



# 9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

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## City allocated federal foreclosure funds

Minneapolis will receive \$5.6 million from the federal government to use on efforts to get foreclosed and abandoned homes sold and occupied. "The city will prioritize funding under the federal program to those areas of the city experiencing the highest number of foreclosures," Tom Streitz, Director of Housing Policy & Development said. "We are also in discussion with the State of Minnesota Housing Finance Agency to receive additional funds from the state allocation of federal funds. Based on our initial conversations with the State we anticipate that we may receive an additional \$4 million dollars that will help us speed the recovery of neighborhoods experiencing high numbers of foreclosures."



There have been 2,304 foreclosures year-to-date in the City of Minneapolis.

Minneapolis, along with St. Paul and the counties of Hennepin, Dakota and Anoka were chosen to receive the money based on the number and rate of foreclosures, subprime mortgages, delinquencies and defaults. The aid can be used to purchase foreclosed properties for rehab and sale. According to the [Star Tribune article by Maria Elena Baca](#), "The federal money comes with strings attached. At least 25 percent needs to be targeted to help people at or below 50 percent of the state median income. Each state, city or county has to create a plan and submit it by December 1 to HUD, which has 45 days to review it. The money needs to be committed within 18 months, and spent within five years."

In addition to federal money, Minneapolis and St. Paul were chosen for the First Look pilot program. "First Look" was developed by the National Community Stabilization Trust who will coordinate the transfer of real estate owned properties from financial institutions to local housing organizations, in collaboration with state and local governments. A benefit of the First Look Program is that the lenders will make the properties available pre-market and at a significantly reduced rate. For complete statistics and maps of mortgage foreclosures in Minneapolis, click [here](#).

## Public forum on the Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor

Reinvestment is happening along the Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor and residents have a role to play in the process. On Wednesday, November 12th from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Sanford Middle School located at 3524 42nd Avenue South, the Longfellow Community Council Neighborhood Development Caucus and the Community Advisory Committee to the Community Works project is hosting a forum where neighbors can learn about and provide input on a major Hennepin County Community Works Initiative. The initiative will impact the area from Hiawatha Avenue to Minnehaha Avenue South and from the Midtown Greenway to Minnehaha Parkway.

Residents may visit stations addressing topics such as transportation and traffic, community image, safety, economic development, green space and parks, housing and commercial revitalization. Short presentations on recent corridor studies such as a railroad study, cultural resource study and market retail study will be offered twice during the evening. There will be refreshments and fun activities for all ages. For more information, click [here](#) or contact Robb Luckow at Hennepin County,

## Partnering to increase domestic violence convictions



As part of a collaboration between the Minneapolis Police Department and [Minneapolis City Attorney's Office](#), the 5<sup>th</sup> precinct has trained its officers on specific protocol designed to improve how they collect evidence for misdemeanor domestic abuse related cases. Since February of this year, the pilot project has already resulted in an impressive 25% increase in domestic violence convictions compared to a prior year. "We are getting better evidence, can bring more of these cases to court and are obtaining more convictions, all with existing resources," commented City Attorney Susan Segal. The pilot will run until the end of January 2009.

"The new pilot project is an example of the Minneapolis Police Department's on-going commitment to doing their part in creating evidence based cases that the Minneapolis City Attorney's Office can prosecute without requiring the victim to be the sole witness in the case,

"Carol Arthur of the [Domestic Abuse Project](#) said. "Victims of domestic violence are frequently intimidated against testifying. Therefore, getting statements at the scene and gathering evidence to support the assault can make all the difference in a successful prosecution and intervention of abuse and providing safety, help and resources to all family members."

Throughout the pilot, the Attorney's Office and Minneapolis Police Department will communicate about specific cases, the impact of the new protocol on resolving cases, and to discuss issues and problems that arise. Segal is enthusiastic about the new endeavor. "The police department, with Inspector Arneson's leadership, has been a great partner on this project. We are looking forward to working with the Department to expand the program to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct and the rest of the City."

## Little Earth crime decreases as hope increases

As 2008 begins to come to a close, a downward trend in crime is becoming evident for 2008. One of the most remarkable areas where this decrease in crime is showing up is in the southern part of the East Phillips neighborhood where [Little Earth of United Tribes](#) is completing its thirty-fifth year of existence. Little Earth is experiencing a dramatic drop in Part One crime, which includes assault, burglary, murder and rape. In 2002, there were 73 offenses compared to only 43 for 2008. The number has been slashed by more than half since 2005 when the number of offenses reached its peak at 93 by years end.



A goal of Little Earth's strategic plan is for 85% of all eligible students to graduate from high school by 2017.

Bill Ziegler, who became president and CEO of Little Earth in December 2004 when the crime, drugs, gang activity, and a sense of hopelessness ruled over development points out that not only has crime decreased, Little Earth has also experienced increased resident involvement in pro-active safety activities. Residents of Little Earth are taking pride in where they live and who they are. The kids have painted a new mural on the pedestrian bridge that connects the east and west sides of Little Earth. "The art on the west side depicts traditional homes at a time when the people prospered and life was good. On the east side is the Minneapolis sky line," Ziegler says. "The pedestrian bridge

in between signifies that we truly can bridge between when we were strong as a people and today but we must be willing to stand up and walk to a new future as a people.” In addition, Little Earth is partnering with the City of Minneapolis and the Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation on a homeownership program that will place Little Earth families in single family homes near the current development. For more information on Little Earth's plan for the future, click [here](#).

## Attend the annual Lake Street Council wine tasting



One of the silent auction items is a pair of the photo is a pair of autographed Muhammed Ali boxing gloves.

On Thursday, November 13, the Lake Street Council will hold its [12<sup>th</sup> annual fundraiser](#). Attendees will enjoy beer and wine tasting while perusing silent auction items to support the work of the council. Items run the gamut from sports to health to art. Supporters can bid on over 100 items, from a heart scan at Abbott Northwestern, tickets to local sporting events, gift cards to local stores and restaurants, as well as Lake Street art and photography.

Tickets are \$20 for members, or \$25 for non-members. For more information and to purchase tickets [email Joyce Wisdom](#) or call her at

612-822-0232. Ticketers may also be ordered online at [www.lakestreetcouncil.org](http://www.lakestreetcouncil.org) or be purchased at the door.

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