00 PM Windom Community Center 5821 Wentworth Ave S</p>

Coffee With Scott

Join Scott for a cup of coffee and talk about City issues. He will be at the following coffee shops from 8-9 AM

<p>Betsy's Backporch 5447 Nicollet Ave S September 21</p>	<p>Nokomis Cafe 5155 Bloomington Ave October 5</p>
<p>Java Jacks 818 W. 46th St September 7</p>	<p>Sister Sludge 4557 Bloomington Ave October 19</p>

Open Appointments

[Hennepin Theatre Special Services District Advisory Board Vacancy \(closes 8/5/2005\)](#)

[Civil Rights Commission \(closes 8/12/2005\)](#)

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