

Community REPORTER

SERVING WEST END NEIGHBORHOODS, DOWNTOWN ST. PAUL TO FORT SELLING, SINCE 1970



ART CRAWL BLOOMS AGAIN IN APRIL page 6

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VOL. 55 NO. 4

APRIL 2025

CIRCULATION 13,000

DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

My Priorities for 2025



SAURA JOST
CITY COUNCIL
MEMBER, WARD 3
columnist

As our City welcomes Spring we're welcoming some changes in our neighborhood.

For those seeking to get out and serve our community with the turn of the season please join one of our City Wide Clean-up events this year. After last year's hugely successful turn out we'll be hosting many more smaller events dispersed across the city to extend our efforts.

This year our Ward 3 office will be focused on making progress at Highland Bridge, working to reigniting the Riverview project with a focus on BRT, expanding our city's tax base, ensuring reliable city services, amending our Rent Stabilization Ordinance, reinstating Tenant Protections, providing comprehensive public safety, and making investments in our infrastructure that both prepare us for Climate Change and seek to reduce its effects.

Elsewhere in the Ward, we have construction coming to Grand Avenue; both a City street reconstruction and Macalester College's dormitory project will be making progress this summer and our Grand Avenue businesses need you to make an intentional effort to visit them during construction. While our new Commercial Corridors Fund will be helping this year, I still expect to see my neighbors at the Italian Pie Shoppe.

On all of these priorities, on all of these projects, the details matter and your input is critical in helping our office find the right solution for St. Paul.

As always our office can be reached at Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Thank you for being a good neighbor.

City Council Approves Appeal of Garbage Depot Site

For the immediate future, the City of St. Paul's new garbage hauler, FCC Environmental, is without a long-term home after the St. Paul City Council unanimously approved an appeal filed by the West 7th/Fort Road Federation to halt a proposed garbage depot at 560 Randolph Ave.

The Council voted 5-0 in favor of an appeal put forth by the Federation, saying the Planning Commission had erred in their determination that FCC's proposed depot fits the light industrial use designation of the city code.

"This is a defining moment for West 7th and the city at large," said Meg Duhr, president of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation. "The appeal is not about just one site. It's about upholding the integrity of city planning, respecting community voices and ensuring that zoning laws are applied consistently."

At issue is which criteria city staff used in determining whether FCC's depot fits within the City's zoning code. The City of St. Paul does not have a specific designation for garbage haulers and had to determine whether the site FCC purchased fits zoning criteria based on similar uses.

City staff and FCC say their facility meets the criteria for light industrial zoning. In their appeal, the Federation said that determination runs afoul of the City's comprehensive plan based on its planned use.

Greg Revering, the General Manager for FCC's operations locally, said he was sympathetic to what the community was saying, but that they had done their due diligence on the property and believe their use fits the current criteria, despite what long-term plans call for.

"The scenarios for this property haven't come to fruition," he said. "It's sad, but it is not grounds for denial."



FCC Environmental purchased 560 Randolph, which currently serves as a tow lot, to be their regional garbage truck depot.

West 7th Resident and former City Council member Dave Thune said that he, for one, did not believe the proposed garbage truck depot was equivalent to a public works facility like the one located at 891 N Dale St.

"If you compare this to the Dale Street shops, which I assume is what this was modeled after, you've got dozens, 50, hundreds of large vehicles," he said. "80 of them drive out in a thundering herd, for every snowfall - three times a year. This is going to be something that happens every day."

Council President Rebecca Noecker agreed that the disparity in traffic generated by the site to that of other public works facilities in the city was a determination in her decision to overturn the Planning Commission's rejection of the Federation's appeal.

"FCC's use is estimated to generate a minimum of 150 vehicle trips per day, 36 of



West 7th/Fort Road Federation President Meg Duhr testified before the City Council on March 19 to appeal FCC Environmental's proposed garbage truck depot at 560 Randolph Ave.

GARBAGE DEPOT, PG 9

COMMUNITY HAPPENING

City of St. Paul Unveils Vision for West 7th Transit

Stakeholders encouraged to participate in a series of April open houses on the proposed project

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

When planning for the Riverview Corridor, a proposed transit route between Downtown and the Mall of America along West 7th St., was ended abruptly by Ramsey County last September, leaders within the City of St. Paul took up the remains of the project and promised they would move quickly to find a solution to the long-dormant corridor.

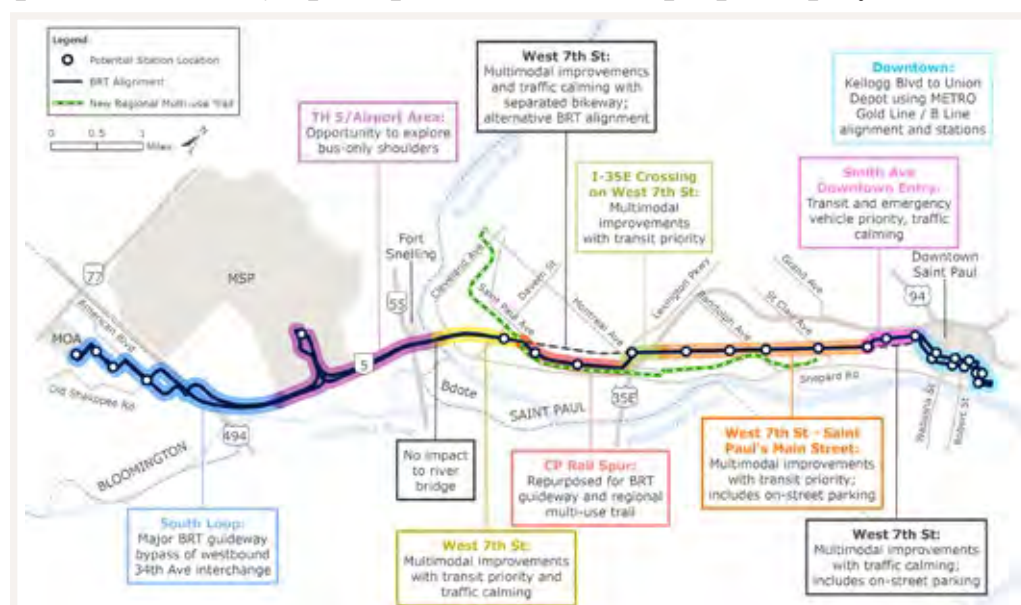
Six months later, they have unveiled their proposed plan and are looking for public input.

The revised plan, which the City says builds upon the work done in the Riverview process, calls for major infrastructure investments in West 7th to go along with a bus rapid transit project and a new bicycle and pedestrian trail.

"The need to improve the West 7th Street Corridor remains clear," Mayor Melvin Carter said in a statement. "We are committed to delivering a solution that expands access, enhances surrounding infrastructure, and makes it safer and more reliable for everyone to move through our city."

The proposed plan is similar to the bus alternative proposed during the Riverview Corridor process, replacing the route 54 bus with Bus Rapid Transit along the 12.5 mile stretch between downtown and the Mall of America.

City planners said they tried to take feedback received from the Riverview process to come up with a plan that is more suitable to the



communities along West 7th.

The plan calls for dedicated lanes for the bus for about 53% of the route, including taking the buses off of West 7th on the eastern end of the road and moving them to Smith Ave. before heading down Kellogg Blvd. into downtown.

The project currently calls for a total of 21 stops along the route, with 16 new stations needing to be built, mostly along 7th and in downtown.

Additionally, buses would move off of 7th between Lexington Parkway and St. Paul Ave., where they would share the abandoned CP rail spur, which the City hopes to be able to purchase as a piece of this project to create a bicycle and pedestrian connection between the Highland Bridge development and downtown.

"Adding a trail connection from West 7th to Highland Bridge is something our community

has been asking for," said Ward 3 Council Member Saura Jost.

The City is hoping to leverage already planned projects to help with offsetting some of the \$450-\$550 million cost of the project, including tapping into the longstanding MnDOT mill and overlay of West 7th in 2028 and 2029, the City's existing downtown street and sidewalk plan and Metro Transit's ongoing investment in bus rapid transit routes.

Based on their current estimates, it could take as many as eight years before we see bus rapid transit on West 7th. However, in order to get into Metro Transit's pipeline to ensure they could move even that soon, some quick decisions about the project need to be made this summer.

With that said, according to Council President Rebecca Noecker, that should come at the expense of the West 7th community.

"As we move forward, it is essential that we continue to prioritize community engagement, ensuring that local businesses, residents, and transit users continue to be involved in this stage of the project," she said. "West 7th Street deserves thoughtful, effective investment that supports both the immediate needs and long-term goals of the neighborhood and broader city."

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

Residents, business owners and other stakeholders are encouraged to visit stpaul.gov/West7 to review the concept and provide feedback. The City is also hosting a series of open houses in April on the project.

- April 8, 6:30-8 p.m., Highland Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy
- April 9, 12-1 p.m., virtual (login info at stpaul.gov/west7)
- April 10, 5-6:30 p.m., Palace Recreation Center, 781 Palace Ave

Meetings will include a presentation about the project status, benefits, and what to expect. There will be a roundtable-style conversation where participants can provide feedback and ask questions. Learn more about the project at stpaul.gov/west7.



Community News & Events

West 7th Neighbor since 1887, C.S.P.S. Hall, an Historic Landmark, is home to

- Kids Gymnastics & Folk Dance Classes
- Language & Cooking Classes
- Ethnic Dinners • Cultural Events
- Festival • Rental Venue

Pancake Breakfast Craft & Bake Sale
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Pancakes (all you-can-eat), sausage, fruit cup, juice, and coffee.

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CZECH AND SLOVAK
MINNESOTA



West 7th/Fort Road Federation Annual Merchandise Design Contest

The West 7th/Fort Road Federation is seeking artists to submit designs for the West 7th Community Merchandise design contest! Everyone is welcome to participate. Proceeds from the merchandise sales will help the West 7th/Fort Road Federation fulfill its mission to promote a welcoming and safe community. The winner will receive a free shirt and has the opportunity to have their name featured on the Federation website and socials.

Entries must be received by April 7. Designs must be original; cannot contain profanity, trademarks, logos or any copyrighted works. By submitting a design, you are guaranteeing the design does not include copyrighted content. Design will appear on the front of the shirt, in color and may not exceed 12 inches by 17 inches. The West 7th/Fort Road Federation name and logo will appear on the back of the shirt along with community sponsors. The design must be on a transparent background and suitable for printing on gray or black shirts. The winning artist will be contacted to finalize the design for printability. The design must include the phrase "West 7th" and should showcase the neighborhood's rich history, eclectic vibe and diversity. Entries must be received in a .png format.

Entries must be submitted to fortroadfed@fortroadfederation.org, with the subject line "West 7th Merch Design Contest". Include your name, email & phone. Entries are the property of The West 7th/Fort Road Federation. By participating you agree to allow the Federation to use the design free of charge, for printing and promotional purposes. The Federation reserves the right to make minor adjustments to the file/design for production purposes.

The Federation Board will review designs and select up to three finalists based on



WEST 7TH MERCH design contest

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concept/originality of design, adherence to design and submission rules, and the design's ability to capture the character of the West 7th Neighborhood.

Attendees of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation Annual Meeting will vote on a winner on April 29. Merchandise will be available to order online the following week.

Find more information, visit fortroadfed.org.



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Catherine Russell and Sean Mason

JAZZ FEST ANNOUNCES DATES, HEADLINERS

The Twin Cities Jazz Festival will return to Lowertown June 20-21, 2025. A diverse array of talented musicians from around the country and around the corner will take to the Main Stage in Mears Park and other stages around town.

On June 20, Twin Cities Jazz Festival veteran Emmet Cohen will take the stage with his trio and The Four Freshmen. Doreen's Jazz New Orleans and Adi Yeshaya Jazz Orchestra featuring Jennifer Grimm will be opening up this year's festival starting at 4:00 p.m. June 21 will be headlined by Catherine Russell and Sean Mason starting at 8:30 p.m. L.A. Buckner and Big HOMiE, Patty Peterson presents Jazz Women All Stars and Society of Chemists will be rounding out the day starting at 2:00 p.m.

Jazz Fest will also feature performances June 20, 7:30 p.m. on the Jazz on 5th Street Stage by Las Guaracheras, an all-female salsa band from Colombia, and June 21, 4 p.m. at Cedar Cultural Center by Leslie Parker Dance Project with a live jazz ensemble.

The Twin Cities Jazz Festival, established in 1999, is a non-profit organization, with a mission to keep the art form of jazz alive and well in our community. It has since grown into one of the largest free civic jazz festivals in the Midwest. Learn more at twincitiesjazzfestival.com.

CITY, WILD ASK STATE LEGISLATURE FOR \$400 MILLION TO UPGRADE XCEL CENTER

The City of St. Paul and the Minnesota Wild announced last week their top priority for the 2025 legislative session is funding a major renovation of the Xcel Energy Center Arena Complex. Renovations to the city-owned Arena Complex, which include the Xcel Center, RiverCentre and Roy Wilkins Auditorium, are estimated to cost \$769 million. The city is asking the state to fund half of the cost, approximately \$394.6 million, with Minnesota Wild owner

Craig Leipold funding \$215.8 million (30%), and the city and local partners providing the remaining \$158.8 million (20%). Ramsey County continues to explore its partnership investment in the proposed Arena Complex renovation.

City leaders and the Wild say that the Xcel Center is in its 25th year of its intended 25-year lifespan and is in need of substantial upgrades. Additionally, they say the RiverCentre and Roy Wilkins Auditorium require significant upgrades to infrastructure and equipment.

The Arena Complex generates over \$383 million in revenue and attracts over 2 million visitors each year. According to an economic impact study conducted by the Wild, a renovated Arena Complex is anticipated to boost annual local spending by \$110 million, create approximately 2,300 union construction jobs, and, when complete, will employ more than 5,000 people in St. Paul.

If state funding is approved, construction on the multi-phase renovation project could begin as early as 2026. For more information, visit stpaul.gov/arena.

MET COUNCIL, CITY OF ST. PAUL APPROVE CENTRAL STATION DEVELOPER

A 20-story apartment tower and a six-story building connected by a skyway over the METRO Green Line are proposed on a critical piece of undeveloped land in the heart of downtown St. Paul.

Following recent approvals to enter into a tentative developer agreement by the Metropolitan Council and St. Paul's Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Indianapolis-based Flaherty & Collins will now begin the process of moving forward with its \$130 million plan to build on what's known as the Central Station Block.

The developer's plans call for 300 market-rate housing units and 10,000 square feet of ground-floor retail space on the now vacant site adjacent to the Green Line's Central Station. The site is also served by the METRO Gold Line and several bus routes.

The Central Station Block is two parcels owned separately by the Met Council and City of St. Paul. The properties were acquired as part of the Green Line's construction over a decade ago.

NEIGHBORHOOD STAR GRANT APPLICATION OPENS

The 2025 application opened March 31 at stpaul.gov/nstar. All applications must be submitted online through ZoomGrants by Friday, May 2 at 4 p.m.

Interested business owners should plan to join the virtual Neighborhood STAR Workshop April 8, 1-2 p.m. Learn more about the program, get application tips, and ask questions of the STAR team. Log-in instructions for the

workshop will be posted at stpaul.gov/nstar.

The City of St. Paul has invested in over 1,200 projects through Neighborhood STAR since 1995. Find details, including guidelines and FAQs, at stpaul.gov/nstar.

MET COUNCIL TO OPEN SECTION 8 WAITING LIST

The Metropolitan Council will take applications for its Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8) waiting list for the first time in nearly three years beginning on April 9. Applications must be submitted by noon on April 16.

The Met Council's housing and redevelopment authority, Metro HRA, will host a lottery on May 1 to randomly select eligible applicants for the waiting list.

American Indian households will have preference on waiting list. This year, Metro HRA will offer a preference for 10% of waiting list placements to heads of households who identify as American Indian. The Met Council made this commitment when it adopted Imagine 2050, the regional development guide, in February.

Because the demand for housing vouchers is far greater than the supply, not everyone who enters the lottery will be selected to join the waiting list. Once on the waiting list, the estimated wait time for a voucher is one to five years, depending on funding from the federal government. Being added to the waiting list does not guarantee a housing voucher or subsidy.

Eligible households pay 30% to 40% of their incomes for rent, and Metro HRA pays the remainder, within established rent guidelines. Participating property owners are guaranteed a stable source of rental income.

More information at metrocouncil.org/Housing/Services/Metro-HRA-Rental-Assistance.aspx.

ST. PAUL JOINS LAWSUIT CHALLENGING PRESIDENT'S THREATS TO WITHHOLD FEDERAL FUNDS

Mayor Melvin Carter announced signing on to a lawsuit filed by the City of San Francisco challenging the legality of a recent executive order on February 26.

Carter said the executive order illegally withholds federal funds to force local law enforcement jurisdictions to act as federal immigration agents, giving federal officials the ability to impose civil or criminal actions against those jurisdictions if they refuse.

"We are taking action to ensure the continuity of local services that receive federal funding, but more importantly to preserve and protect the basic covenant that our residents and businesses who contribute millions in hard earned tax dollars to our federal tax base have a right to benefit from the federal funding that they provide. We do not accept the proposal of this executive order unlawfully holding hostage federal funds as ransom against an unlawful political demand."

The City of St. Paul relies on about \$260 million in receivable federal funding to support critical investments in emergency response, infrastructure, housing and public services—about \$192.2 million of which is currently under contract. Of those dollars already under contract, roughly \$139.4 million accounts for one-time capital investment projects and the remaining \$52.7 million supports ongoing programs and department operations.

Another \$66.8 million is in the post-award phase of establishing workplans and executing contracts. The city has also applied for an additional \$66.1 million in federal grants. Some of the major initial impacts include: A combined \$7.3 million in nearly completed construction for Como Park Zoo geothermal upgrades and the North End Community Center; Interruption in the 10-year plan to replace 26,000 lead service lines; Loss of 28,400 high school intern hours with the city's year-round Right Track program; Delay of approximately 1,800 trees scheduled to be planted, and 1,100 stumps planned for removal over five years; \$3 million in redevelopment grants for new affordable housing and business and economic development; Cuts to emergency response and public safety training programs and personnel; Cuts to supports for unsheltered work.

In 2004, the city adopted a separation ordinance that ensures all residents are granted full access to city services regardless of immigration status. The ordinance also states that no city employee is responsible, nor are they authorized, to enforce federal immigration policies.

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As a small, nonprofit news organization, our success relies on the support of our community. Thankfully, for nearly 55 years the people in neighborhoods along West 7th have helped us thrive.

From giving their time to help us tell the stories of the area, to the small businesses who support us through advertising, the West 7th Community has invested in our paper for over a half-century, and for that we are eternally grateful.

In these times, it is more important than ever to continue supporting independent, local news – news that affects your daily life, neighbors and community. This April, we're asking for your

continued support and donations to help us do even more.

Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for supporting us in whatever way makes sense for you!

Whether it be simply reading our pages each month, to providing us with a donation, we would not exist without the support of our community and our partners and we truly, deeply appreciate everything you do to keep the *Community Reporter* a thriving neighborhood resource.

--Damian Goebel, Editor

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In 2025 we have two big goals:

Expand the *Community Reporter*

We want to tell more stories on more printed pages, update and modernize our website and serve a larger geographic delivery area, growing our ability to keep everyone informed of the things that matter most in our community.

Increase paid writing opportunities

Our writers, photographers and creators are the backbone of our organization. We want to include more voices in our pages. To attract those voices, we want to make sure that the people doing the work of telling the stories of our community are compensated for their time if they choose.

Our goal this year is to raise \$30,000 to support our future success in keeping our community informed about what matters most in their backyard.

WE NEED YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO REACH OUR GOALS

Support high quality, local, nonprofit journalism in your community mailing a pledge or donating online at communityreporter.org/donate. Your tax-deductible donation lets us provide you the news and views from the West End that matter most for the next 55 years.

WAYS TO SUPPORT CR

Whether you can provide financial support or not, there are plenty of other ways to support the future of local journalism.

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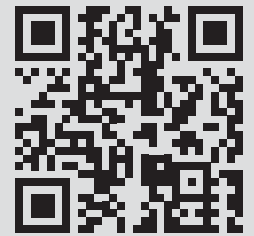
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BUILDING COMMUNITY Influencers for a kinder world



TIM JOHNSON columnist

It is fair to say that Carl Benston, AKA, Mr. Positive, never thought of himself as an influencer, at least not by the standards of those who are able to use their influence as a source of income through social media. How could you possibly expect a person living with savant syndrome disability to be an influencer?

Like others who live in or frequent the West 7th Community, I often saw Carl on his creatively outfitted bike. I never had the opportunity to meet Mr. Positive in person, but thanks to the wonderful memorial in the January *Community Reporter* and the writings of Tim Rumsey, I almost feel like I did. I certainly have known folks like Carl, people who somehow manage the art of being, without pretense or gilded effort to showcase themselves for profit or otherwise.

One of the advantages of being a pastor is you are given the opportunity to encounter people like Carl

who are so at peace with who they are that they can generously care about those around them. Among the folks standing out for me is Blanche, a woman who also would never show up on anyone's list of influencers. She had no children or family in the area and in her later years her days were spent in the confines of the nursing home where she lived, a place where many folks say they never wish to end up. Blanche was in a shared bedroom and was given the bed closest to the hallway rather than a bed next to the window. The nursing home itself was on the tired side, looking like it had known some years. Blanche had every reason to lament her situation, but every time I stopped to visit she was nothing but positive about the staff, about the food, about where she lived. She never failed to ask about how I was doing and about my family. By her very presence, Blanche gave me cause to reconsider how I looked at and dealt with all the things that I might find frustrating and discouraging. I am confident she had that impact on others as well.

Neither Carl nor Blanche allowed the circumstances of their lives to be a detriment to who they were or how they treated those around them. In her book "Calling In:

How to Start Making Change with Those You'd Rather Cancel," author Loretta Ross states, "the one human right that can never be taken away is the right to choose our own attitude, no matter the circumstances in which we find ourselves." For Ross our capacity to have a positive influence in our world and with those around us begins with something that likely came natural for Carl and Blanche; that is "recognizing we have a common core with most people – the values and experiences and concerns that you share." Rather than "focus on the differences that leap out to you" give your first attention to what we hold in common.

Loretta Ross is an African American activist who has spent five decades working for human rights. She is very much concerned with making the world a better place, where racism, sexism or any hierarchy of division and oppression will no longer be a drag on the human spirit or potential. What Ross is convinced we need is a willingness to listen, to call in the best in people, rather than call out the worst. What we need is more people like Carl and Blanche whose influence encourages us to be better, do better, enabling us to play our part in shaping the type of community and world in which we truly want to live.

COMMUNITY VOICES

What is happening with former Lowry Apartments?

The city of St. Paul condemned and boarded up the Lowry Apartments, displacing residents and leaving behind a vacant, deteriorating building that now threatens neighboring properties. Since then, nothing has been done—no plan, no progress, just an abandoned structure bringing down property values and causing real damage, including water leaks affecting the Lowry Condos next door.

Mayor Carter and city officials used this crisis to make political statements about helping people in need, yet

after forcing residents out, they've done nothing to fix the situation. Where is the accountability? What's the plan for this property? The city, or whoever now owns it, owes the community an explanation.

We need transparency. We need action. We need real solutions—not boarded-up windows and empty promises.

If you live, work, or care about downtown St. Paul, make your voice heard. Contact city officials, demand answers, and push for a plan that restores this building and our community.

Speak up now—before this eyesore becomes a permanent problem.


Contact the Mayors office: https://saintpaul.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=23314062489357

Contact the City Council president, Rebecca Noeker: ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us

Sincerely, Anthony T. Eaton



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 Our dedication lies in helping you navigate through this period with grace and dignity, ensuring that every detail is handled with care and reverence.

KESSLER & MAGUIRE FUNERAL HOME
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651-224-2341



Community Business

Five West 7th Businesses Receive Improvement Grants

Roxanne Sanchez, owner of Nine Lives Thrift, located at 1165 West 7th, was in the midst of expanding her shop to the adjoining 1169 West 7th when she got the news that she'd have a little help.

"The timing is perfect," she said. "We are expanding into the vacant space next door, formally Mojo Monkey. That process was more costly than expected."

Nine Lives, along with four other businesses along West 7th, are the initial recipients of funding through the Revitalize West 7th program of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation.

The program, funded through the Neighborhood STAR program of the City, provided small grants for capital improvements to businesses facades. Business owners had to apply for funding through the Federation, but with less red tape than other programs available.

"The application was much easier than other grants we have looked at," Sanchez Said.

In addition to Nine Lives, the Federation is providing funds to Brake Bread, Tavial Grill, Healing Space and Country Club Vintage.

"This program is an investment in our local businesses," Julia McColley, Executive Director of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, said in a statement. "By making facade improvements more accessible, we hope to spur economic development and strengthen the neighborhood's identity."

Upgrades business are planning include things like signage, patio upgrades and more.

"We are replacing our front door with something more accessible," Sanchez said. "We are also getting a bike rack out front and new signage for our expanded space."

Brake Bread said in their newsletter that they were planning to use the funding for install restrooms for customers using their new outdoor bus seating.

McColley said they had more applicants than they were able to fund, but she hopes they will be able to offer the program again in the coming years depending on funding.

Learn more at fortroadfed.org/revitalize-west-7th.



Brake Bread said they are using their facade improvement grant to install a new restroom for customer use.



Nine Lives Thrift Store at 1165 West 7th is one of five businesses receiving grants from the West 7th/Fort Road Federation for facade improvements.



Afton Park Development is planning an 87 unit, mixed-use development at the corner of Grand and Victoria.

COMMUNITYHAPPENING New Development Planned for Grand and Victoria

Local developer Afton Park Development unveiled their concept for a new mixed-use development at the intersection of Grand and Victoria.

The planned development, which was shared with the community on March 18 at a public meeting at Summit Church, calls for a six-story building with 87 housing units and 12,000 square feet of retail space.

Developers said they hoped the first floor retail space would be anchored by two restaurants and a retail store.

They hoped to purchase the property early next year and have the project complete by

summer 2027.

The proposed development would occupy the long-time Billy's On Grand space, which was rebranded Gather Eatery and Watch Bar in 2023 and has been sitting vacant since early this year, and the adjoining Victoria Crossing East Mall.

Project planners said they are working with the City on conditional use permitting for the site and would not close on the property until that process is completed.

You can learn more about the project at aftonpark.com/portfolio.

SHOLOM:

Minnesota's Most Inclusive Senior Community, Guided by Jewish Values



AT SHOLOM, WE PROVIDE EXCEPTIONAL AGING SERVICES FOR ALL, ROOTED IN JEWISH VALUES. As a nonprofit senior care organization, we offer a welcoming, inclusive environment where individuals of all backgrounds and faiths find community, dignity, and purpose. Whether through our comprehensive care services or innovative programs, Sholom is a place where connections thrive, diversity is celebrated, and every resident is valued.

GUIDED BY JEWISH VALUES, OPEN TO ALL

Sholom is committed to building a strong, inclusive community through programs that honor Jewish traditions while encouraging engagement for all residents.

Jewish Culture Connections

This program invites residents to explore Jewish heritage through discussions, storytelling, and shared traditions. Jewish residents can embrace their roots, while seniors of all faiths are encouraged to participate, deepening their understanding of Jewish culture and fostering mutual respect.

Faith Conversations

One of our newest programs, *Faith Conversations* creates a respectful space for residents to explore spirituality, share personal beliefs, and learn from one another. Guided by spiritual care leaders, this program encourages open dialogue and connection, reflecting our commitment to inclusivity.

Community Ambassador Program

Residents in our *Community Ambassador Program* find purpose and belonging by using their talents to contribute to the community. Whether assisting with tours, community events, leading our social committees or using other skills, members strengthen the bonds within our Sholom family.

A FULL CONTINUUM OF CARE

Sholom offers a broad spectrum of aging services, ensuring that residents receive the right level of care at every stage of life. Our services include independent living, assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing, rehabilitation, hospice, and home-based care. Every service is designed to promote health, safety, and independence, allowing residents to live fully and with dignity. **Our mission reflects this commitment:**

SHOLOM, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OUR COMMUNITY, SUPPORTS ADULTS IN NEED ACROSS THE CONTINUUM OF CARE, TO LIVE FULLY IN A JEWISH ENVIRONMENT WHERE ALL ARE WELCOME.

A THRIVING, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

Sholom is more than a senior living provider—it's a place of belonging. Through programs like *Faith Conversations* and *Jewish Culture Connections*, we create opportunities for meaningful engagement, lifelong learning, and cross-cultural understanding. We believe that inclusivity strengthens our community, and we are proud to be Minnesota's most welcoming senior living provider.

JOIN US FOR THE UPCOMING EVENTS - VISIT [SHOLOM.COM/EVENTS](http://sholom.com/events) TO LEARN MORE!

THURSDAY, APRIL 10TH | 12:00 - 1:00 PM | "Navigating the Downsizing and Moving Journey"

APRIL 2ND, APRIL 30TH, MAY 7TH | 5:30 - 6:30 PM | "3-Part Caregiver Series for Adult Children"

SUNDAY, APRIL 27TH | 1:00 - 3:00 PM | "Bloom & Mingle: A Spring Social"

THURSDAY, MAY 1ST | 3:00 - 6:00 PM | "Volunteer Appreciation Ice Cream Social"

AT SHOLOM, WE IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE, FOSTER DEEP CONNECTIONS, AND SERVE AS A TRUSTED RESOURCE FOR AGING SERVICES. JOIN US AND EXPERIENCE A COMMUNITY WHERE TRADITION, CARE, AND INCLUSION COME TOGETHER.



To learn more, visit sholom.com or contact us at 855.574.6566

NEW WEBSITE COMING SOON... STAY TUNED!



Community Traditions

Spring Art Crawl Returns This April

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

The annual right of spring, St. Paul Art Crawl, returns this April with even more art, music and activities than ever before.

This year, organizers are spreading out the spring showcase of local artists across three weekends, divided up by the city's City Council Wards.

Ward 2, which includes the Downtown, Summit Hill, The West Side and the West 7th neighborhoods is first up on April 25-27, with events, activities and all the art you can handle all weekend. Wards 5, 6 and 7 are the following weekend, May 2-4, with Wards 1, 3 and 4 hosting events May 9-11.

We've rounded up some of the events happening along West 7th for this year's festivities. See all the events over the three weekends at stpaulartcollective.org.

ART CRAWL AT THE BREWERY

Work out all of your spring fling needs with the amazing collection of talented artists at Schmidt Artist Lofts Brewhouse - April 25-27, 2025 in the West 7th Arts District.

This spring's Art Crawl begins right here



at the historic Schmidt Brewery with over 80 artists exhibiting and selling their work. See and shop paintings, ceramics, illustrations, jewelry, photography, block prints, glass art, digital work, fiber arts and more by Schmidt resident artists and our local guest artists.

Your challenge is to search every inch of the 5 level Brew House. Explore each room, gallery, hall and hallway from the tunnel to the rooftop overlooking the St. Paul Skyline. Learn a few new moves at the Dance Studio off the Tunnel Gallery Saturday afternoon. Don't miss your opportunity to learn from an artist through our Open Palette Art demonstrations on the rooftop. Attend a session and get inspired to test your own artistic abilities. Take in the spectacular view while you chat one-to-one with our artists.

Entries for the 44th Annual MN Congressional District High School Art Competition takes center stage in our Atrium. This new generation of artists offer their youthful insight. The winning piece will be part of a national exhibit at the U.S. Capitol, and runners up will be displayed at congressional offices in St. Paul and Washington D.C.

While in our West 7th neighborhood, expand your art adventure with more art venues and shops nearby. Stay fueled for your day (or weekend) with fabulous food trucks on site and a variety of restaurants within walking distance.

If you go

Attendance is free. Street parking is free. Hours: Friday 6-9 p.m.; Saturday 12-7 p.m.; Sunday 12-5 p.m. Schmidt Brewhouse - 900 West 7th St. Information: schmidtartists.com.

ART CRAWL ON THE WEST SIDE

Experience a celebration of creativity: open artist studios, guest artists and live music at F-O-K Studios at Farwell-on-Water, 106 W Water Street just south of Harriet Island, celebrating creativity during the Ward 2 weekend of the St. Paul Art Crawl. Visitors can explore three floors of artist studios with over 50 artists and musicians. Discover a work of art to add to your life and get an opportunity to converse directly with the artist who made it.

Start on the 5th Floor to visit two of our resident artists, continue to the 4th Floor where you will find more studios and guest artists down the center of the warehouse, and it doesn't stop there - go to the 3rd Floor to visit the Gallery featuring an exhibition of resident artists. After that, make your way through the hallways of the 3rd Floor where you will find more resident artists, enjoy complimentary beverages in the lounge while listening to local musicians on our stage. Food from Boca Chica and the Eggroll Queen.

If you go

Free parking in F-O-K Studios lot and All Inc. lot on Plato Boulevard. Follow the parking and overflow parking signs. Hours: Friday, April 25, 5-9 p.m.; Saturday, April 26, Noon-8 p.m.; Sunday, April 27, Noon - 5 p.m. F-O-K Studios at Farwell-on-Water, 106 W Water Street

More info: Follow F-O-K Creatives on Facebook and Instagram @fokcreatives or fokcreatives.square.site.



Schmidt Spring Art Crawl
April 25th-27th
www.schmidtartists.com



Community Traditions

MUSIC FESTIVAL FEATURES LOCAL ARTISTIS

Live Music at the Sounds of Schmidt Festival The Sounds of Schmidt Spring Art Crawl Music Festival is set to take the local music scene by storm. The festival showcases an incredible lineup of talent that spans all genres of the local music scene. This is a unique chance to discover new artists and support the local music community in several fun and vibrant venues.

This year's Music Festival promises something for every music lover. Organizers have booked more than 50 performances highlighting genres like jazz, indie, punk, folk, country, dance, hard rock, hip hop and everything in between. The lineup includes an exciting array of solo acts, duos and bands, each bringing their unique sound to the stage.

The Music Festival will feature live performances at several venues along the W 7th Arts District in St. Paul, MN including: The White Squirrel, 974 W 7th Street and Rathskeller at the Schmidt Brewery Complex at 882 W 7th Street, St. Paul, MN)

Bring your appetite and thirst! They'll be selling products from our proud beverage sponsors Sociable Cider Werks and Bad Weather Brewery. Food trucks and caterers will meet your culinary cravings.

The festival provides a great opportunity

to explore local culture, support independent artists, and enjoy an unforgettable weekend with friends and family.

If you go

Hours: Friday, April 25, 6:00-9:00 p.m. Rathskeller at the Schmidt Brewery Complex, 9:00 p.m.-midnight The White Squirrel; Saturday April 26, noon-7:00 p.m., Rathskeller at the Schmidt Brewery Complex, 9:00 p.m.-midnight, The White Squirrel; Sunday April 27, noon-5:00 p.m., Rathskeller at the Schmidt Brewery Complex, 5:00 p.m.-midnight The White Squirrel. No Cover Charge!

For the list of bands, musicians and schedule, visit: [instagram.com/schmidtmusicians](https://www.instagram.com/schmidtmusicians).

ART CRAWL AT UNION DEPOT

Ready to refresh your home or wardrobe? Shop local artists with a wide variety of options at Union Depot including painters, photographers, mixed media artists, jewelry designers and apothecary creators! Come support local makers and bring home a new piece of art.

If you go

Hours: Friday, April 25: 5-9 p.m.; Saturday, April 26: 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Sunday, April 27: 12-6 p.m. Info: [uniondepot.org/event-calendar](https://www.uniondepot.org/event-calendar).

HEART HEALING MARKETPLACE

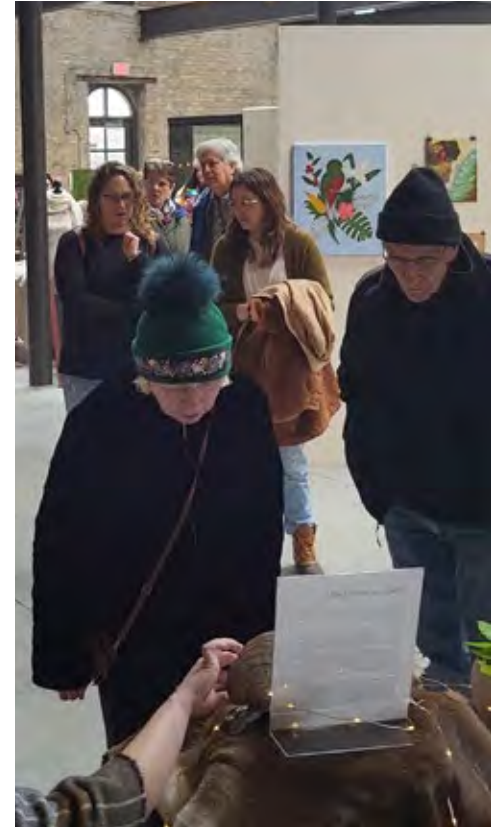
Where Healing is Art, an immersive community event dedicated to spiritual and creative offerings. HEART will bring together local artisans, healers and wellness practitioners for a weekend of connection, creativity and holistic experiences.

Taking place at Schmidt's Rathskeller on April 25, 26 and 27, HEART is designed to cultivate a space where art and healing intersect. HEART is born from an unshakable belief in the power of art and healing to transform lives. Attendees can explore a diverse range of vendors offering handcrafted goods, spiritual tools, and wellness services, as well as participate in interactive workshops, live art demonstrations and guided meditations.

If you go

HEART is open to all who seek inspiration, healing and meaningful connections.

Learn more at [unfinishedbusiness888.com](https://www.unfinishedbusiness888.com).





Community REPORTER
 DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE
How Federal Funding Impacts Minneapolis
 Neighbors Continue Fight Against Garbage Depot Despite Losses at City
 Downtown St. Paul on the Cusp of Major Redevelopment

Community Nourishment

WESTEND HEALTHLINE

When It's Not a Breath of Fresh Air: A Review of Asthma

BY SARAH REICHHOFF, MD

With Spring in full swing, bringing with it allergy season, decreased air quality and more people out and about getting exercise, now is a good time to brush up your knowledge of asthma. This is a relatively common condition that affects up to 7% of children and up to 10% of adults in Minnesota. However, while common, this condition is not one size fits all and every person who has this is affected differently.

In general, asthma is a condition that affects the lungs and makes it difficult to breathe at times. In response to triggers, the airways of the lungs become smaller due to inflammation, increased mucus, and tightening of the muscles around the airways. All of this leads to a smaller area for air to come in and out of the body. Understanding how asthma works explains the symptoms that patients often experience, like wheezing or noisy breathing (think of wind whistling through a small space), a tight feeling in the chest, difficulty catching a breath and coughing as the lungs try to clear the airways. While the causes of asthma are complex, including genetic and environmental factors, this is a condition which has treatments to control and even prevent symptoms!

When seeing a medical provider about asthma, they will ask questions about how often you are experiencing symptoms, if they ever wake you from sleep, if they prevent you from doing any of your normal daily activities, if you have had to go to the Emergency Department for treatment or had to be admitted to the hospital, and how often you have to use your medication if you have any. These questions help to determine how well the asthma is controlled, whether it is mild, moderate or severe and whether it is intermittent or persistent. Your provider will also ask if there are any triggers that you have recognized; some people notice that they only have symptoms with exercise, while others have worsening asthma related to allergies, respiratory illnesses, polluted air or cold/dry weather. Along with these questions, diagnosis and management are



sometimes assisted by a breathing test called Pulmonary Function Testing or PFTs.

The treatment for asthma is individualized to each person's symptoms, triggers and severity. Some people will just need a short acting inhaler occasionally when symptoms appear, or may take that inhaler before coming in contact with something they have found to be a trigger. Other people may need a longer acting inhaler or other medication to take daily to control symptoms before they arise. Your medical provider may also help make an Asthma Action Plan, especially for young children. This will designate green, yellow and red zones based on symptoms and will detail which medicines to take at each level, and when it might be necessary to go to the hospital for further treatment. Sometimes, when asthma symptoms increase quickly during an "asthma attack", stronger and more frequent treatments need to be given to decrease inflammation and relax the

muscles around the airways.

So, what should you do with this information? If you have asthma or have experienced the symptoms discussed above, take some time to think about when the symptoms happen, how often you are experiencing them, how severe they get, and if you have medications on hand which help relieve the symptoms. If you aren't sure your symptoms are well controlled, or if you have questions and want to make sure you have the most up to date plan for yourself, make an appointment with your primary care provider to address this. And, if you are ever concerned for quickly increasing difficulty breathing that is not fixed by a "rescue" inhaler, go to your local Emergency Department for assessment and treatment.

Dr. Reichhoff is a family physician at Allina Health United Family Physicians, 233 Grand Ave, St. Paul, 55102, 651-241-5200.

Want to make a difference?

We're raising money to digitize and provide The Community Reporter's 50-plus years of archives free online. Staff from the Minnesota History Center will do the work. Your \$1 page or \$8 issue donation will make a difference.

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NEIGHBORHOOD cleanup day

SATURDAY
26
 APRIL
2025

3:00 PM - 4:30 PM

PLEASANT PLACE (GARFIELD & HARRISON)

Activities:

- PICKING UP LITTER
- LIGHT GARDENING
- CONNECTING WITH NEIGHBORS

free snacks and beverages for the volunteers!



WEST SEVENTH / FORT ROAD FEDERATION
 SAINT PAUL MINNESOTA
 RAMSEY COUNTY
 Saint Paul - Ramsey County Public Health

In the Community

NOTEBOOK RECOLLECTIONS

Smile

BY TIM RUMSEY

I swallowed a camera two months ago. Dr. Ravi made me do it.

OK, it was a medical test. To check for blood in my small intestine. Not a usual study, but for me part of a work up for a bout of “low blood” – anemia.

The 22 feet of our small intestines complete the body’s marvelous assembly line of food digestion and absorption.

Upon Dr. Ravi’s order, I went to a Minnesota Gastroenterology (MNGI) office several days later. I had a pleasant, professional encounter with one of the G.I. nurses. There were no “BM” jokes or “camera-in-the-diabolical-system” comments.

There would be an at-home prep the day before the actual test to clean out the 22 feet of my small intestine. Much like a colonoscopy prep, there would be a Gatorade festival with a side of bowel softeners and eliminators.

The camera itself is contained in a clean, sterile, disposable capsule, the size of a multivitamin.

A multi-multivitamin that takes 14 picture frames a second and creates an eight hour movie of the inside wall of my small intestine made up of the

all-wonderful Duodenum, Jejunum and Ilium (not to be confused as three ancient Roman cities).

I would be wearing a wide-mesh brand around my waist about the size and look of a world championship wrestling belt that contained a battery, transmitter and recorder for the camera I would swallow.

I got the belt and camera at the MNGI office. I could be at home or almost anywhere. Just no bending, contact sports or long distance running for the eight hours of recording.

I swallowed the camera at 8 a.m. of test day. A green light would blink every 15 minutes to let me know the camera was still functioning.

The participant (me) has to “visually examine” all their “toilet stools” until they see the camera. No retrieval necessary. My small intestine movie will have been recorded in the “belt-receptor.”

At 4 p.m. upon test completion, I returned the recorder belt to the Minnesota G.I. office. The receptionist welcomed me with an “I know all about that test” smile and a “way to go” salute. (What if we could swallow body cameras to use for Disney World trips?)

Time Out

Oh, I miss Carl, Mr. Positive. Carl Benston. I could’ve consulted him for some pre-test calming down. I think Carl would have listened interestingly about my swallowing a camera. He would’ve been quiet for a moment and then he’d ask: “a Kodak? Will you keep the pictures?”

At 4 p.m. I took a quick peek in the toilet bowl. I saw the “Kodak.” The belt had the whole movie.

A Minnesota G.I. doctor reviewed the film. Then she texted the results of Dr. Ravi who texted them to me: “minimal bleeding at three sites compatible with ibuprofen or aspirin use. No ulcers, cancers or other abnormalities.”

I was good to go. Stop the ibuprofen and aspirin for three months (Tylenol OK) and then a blood recheck to make sure the anemia has recovered.

I told Dr. Joel Giffin, the first doctor I saw in clinic the next day, the good news.

He asked if I had considered entering my bowel movie in the Cannes film festival.

Engage with Local Authors and More

Support local authors at the MN Black Authors Expo or participate in a family-friendly program to help build a more sustainable and community-driven St. Paul! Find more events at sppl.org/events

Attend the Minnesota Black Author’s Expo
April 12, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. | Central Library

The Minnesota Black Author’s Expo brings together authors, educators and students to encourage everyone to write, read, learn and grow. There’s a space

for everyone—a Writers Boot Camp for emerging and established writers, a Creative Writing Workshop for teens, a Kids Corner with fun-filled activities and a chance to meet and support dozens of authors. Learn/register at mnblackauthorsexpo.com.

Events at West 7th Library

A great lineup of events for all ages:
• Playdate – Tue, 3-5 p.m.
• Family Storytime – Wed, 10:30 a.m.



- Spring Break at W7: Painting Pet Rocks! Tuesday, April 1, 3-5 p.m.
- Memoir Writing for Adults (five-part class) – Begins April 14, 1-2:30 p.m.
- Movie: *Ratatouille!* – April 25, 6:15 p.m.

GARBAGE DEPOT, PG 1

those being trash trucks,” she said. “There was no discussion of and no evidence presented to show that a public works yard experiences anything close to that level of daily traffic volumes.”

She said she found errors in the Planning Commission’s determination, including omitting discussion of significant traffic difference, finding that the determination was consistent with the comprehensive plan and the fact that the commission did not receive 70% of the materials submitted by the Federation, including their opening statement laying out their grounds, as part of their appeal.

The West 7th/Fort Road Federation submitted their appeal to the City Council after they found their materials were not provided to Planning Commissioners, which city staff have acknowledged was done in error.

In a letter to the Council, Mayor Carter said, by granting the appeal, they had “plunged the City into crisis.”

“By granting the appeal without a legal basis, the City Council is prohibiting a private company who legally purchased a property from using the site to provide essential garbage services to our city, jeopardizing our ability to provide trash services across the city after March 31,” he said in his letter.

He suggested the Council call an emergency session to rethink their vote.

In a statement, the Federation refuted the Mayor’s assertion that the city’s capacity for garbage pickup was in jeopardy.

“FCC Environmental has a solid waste hauling permit in place and has been servicing 48,000 residential properties with five or more units since November 1, 2024, using other compressed natural gas

fueling stations around the metro,” they said. “Throughout this citizen participation process, we verified on multiple occasions that garbage service would not be interrupted.”

FCC Environmental was awarded the City of St. Paul’s trash collection contract last spring. They are planned to begin providing garbage collection service to 90% of the city’s 1-4 unit housing, including residential trash, bulky items and yard waste, beginning April 1.

As part of their contract, they purchased the five-acre site at 560 Randolph Ave., along with the adjacent 540 Randolph Ave., last year with the intent of being their primary storage and refueling facility.

FCC planned a \$25 million investment of the site to house their 30 initial garbage trucks, which could increase to as many as 80, a dispatch facility and a compressed natural gas fueling station.

A global company based in Spain, the proposed depot is a major piece of FCC’s expansion to St. Paul.

On January 21, the Fort Road Federation made an appeal to the St. Paul Planning Commission about the proposed plan and whether it met the criteria for light industrial use.

The Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission voted 3-2 to deny the Federation’s appeal on February 13. The appeal was subsequently denied by the Planning Commission on February 21 in a unanimous vote.

Public testimony was not allowed during the Planning Commission proceeding. However, city staff have acknowledged that a majority of the materials for the appeal were erroneously omitted from the Planning Commission’s packet for their Feb. 21 meeting.

A tentative site review public hearing was

tentatively scheduled for March 27. It is unclear whether that public hearing will take place given the City Council’s approval of the Federation’s appeal.

It is also unclear what comes next in the process. At the Planning Commission meeting on March 21, acting Planning Director Bill Dormity said he was unsure what comes next.

“I don’t know what the next steps are,” he said.



For information, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events

REPRESENT YOUR NEIGHBORS - JOIN OUR BOARD

The HDC is led by a group of neighborhood volunteers elected by Highland Park residents and business representatives to bring the voices of the community to the City of St. Paul on issues. These positions will be up for election April 10-15:

- One rep (Grids 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11). See a map at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/hdc.
 - Two at-large reps from any grid in Highland Park
- A great way to get involved in your community. Applications are due by 5 p.m., April 3. Learn more at bit.ly/2025HDCBoard.

ANNUAL MEETING

April 10, 6:30 p.m., Summit Brewing, 910 Montreal Circle. Learn about neighborhood projects, meet HDC’s Board Member Election candidates. Also, hear about roads and public projects in Highland Park, including MnDOT’s I-35 bridge project over Shepard Road, City of St. Paul’s Climate And Resiliency Plan and Riverview bus rapid transit, and Great River Passage Conservancy’s River Learning Center. Food provided; beverages available for purchase.

VOTE IN THE 2025 ELECTION

Your voice matters! Election runs April 10, 7 p.m. to April 15, 10 p.m. via Survey Monkey. Prefer a paper ballot? Email/call kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org; 651-695-4005. Details at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/hdc-event/2025election.



SAVE THE DATE

Join us on Tuesday, April 29 at Summit Brewing (910 Montreal Circle) for our Annual Meeting. This is an opportunity to learn about projects in the neighborhood and meet candidates running in the Federation Board Member Election.

In addition to connecting with neighbors and candidates, connect with community organizations and hear from representatives from city, county and state-led projects in our neighborhood.

Food will be provided and beverages will be available for purchase.

GET INVOLVED

We are currently accepting applications to join our board. Applications are open now and due April 6. Not ready to run for a board seat yet? Join us for an upcoming committee meeting!

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Federation has two big events coming up:
• **West End Garage Sale Weekend** (5/17-5/18)
• **15th Annual West End Neighbors’ Garden Tour** (6/14). For details: fortroadfed.org.

UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- **Transportation & Land Use**, 4/2, 6:30 p.m.
- **Engagement & Fundraising**, 4/22, 6:30 p.m.
- **Annual Mtg**, 4/29, 6 p.m. Summit Brewing

STAY IN TOUCH

"Like" us on Facebook. Subscribe to e-newsletter. More information at fortroadfederation.org

CONTACT

Julia McColley, julia@fortroadfederation.org;
651-298-5599; 395 Superior Street, St. Paul



**WEST 7TH
COMMUNITY CENTER**
265 Oneida, St. Paul
651-298-5493
keystoneservices.org

Check the website for the latest information or call the Center.

Volunteers are the Key!

Keystone provides food support to over 11,000 individuals every month. We are able to provide support for so many in our community thanks to our wonderful volunteers! Volunteer opportunities are available Monday – Friday during the day as well as Wednesday evenings. Shifts may be as short as an hour, with most running from 90 minutes to three hours. Our volunteer shifts are flexible – come help out once a month or weekly or somewhere in between.

Have a vehicle and want to deliver food and a friendly face? Meals on Wheels delivers Monday-Friday from 10:45 a.m. – 12 p.m. and Grocery Delivery ahs shifts Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 12 – 1:30 p.m.

Do you love exploring Ramsey County and being outside in MN all seasons? Our Foodmobile has 30 distribution sites each month in 2.25 hour shifts

Do you want to help 10,000 community members receive food support at the Keystone Community Food Center? The Market and Warehouse has multiple shift opportunities.

Volunteering at Keystone is a fun and meaningful way to show care to your community and a great way to give back this holiday season. Our volunteer staff will work with you to find a role that fits your interests and schedule. To learn more about volunteering at Keystone and fill out a volunteer application, visit keystoneservices.org/volunteer.

Community Kids Free After School Program

Students in grades K-8 are invited to participate in Keystone’s Free after school program, where they’ll have the opportunity to receive homework help and engage in other learning opportunities and fun activities. 2:30–6 p.m., West 7th Community Center.

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Community Business

West 7th Neighbors Oppose Permit for 237 Richmond



West 7th Neighbors have asked the Planning Commission to deny a nonconforming use permit for 237 Richmond, the former Magic's Auto Repair.

Roxanne Sanchez, owner of Nine Lives Thrift, located at 1165 West 7th, was in the midst of expanding her shop to the adjoining 1169 West 7th when she got the news that she'd have a little help.

"The timing is perfect," she said. "We are expanding into the vacant space next door, formally Mojo Monkey. That process was more costly than expected."

Nine Lives, along with four other businesses along West 7th, are the initial recipients of funding through the Revitalize West 7th program of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation.

The program, funded through the Neighborhood STAR program of the City, provided small grants for capital

improvements to businesses facades. Business owners had to apply for funding through the Federation, but with less red tape than other programs available.

"The application was much easier than other grants we have looked at," Sanchez Said.

In addition to Nine Lives, the Federation is providing funds to Brake Bread, Tavial Grill, Healing Space and Country Club Vintage.

"This program is an investment in our local businesses," Julia McColley, Executive Director of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, said in a statement. "By making facade improvements more accessible, we hope to spur economic development and strengthen the neighborhood's identity."

Upgrades business are planning include

things like signage, patio upgrades and more.

"We are replacing our front door with something more accessible," Sanchez said.

"We are also getting a bike rack out front and new signage for our expanded space."

Brake Bread said in their newsletter that they were planning to use the funding for install restrooms for customers using their new outdoor bus seating.

McColley said they had more applicants than they were able to fund, but she hopes they will be able to offer the program again in the coming years depending on funding.

Learn more at fortroadfed.org/revitalize-west-7th.

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SECRET WARRIORS AT HISTORY THEATRE

March 29-April 19. History Theatre world premiere. \$15-\$64. A new drama by acclaimed playwright R.A. Shiomi unveils the untold stories of Japanese-American (Nisei) soldiers who trained at Minnesota's Fort Snelling during WWII. Discover their compelling personal journeys and heartfelt love stories set against the backdrop of the war and the incarceration of their families. From the battlefields abroad to the struggles at home, this powerful play brings history to life through riveting storytelling and heartfelt performances. Tickets and details at historytheatre.com.

WHEN YOU'RE IN THE MIRROR...

Through April 27, Minnesota Museum of American Art. The title comes from a song on Charli XCX's album "Brat." Charli sings "when you're in the mirror, do you like what you see? When you're in the mirror, you're just looking at me." The duality of the lyric allows the listener to come to their own conclusions around what and who is drawing attention in the metaphorical mirror of introspection and relays into the colloquial use of "brat" as more than just an album: it's a way of being. With its multi-layered approach, it could be argued that "Brat," as both an album and a movement, is Charli's own self-portrait. Learn more at mmaa.org/when-youre-in-the-mirror.

FORT ROAD HAPPY HOUR

March 25, 4-6 p.m. Emerald Lounge. Enjoy a casual gathering with neighbors, businesses and community members—no agenda, just great conversation. Appetizers, and beverages for purchase. All welcome. Supported by St. Paul Jaycees Foundation. Learn more: fortroadfed.org.

ANNUAL BATTLE CREEK PROM SALE

Through April 5. Battle Creek Rec. Center. Looking for your perfect Prom 'fit'? All dresses and suits under \$5. Jewelry, shoes and ties also available. April 2, 4-7pm; April 4, 10am-5pm; April 5, 10am-1pm. Learn more at mnsaintpaulweb.myvscloud.com/webtrac/web/iteminfo.html?Module=AR&FMID=14649490

JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES 9TH ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF SERVICE

April 6, 5-8 p.m. Mendakota Country Club. \$125. A fundraiser to benefit Jewish Family Service of St. Paul. Cocktails begin at 5:00 with dinner at 6:00 p.m. followed by the fundraiser program featuring auction and raffle items. Event will support programs for elderly Russian speakers. Tickets/info at jfssp.org.

WEST 7TH TRANSIT ENGAGEMENT SESSION

April 8, 6:30-8 p.m. Highland Community Center. Visit stpaul.gov/West7 to review the concept and provide feedback, and attend any sessions: April 8, 6:30-8 p.m., Highland Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy; April 9, 12-1 p.m., virtual (login info: stpaul.gov/west7); April 10, 5-6:30 p.m., Palace Recreation Ctr, 781 Palace Ave. Learn more at stpaul.gov/west7.

SATURDAY SCIENCE CLUB

April 12, 1-2 p.m. Crosby Farm Park. Ages 14+. Free. Let's get outside and explore the world! A monthly meetup for folks to get outside, explore, and learn about our incredible urban ecosystem. Dress for the weather. A smartphone with iNaturalist app encouraged, not required. Register: bit.ly/saturdaysciencetrophy

SPRING FLING

April 17, 6-7:30 p.m. Linwood Recreation Center. Free. Come & meet your neighbors. El Rio Vista, Linwood, Palace will together have a fun time for kids with games, music, demos, info tables & more. Learn more at stpaul.gov/news/spring-celebrations-events.

JOYFUL NOISE

April 25-May 10. Art House North Theater. Pay as you are able - \$50. Bucket Brigade presents the regional premiere by Tim Slover. The unbelievably true tale of the unlikely origin of Handel's Messiah, an enduring piece of music that almost didn't get written. Tickets and more info at bucketbrigadetheater.com.

SUMMER CHOICE FAIR

April 27, 12-3 p.m. Oxford Community Center. Families can one-stop-shop to learn about exciting summer programs offered across St. Paul. Free. Oxford Community Center. All welcome. Learn more: stpaul.gov/news/summer-choice-fair.



MEAN GIRLS

April 8-13. Ordway Center. \$45-\$160. Cady Heron may have grown up on an African savanna, but nothing prepared her for the wild and vicious ways of her strange new home: suburban Illinois. How will this naive newbie rise to the top of the popularity pecking order? By taking on The Plastics, a trio of lionized frenemies led by the charming but ruthless Regina George. But when Cady devises a plan to end Regina's reign, she learns the hard way that you can't cross a Queen Bee without getting stung. The musical is rated PG-13. Tickets and more info available at ordway.org

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