

SOUTHWEST Connector

NEWS FOR EVERYONE, DELIVERED TO EVERYONE • NOVEMBER 3, 2022 • VOL. 1 • NO. 20

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paints what she sees



A NEW NICOLLET

City gathers input on Nicollet
Redevelopment at open
house, through survey

By **Chloe Peter**

The Nicollet Redevelopment will take down barriers that have impacted residents and local businesses.

Lake Street and Nicollet Ave. was once an intersection of two commercial corridors. But after the Kmart site was built in 1977, Nicollet Ave. has been cut off into different side streets.

The City of Minneapolis held an open house on Oct. 25 at Abyssinia Cultural Center (322 W. Lake St.) to get public comments. Attendees were asked:

- What are some specific housing, small business, and public space needs in this area?
- What else should we know about community health and safety in the former Kmart area?

The city plans to host more design workshops in the future.

Minneapolis owns approximately 10 acres of land between the Midtown Greenway, Lake St., 1st Ave., and Blaisdell Ave. This property is referred to as the "former Kmart site." The redevelopment project will connect Nicollet Avenue south of Lake Street and north of the Midtown Greenway, reestablishing a street grid after decades in which Nicollet Avenue was cut off by the store. The city of Minneapolis bought the store in March 2020 and was planning to demolish it that year. However, after two local post offices were



TASTING LOCAL BREWS

Events coordinator Alek Glauvitz (left) and tap room manager Luke Hoppe serve up samples from Lyn Lake Brewery during the 21st Autumn Brew Review at Boom Island Park on Saturday, Oct. 15, 2022. They were among 95 breweries from across the state at the annual event organized by the Minnesota Craft Brewers Guild. Also present were Wooden Ship Brewing Company, Steel Toe Brewing of St. Louis Park, Wooden Hill Brewing Company of Edina, Eastlake Craft Brewery, and Jinx Tea. Look for more photos on the Connector website and Instagram account. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

DIVIDED ON RESTRUCTURE

City council members and residents remain divided on new "strong mayor" government structure.

By **Cam Gordon**

The city council and mayor approved the "executive mayor - legislative council government structure" ordinance amendments on Oct. 20, 2022.

The approval repeals and replaces several chapters of the Minneapolis code of ordinances, adding seven new chapters relating to the city's administration including sections on the new offices of public service and community safety and changes to those on the city attorney, internal auditor, and the city coordinator.

The ordinance was authored by Ward 13 Council Member Linea Palmisano, although the city's press release called it "Mayor Jacob Frey's government structure omnibus ordinance." Its framework closely follows the recommendations of Frey's Government Structure Workgroup that consolidated several city departments into two mega departments, or offices. This reduces the number of direct reports for the mayor to four from the 10 found in the city's organizational chart prior to this term.

The four reporting to the mayor includes two new positions. The City Operations Officer and Community Safety Commissioner will now be alongside the Mayor's Chief of Staff and the city attorney. The city attorney continues to report to both the council and the mayor just as she, and all the other major departments aside



OVERWHELMED? CALL CRISIS NURSERY FOR PARENTING HELP



Mary Pat Lee stands in the closet of the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery where children visiting are able to pick their own outfits for their stay. "Every kid who comes through our doors has experienced some kind of trauma and we take that into account with their care," Lee said. "It's not 'What's wrong with this kid?' but it's 'What happened to this kid and what do they need?'" (Photo by Chloe Peter)

Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery offers free, voluntary services for parents facing unemployment, medical or mental health concerns, homelessness, poverty, domestic violence, and more.

By **Chloe Peter**

A woman came into the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery (GMCN) looking for shelter for her children. Her boyfriend had been prostituting her and had taken all of her money. She was terrified for herself and her children. The nursery housed her children while staff supported her in finding resources such as women's shelters and domestic violence support centers.

GMCN Executive Director Mary Pat Lee has worked there for more than 16 years. "My job, or at least the way I see my job, is to make sure that everybody else has what they need to do their job so that we can achieve our mission, which is to end child abuse and neglect and create strong, healthy families," Lee said.

In 2021, 186 children from 113 different families stayed at the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery. The non-profit organization is at 4544 4th Avenue South.

Help starts with a crisis line. Any time of the day or night, if a parent or guardian in the care of young children feels like they need to talk to someone, the GMCN has a qualified advocate that they can connect to. Lee mentioned that sometimes those calls are a parent calling in to say that they have a colicky baby who hasn't slept, and they aren't sure what to do. Other times, a parent doesn't have any place safe for the children to stay. No matter what the situation, the GMCN's mission is to provide support for families.



FAMILY, FRIENDS CELEBRATE GEORGE FLOYD'S BIRTHDAY

By **Jill Boogren**

Family, friends and community members gathered on Oct. 14, 2022, at The Square event center (3736 Chicago Ave.) to celebrate the life and memory of George "Perry" Floyd on what would have been his 49th birthday.

Floyd's aunt, Angela Harrelson, described her nephew as good in sports – he played basketball and football – and able to relate to the people in the neighborhood.

"They used to call him Big Floyd. Not because he's so tall, which he really was, but because he really connected with the community."

Before moving to Minnesota, Floyd lived in what Harrelson called a "rough" neighborhood in Houston, Texas, and went through his own personal challenges. But he had been reaching out to programs to help mentor some of the Black and Brown youth in the neighborhood – work Harrelson believes Floyd would have continued here.

"There truly wasn't enough time for him. Because if he coulda did what he was doin' in Texas, it would've been phenomenal," she said. "He just didn't have enough time."

To those who knew him, Floyd's magnanimous nature extended to everyone.

"Floyd is the type of man, he went up to everybody. People that a lot of us just kind of throw away and don't even want to look at and don't wanna be around," said Floyd's significant other Courteney Ross. "I noticed that in him, that none of that mattered. He would go around with everyone... and pray and love them up no matter where they came from or how they looked, what they had. And treat everyone just as a human being. Period."

It is fitting, then, that a whole community has formed in the wake of his death. Another of Floyd's aunts Mahalia Jones from North Carolina, praised those who came forward to protect and hold sacred the space at 38th and Chicago.

"That was one of the most amazing, powerful things that I ever heard. And y'all did that. And y'all continue to do that," said Jones.

Floyd's cousin Paris Stevens, also from North Carolina, acknowledged that the people at 38th and Chicago have been in "the thick and thin of it."

"To go through that trauma, every single day, and to still stand – we're all still standing. We have to keep pushing forward," she said. "The trials and the tribu-



Toshira Garraway of Families Supporting Families Against Police Violence, shares a joyful moment with George "Perry" Floyd's aunt Angela Harrelson, his aunt Mahalia Jones (holding microphone), and his cousin Paris Stevens at a celebration of Perry's life on Oct. 14, 2022, on what would have been his 49th birthday. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



Guests honor George Perry Floyd at The Square at 38th and Chicago on what would have been his 49th birthday. (Photo by Jill Boogren)

lations won't stop, but things are getting better. Change is happening."

For Harrelson, this change is the gift Floyd left behind for everybody, change she described as "powerful," a door that people "just ran through."

"For the first time in history Black and Brown people ran through this door. Chains were broken. It's like we was runnin' for freedom. But this time we ran, we never looked back, because we saw that dream that Martin Luther King had talked about. We saw hope with a plan this time. And everyone was just excited," she said. "So we need to keep that excitement goin', not just for our family, but there's other families that didn't get a chance to have the publicity that we had."

Stevens echoed the calls to continue

the work.

"This has impacted people from all over the world. And we just have to keep the momentum," she said. "It is a movement, and the movement has to continue. It doesn't just stop with us, it continues through you all. We all have a voice. We all have to lift our voices in one way, shape or form."

Earlier in the day, family members received a proclamation from Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey declaring Oct. 14, 2022, as George Floyd Day. Harrelson said it was an overwhelming day, but it was an "incredible birthday present" for Perry.

The evening event was organized by Families Supporting Families Against Police Violence, who support impacted families while seeking justice for the many



George Floyd's significant other, Courteney Ross, tells people gathered that Floyd would treat everyone, no matter where they came from, how they looked or what they had, as a human being. (Photo by Jill Boogren)



lives lost at the hands of the police.

Floyd's birthday fell just 10 days before the scheduled start of the state trial of the remaining two former Minneapolis police officers involved in his murder, J. Alexander Kueng and Tou Thao. Kueng pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting second-degree manslaughter. Thao waived his right to a jury trial and asked for a bench trial for aiding and abetting second-degree manslaughter, which means the court will determine the verdict. The other two former Minneapolis police officers involved were already found guilty and are serving prison time: Derek Chauvin, found guilty of second-degree unintentional murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter on April 20, 2021, was sentenced to 22.5 years; Thomas Lane pleaded guilty to aiding and abetting second-degree manslaughter and was sentenced to three years. All four officers were also found guilty in federal court of violating Floyd's civil rights.

Harrelson and Stevens cochair the George Floyd Global Memorial, formed to preserve the offerings left for Floyd as well as the stories of the community. Go to www.georgefloydglobalmemorial.org.

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THE PROCESS

Services include crisis de-escalation, resources and referrals, short term overnight care for children ages birth–six, and home visiting. If you decide to bring your child to stay with us, please know:

- We'll listen so we understand how to best care for your child.
- We'll help find the best way to get you and your family to the nursery.
- All you need to bring is proof of residence in Hennepin County and any prescription medications your child needs. We'll take care of the rest.
- You are welcome to call and talk with your child during their stay at the nursery.

All services provided by the Nursery are confidential and voluntary, meaning you decide if we're the right fit for you. We will not call Child Protective Services if you opt to use the Nursery, however, please know that Nursery staff are mandated reporters and must call Child Protective Services if they suspect child abuse or neglect.

VOLUNTEER

Grocery Shoppers: Help ensure that kiddos staying at the nursery continue to receive healthy, fresh meals. Sign up to purchase and deliver groceries including fresh fruits and veggies to the nursery – flexible scheduling and item lists available. Contact Keith (kjohnson@crisisnursery.org) to learn more or sign up.

Cook for Kids and Creative Snack for Kids:

Groups of up to four, fully vaccinated volunteers can come make a meal and a snack for the kids at the nursery.

Please note: Due to COVID-19, the nursery continues to limit the number of people in the building. General child care and enrichment activity volunteer shifts have not yet resumed.

1 CRISIS NURSERY

"In being here and being a resource for people, we're really able to hopefully prevent abuse, but also neglect," Lee said. "We're really trying to ensure that parents have a place that they trust that they can come to."

GMCN cares for kids newborn to age six. Children can stay in the nursery up to three days at a time and up to 30 days in a year. If a parent uses their overnight services two or three times, the nursery will offer a home visiting program. The home visiting program is where a master's level clinician will come to the home once a week for up to two years and discuss what is putting the parent in crisis and how the nursery can support the family getting to a place where needs can be met.

"It's always about connecting people to resources," Lee said. "It's especially true when we're dealing with a situation where the parent has experienced domestic violence."

STRESS IMPACTS BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

Lee also pointed out that kids who have experienced crisis and trauma have a higher cortisol level than what is considered average for children. Because their bodies are in "flight or fight" response, it triggers stress and can have an impact on their brain development.

"We're trying to ensure that kids here really experience rest," Lee said. "We try and give them some techniques to help them handle their big feelings, and we try and give them an opportunity to have a trusting relationship with an adult other than their parent."

To help children that come in practice mindfulness and process their feelings, the nursery has different playrooms. One room is dedicated to sensory play with pads on the floors to roll around, different instruments, and toys with various textures.

Another room is an art room where kids can express themselves creatively with paint, crayons, and etc.

GMCN provides clean clothes and meals for children while they are there. The dining area has signs encouraging the kids that they do not have to be afraid to ask for more food, and others with pictures that represent different emotions.

"We want to be giving kids the benefit of what science has learned about how we can change our response to be most helpful and to mitigate the things that are harming and damaging through stress and crisis," Lee said.

“

We are really trying to ensure that parents have a place that they trust to come to when they and their children are in need."

Mary Pat Lee

G M C N works with Dr. Megan Gunnar and doctoral students who specialize in child development at the University of Minnesota. They

come in to educate staff on ways to help children through crises they are experiencing, and will then visit later to see what progress has been made and provide more advice.

"I think, for the nursery, really trying to build that relationship between parent and child to break the pattern is important," Lee said. "It's a two-generation approach, and I think through that, a lot of our parents are doing an amazing job, but many of them are caught in this repeating the experience they had as a child with their children."

To find more information on the Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery and how to donate, visit www.crisisnursery.org/. Call 763-591-0100 to reach the GMCN's 24-hour crisis hotline.

PARENTING TIP: HELPING YOUR CHILD TO OPEN UP

Parents want to know about their kids and what they're feeling, but it can be difficult to get them to open up. Here are a few ways you can make your child feel safe enough to share their feelings, good or bad.

• **Specifics:** Asking "how was your day?" can be overwhelming. Try narrowing the questions to make them more specific: "What did you have for lunch?" "Who did you play with at recess?"

• **Empathy vs. Solutions:** Pay attention to whether your child wants you to simply listen or if they want help solving a problem. You can even ask them that very question: "Do you just want me to listen or do you want my thoughts?"

• **Open ended questions:** Instead of "Did you have fun in gym class?", try "What happened in gym class today?". Saying "tell me more" is another good way to open up communication.

• **Show:** Be open yourself and share your own feelings. Teach your children by modeling the behavior you want to see.



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WE NEED TO HAVE MORE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT EATING DISORDERS

A look into eating disorders in Minnesota, and how I've dealt with my own.

With all of the trend diets that are popular in the media right now, it can be difficult to know where I stand when it comes to my own body image. I am bombarded by social media posts about if I just gave up most fats, I could live a better life, while others insist that I need to restrict sugars to the point where I should even be wary of fruits. While I know that there needs to be a nutritional balance, it's hard to navigate my own health in this climate.

Nine percent of Minnesotans will have an eating disorder (ED) in their lifetime, according to Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders (STRIPED), a public health incubator funded by Harvard Medical School. This represents over 490,000 people. An ED is defined as serious conditions related to persistent eating behaviors that negatively impact your health, your emotions, and your ability to function in important areas of life. The most common eating disorders are anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge-eating disorder.

My ED started when I first entered high school. I compared my body to other girls in my class, and I felt pressure to look like the women I saw on Instagram. I saw comments critiquing how they looked and wondered what people thought of me if they could be so critical of women who were already being Photoshopped to be perfect. It took a very long time to have the courage to reach out for help about my struggling relationship with food.

ED can affect anyone starting as young as five years old to more than 80 years old. While it impacts all races, peo-

ple of color with ED are half as likely to be diagnosed or receive treatment, according to STRIPED.

Reaching out for help was one of the best things I ever did even though I am still on my journey to have a healthy relationship with food. I work on mindful eating and seeing a health journey as a way to feel better, instead of feeling guilty over my weight. However, each ED and the path to healing is very individualistic.

ED treatment in the Southwest area can be found at Melrose Center - St. Louis Park (325 Monterey Dr.), and The Emily Program - Anna Westin House West (3012 W 44th St. Minneapolis).

The Mayo Clinic lists some tactics to help with prevention of ED in kids and teens for parents:

- Avoid dieting around your child
- Talk to your child about their mental health and the risks of unhealthy eating choices
- Cultivate and reinforce a healthy body image
- Enlist the help of your child's doctor

I still feel twinges of guilt when I eat,


and I have definitely fallen off the track of gaining a better relationship with food more than a few times. I tug at my clothes because they never seem to fit right on my body. On the rare occurrence that I feel good in an outfit, it is bombarded by thoughts like: "If I just ate less, I could fit into something better." I would never wish this on anyone, and yet, more than 490,000 Minnesotans will suffer in their lifetime. In my opinion, we do not talk about this enough.

Those with ED spend 80-90 percent of their day thinking about food or their bodies. Research has shown that weight stigma is still a large problem in the healthcare system where healthcare workers may overlook a patient's symptoms due to being over or underweight. While I agree that it is very important to focus on getting to a healthy weight where the patient feels their best, largely focusing on that can cause missing an important diagnosis.

And these stigmas do not stop there. In high school, I would eat crackers for lunch and yogurt for dinner even though I had worked out for hours on end to

have a 'fit body,' and people told me that I needed to go eat some burgers as if that would help anything. Now, I am overweight, and I have been told that me sweating is just 'another gross symptom of being overweight' even though I know it is a side effect from the medication that's helping with my ED.

Open discussions need to be had. In my mind, there is no other way to help ED. I know that we've come a long way even since I was a teen with recognizing different body types as good and beautiful, but there's still more steps to be taken. If you or someone you know is struggling with and ED, please reach out for help. The National Eating Disorders Association has a hotline that is available through phone, text, or online chat. These, and their hours, can be found at <https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/help-support/contact-helpline>.

 **Chloe Peter** is a writer, editor, and local news enthusiast. She is an advocate for creativity and learning with a sense of wonder. Contact her at new@swconnector.com



By **Chloe Peter**

PREVALENCE & MORTALITY



Nine percent of Minnesotans (493,942 people), will have an eating disorder in their lifetime

10,200 deaths per year nationally as a direct result of an eating disorder, equating to 1 death every 52 minutes



EATING DISORDERS AFFECT EVERYONE:



- All ages, starting as young as 5 years old to over 80 years old
- All races, however, people of color with eating disorders are half as likely to be diagnosed or to receive treatment¹
- All genders, with females being 2x more likely to have an eating disorder
- All sexual orientations

LET'S TALK ABOUT BLACK LIVES MATTER YARD SIGNS



I have always been a longform type of guy. I usually don't bother with Twitter and stuff like that. I find life too complex, communication too subtle.

Catch phrases serve political candidates or social movements. They communicate power through their repetition, and whether you share in that power depends more on what you believed before the hashtag came along.

In the winter of 2019-2020, I bought a house in southwest Minneapolis, and I did not have a chance to meet many of my neighbors before COVID-19 shut us all up indoors. So, in the days and weeks after George Floyd was killed, I was a Black man living in a new neighborhood surrounded by White people I couldn't talk to.

Seeing Black Lives Matter signs pop up in a few

of my neighbors' yards made me feel quite a bit better. When I saw those signs it felt a little like someone had set out some flowers on a table for me and whoever else was passing by that day.

But I recognize that lawn signs don't always look like flowers. They can communicate your values, and they can be an appeal for solidarity. But they can also draw a line in the sand or even appear as a show of force to people who've identified with some opposing party. If my most frequent discourse with a person that disagrees with me is a sign that identifies me as their opposition, where can we go from there?

I don't have a Black Lives Matter sign in my own yard partly mostly I am a Black man who has lived and worked around White people basically ever since college, so I feel like I am a Black Lives Matter sign. But I am also a cautious person. As a

Black man who grew up passing between Black and White communities every day, I have grown accustomed to taking care to make sure that I'm understood.

So let me be clear: I am not saying you should ditch your signs. But, as Election Day approaches, I hope you will be analytical about their shortcomings, and you should strive to compensate for them. In the eyes of my out of state friends and family, Minnesotans have a reputation for being awkward, cold and distant.

This disposition can leave us trapped in our homes behind our lawn signs as the snow months approach. Let's get past that. Maybe put up another sign that says, "I can't capture my beliefs in a pithy hashtag, but stop by sometime and we can talk about it." Or maybe let's spend more time in our front yards, set up some chairs in front of our signs, and invite people passing by.

Eddie Glenn, East Harriet neighborhood

WHY DO SCHOOLS STILL SPANK STUDENTS?

I am astounded that schools are still spanking students in the United States, even if the use of it is declining. If a parent hit their kids that's child abuse. If an adult hits an adult that's against federal laws. But if a teacher (parent, adult) hits a kid in school that's considered just fine even maybe wanted from the community, but what does that say about us?

As an American it doesn't really sit well. We have a pretty stable country, happy families, and enough food usually. And yet we still hit our kids even though they're just learning? Sixteen states have expressly allowed it, six have no laws against it. The schools don't even ask for permission, some parents are enraged. Other schools use it as a choice like in North Carolina instead of suspension. But how does it affect how they/we grow up? Where do we draw the line?

Joselyn Pettit
age 13

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TWIN CITIES LITERARY SCENE OPENS NEW CHAPTER

Minneapolis, St. Paul continue to be pioneers in bringing the written word to life.

Did you know the Twin Cities have one of the top literary scenes in the United States? Not too many people associate Minneapolis and St. Paul with the avant-garde. But they are right up there with New York, San Francisco and other creative and intellectual forces invested in literature, poetry and the book arts.



By **Eric Ortiz**

Even some locals remain in the dark about the literary prowess in our backyard. It's time to see the light about the arts as a vehicle for social betterment and appreciate the vibrant community of talented writers, diverse publishers, innovative educational programs, events and people that advance the written word here at home.

Start with Rain Taxi, a nonprofit literary organization based in Minneapolis. They have been publishing a quarterly magazine of book reviews since 1996. Led by Rain Taxi editor and executive director Eric Lorberer and art director Kelly Everding, this print journal is not your average look at fiction, nonfiction, poetry and comics. It produces 40-50 award-winning pages of adventurous literature every four months, and is now distributed in 150 locations nationwide.

Their latest issue – Volume 27, No. 3, Fall 2022 (#107) – explores Icelandic sagas, composing in public, rap as literature, the indecent Patricia Highsmith, the undiscovered Baudelaire and more. They also have a corollary online edition with unique materials that connect readers to books of merit that might otherwise get overlooked.

But Rain Taxi is much more than just a magazine. Rain Taxi organizes the Rain Taxi Reading Series and the annual Twin Cities Book Festival, which had its 22nd run on Oct. 15 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds (if you didn't make it, check out the festival in 2023). They publish original creative



Writer, professor and Rain Taxi board member Kris Bigalk, right, with author Margaret Hasse promoting her new book "The Call of Glacier Park" at the 2022 Twin Cities Book Festival in St. Paul. (Photo by Eric Ortiz)

works via chapbooks and broadsides, and, as a service to the local community, maintain the Twin Cities Literary Calendar with a list of literary events in our region.

In all its programs, Rain Taxi is committed to artistic diversity, cultural relevance and widespread access. They exist for readers, writers, publishers, booksellers, educators and kindred spirits of all shapes and sizes. The common bond is a desire to keep books flourishing in a digital world and distracted society. As poet Ron Silliman wrote, Rain Taxi understands small press titles are the "core and soul of American publishing."

"Of course, there's the aesthetic issue – the pleasure of holding actual paper – but there's also the social issue," Lorberer explained in "There's This Book You've Never Heard Of," a City Pages story published on

Oct. 24, 2001.

"We want to reach readers from different segments of society, who might not have access to the internet."

Thanks to the internet and the Wayback Machine, we can still read the story by City Pages, the Minneapolis-St. Paul alternative newspaper that launched in 1979 but was a casualty of the pandemic in 2020 after 41 years of operations.

The closing of City Pages is a reminder of the tenuous grip print publications



Eric Lorberer

can have in our age of technology. It's also a reminder there is a place for both digital and print. It doesn't have to be either/or. After surviving COVID and the digital revolution, Rain Taxi is proof that printed words still matter, and there continues to be a market to read them. This year's Twin Cities Book Festival brought together thousands of book lovers to support and celebrate the literary arts.

The opening reception for the book festival was held at Open Book, a Minneapolis literary arts center that opened in 2000 and is the biggest writers' building in the country. Open Book was co-created by Milkweed (an independent publisher), The Loft (a haven for readers and writers since 1974), and Minnesota Center for Book Arts (a visual arts center that celebrates the art of the book). All three of Open Book's founding partner organizations make the place home and a self-described "space for everyone."

That inclusivity is the spirit of Minnesota's literary community, which also includes the Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop, a program founded in 2011 by Loft mentor Jennifer Bowen Hicks that now has over 25 instructors who have taught more than 200 creative writing classes to over 3,000 men and women in every adult state prison in Minnesota. Everyone is welcome to experience the joyful universe of words. Nobody is excluded.

I joined the Rain Taxi board in September thanks to an invitation from fellow Rain Taxi board member Kris Bigalk, who founded and directs a groundbreaking creative writing program at Normandale Community College in Bloomington, Minn., the first of its kind in the country.

One of her former students, also a former student in the Minnesota Prison Writing Workshop program, now works at Open Book and helped us with the book festival's opening reception. He also is a talented writer.

One more reminder that words connect us all.



Eric Ortiz lives in the Wedge with his family. When he's not community building, he's the director of media for Big Edition and writes bilingual children's books with his kids. Their first book, "How the Zookalex Saved the Village," is available in English and Spanish.

Fun City Dogs

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KMART SITE

burned following the murder of George Floyd, the building was used as a temporary post office. The Lake Street Post Office station at E. 31st St. and 1st Ave. S. has recently reopened. The post office at 3033 27th Ave. S. is under construction and will be completed before the lease for Kmart ends in September 2023.

The city, according to its project expectations, “is ready to reconnect this commercial and cultural crossroads.”

The city will reconstructing the street between 29th and Lake Street, aiming to “approach street design in a way that prioritizes people as they walk, take transit, and bicycle over those driving.” The street and streetscape design is yet to be developed.

At the open house, city of Minneapolis employees stood by posters that encouraged attendees to write out their comments and concerns on post-it notes so others could jump off ideas in discussion. Rebecca Parrell, a project supervisor with the Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development department, was also there helping to answer any questions that attendees had. The booth she stood at asked community members where they travel most on any given day in order to help address gaps of business, service, and other amenities in the surrounding area.

“We’re happy that more than 100 people attended the open house and got the opportunity to share feedback with staff about the New Nicollet project,” said Parrell. “With engagement underway now, we hope more people take advantage of this once-in-a-generation opportunity to help shape the vision for this site.”

There is still much discussion about what is to happen with green spaces, housing, development, retail, displacement, building design, and parking and

parking and vehicular access. Some of the topics still undecided are storm-water management, size and placement of business locations, phasing plan for development, and understanding what businesses operate in the area and what they need to continue to succeed.

Sundance Family Foundation Executive Director Peg Thomas expressed concerns about housing for the homeless and mental health support. Sundance aims to accelerate youth development and strengthen family stability.

“How can we have public spaces like parks when we force the homeless to be out all day instead of helping them find resources?” Thomas said.

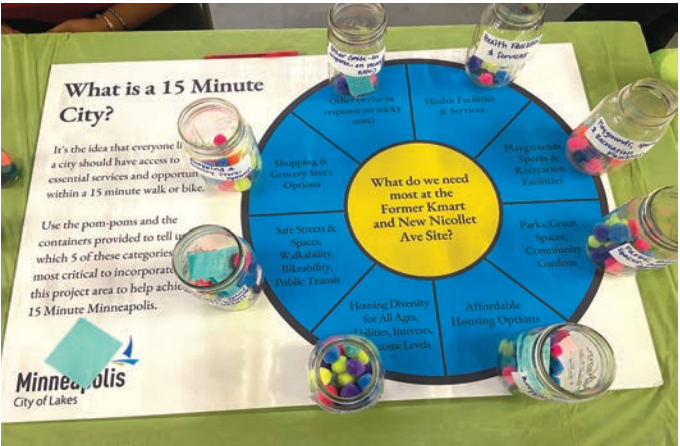
She also mentioned her frustrations with the Kmart going up in the first place. Thomas believes that such a prominent road should not have ever been blocked. She pointed out that it cut off a part of the community that could have been more connected had the site not been turned into a Kmart.

“I think it was corruption that cut up the road and the city like they did,” Thomas said.

If residents would like to give further feedback on the Nicollet Redevelopment, the city has opened a survey through Nov. 30. The survey asks residents about how they currently get to the area, for what reasons, and what their future goals are for the area. The Supervalu at the site has been demolished.



Peg Thomas fills out where she travels throughout Minneapolis on a typical Tuesday. Residents filled out these forms at the open house to discuss the former Kmart site on Oct. 25 in order to help city planners see what would be helpful to add in the area. (Photo by Chloe Peter)



Residents were asked what type of establishment they would like to see in place of the former Kmart site at Nicollet Ave. and Lake St. Ideas included affordable housing, healthcare resources, and groceries. AT LEFT: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Project Coordinator Suado Abdi chats with open house attendees and listens to suggestions. (Photos by Chloe Peter)



*Old homes! old hearts! Upon my soul forever
Their peace and gladness lie like tears and laughter;
Like love they touch me, through the years that sever,
With simple faith; like friendship, draw me after
The dreamy patience that is theirs forever.*

Madison Julius Cawein

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Website serves as online hub for racial equity and information

REACH TWIN CITIES CONNECTS

By Jan Willms

Following a tragedy like the murder of George Floyd, it can be difficult for a community to see any glimmers of hope. But after his killing and the social unrest that followed, neighborhoods began to rebuild and seek ways to prevent such incidences from happening again.

And one way to do that is to connect with the community and provide up-to-date information about what is happening and how community members can participate.

Enter Racial Equity and Community Health (REACH) Twin Cities. "In 2020 the Lake Street Leadership Recovery Coalition came together directly in response to what was going on in our city after George Floyd's murder and the civil uprising," said Christina Beck, communications and development director for REACH.

"Community centers, businesses and residents met, and out of that coalition REACH was developed," she said. The mission of REACH is to serve as a central information hub for updates, resources and opportunities around community recovery, renewal and wellness.

"The Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association (PPNA) was awarded a \$100,000 unsolicited grant from the McKnight Foundation, which was giving away 10 of these grants," Beck continued. These grants were given in direct response to the projects that were working toward healing and recovery after the murder of George Floyd.

PPNA took on the administration of REACH, and Beck began her duties in September of 2021.

"REACH is the online hub of resource

es and information," Beck said. "In the beginning, there were a couple of people contracted to seek events and news that highlighted our promoted projects, services, programs and initiatives that seek to improve the elements of health and wealth and reduce the disparity within and around the communities most affected, with large populations of BIPOC.

"Those news and events were then loaded into the website created from the McKnight funds. We have begun to make the necessary revisions and updates, see what is working and working out the cogs in the system. We are going to be guiding light traffic and promoting to other organizations, like other neighborhood associations. Now we have an employee more dedicated to this work. We have no contractors, but partners with the community," Beck remarked.

She said REACH Twin Cities wants to use its website for things that build awareness, fuel action, attract resources and promote health and awareness, particularly to communities most impacted by the uprisings.

"When somebody is looking for what they can do, they can come to the REACH website to inform themselves by finding resources for further education, articles pointing to policies that need their voices and an ever-changing calendar of events," Beck advised.

There are several examples of what the REACH website broadcasts. One item is a call to assist Miss Linda, a resident who was being evicted from her home. "Someone at PPNA is dedicated to advocacy work, so while REACH may not be able to help a person directly, we are able to broadcast through our social media channel and on



Christina Beck of REACH listens in to four homeless activists via a Zoom meeting describe police activities at the scene of a homeless encampment. (Photo by Terry Faust)

our personal time. This is a developing story that has affected many in the neighborhood, and people are excited to help Miss Linda stay in her home," Beck said.

Freedom Street Health, groups of local citizens who are doing work in real grassroots form, forming a radical model directly from people to people, has its information listed on the REACH calendar of events.

Beck noted that a group of community members talking about the history of inequity in their neighborhoods has had their sessions listed on the website. A clean-up of the Corcoran neighborhood was promoted.

"We look for something that prioritizes positive connections," Beck said. "There have been a lot of words in the last few years; we want to see intentions trans-

ferred into positive action."

Beck said REACH Twin Cities has been working mostly remotely. She is currently the only employee, but the communications manager from PPNA does a lot of work on the backside with the website. "That person definitely has a role in the website, marketing and outreach," Beck commented. "There is nobody at PPNA who does not touch REACH."

Beck said she has primarily an editorial and procurement role at this time. "PPNA will be a part of it as the website becomes more dynamic and accessible."

The community is invited to make the website a useful resource, submitting thoughts and ideas as well as current events to the calendar and seeking information on neighborhood activities.

The website is reachtwincities.org.



Join Us!

NOVEMBER 2022 ADMISSION EVENTS

LOWER SCHOOL (K-5) OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, November 13, 2022, 1:00-3:00 p.m.

1150 Goodrich Avenue, St. Paul

MIDDLE/UPPER SCHOOL (6-12) OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, November 13, 2022, 3:00-5:00 p.m.

1712 Randolph Avenue, St. Paul

Our November Admission Open Houses are designed to give the entire family a chance to get to know our community in a welcoming and flexible way. Join us to take a tour of campus, meet faculty and staff, and connect with current students and parents.

RSVPs are not required, but we encourage families to let us know if you plan to join us by registering on our Admission Events page at www.spa.edu/AdmissionEvents or by giving us a call at 651-696-1332.

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Visit spa.edu/admissionevents for information about our January Open Houses.



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Fall at the Kingfield Farmers Market and the apple guy is out. I've never seen someone so excited to sell apples and tell you everything you'd ever want to know about apples. (Illustration by WACSO)

LOOKING AT NATURE, PAINTING WHAT SHE SEES

THE ART OF...

Minneapolis-based artist Mary Bacon highlights local landscape in her work, and has closely studied local flowers, trees, and parks. She is showing currently at Artacile Art Gallery in the Northrup King Building, in space #159.



By Suzie Marty

Her artist statement: "In my paintings, I am idealizing the universal flower or leaf, seeing the leaf or flower as an icon, an object of contemplation and meditation."

"Some of the flower paintings are designed using a circular mandala or labyrinth pattern, representing calm and wholeness for the psyche."

"The linear sections within some of these paintings are like the lines of a musical composition, or lines of poetry. I am telling my story line by line, a story of the beauty I saw in a particular place and time."

WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

I have always lived in Minnesota, but these days I spend a lot of time in California. My heart lives with the ancient Redwood forests.

WHAT IS YOUR CAREER AND ART BACKGROUND?

I am a self-taught artist, and that took a lot of teaching, since I chose oil painting! There is a lot of technical knowledge needed to create a successful painting: what can you paint on, how do you prepare the surface before the paint goes on, how to mix colors together to get the shades you want, what brushes to use and what brushstrokes to use to get the effect you want. It can be a life long study – I've only just touched the surface of the subject. I've been painting now for about 15 years.

HOW DOES WHERE YOU ARE FROM INFLUENCE YOUR WORK?

I was very lucky to grow up in a rural area, with woods, creeks, wetlands, chokecherries and wild strawberries. Lucky, because I have always felt more at home in nature. People can be very bewildering to a sensitive empathic person such as myself, and nature is a peaceful place. And painting nature is a meditative refuge. So, the fact that our society makes people into commercial units – required to go out on your own to earn a living – forces a person to fit into a mold that does not necessarily suit them. We forget our dreams sometimes and don't wake back up to the life our heart really desires, until some decades go by. That's how it was for me. I was in my 40s, working for a furniture company as an interior designer, working regular hours, and one day I just knew I had to become a painter. I asked



my boss if I could go part-time, so I could have time to learn to paint. She said no, so it dawned on me that I could open my own design firm, be independent, arrange my schedule my own way so that I would have time and energy left for learning art. I had an epic dream right after I quit: I was given the "Book of Art" from what some people call the "Akashic Hall of Records." And I never looked back!

WAS THERE A DEFINING MOMENT WHEN IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU KNEW YOU WANTED TO BE AN ARTIST?

The influence I'd like my art to have on people is for them to receive a calm and meditative feeling by looking at the art, or in being inspired into realizing that they express themselves through art, too. The creative ability is not reserved for only certain people. It just takes desire, and time.

EXPLAIN YOUR TECHNIQUE/CREATIVE PROCESS. WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO CREATE?

My creative process is to mostly look and look and look at nature, flowers, trees, colors. Capturing how a flower looks to me and what it means to me is a medita-

tive process, sitting and the easel, drawing, mixing colors. Mostly I am listening to music like Estas Tonne, Piea, Anilah, or talks by Matt Kahn, Lee Harris, Eckhart Tolle while I work on a painting, and let the painting become a visible meditation.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON ART COLLECTING AND HOW DO YOU CULTIVATE A COLLECTOR BASE?

The first thing about art collecting is that a new art collector, one who has never owned an original piece of art, is always amazed and surprised by how much life original art has, and how much it adds to their home. I know this through my experience with interior design, and with my own art collectors. Bringing art into someone's home can be a big revelation to them. It's important for me to keep showing my work in various places, to share my experience with art. I like being a part of the NE Minneapolis art scene.

YOU DO A LOT OF SERIES. EXPLAIN THE IDEA BEHIND THAT...

My multiple series have been a result of really wanting to experiment. I like bold but nuanced colors, and I spend almost as much time mixing shades as I do



painting. With the textured pieces I rely on the way the light catches the surface to add even more shades. And with the abstracts I can put the colors on in quick brushstrokes, and see how the colors react and play off each other. These things are much more controlled when I paint my large florals, so the new experiments can be exciting to me!

DO YOU EVER HAVE CREATIVE BLOCKS? HOW DO YOU OVERCOME THEM?

Blocks can come and go. They are usually solved by just sitting down and making myself open a few tubes of paint and start mixing something. I have so many concepts waiting in the wings for future paintings, so many that I will never be able to paint them all in my lifetime, so I have no problem there.

WHO ARE SOME ARTISTS YOU ADMIRE, FOLLOW, OR HAVE BEEN INSPIRATION?

Anyone can probably see my admiration and awe of Georgia O'Keeffe. When I was learning to paint, I spent time practicing copying her works (an honorable art student tradition). Cezanne and his lemons; Van Gogh and his olive trees; and writings on the Art Spirit by Robert Henri, Kandinsky, and C.G. Jung – especially Jung's work on the meaning of the circular mandala to human nature.

HOW MANY HOURS GO INTO AN AVERAGE PIECE?

The paintings that take me the longest are the large florals. Between sketching, underpainting, mixing colors, and painting the layers, a 30" x 30" painting can take 40 hours.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOUR ART 10 YEARS FROM NOW?

I can see myself making larger and ever larger modern botanicals. More ocean themes. Some whales may be swimming my way!

Learn more at marybaconart.com.



Suzie Marty is an artist and curator at Everett & Charlie art gallery in Linden Hills. She is also an avid supporter of buying local, and a marketing specialist for the *Southwest Connector*. Contact her at ads@swconnector.com.

MORE PREDICTIONS FOR THE LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET

TEAMING UP FOR GOOD

The most frequently asked question I get about real estate is some version of this: "Are we in a real estate bubble? When are prices going to start dropping in our neighborhood?"

My short answer – no, and never.

I'm not being facetious here. Prices may drop seasonally, for a month or two, and there may come a time, in five or 10 or 15 years when southwest Minneapolis prices have risen so high that they may need to drop a bit... But we are not overpriced yet. The prices in 2024 will be higher than 2022. Bet on it.

Last spring, I made a few predictions, and while it may be too soon to confirm anything, so far those predictions have borne out. Here's what I said in March:

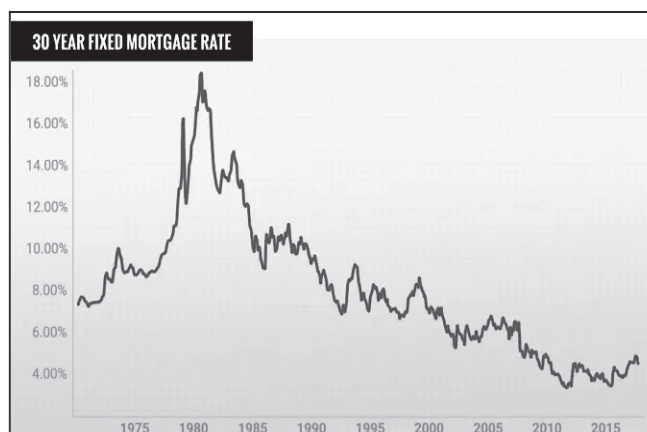
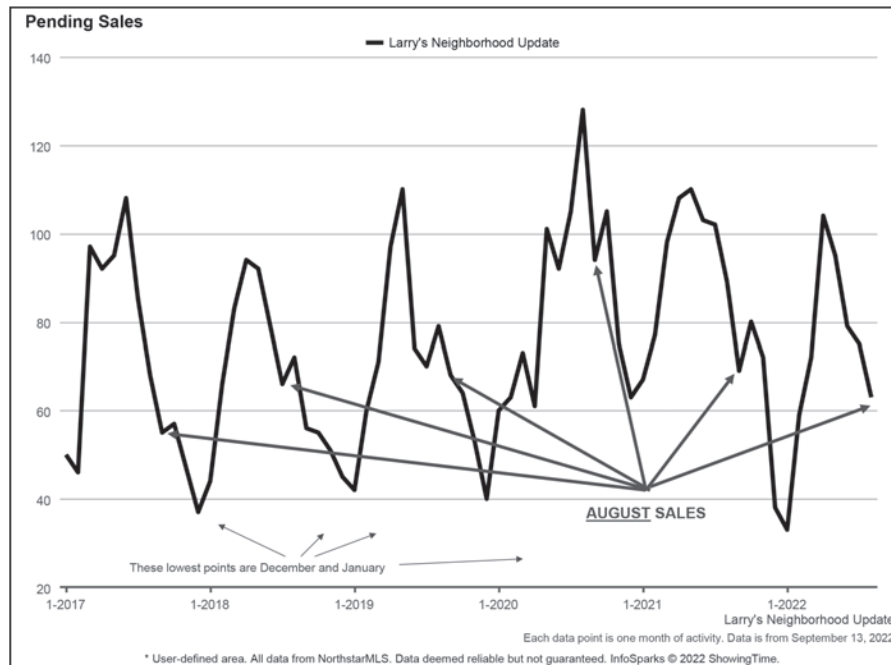
Prediction # 1 – Single family home prices will continue to rise. The value of land, and single family homes, is still increasing, and despite 10 years of significant appreciation, prices have not even come close to peaking in Minneapolis.

And here's the latest graph: NOTE: median prices are up 2% in the last 5 months.

Prediction #2 – Multiple offers will be the norm in southwest from now until June. For the last five years, late winter and spring have been highly competitive, and by June, things were slowing down. Note to sellers: It's far better to enter the



By Larry LaVercombe



market in April/May than in July/August.

Here is a graph that may be helpful to any of you who are planning your real estate investment future.

It's clear. August is a very difficult month to sell a house, relative to June. In every year except one, September was bet-

ter. (Note that only in 2019 was there not a slight sales uptick in September.)

Sometimes it's hard to plan your real estate sales and purchases. Life events often take precedence over timing. But if you can get your house on the market in June, rather than August, chances are

you'll move it faster, and consequently, you'll likely sell it for more money.

REGARDING INTEREST RATES:

We've heard the news: Rates are up, a lot, in the last year. In October of 2021 you could get a 30-year mortgage for 3%. Rates have more than doubled since then.

So, why are we not in a panic? Why is it still a good time to buy in the Twin Cities?

One reason is that, historically speaking, rates of 7% are still well below the last 50 years average.

My own context is this: when I started selling real estate 23 years ago in 1999, my seasoned mentors and colleagues were thrilled that the rates were all the way down to 7%.

Rates hardly seemed to affect sales this year. Closed sales virtually mirrored new listings, meaning that the reason there were fewer transactions this year had more to do with supply than demand. Meanwhile, as I mentioned, prices were still up.

So, if you're worried about your home value plummeting someday – don't be. Not if you live around here.

And if you're planning on waiting to purchase here until prices go down... Chances are they will never be lower than they are now. I know it's bold for me to say so – but I really think it's true. I'm bullish on Minneapolis. We have not hit our values-peak.



Larry LaVercombe is a writer, filmmaker, and activist, born in Detroit and arrived in Minneapolis in 1975. He lived in a treehouse in San Diego before getting an MFA from the USC Film School. He writes most days, and as Team Larry he has been selling residential real estate in Minneapolis for 26 years.

CITY BRIEFS

EARLY VOTE CENTER EXTENDS HOURS.

The Early Vote Center is now open 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays and noon to 5 p.m. Sundays. The center's last day of service is Monday, Nov. 7, which is the day before Election Day, and hours Nov. 7 are 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. At this point, the city recommends returning mail ballots in person to avoid a late delivery. Ballots can be dropped off during regular business hours at Minneapolis Election & Voter Services, 980 E. Hennepin Ave., or at the Hennepin County Government Center, 300 Sixth St. S. Three more drop-off sites will be open Nov. 1-7. On Election Day, Nov. 8, completed mail ballots will only be accepted until 3 p.m.

PARK BOARD BUDGET

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) Superintendent Al Bangoura presented his recommended 2023 budget to the Park Board on Oct. 12. The Park Board had requested a tax levy increase of 6.16%, but the Board of Estimate and Taxation only approved a 5.4% increase, setting the maximum at \$78,456,285. The increase will be used primarily to support the board's commitment to increase youth investment and to offset the State of Minnesota Local Government Aid (LGA) funding decrease. You can find the proposed budget and more information at www.minneapolis.org/budget. Public comment opportunities are scheduled for Nov. 2, 15, 30 and Dec. 6.

CITY BUDGET HEARINGS

The city council is holding public hearings at city hall, 350 S. Fifth St., room 317, on Mayor Frey's recommended budget on Nov. 10, at 10 a.m. and, Nov. 15, at 6:05 p.m.

1ST AVE RECONSTRUCTION

This month the council will approve the design for the full reconstruction of 1.5 miles of 1st Avenue South from Lake Street to Grant Street, including the bridge over the Midtown Greenway. It is proposed to include a two-way protected bikeway, improve pedestrian facilities, and stormwater management improvements. The block from 31st Street to Lake Street will incorporate striping and other elements to provide a better transition for bicyclists traveling northbound. The recommended project layout primarily has one northbound travel lane (except between Lake Street to 28th Street and I-94 to Grant Street), reduces some on-street parking, expands the boulevard to accommodate trees and green stormwater infrastructure, improves the existing two-way bikeway on the west side of the street, and expands sidewalk space. Public Works will evaluate use of raised crossings on side streets at three intersections (28th Street, 26th Street, and 16th Street) during final design.

FRANKLIN REOPENED

Construction has been finished on the city-owned section of Franklin Avenue between Lyndale and Hennepin that has been re-opened. It includes a separated bike path, boulevard plantings, upgraded hydrants, and more accessible curb features. Hennepin county is responsible for Franklin from Lyndale to Chicago, which is scheduled to be reconstructed in 2025 or 26.



Briefs compiled by Cam Gordon.

One Good Reason Why GenXers Read Newspapers... Platform Choice



Social media, websites, apps and e-newsletters. Not to mention the printed page. GenXers use both print and digital newspaper platforms to access the local news, information and advertising that impact their lives.

That's why today's newspapers employ a multi-platform strategy when creating new products for these engaged consumers. Makes sense for a group where more than eight out of ten access the newspaper content they depend on through digital channels.

In fact, **GenXers make up 50%** of all local newspaper readers. It's why newspaper advertising is your best bet to reach this active group of desirable consumers.

Source: Aggregate of market studies conducted by Coda Ventures for state newspaper associations in Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota and Tennessee.

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To learn more, contact your local newspaper sales representative, or visit RelevanceProject.net



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RIDDING THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF LITTER



Thirty volunteers showed up on Saturday, Oct. 15 for the Wedge neighborhood fall cleanup. In just two hours, volunteers covered all streets of the Wedge. In all, 22 pounds of recycling was collected and 160 pounds of garbage. The clean-up was organized by LHENA's Environmental Committee.

LHENA is an ecosystem, with various roles and entities and activities each playing a unique part in an overall project of advancing a common purpose as neighbors, and promoting community spirit and action. Committees play a vital role in the mix. They are how neighbors connect, discuss, debate and make decisions around broadly defined areas of community interest. This is done through a structure and culture that promotes speaking up, hearing others out, thinking critically, offering encouragement, and taking action.

►1 RESTRUCTURE

from the police, did before the charter amendment.

The two new consolidated divisions are the Office of Public Service, which includes all the operational departments under the leadership of a Chief Operations Officer; and the Office of Community Safety, which includes the departments of Police, Fire, 911, Emergency Management and a new Neighborhood Safety Department.

The only city departments that will now report directly to the city council (down from 12 last term) are the city clerk, auditor, and the city attorney.

Support for the ordinance was not unanimous at the public hearing or at the council vote where it passed on a nine to four vote.

"This is a historic moment for our city," said Frey. "Minneapolis voters chose this form of government for our city, and it was up to us to create a responsive structure that is effective, efficient, and equitable in delivering city services to all residents."

"After 10 months of working together as a council and with the mayor, we have carried out the will of the residents of Minneapolis," said Council President Andrea Jenkins. "We are setting forth a new direction in the city of Minneapolis – it's a new day and I am proud to be a part of it."

"Our actions today install a new level of clarity and accountability within our local government – the kind that residents deserve and should expect out of city hall," said Palmisano.

AMENDMENTS FAILED, PASSED

Prior to final passage and the public hearing, some amendments were proposed at a committee meeting on the 18th.

An amendment that would have removed the requirement for the mayor to submit a comprehensive policy to the council failed. Amendments that would have elevated the race, equity, inclusion, and belonging department to same level as the offices of safety and public service, as well as one that would allow the council an ability to vote on all department heads, failed.

An amendment to establish a performance management and innovation department authored was approved with a vote of seven to six.

PUBLIC DIVIDED

At the public hearing, eight people spoke. The proposal won the support of Colleen Moriarty, from League of Women Voters; Barry Clegg, the Charter Commis-

sion Chair; Kathleen O'Brien, past council member and co-chair of the Mayor's Government Structure Workgroup; Lee Munnich; Steve Cramer; President of the Mpls. Downtown Council; and Clarence Shallbetter.

"This ordinance is consistent with the charter changes approved by voters in a manner that respects the intent of both the charter commission and the voters," said Clegg.

Kristen Ingle, from the Southwest Alliance for Equity, and Rachael "Ray" Klahr, spoke in opposition.

Ingle, a Fulton resident, called the proposal "a power grab by affluent White elites dressed up in the language of good government."

"The current restructure will not allow our government to function more equitably and will make the city enterprise much less accountable and responsive to the community," said Ingle.

ORGANIZED BETTER OR TOO MUCH POWER TO MAYOR?

The city council was also divided. Ward 7 Council Member Lisa Goodman joined her southwest colleagues, Ward 11's Emily Koski and Palmisano, in supporting the change. "I am very proud of all the people that were involved in constructing this ordinance that will organize our city enterprise much like other cities across the nation," said Goodman in an email sent after the meeting.

Four council members (Eliot Payne, Robin Wonsley, Jason Chavez and Aisha Chughtai) voted against the amendment.

"I voted no on this because we did not need an ordinance for the new government structure to be implemented. The mayor has authority to do much of this via executive order, as he did with establishing the duties and responsibilities of the Community Safety Commissioner," said Ward 10's Chughtai, who represents much of southwest. "The ordinance in its current iteration gives too much legislative power to the mayor."

"While I've appreciated the time spent forming the mayor's roles and responsibilities, we haven't spent enough time solidifying the legislative side. That leaves my colleagues and I – and the residents we represent – without the certainty we need," she added.

Ward 1 Council Member Payne agreed. "The city council has expanded the executive authority of the mayor yet has taken no action to expand its own capacity to conduct meaningful oversight," he said. "I fear the passage of this new ordinance blurs the lines of accountability, creates unnecessary confusion, and minimizes the voice of our constituents."

At that meeting, even before it was signed by the mayor and officially enact-

ed, council members started questioning their own authority to pass a staff directive regarding the forced closures of homeless encampments.

"I remain concerned about the weaponization of 'council authority' in today's discussion," Chughtai wrote in an email after the meeting. "Government structure is not a ploy the mayor's office and the Frey administration get to play every time the council is considering an action they do not like. Disagreement is necessary for a healthy democracy and ensuring all our constituents have a voice in shaping policy is critical."

"Under this new government structure, the city council is the legislative body that has authority to enact local laws to govern the community and public policies to direct the delivery of city services and programs. All the items we discussed regarding encampment response were pieces of public policy to direct the delivery of city services and programs. In the coming months and years, we will continue learning what falls under the mayor's authority versus the council's. It is critical for the council to use its full authority to represent the residents who elected us to serve them."

CHECKS AND BALANCES TO POWER?

Southwest residents Heather Silsbee and Josh Martin have been tracking the restructuring proposal since the beginning of the term.

In response to the ordinance passing as it did, Silsbee, a West Maka Ska resident, wrote, "As weak as they are, the council still approves the budget, they still can propose and pass ordinances (e.g., rent control), they still have to confirm Frey's top staff, and they still have the power to approve or reject contracts and development projects."

"Yes, this restructure is very bad and has made Minneapolis even less equitable, but it doesn't change the fact that the city council will always be more representative of the people than the mayor. And they will continue to be more powerful than us as average residents."

Josh Martin, a Kingfield resident, wanted a different outcome, but is not giving up. "So long as the new system is in place, it is instead crucial for supporters of a strong council to continue to support adequate funding and staffing for the council and its legislative functions, and appropriate checks and balances to maintain the council's authority," he wrote recently.

The impact of the ordinance change is certain to be debated and discussed in the weeks ahead, including as part next year's budget that is set to be approved in December.

NEIGHBORHOOD BRIEFS

COMMUNITY FIX IT EVENTS

This once-a-month program gives people the opportunity to learn how to fix small household items, tools, and textiles. No reservations are required and it is open to the public on the third Sunday of the month from 3 to 6 p.m. at 1620 Central Ave. NE Suite 120.

LYNNHURST BUCKTHORN BUST NOV. 5

Buckthorn crowd out native plants and displace the native shrubs and small trees in woodsy areas. If interested, meet at Aldrich Ave. and Minnehaha Pkwy. on the north side of Minnehaha Creek on Nov. 5. Lynnhurst neighborhood requests that people bring their own gloves and tools, such as pruners, loppers, and shovels. They will have some weed wrenches available for sharing.

NICOLLET AVE. ZERO VISION MEETING

The Nicollet Avenue Vision Zero Community Meeting will be at The Lowbrow (4244 Nicollet) on Monday, Nov. 7, 3-4 p.m.

LINDEN HILLS CRAFTERS NOV. 10

Attend an evening of sociable crafting every second and fourth Thursday of the month at Heartfelt (4306 Upton Ave. S) from 6-8 p.m. Bring your own project or be inspired by the supplies available at Heartfelt. All crafts are welcome.

LHENA FOOD SHARE NOV. 12

The food share offers free groceries twice a month to anyone in the Wedge who needs it. This means one bag of fresh fruit/vegetables and one bag of pantry items. Food Shares are on the first and third Friday-Saturday of the month at 2836 Lyndale Ave. S #132.

NEIGHBORHOOD ROOTS WINTER MARKET NOV. 12

Enjoy music and fresh, ready-to-eat food and beverages, and stock up on produce, sweet treats, crafts, and gifts from local farmers, bakers, and artisans. The market will feature vendors from the Kingfield, Fulton, and Nokomis Farmers Market. All markets will be held on Saturdays from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at 6010 Lyndale Ave. S.

SSCO LISTENING SESSION NOV. 14

SSCO will be hosting a weekly listening session from 6 to 7 p.m. on Nov. 14 to hear from neighbors about the direction they want to see the organization take. Join via Zoom link found on the website.

MAPPING PREJUDICE TALK NOV. 14

LHiNC's Zoning and Housing Committee is proud to host a talk by Dr. Kirsten Deleard, co-founder and project director of the Mapping Prejudice Project, on Monday, Nov. 14 at 7 p.m. Dr. Deleard will discuss her research on the history of racial covenants in Minneapolis, and particularly in Linden Hills, to explore the complex history of discriminatory housing policies and their contemporary legacies. This meeting will be held virtually.

TROLLEY PATH CONDOS

On Sept. 29, LHiNC hosted a meeting with Sustainable 9 Design + Build and interested neighborhood residents to discuss a proposed four-condo project at 4352 Zenith Avenue South. The developer presented the project, heard concerns, answered questions and presented revisions. Watch the full meeting on the LHiNC YouTube channel. The rezoning and variance requests for this project will be taken up by the City Planning Commission on Nov. 1. Public comment before that date can be shared with City Planner Hilary Dvorak, 612-673-2639 hilary.dvorak@minneapolismn.gov or at the Planning Commission meeting on Nov. 1, 4:30 p.m. in City Hall, Room 317.

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BUILDING A GREENER MINNEAPOLIS

Green Minneapolis, in partnership with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, has launched the first urban tree carbon offset program in Minnesota.

By **Chloe Peter**

Green Minneapolis is dedicated to advancing the vibrancy of Minneapolis through parks and greening. The non-profit (81 South 9th Street Suite 260) conducted a study focused on establishing an urban tree planting initiative.

The study determined:

- The urban tree canopy is an important way to mitigate the impacts of climate change
- The urban tree canopy in Minneapolis is decreasing
- Local governments are looking for new funding sources to plant more trees
- An urban tree carbon credit marketplace was emerging across the U.S., and leading Twin Cities companies are purchasing carbon credits

In 2021, Green Minneapolis formally started the Twin Cities Climate Resiliency Initiative that included the establishment of Minnesota's first urban tree carbon offset program.

Green Minneapolis Twin Cities Climate Resiliency Initiative Project Coordinator Michaela Neu is helping lead the tree program to plant and sustain 5 million trees in the Twin Cities' metro area.

"I am passionate about our work to enhance the vitality of Minneapolis by building public/private partnerships to expand the metro area's tree canopy," Neu said.

WHAT IS GREEN MINNEAPOLIS' ROLE IN THIS PLAN?

Neu: In the urban tree carbon offset program, Green Minneapolis is the project operator, which means that we administer the project on behalf of our tree planting partners. In addition to our role as project operator, Green Minneapolis is serving as the carbon credit broker for selling the carbon credits generated from these projects.



Michaela Neu has been working as Green Minneapolis Project Coordinator since April 2022. "The urban tree canopy is an essential component of urban infrastructure that keeps our cities livable and economically vibrant - just like our transit systems or stormwater management systems," Neu said.

ects. One carbon credit is equivalent to an emission reduction of one metric ton of carbon dioxide.

IN A 20-YEAR PLAN, WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Neu: Our pilot project with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) launched the first urban tree carbon offset program in Minnesota, which

Green Minneapolis is a non-profit organization with the vision to grow a green future for the Twin Cities, with tree-lined streets and active public spaces that enrich quality of life, create a healthier environment and connect people through place.



I am passionate about our work to enhance the vitality of Minneapolis by building public/private partnerships to expand the metro area's tree canopy."

Michaela Neu

includes 23,755 trees that were planted from 2019-2021. We are currently working on our second urban tree carbon credit project with the MPRB, that includes 10,000 trees planted in 2022. Our initiative received \$1 million in funding from the City of Minneapolis that the MPRB is using to plant an additional 8,000 trees in 2023 and

2024. We plan to do annual tree planting projects with the MPRB for the next 20 years and are developing tree planting partnerships with other Twin Cities local governments including Hennepin County.

HOW DO YOU WORK WITH SMALL BUSINESSES SO THESE CAN BE AVAILABLE ACROSS THE METRO?

Neu: To date, we have been working with larger companies located in the Twin Cities that have already determined their carbon footprint from their operations and are taking steps to reduce their carbon emissions. We are interested in making our carbon credits available to small businesses that want to offset their carbon

footprints, and look forward to developing a program where small businesses can get assistance in estimating their carbon footprints and how to reduce their emissions.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES?

Neu: The urban tree canopy is an essential component of urban infrastructure that keeps our cities livable and economically vibrant - just like our transit systems or stormwater management systems. In addition to sequestering carbon, urban trees provide other quantifiable benefits to urban communities including reducing flooding, stormwater runoff, air pollution, urban heat islands, and heating and cooling energy use. In addition, trees increase property values, contribute to our mental health, provide habitat for wildlife, reduce crime, slow down car traffic, and create local urban arborist careers.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ON PLANTING TREES TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE?

Neu: While it may be up for debate at the macro level whether we can plant enough trees across the planet to sequester carbon at the levels necessary to mitigate climate change, there is little debate that urban tree canopy can mitigate the impacts of climate change on urban communities through other means. In addition to sequestering carbon, urban trees capture stormwater, thus reducing flooding of neighborhoods and polluting urban waterways. Urban trees also filter large quantities of particulate air pollution, making it safer for urban residents to breathe and exercise outside.

Urban tree canopy also reduces urban heat islands, cooling city streets and buildings, and reducing energy use. During the winter, urban trees act as windbreaks, reducing the heating costs and energy used by adjacent buildings. Urban trees also provide urban wildlife habitat, especially for birds and pollinators.

HOW CAN PEOPLE HELP?

Neu: The Twin Cities Climate Resiliency Initiative brings together individuals and companies that are taking action to reduce their environmental footprint by investing in the local tree canopy and community. You can help make a difference by donating to Green Minneapolis Twin Cities Urban Forest Fund, where funds will be used to plant and maintain trees across the metro area. More information can be found at www.greenminneapolis.org/projects/climate-resiliency-initiative/carbon-offset-program/.

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