

10 April 2006

Dear Prospective Task Force Member,

You have been identified as a person who may be interested in helping shape the City of Minneapolis' community technology agenda through participation on a newly formed Digital Inclusion Task Force. This project brings together community leaders to articulate and address existing technology access and literacy gaps in our communities.

The Task Force will work closely with community stakeholders to articulate the core "digital divide" issues facing the City. This group will also provide guidance regarding the use of potential funds that the City is positioned to secure through the Wireless Minneapolis initiative. Your participation on the Task Force will ensure that any "community benefits" funding addresses technology disparities as defined in the City's RFP. Included with this letter are background materials describing the City's Broadband/Wireless initiative, along with a proposed timeline for task force activities leading up to final contract negotiations in July of 2006.

We envision the Task Force as a dynamic cross-sector working group, designed to include representatives from local government, education, non-profit, business and community-based organizations. The Digital Inclusion Task Force is being convened to:

- *Identify opportunities* to leverage new and existing resources towards "bridging the digital divide" in the City of Minneapolis
- *Develop specific strategies* that address the persistent barriers to technology access and literacy among City residents, small businesses and non-profit organizations
- *Prioritize technology needs* and approaches, based on cross-sector input and evaluation (these will be included in final CBA recommendations)
- *Articulate a community technology agenda* for the City moving forward

The Task Force will meet 5-6 times between April 24th and August 1st, 2006. These will be working lunch meetings (11:30-1:00 p.m.) held at City Hall in downtown Minneapolis. We will survey participants for best dates once we have the final list of participants.

In addition to attending meetings, participants will be expected to share information and correspondence over the next 4 months using an online forum provided by e-democracy.org. This forum is being designed to facilitate discussion, and will allow members to share internal and external resources (such as links and draft documents) in advance of meetings and presentations.

To ensure that we have a broad representation of perspectives and expertise while maintaining a productive group size (approx. 15), we are asking nominees to submit a summary of your interests or experience related to this issue, and brief answers to the following questions:

1. How does the digital divide affect your constituents/customers/clients?
2. Has your organization/office developed (or discussed) strategies to address the "digital divide"?
3. What expertise or interests do you bring to this Task Force?

Please email your resume or biography, including current contact information, along with your thoughts in response to the questions above, **no later than April 17th**.

If you would like to nominate another colleague to represent your organization or sector, or have any questions about this project, please contact me directly ASAP.

Thank you in advance for your help toward ensuring "Digital Inclusion" for all Minneapolis residents!

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