



9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

April 13, 2007

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Breakfast with Gary: Mayor R.T. Rybak

On April 27th, join Council Member Gary Schiff for Breakfast with Gary featuring Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak. Rybak will talk about public safety and [The Minneapolis Promise](#) and also take questions from the audience. Since he took office in January of 2002, Mayor Rybak has helped streamline the city's development functions, created a \$10 million affordable housing trust fund, strengthened the city's ethics code, and closed a \$50 million gap in city funding by delivering four budgets in less than two years.



Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak

Breakfast with Gary is a monthly event held 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. the final Friday of the month at La Loma Café of the Americas, 3019 Minnehaha Avenue South. \$5 buys breakfast.

Future uncertain for Neighborhood Revitalization Program

New [projections](#) released this week show the city's successful [Neighborhood Revitalization Program](#) with a \$7.7 million shortfall through 2009. Continuation of the program past 2009 remains uncertain, with no funding identified.

The shortfall stems from a smaller than anticipated tax increment in the group of downtown commercial properties that fund NRP, according to Jack Kryst, city finance analyst. The lack of tax increment came from two factors: slow growth in the value of downtown commercial properties and the effect of state tax rate cuts for commercial properties (see next story, below).

Earlier this month a City Council [motion](#) directing staff to study funding options for the future of NRP failed, with only Council Members Schiff, Gordon and Lilligren voting yes. Also last week, the Council asked the Legislature not to take any action on [a bill sponsored by Rep. Karen Clark](#) (61B) requiring a study about the future of NRP.

"NRP has been crucial for revitalizing neighborhoods," Council Member Gary Schiff said. "We must act now to plan the future of this program and ensure the ongoing operation of neighborhood organizations."

Corporate property taxes drop for big business

While the property tax burden continues to rise on Minneapolis homeowners, downtown corporate property taxes have fallen in the last decade. Today, the top five commercial properties pay \$22.3 million less in property taxes than they did a decade ago.

	1997 tax	2006 tax
225 South Sixth St	\$12,709,338	\$4,762,143
Wells Fargo Center	\$10,810,098	\$6,177,573
City Center	\$9,852,920	\$4,956,434
Fifth Street Towers	\$7,445,390	\$3,999,042
Lutheran Brotherhood	\$2,684,075	\$1,346,834
Total	\$43,501,820	\$21,242,026

"The legislature passed property tax cuts for big business back in the 1990s, and then

the market slumped. The effect is millions lost to the city budget,” says Gary Schiff. Now, Minneapolis legislators are proposing a new tax plan to provide property tax relief to homeowners. “Minnesotans are in need of real and permanent property tax relief,” Rep Jim Davnie said. “Unfortunately, Governor Pawlenty would prefer to protect very high income taxpayers rather than the 90% of Minnesotans who would get tax relief by threatening to veto this bill.”

The proposed legislation would create a new homestead credit of up to \$2,500 that 90 percent of homeowners in Minnesota would qualify for. The tax refund would be supported by creating a new state income tax bracket applying to people earning more than \$226,000 as a single filer or \$400,000 as a couple. In that tax bracket, 81 percent of the people earn more than \$1 million per year.

To send an e-mail regarding property tax reform to Governor Tim Pawlenty, [click here](#).

New Business Profile!

La Loma opens third south Minneapolis location



Noelia and Enrique Garcia
(MPR Photo by Bianca Vazquez Toness)

In just eight years, Enrique and Noelia Garcia have turned a family recipe for tamales into a profitable business, including wholesaling and restaurants in three Ninth Ward locations. The latest, La Loma Café of the Americas celebrates a grand opening at noon this Saturday, April 14th at 3019 Minnehaha Ave S.

“Enrique and Noelia were among the first Latinos to see Lake Street as an opportunity” says Joyce Wisdom, Lake Street Council director. “As a result, investment on Lake Street has multiplied, especially with immigrant businesses.”

In 1993, the Garcia’s left Quebrantadero, Morelos for the United States, just two days after the teenagers were married. The tamales they made for their coworkers made them popular, and a decision to go into business soon followed.

[La Loma](#) first opened in 1999 as a coffee shop in [Mercado Central](#), serving beverages including atole, along with tamales. Catering requests eventually led to a wholesaling business on 38th Street. Last year, La Loma added a second café in the Midtown Exchange and the tamales can be found in the frozen food section of stores throughout Minnesota. For more about the Garcia’s journey into business ownership, read the profile by [Minnesota Public Radio](#).

Dine Out for Life and fight AIDS on April 26th

The Minneapolis City Council has [proclaimed](#) April 26, 2007 as Dining Out for Life Day. Participating restaurants will contribute a portion of meal expenses to the [Aliveness Project’s](#) work helping people living with HIV and AIDS in Minneapolis.

Last year, more than 1,350 people with HIV benefited from the Aliveness Projects services, including meal programs, a food shelf and health care advocacy.

[Participating restaurants](#) near the 9th Ward include [Clicquot Club Café](#), [The Craftsman](#), [El Nuevo Rodeo](#), [Jakeeno’s Pizza & Pasta](#), [Midori’s Floating World Café](#) and the [Riverview Café & Wine Bar](#).

