

COUNCIL PERSPECTIVES

## Keeping Our Community Safe and Thriving



**SAURA JOST**  
CITY COUNCIL  
MEMBER, WARD 3  
columnist

We have an election on Tuesday, November 4 and our democracy is stronger when you participate. Please vote!

It's been a challenging year and one of contrasts. As major crimes in St. Paul plummet by double digits, our year has been punctuated by startling violence.

Gravest of all the Annunciation Shooting across the river. Last month, State Senator Sandy Pappas spoke of the work happening at the state to prevent a similar tragedy from ever happening again. Our office, Mayor Carter, and all Council Members are working together and in parallel with our St. Paul Delegation to advance City Ordinance to end this type of senseless violence.

We will pass an ordinance containing four common sense gun control measures, but St. Paul will be prevented from enforcing these widely popular protections by a state law from 1985. Despite the state's preemption, passing this ordinance serves two purposes. First it will send a clear message to the state where St. Paul's values stand. We are committed to protecting our children and each other from gun violence. It also means that should the state preemption ever be lifted; our city will have those common sense gun protections ready to take effect immediately.

We deserve to feel safe in our city. Our children deserve to feel safe in their schools. We will never achieve that safety as long as weapons of war are allowed to exist freely.

In other parts of the Ward our work continues on the future of transit on West 7th. We are grateful to our colleagues at the State and Met Council for their continued partnership and commitment as we explore what's possible for our street in a challenging budgetary environment.

Highland Bridge construction continues to reawaken as more parcels move through and towards our planning processes.

Finally our Budget season is soon coming to a close as negotiations continue with the Mayor and our Council colleagues. It's been a challenging budget season as we face cuts from state and federal programming and rising costs and burdens from inflation. Our office will always work to balance providing the services our community expects and deserves with the careful consideration of the cost.

Our office can be reached at ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us or by telephone at 651-266-8630. Thank you for being a good neighbor.

# What's next for West 7th reconstruction, transit?

## No one knows

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

**W**est 7th/Fort Road Federation Executive Director Julia McColley sent an email on October 7 letting elected and policy leaders know that, without warning or knowledge, she came across substantive changes to the city's "New West 7th Corridor" project page, the City of St. Paul's attempt to pick up the pieces of the decade-long Riverview Corridor planning process, which itself unceremoniously ended in September of 2024.

The main change, without putting it in so many words, was the project wasn't moving forward as proposed during the full-court-press of community meetings this April. The grand vision presented for a new transit line along West 7th had become only two things, a mill and overlay of the street and the potential for a future ABRT project.

"Our neighborhood deserves transparency and a real voice in shaping a project that will define the West 7th corridor for decades to come," McColley said in an email, asking decision makers how they came to this place.

Ultimately, funding the ambitious transit project became too big for any one level of government to bear, especially after Ramsey County reallocated three-quarters of a billion dollars away from the corridor in their proposed Transit and Transportation Investment Plan.

When the new plan for nearly a billion dollars in transportation spending was presented in June, Tom Basgen, a West 7th resident and the Legislative Aide to Ward 3 Councilmember Saura Jost said, "'West 7th has been holding its breath for two decades waiting for the Riverview project. Investment has been delayed, building projects abandoned and the future has been on pause. And that sucks. But there's good news, we are picking up the torch with the new West 7th project being led by the City with partnership from Met Council and MnDOT. We're just



West 7th resident Dana DeMaster asks a question about the future of West 7th on October 29.

missing one last partner to invest. That's you – Ramsey County."

Additionally, Mayor Melvin Carter asked the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners in a letter, co-signed by then Metropolitan Council Chair Charlie Zelle and MnDOT Metro Engineer Khani Sahebjam, to keep funding for the corridor, saying, "Achieving this transformative vision for the West 7th corridor will depend on the financial commitments and advocacy of each of our agencies, including Ramsey County."

The County Board passed the plan as proposed unanimously on June 10.

### "The Roadway Doesn't Care"

On October 29, State Level elected leaders in the area, including Reps. Dave Pinto and Maria Isa Perez-Vega, along with State Senators Sandy Pappas and Erin Murphy, hosted nearly 200 people at the North Garden Theater to discuss what was billed as "The Future of West 7th."

Policy makers and elected officials ran through the history of aborted street and transit projects along the corridor, pushing off much needed maintenance of the road itself.

"The current condition is disgraceful," said Meg Duhr, Chair of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation. "As you'd expect on a multi-lane road with almost no pedestrian infrastructure at the bare minimum of transit infrastructure and long stretches lacking street trees. Driver behavior can be very risky, and many sections of the sidewalk are inaccessible to people with mobility limitations, and crossing the street is very dangerous."

Ultimately, though, there is only one project

in the foreseeable future on the street, a long-planned \$100 million mill and overlay.

"The current plan is a mill and overlay, which would scrape off the top of the the road and resurface it," said Pinto. "It would include some ADA and sidewalk fixes as well."

Pinto said the project is planned, budgeted for and will begin in 2028. Though he and other leaders acknowledge it is insufficient for what is needed on the road, and a total reconstruction could cost upwards of \$400-\$500 million - more than the entire annual budget for MnDOT's Metro District.

"I think all of us agree a mill and overlay isn't enough, and we would like to do more," said Russ Stark, the City's Chief Resilience Officer. "We don't have anything solid yet, but the concept could include perhaps reconstructing parts of the street, some of the parts that are in the worst shape, both in terms of what's happening at the level of pavement and also what's happening at the level underneath the pavement."

Stark said that a compromise like this could be closer to \$200 million, not including any transit enhancements, which would come through a separate process, if at all.

That process has already started with Metro Transit, according to Nick Thompson with Metro Transit's Planning and Capital Programs Division.

"If you've ridden the B line, which was opened in June, which connects St. Paul and Minneapolis from downtown St. Paul on Selby and Marshall, that's what we're we will start planning for now on this corridor," said Thompson. "It's a really

TRANSIT, PG 3

# SPPS Asks Voters to Approve Additional \$37 Million Annually

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

Facing a budget deficit of over \$50 million per year, the St. Paul Board of Education is asking the voters to approve an additional operating levy in the 2025 election of \$1073 per student over the next 10 years.

They say that the referendum would raise an additional \$37 million annually for the district's general fund, which is what is used to pay teacher salaries and benefits, school utilities and maintenance, classroom equipment, transportation and more.

The district has said without this additional funding, they would be looking at significant cuts to their budget.

"The reality is, we can't cut our way to better outcomes for our students," School Board member Carlo Franco said during the Board's July 15 meeting. "I believe that the power of an additional \$37 million plus per year can help us get there, but I know the alternative of that will never help us get there."

### More than keeping the lights on

SPPS Superintendent Dr. Stacie Stanley said, with or without the referendum passing, St. Paul Public Schools will still be there to serve students, but there is a lot at stake.

"I was at Johnson High School and we have our aeronautics program. I was at Humboldt and we have our welding program. I've been



Teresa Mozur



Dr. Stacie Stanley



Dr. Megan Olivia Hall



### GET THE WHOLE STORY

Read Mayoral candidate Q&As, info on what is on your ballot, find your polling place and more information on this year's election online at [communityreporter.org/2025election](https://communityreporter.org/2025election)

to multiple FFA programs where kids are using hydroponics to grow vegetables, the lettuce that is used in their cafeteria," Stanley said. "These are the incredible things that unfortunately, because we see them as extras, would have to be on the table that our children would lose. And I just don't want that to happen."

Stanley, a product of SPPS who officially became Superintendent in May, said she understands the importance of "what some people call extracurriculars," and that by participating in things like debate and student council, it helped to shape who she is today.

"All of those things are as important as math and literacy, and I say that as a former math teacher," she said. "And that is what is at stake right now. It is the arts. It is. And it is orchestra."

For Megan Hall, a long-time science teacher at Open World Learning Community and a member of the St. Paul Federation

BUDGET, PG 7



COMMUNITY VOICES

2025 ELECTION  
Ranked Voting - A Guide

BY ROBIN GILMER

In a few days we are at the polls in St. Paul. You ask “An election? What are we voting for now?” Excellent question. This ballot may have city, school board, and local ballot questions. Check your precinct for what is on your ballot. While these off-year elections don’t get the hubbub of elections like presidential years, they are still important. These elections shape your community.

On your way to the polls, you have some idea of the candidates and are mulling over your choices. You feel prepared. You walk in, get your ballot, and pen readied, aim for that first box to start marking it.... but wait, there is not just one box but several. Which one do you choose? You inquire and are told this election uses Ranked Choice Voting. GULP! After a brief tutorial, you persevere and vote, but you are curious about that process.

I had the same question for years and I’m an election judge. To help myself and other

confused voters, here is some history on Ranked Choice Voting, why it’s used in St. Paul, and what to do at the polls.

**History of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)**  
Ranked Choice Voting is based on the Single Transferable Vote Electoral System, developed by Thomas Wright Hill in 1819. It allows voters to rank multiple candidates for the same office in order of preference. Many states (including Minnesota) use this means of voting in state and local elections. St. Paul voters have used this method for city elections since 2011, but it is not used for state or national elections.

**How it Works**  
Voters rank multiple candidates for one office in order of preference, from the top choice to their last choice, i.e.: first choice, second choice, third choice, etc.

- A candidate needs a majority (50% plus one) of the votes to win.
- If a candidate receives the absolute majority of the first choice votes they win the election.

- If a candidate doesn’t receive more than 50% of the first choice ballots, the candidates who have the lowest percentage of votes and mathematically cannot reach 50% are eliminated. These ballots will be reallocated to the voters’ second choices.
- The process continues until one candidate reaches more than 50% of the votes.

**On your Ballot**  
Voters must rank candidates only once, second, third or greater ranked votes are optional. This means, if there is only one person who you want to cast a vote to elect, you only have to vote for that one, but if you like another candidate almost as much as your first choice, you can list them second.

Fill in the square for each candidate you wish to vote for in order of preference.

You are now an RCV expert. You can vote at the November 4th election with confidence. Don’t forget to share this knowledge with friends, family, and co-workers.

Example of a ranked voting ballot

Mayor City of St. Paul					
1	2	3	4	5	6
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Melvin Carter					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adam Dullinger					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mike Hilborn					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kaohly Her					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yan Chen					
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
----- write-in, if any					

See you at the polls!

2025 ELECTION  
Administrative Citations One Of Two 2025 Ballot Questions

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

In January of this year, the St. Paul City Council passed an ordinance to allow itself the ability to impose fines on businesses in the city without bringing criminal charges against them, largely to enforce the wage theft and tenant protection ordinances that had little teeth without additional tools available for enforcement.

The administrative citation ordinance was to go into effect in April of this year, but concerned citizens collected signatures to put the question of whether the City should have that power on this year’s ballot, rather than leaving it up to the council and Mayor to decide.

“My primary motivation for organizing the petition drive was my belief that voters should decide what penalty power the city has, not elected officials,” said Peter Butler, an advocate against the proposed

amendment.

Among Butler’s primary arguments against the amendment is that the language is vague and could lead to uneven application, or even be abused.

Additionally, Butler said in a presentation emailed to media, the amendment to the City Charter seems redundant.

“The City has abatement powers and wage theft should be criminally prosecuted. Licenses can be suspended or revoked,” the presentation said, in part.

Advocates, on the other hand, say it is well past time for city leaders to have the ability to levy administrative citations, given that St. Paul is the only city in the state without that power already and it has caused city leaders problems over the years.

“I’ve worked in City Hall in multiple roles and I used to get phone calls from parents who were scared, saying their landlord is asking them to pay for something they



Matt Privratsky  
Peter Butler

shouldn’t pay for,” said Matt Privratsky, a former interim-City Council member and current chair of the Yes for Fairer St. Paul campaign working to pass the charter amendment. “The only tool the city has is to revoke a certificate of occupancy, which

would leave families homeless.”

He said that, if the amendment were to pass, it would give city leaders another tool in their toolbox, and only for those who transgress approved city ordinance.

“The City knows it needs these tools in place,” Privratsky said. “Earned sick and safe time and minimum wage rules need these tools.”

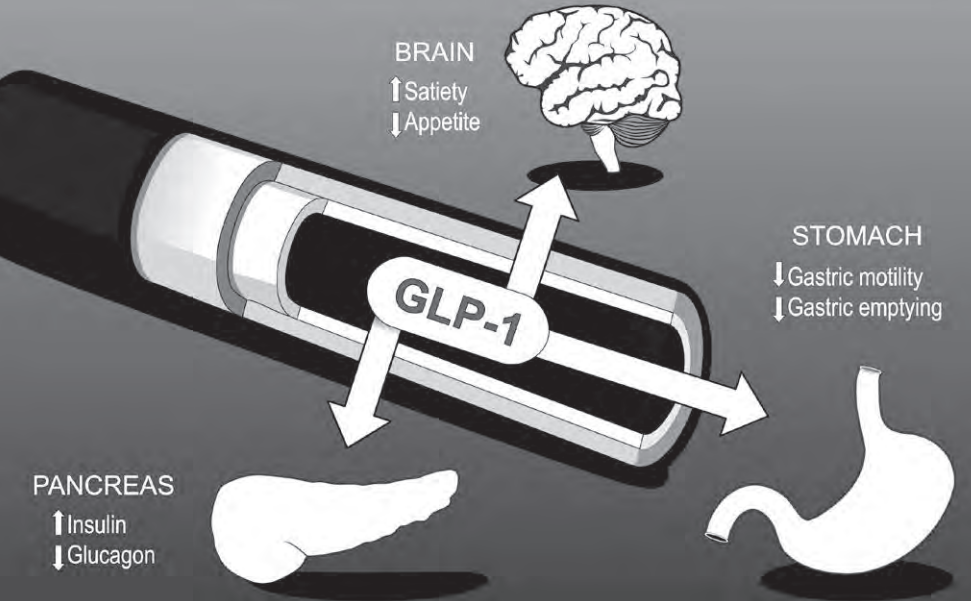
He said that, while the amendment itself doesn’t spell out minimum and maximum fines, it does require city council to pass or amend ordinances to define what fines can be levied.

“It all has to be created through local ordinance,” Privratsky said. “Anything new will have to be reviewed and approved.”

Even if administrative citations are approved by voters, it doesn’t give the Councilmembers carte blanche to begin

BALLOT, PG 5

HEALTH LINE  
Glp-1: A New Healthcare Tool For Weight Loss



BY JAKE ROBINSON, MD

As we head toward the end of 2025, it’s likely that you or someone you know has gone on, or at least thought about going on, GLP-1 medications for weight loss. These drugs include popular brand names like Ozempic, Wegovy, Mounjaro and Victoza. They’ve become nearly impossible to miss—advertised on social media, television and in print. Most of the ads focus on weight loss, often with fine print disclaimers about other effects. Let’s take a closer look at how these medications work, their benefits and their drawbacks.

GLP-1 stands for glucagon-like-peptide-1, a hormone naturally produced in the intestines after you eat. It helps you feel full and slows digestion. When scientists discovered this, they theorized that mimicking GLP-1 in the body could help people eat less without the constant hunger that usually comes with dieting. That idea became the foundation for the modern GLP-1 medication industry.

These drugs essentially trick your body into

feeling satisfied sooner. In doing so, they can help people consume fewer calories and lose weight. For many, the results are impressive. Compared to traditional calorie-counting diets, GLP-1s tend to make the process easier because patients report far fewer cravings. In fact, some say they become repulsed by their previous portion sizes or old eating habits. By changing how the brain perceives food, these medications can make it easier to change behavior and maintain healthier choices. This mental shift often makes all the difference in long-term success.

Of course, the question everyone asks is, “How much weight can I expect to lose?” Studies show that people typically lose around 10% of their initial body weight on these drugs. Results vary by medication and lifestyle, but consistent findings show not only weight loss, but also improvements in blood sugar control for people with type 2 diabetes. Because of multiple benefits, the FDA approved several GLP-1 medications for both diabetes and

obesity, and many insurance plans have started covering them to increase affordability.

However, these medications come with side effects that deserve careful attention. I’ve had patients who were thrilled with their progress but still chose to stop taking GLP-1s because of nausea, vomiting, constipation or diarrhea. These symptoms often improve with time, but they can be severe enough to discourage continued use. Research shows that about one in three people stop taking GLP-1s within the first year, and about half stop after one year. Once the medication is discontinued, appetite typically returns to previous levels, and some or all of the lost weight may return.

Another challenge is that appetite suppression can make eating less enjoyable. For many people, food is a source of comfort and joy. Personally, I compare it to my recurring nightmare that the state fair runs out of Sweet Martha’s cookies—something that would take away one of the little joys of summer.

It’s also worth remembering that GLP-1 medications are most effective when paired with a healthy lifestyle. Eating balanced meals, exercising regularly, and getting good sleep all help enhance and maintain the benefits. The patients who succeed long term are those who use their time on these medications to develop lasting habits that support health even after they stop taking the injections.

GLP-1 medicines are transforming how people approach weight loss and diabetes management. They can improve blood sugar, lower cardiovascular risk, and support sustainable weight control. Still, they work best when used safely, under the guidance of a healthcare provider, and as part of a comprehensive approach to wellness. These medications are not shortcuts, but they can be powerful tools—helping many people regain control of their health and their future.

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

# Community REPORTER

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COMMUNITY NEWS & EVENTS

The Eagle Street Opens in Former Apostle Space

BY KORINNE DENNIS

On Friday, September 26, if you were going to the Keith Urban concert at the NEW Grand Casino Arena, you may have run into a large tour bus promoting his reality TV show, “The Road,” where emerging musicians compete to open up for the “Blue Ain’t Your Color” artist. While many waited in line to enjoy the photo booth and tour the bus, others were inside The Eagle Street, located at 253 Kellogg Blvd. in the former Apostle Supper Club space, a new sports bar that pays tribute to the Eagle Street Grille, which closed its doors in 2023 after operating for 20 years.

Co-owners Jim Flaherty and Joe Kasel introduced another idea for this 7000 sq/ft modern sports bar that offers beers on tap or in bottles. There is an extensive selection of spirits that should match your personality, as well as a variety of wines. The cooler fall weather has provided a nice breeze, both inside and on the open patio, keeping the place at the perfect temperature before a Minnesota Wild game or concert when tons of fans flock in. Did I mention it is directly across the street from the arena?

Joe, a St. Paul native, Cretin graduate, University of St. Thomas alumnus, and football player, has been a restaurateur for nearly 25 years. His passion for the city is evident, as is his strong commitment to staying in St. Paul. He has brought life, enthusiasm for hospitality and friendships that residents have embraced for years.

Jim, a native of West St. Paul and a graduate of the now-closed St. Bernard’s High School, formerly located at the corner of Rice and Maryland in St. Paul, is relatively new to the restaurant industry. His first restaurant venture, Pauly’s Pub & Grill, located at 1668 Selby Avenue, opened less than two years ago as a neighborhood bar and grill. Jim has longstanding ties to downtown St. Paul, dating back to 2007 when he and his wife, Kari, purchased Allegra Printing in the heart of downtown. That business has been providing print, signage, and marketing services around the city for nearly 20 years. Jim is also active in the community, volunteering with various non-profits.



He was King Boreas of the St. Paul Winter Carnival in 2016 and recently served as Mr. Pat, leading the great St. Patrick’s Day tradition in St. Paul.

“The opportunity to revitalize the corner across from the Grand Casino Arena was one Joe and I couldn’t pass up. Moving forward, you can expect live music, elevated food options and a friendly family atmosphere, with a strong level of community involvement,” Jim shared with me. They are honored to be part of such an exciting opportunity!

I appreciate that more places keep opening up in our neighborhood. As a writer and part-time

graduate student who struggles to focus at home, I enjoy being welcomed into lively spots with wifi and outlets. And I’m sorry, Minnesota, but I’m still an Eagles fan, and I like having another place to spend my Sundays. Shall I meet you at the bar and share an espresso martini with you? Yep, add that to the list of beverage selections.

IF YOU GO

The Eagle Street, 253 Kellogg Blvd. Saint Paul. Directly across from the Grand Casino Arena in the former Apostle Supper Club Space. Open everyday 11 a.m. - 1 a.m. theeaglestreet.com

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LINWOOD REC CENTER GETTING NEW FIELDS, PLAYGROUNDS

Demolition started October 20 to completely remake the fields and playground at Linwood Rec Center, 860 St. Clair Ave.

Expected to be completed next year, the renovation to Linwood will see several major improvements to its grounds, including improved irrigation, new playground equipment, the addition of pickleball and basketball courts, a reorientation of the fields and a new amphitheater.

Final designs for the playground equipment will be decided in the coming months. Learn more at [summithillassociation.org/linwoodpark](http://summithillassociation.org/linwoodpark).

GRAND AVENUE WRAPS UP 2025 CONSTRUCTION

Grand Ave. between Snelling and Fairview Avenues reopened on October 21 after a months-long reconstruction project. The first of the City’s Common Cent Sales Tax street construction projects, the project fixed aging infrastructure in the ½ mile stretch of grand, while making improvements to pedestrian crossings, widening sidewalks to create more space for businesses to have

sidewalk cafes and creating new bike infrastructure. Finishing touches will continue through the fall, with public art installations planned in the spring. Learn more at [stpaul.gov/grandavenue](http://stpaul.gov/grandavenue).

NOMINATE YOUR NEIGHBOR, OR YOURSELF, FOR THE HALLOWEEN DECOR CONTEST

Do you have a neighbor that wows you every year with their Halloween decor? Think yours are the best?! Nominations are now open for the 3rd annual Fort Road Federation Halloween Decor Competition! Submit a photo and address of your nomination via Google form by 11:59pm on November 3rd. Voting will take place at our November Board Meeting and the winner will receive a spooky good prize. Learn more at [fortroadfed.org](http://fortroadfed.org).

WEST 7TH SHOWS UP FOR NO KINGS RALLY

Hundreds of people joined in the national “No Kings” protest at Lexington and West 7th on October 18 to protest

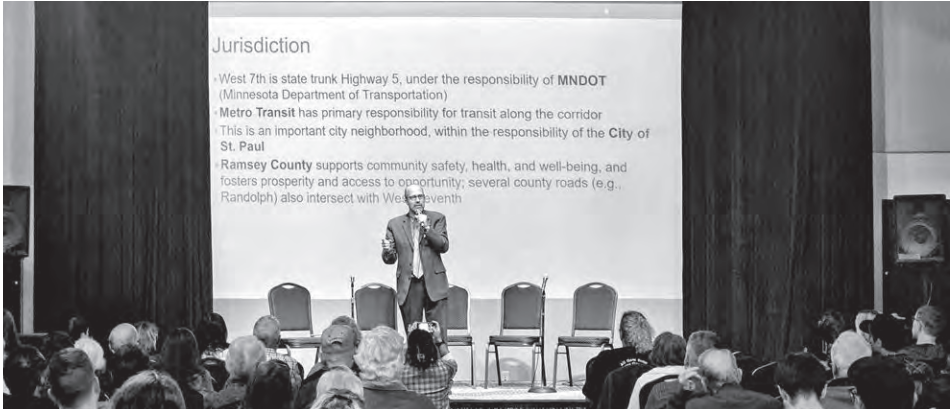
growing authoritarianism under the current presidential administration. The event at Lexington Landing was one of several throughout the Twin Cities that day, the largest of which saw estimates as high as 100,000 in downtown Minneapolis. An estimated 7 million people participated in rallies in all 50 states as part of the No Kings movement protesting Donald Trump and his policies. You can find additional information at [indivisiblebtwincities.org/no-kings-twincities](http://indivisiblebtwincities.org/no-kings-twincities).



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District 64B Representative Dive Pinto speaks at the Future of West 7th event on October 29

TRANSIT, PG 1

important time because, by the end of this year, we’re going to pick the next three corridors.”

Those three new transit corridors, J, K and L lines, would begin construction sometime between 2030 and 2035.

During the Q&A section of the event, neighbors shared their skepticism over anything of substance happening in the area.

“What I’ve heard tonight is a bit discouraging, if I might say,” said long-time West End resident Becky Yust. “I heard ‘partners’ spoken by electeds and agency people a number of times. Never once did that include the neighborhoods.”

“In my estimation today this is my 86th meeting I’ve gone to on this topic and I’m exhausted,” said West 7th resident Dana DeMaster. “I came here tonight not expecting much, like completely pessimistically.”

Both DeMaster and Tim Reardon, who lives at the Schmidt Artists lofts, acknowledged frustration over the lack of action on the street.

“I want to know what more can we do in the short term,” Reardon said. “I think there’s a lot of frustration around obviously waiting another five years, but what more can we do now?”

Reardon said he is newer to West 7th, but

already has found people navigating the street to attend the twice annual art crawl to be treacherous.

To his credit, St. Paul Public Works director Sean Kershaw, who also lives in the neighborhood, volunteered to help with some short-term fixes for crossing near the Schmidt campus.

Short-term actions aside, there are still the long-term needs of the road that have been ignored for far too long with not much information about a path forward.

“The roadway doesn’t care if the agencies can’t figure out a vision, can’t figure out how to implement it, can’t figure out anything else but the roadway, the sidewalks, the pavements, the trees,” Said Dale Gade, a Manager in MnDOT’s Metro District. “Everything keeps deteriorating with the lack of action.”

“I am hearing and feeling the frustration in the room and I think what we need is to come back to you in 60 days with a proposed plan and a funding source,” said City Council President Rebecca Noecker. “We’ve tried that in the past, but I think what we all are hearing tonight, what I’m hearing, is when everyone owns it, nobody owns it, and it shouldn’t be on you to get us to do that work, and to come



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COMMUNITY TRADITIONS



Neal Gosman

Community Reporter Celebrates 55 Years

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

Depending on how you measure, any one of these dates is the birth of the “Community Reporter.”

On March 1, 1970, the first issue of the West 7th Street Association was printed. The predecessor to both the “Community Reporter” and the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, this was a monthly printed newsletter published from March 1970 to June 1971.

On September 8, 1970, the first edition of the West 7th news, a newsletter of the West 7th Community Center was published. They produced four issues until December 1970.

Then, on July 1, 1971, the first edition of the “Community Reporter” was published.

Neal Gosman, one of the original architects of the paper wrote back in 2021 for the 50th anniversary of the paper, “One little seed I planted was a primitive, hand done, typewritten community newsletter then called W7th News. After I left for military service in 1971, the effort was picked up by Kathy Vadnais and others and remade into the newsprint paper you hold in your hands.”


The “Community Reporter” was born out of a need to communicate all of the things happening in the West 7th Neighborhood in the 70s, and that need hasn’t changed. In fact, it has only increased - and not just in West 7th. While other community newspapers have come and gone through the years, we’ve persevered, and continue to thrive.

We celebrated our 50th anniversary in the pages of our paper (which you can read at [communityreporter.org/tag/community-reporter](https://communityreporter.org/tag/community-reporter)), but weren’t able to celebrate in person because of the ongoing pandemic.

Now, as we either close out or begin our 55th year, depending on how you measure, we want to celebrate with you, our community who has supported us all along the way.

**Support our mission**

We are looking to raise \$5,500 this year for our 55th anniversary. As a nonprofit news organization, your tax-deductible donations help us sustain our mission to bring you the news impacting our community.

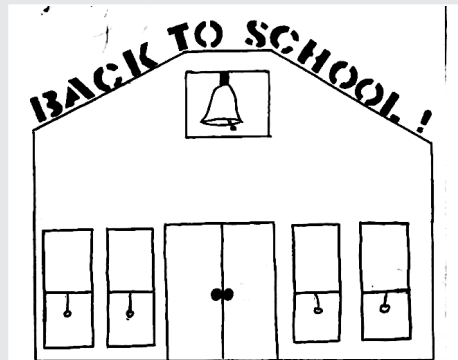


The date eligibility for association  
this year (April 1st) is 1970. A note:  
To street residents, whenever  
we can support your needs for  
that year...

West Seventh Street Association

GENERAL MEETING  
For Neighborhood Development

Thursday, March 26  
7:30



BACK TO SCHOOL!

SEPT. 8, 1970

West 7th Community Center  
Newsletter  
September Edition

Community Reporter

CHOS

Home

Small donations make a big impact

**Small donations make a big impact**

If 1% of our readers donated \$3/month, we could produce an entire issue without putting additional burden on our small business partners, who support us all year long through their advertising.

You can donate online at [communityreporter.org/donate](https://communityreporter.org/donate).

Mail your donation to Community Reporter, 265 Oneida St. St. Paul, MN 55102.

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Nov. 20, 2025

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COMMUNITY NOURISHMENT

ORIGIN STORIES

Part the Sixth: John Irvine, Granddaddy of West 7th/St. Paul

By Joe Landsberger

While Irvine Park and Hillside commemorate John Irvine, his legendary civic role in the birth of our neighborhoods and city is somewhat neglected.

Prior to 1849 St. Paul was a frontier community with pioneer farmers and little development, much less markets. Settlers cleared the land and lived in log cabins until land titles cleared and permanent homes were built.

With a cohort of East Coast entrepreneurs and speculators, John Irvine (1813–1878) migrated west in 1837 from Pennsylvania; he arrived in Prairie du Chien in 1840 as a grocer. His friend Henry Jackson convinced him of commercial opportunities at the head of Mississippi River navigation. In 1843 Irvine trekked 200 miles in a sleigh with goods for sale and purchased 300 acres of the old Phelan claim for \$300 from Joseph Rondo. The next year the steamer Otter towed his inventory on a large Mackinac boat from Prairie du Chien to the Upper Landing. It required great physical effort to drag his supplies through the brush and up the thickly wooded, roadless hill to his log cabin (around Third Street and Franklin Avenue). At the time of Irvine’s arrival, St. Paul had approximately 20 log cabins, five stores, one tavern and a Catholic chapel.

Within five years, Irvine cleared stands of elm, cedar and tamarack for a farm that he sold to steamers. He processed lumber in his sawmill and was used to construct his home, the first frame building in the settlement. The paths where Irvine “first dragged his supplies became Eagle and Chestnut Streets—the first business strips of West Seventh Street.” About 1845 he bought the Mortimer claim, and sold section 6, town 28, east half of northwest quarter to Henry Rice, the eventual area of Rice Park.

In 1849 Irvine donated a parcel of his land above the Upper Landing to the town to create a small park square. He switched from farming to real estate, setting a pattern other East Coast speculators would follow. He sold lots around the park square and transformed “Irvine Park into St. Paul’s earliest, most fashionable, residential district.” Located on an intermediary plateau above the Upper Landing, by 1857 the neighborhood had approximately 15 houses featuring the Federal,



John Irvine

Greek Revival and Carpenter Gothic styles.

Over time the emerging Fort Road neighborhood was home to two Minnesota governors, one United States Senator, two Chief Supreme Court Justices of Minnesota, seven St. Paul mayors and numerous other politicians, as well as prominent businessmen.

Rural life however thrived in Irvine Park. Diarist Polly Caroline Bullard (1816-1898) in “Remembrance of Things Past” recounted how “Early on, most of Irvine Park’s houses faced the Mississippi River, and the neighborhood extended down the bluff, which was not very steep until the railroads were built. At the time, the park square was a grazing ground for cows. “Several families in the district kept cows in those days—so many that a boy came early in the morning to collect them and conduct them to a pasture below Oakland Ave.... Around 5 in the afternoon we would see the procession loping home again — each cow turning into her home gateway when she reached it.”

Irvine died May 2, 1878 with services at Christ Church and burial in Oakland Cemetery. “Mr. Irvine has been one of our

most active and useful citizens during his thirty-two years’ residence. The ample property, which his foresight and prudence prompted him to secure and hold, is now one of the finest portions of our city. The proceeds of most of it which has been sold, has been reinvested in erecting substantial business blocks, mills, warehouses and other buildings.”

George Irvine, John’s brother, joined him in 1851, hoed five acres of potatoes and with John, framed a saw mill and partnered in a store on Third Street. In 1857 they built a warehouse on the Upper Levee that moved to Exchange and Third Streets. George was trained as a tanner and opened the first leather store in the Rice House and a grocery business up to 1861. After stints as a policeman and running a boarding house George left St. Paul but returned in 1876 and worked in the Merchants Hotel until retirement. He died in 1892.

A tour of the Oakland Cemetery is like a wander through Minnesota’s history and prominent figures in the “Origin Story”. However John Irvine has a simple stone monument that differs from Horace Hills Irvine’s substantial mausoleum. Horace was a lumberman and lawyer; his family donated the current Governor’s mansion on Summit to the State of Minnesota. In 1965, Clotilde Irvine Moles and Olivia Irvine Dodge, the youngest Irvine daughters, donated the house and property to the State of Minnesota. Horace Hills Irvine died in 1947 and Mrs. Irvine remained at the Residence until her death in 1964.

More on John Irvine

Local Author Barbara McCormick has written a book on the historic district. “Walking Tour booklet of the Irvine Park Historic District,” 2025 3rd edition, by Barbara McCormick, et al. First published in 1986. Available at Ramsey County Historical Society and Subtext Books. Fifth Street, downtown St. Paul.

You can find a copy of “The Origin Story of Fort Road/West Seventh Street, the Township/ City of Saint Paul, the Territory/State of Minnesota: Glacial Age Forward” at your local library, or order up a copy of your own at [fortroadfed.org](http://fortroadfed.org). Learn more about the book and find Joe’s upcoming conversations about the history of West 7th at [josfland.com](http://josfland.com).

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BALLOT, PG 2

assessing fines. Local ordinance lays out maximums based on the number of offenses and there is a built in appeals process.

Additionally, Councilmembers voted to approve the creation of a task force back in January to study how the new rules will affect their equitable distribution. If passed, the task force can begin its work to study whether the new fine structure disproportionately impacts low-income residents and people of color.

The full question on the ballot reads as follows: *Referendum on Ord 25-2 amending the City Charter. Should Ordinance Ord 25-2, amending Chapter 6.03 of the St. Paul Charter, regarding Administrative Citations take effect? Ordinance Ord 25-2 amends the City Charter to authorize the issuance of Administrative Citations that may result in the imposition of civil fines for violations of City Ordinances. Administrative Citations are not Criminal Citations.*

A “yes vote is a vote in favor of amending the City Charter to allow the City to issue administrative citations.

A “No” vote is a vote against amending the City Charter and against administrative citations.

City Questions

To vote for a question, fill in the box next to the word “Yes” on that question. To vote against a question, fill in the box next to the word “No” on that question.

City of St. Paul City Question 1
<b>Referendum on Ord 25-2 amending the City Charter.</b>
Should Ordinance Ord 25-2, amending Chapter 6.03 of the St. Paul Charter, regarding Administrative Citations take effect? Ordinance Ord 25-2 amends the City Charter to authorize the issuance of Administrative Citations that may result in the imposition of civil fines for violations of City Ordinances. Administrative Citations are not Criminal Citations.
A “Yes” vote is a vote in favor of amending the City Charter to allow the City to issue administrative citations. A “No” vote is a vote against amending the City Charter and against administrative citations.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No

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## ST. PAUL: VOTE YES

### ON OR BEFORE NOV. 4TH, 2025 ON

#### CITY QUESTION #1 FOR A FAIRER ST. PAUL!



As St. Paulites, we deserve a city where the laws we create together actually benefit us, no matter what neighborhood we live in or how much money we have.

But right now, Saint Paul is the only major city in Minnesota that can’t use civil law to issue Administrative Citations, which are basic tools to enforce our ordinances.


Essentially, Administrative Citations are a way for our city to work better for us. Without them, corporations and bad actors break the law without consequences. Together, we can make sure employers committing wage theft are held accountable, landlords keep their properties safe for their tenants, and a lot more. **Vote Yes on Question 1 for a Fairer St. Paul by November 4th!**

**Endorsed by: Mayor Melvin Carter, Rep. Kaohly Her, Sen. Erin Murphy, County Attorney John Choi, ISIAAH, Housing Justice Center, Sustain St. Paul and Supported by the St. Paul DFL**

[www.voteyesforafairerstpaul.com](http://www.voteyesforafairerstpaul.com)

Paid for by Vote Yes for A Fairer St. Paul, 345 Randolph Ave. #100, St. Paul MN 55102

Find out more about the issue and voting info:





IN THE COMMUNITY

LIBRARY UPDATE

50th Anniversary of Southeast Asian Resettlement in St. Paul Commemoration Library Card

In honor of the 50th Anniversary of Southeast Asian resettlement in St. Paul, we’ve launched a special-edition library card designed by local Hmong American artist Kao Lee Thao!

This card celebrates the vibrant Cambodian, Hmong, Lao and Vietnamese communities who have built new roots in St. Paul and across Minnesota. The artwork draws inspiration from traditional textiles, patterns and landscapes woven together as a symbol of resilience and connection. Flowing water ties the design together, representing the journey from the Mekong to the Mississippi—symbolizing survival, transformation and imagination.

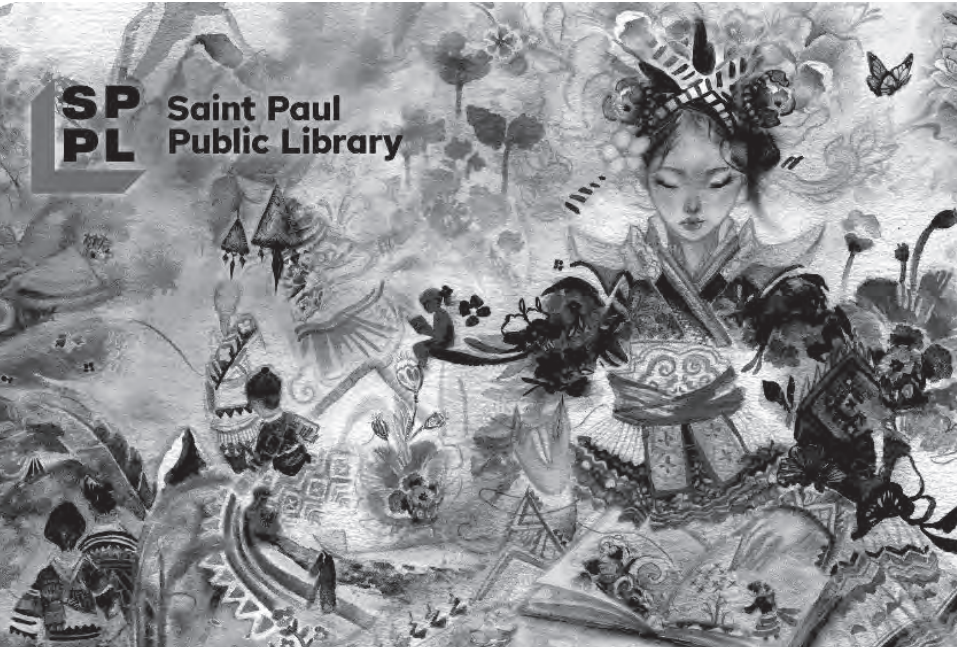
This card is a celebration of representation, connection and belonging. It’s an invitation to see yourself, your community and the stories of Southeast Asia reflected in the library. Read more about the special-edition card at [sppl.org/special-edition](http://sppl.org/special-edition).

Sign up for your card at any St. Paul Public Library location while supplies last and join us for a 50th Anniversary storytelling event on December 13 from 2-4 p.m. at Sun Ray Library!

EVENTS AT WEST 7TH LIBRARY

**ECFE at the Library**  
Monday, Nov 10, 2025, 2-3 p.m.  
Drop in to an ECFE (Early Childhood Family Education) class at the library second Mondays at from 2-3 p.m.

**Earth-Friendly Greeting Cards**  
Monday, Nov 17, 2025 1 p.m – 2:30 p.m.  
Come alone or with friends to the ultimate card party! Spend an afternoon designing your own environmentally friendly greeting



cards using everyday items. Create unique art using recycled and upcycled materials. Leave with as many cards as you care to make. All materials provided. Register at [sppl.org](http://sppl.org).

**Family Movie: Coco!**  
Friday, Nov 19, 6:15 p.m.  
Join West 7th Library and Keystone Community Services for our featured movie: Coco! One Friday night a month we’ll show our favorite movies on the big screen in the gym. Bring your favorite blanket & snacks--

and wear your pajamas if you like. Fresh hot popcorn will be served!

**Playdate**  
Tuesdays 3-5 p.m.  
Playdate is an informal playtime for families to gather at the library.

**Family Storytime**  
Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.  
Join MizKathleen for an interactive learning opportunity for you and your child to enjoy stories, rhymes, songs, live music, and fun.

FILM REVIEW

The Phoenician Scheme” Is Delightfully Absurd, Absurdly Delightful

**By Zach Murphy**  
For his 12th film, the masterful Wes Anderson has devised “The Phoenician Scheme,” an industrialist-themed yarn that blitzes with style and rattles with hilarity. Here, we bear witness to an artist working at the height of their craft. It’s truly splendid cinema.

Set in the 50s, the story zooms in on Zsa-Zsa Korda (Benicio del Toro), a slippery tycoon with a controversial aura. After seeing visions of his judgment day, he decides to anoint his only daughter (a nun played by Mia Threapleton) as the sole heir to his estate—but on a trial basis. Anderson deploys his signature boxy aesthetic to literal levels here, as the tightly organized plot unfolds through a series of shoeboxes that contain Korda’s enterprise plans.

What ensues is a comedic caper of suspicious events and idiosyncratic characters. This thing is hysterical. It’s delightfully absurd and absurdly delightful. The clever script is packed with dialogue that is as droll as it is sophisticated, and there are plenty of sight gags stuffed in—my favorite being a high-stakes game of basketball where del Toro and Riz Ahmed square off against a duo of cantankerous investors played by Tom Hanks and Brian Cranston. Del Toro gives a stellar central performance, and his comic timing is excellent.

As expected, Anderson’s defining traits as a filmmaker are on full exhibit here. The visuals are painterly, picturesque, and cinematic all at once. Every frame is exquisitely staged, and every scene is a hoot and a half. There’s a



Benicio Del Toro and Mia Threapleton

significant emphasis on architecture and interior design, and if you pay close attention to the depth and dimension of each setting, the details are astonishing—right down to the textures and color palettes. It’s almost

as if a lot of the shots were ripped from an issue of “Architectural Digest” that Anderson curated in his imagination.

With a title like “The Phoenician Scheme,” it’s only fitting that the intricate narrative stacks on the twists, turns and reveals. But what’s most surprising are the sneakily tender moments, along with the themes of fate, faith and family. With this film, Wes Anderson proves that he’s one of the greatest auteurs in contemporary cinema. When Korda utters the line, “Don’t buy great art, buy masterpieces,” it feels personal.

“The Phoenician Scheme” is available to rent or buy on all major streaming platforms, and available to stream with your Peacock subscription. Zach Murphy is an avid enthusiast of cinema, theater and storytelling. He lives with his wonderful wife Kelly in St. Paul. You can read more reviews at his blog, Fade to Zach.




**CURB CLEANUP WEST 7TH/FORT ROAD**  
FEDERATION has teamed up with Capitol Region Watershed District for the West 7th Curb Cleanup. When it rains, leaves on streets release nutrients into the water that flows into storm drains and the lake. There it becomes food that fuels algae overgrowth. Join neighbors in sweeping your curb once a week this fall to help keep the Mississippi clean.

**CHATSWORTH DEVELOPMENT NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING:** Members of the West Seventh neighborhood are invited to a community meeting to learn more about a forthcoming development of 36 co-living units at 750 Chatsworth Street. This will be an opportunity to learn more about the development, ask questions and share thoughts. Present will be GRO, the developer; the Federation; and select local officials. The meeting will be lightly moderated. Nov. 12, 6 p.m. at Palace Community Center. More info [fortroadfed.org](http://fortroadfed.org)

**GET INVOLVED!**  
Fall is a great time to get involved at the Federation. Subscribe to monthly newsletter to keep in touch.

**UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**  
• **Transportation & Land Use**, Nov 5, 6:30 pm!  
• **Board Meeting**, Nov 10, 7pm  
• **Community Engagement & Fundraising**, Nov 25, 6:30 pm



**WEST 7TH COMMUNITY CENTER**  
265 Oneida, St. Paul  
651-298-5493  
[keystoneservices.org](http://keystoneservices.org)  
*Check the website for the latest information or call the Center.*

**Volunteer for Meals on Wheels**

Through our partnership with Meals On Wheels, we service 10 different areas around the city of St. Paul! They include River, Summit, Winslow, Midway, Montreal, North, West Side, District 12, Highland, and Macalester Groveland.

The program is run through our West 7th Community Center, and it serves locally prepared meals that are delivered by a neighborhood volunteers Mondays through Fridays!

Many homebound elderly and adults with disabilities are fragile and vulnerable, and most struggle to prepare a nutritious meal on their own. Meals on Wheels can help! Locally prepared meals are delivered by a neighborhood volunteer. Keystone's Meals on Wheels program is all about choice and friendly service.

To learn more or to sign up to receive Meals on Wheels, call Metro Meals on Wheels at 612-623-3363 and they will find the provider in your neighborhood. For basic information, call Keystone's senior services staff at 651-645-7424 or 651-298-5493.

**Get in Gear with Express Bike Shop**

Express Bike Shop, a nonprofit shop and social enterprise of Keystone Community Services, is open Tuesday – Saturday and we’re here for all your biking needs! We sell high-quality refurbished bicycles at affordable prices. We are a full-service shop so can tune up your bike or update it to make it more comfortable. We also sell a variety of accessories like seats, locks, helmets, and more. Whatever your bike needs, we’re here; give us a call at 651-644-9660 or stop by the shop at 1158 Selby Ave, St. Paul.



**HIGHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
For information, visit [highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events](http://highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events)

**BUSINESSES: APPLY FOR FUNDING**  
Highland Park has two corridors that are eligible for grant funds through the city's Commercial Corridor Organization Assistance Program. Businesses along West 7th can learn more on our website and apply for remaining funds on a rolling basis starting November 30, 2025, until all grant funds are allocated.

**UPCOMING COMMITTEES MEETINGS**  
Highland Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy with an option to join online unless noted. Get the Zoom link and meeting agendas at [www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar](http://www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar).

- HDC board meeting – Thu, Nov 6, 7 p.m.
- Transportation – Mon, Nov 10 at 7 p.m.
- Community Development – Tue, Nov 18, 6:30 p.m.



**WELCOME TO KESSLER & MAGUIRE FUNERAL HOME**

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651-224-2341





# BULLETIN BOARD

## THE TWIN CITIES JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

Through Nov 2. Various Venues. This year's festival presents 11 days of world-class cinema, special guests, and community conversation at venues across the Twin Cities. Screenings will be held at landmark venues across the Twin Cities, including the Minnesota JCC Capp Center St. Paul and Sabes Center Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (MIA), Parkway Theater, Riverview Theater, Main Cinema, Alliance Française and Open Book. For a list of screenings & events and to buy tickets, visit [TCJfilmfest.org](http://TCJfilmfest.org).



## 25TH ANNUAL TWIN CITIES BOOK FESTIVAL

Nov 8, 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Union Depot. Free. Rain Taxi's Twin Cities Book Festival is the annual Minnesota gathering for readers, writers, publishers, and purveyors of all things literary. The TCBF features dozens of presenting authors, special children's programs, and a wide variety of exhibitors featuring new and rare books, quirky literary curiosities, and more. Learn more at [twincitiesbookfestival.com](http://twincitiesbookfestival.com).

## VETERANS DAY LUNCHEON

Nov 8, 1-3 p.m. Sibley Historic Site. \$35-\$40. Honor the service and sacrifice of Minnesota's military heroes at the Sibley Historic Site. Enjoy a three-course lunch followed by a powerful presentation from photographer, historian, and PBS host Doug Ohman, who will share remarkable stories of Minnesota's Medal of Honor recipients from the Civil War to today. Tickets and more info at [mnhs.org/events](http://mnhs.org/events).

## CHATSWORTH NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

Nov 12, 6 p.m. Palace Community Center. Members of the West 7th neighborhood are invited to a community meeting to learn more about a forthcoming development of 36 co-living units at 750 Chatsworth Street. More info [fortroadfed.org](http://fortroadfed.org)

## GROWING OUT LOUD STUDENT ART SHOWCASE

Nov 12, 6-8 p.m. Landmark Center. Free. Organized by our Youth Committee, this new juried showcase will feature work from 100+ St. Paul Public Schools K-12 students, amplifying youth voices and connecting artists, schools, and neighborhoods. Learn more at [instagram.com/p/DQHbAEqAFEA/](http://instagram.com/p/DQHbAEqAFEA/).

## COFFEE CHAT: A ROUND TOWER STORY

Nov 13 & 15, 1:30 p.m. Historic Fort Snelling. Free with Admission. Our coffee chat lecture series will discuss the iconic Round Tower at Fort Snelling. Built in 1820, it was originally designed as a final line of defense for soldiers in case of attack. Learn more at [mnhs.org/events](http://mnhs.org/events).

## LANDMARK LIVE!

Nov 14, 6:45-9:30 p.m. Landmark Center. \$25-30. "Landmark Live" features the best of Americana, indie rock, jazz and folk music, with support from KFAL Radio and the Pioneer Press. Concerts begin at 7:30 pm and are preceded by a cocktail hour at 6:45 pm. Featuring Kiss the Tiger. Friday, Dec 12: Chastity Brown. Learn more at [landmarkcenter.org/landmark-live](http://landmarkcenter.org/landmark-live).

## SOKOL MINNESOTA FRIENDLY FRIDAY EVENINGS

Nov 14, 7-10 p.m. C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan St, St Paul. Free. Family friendly cards and board games, fun, food, and friends. No fee. Bring your own beverages and/or snack to share. Learn more at [sokolmn.org/all-events](http://sokolmn.org/all-events).

## FAMILY SCIENCE CLUB

Nov 15, 1-2 p.m. Crosby Farm Park. Free. Saturday Science Club is a monthly meetup for families to get outside, explore, and learn about our incredible urban ecosystem. Each month we'll look for wildlife and complete a mini bioblitz of life in the park. Program is best for children 6-12 and their families. All minors must be accompanied by an adult. This

program takes place outside. Please dress for the weather. A smartphone with the iNaturalist app is encouraged, but certainly not required. Register at [bit.ly/saturdayscienceclub](http://bit.ly/saturdayscienceclub).

## CAPITOL CIVIL WAR TOUR

Nov 15, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Minnesota State Capitol. Free-\$12. Explore Minnesota's vital role in the Civil War through battle flags, art, and memorials. See renowned paintings in the Governor's Reception Room, statues of officers, and a rare flag staff from Gettysburg. Pickets and info at [mnhs.org/events](http://mnhs.org/events).

## BALLET TUESDAYS

Nov 18, 12-1 p.m. Landmark Center. Free. Landmark Center hosts FREE lunch-hour ballet performances and demonstrations, from 12-1pm, in partnership with Ballet Co.Laboratory. Featuring The Snow Queen. Learn more at [landmarkcenter.org/ballet-tuesdays](http://landmarkcenter.org/ballet-tuesdays).

## THE NOTEBOOK

Nov. 18-30. Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. \$45-\$146. Based on the best-selling novel that inspired the iconic film, The Notebook tells the story of Allie and Noah, both from different worlds, who share a lifetime of love despite the forces that threaten to pull them apart. Tickets and more at [ordway.org/events/the-notebook](http://ordway.org/events/the-notebook).

## PUBLIC HEARING - MISSISSIPPI RIVER CORRIDOR CRITICAL AREA (MRCCA) ZONING STUDY

Nov 19, 3:30 p.m. St. Paul City Hall. The City Council will hold a public hearing on the proposed Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area zoning code amendments.

## FALL CRAFT FAIR

Nov 22, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Edgumbe Rec Center. Free. Edgumbe's Fall Craft Fair is back! All are welcome to come explore crafts for sale from a variety of vendors. For more fall events, visit [stpaul.gov/fall-events](http://stpaul.gov/fall-events).

## SCHMIDT HOLIDAY MARKET

November 22-23. Schmidt Artists Lofts. Free. Art for holiday gifts, ceramics, paintings, jewelry and unique inspirations. November 22, 11 a.m.-7p.m. November 23, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Visit [schmidtartists.com/holiday-markets](http://schmidtartists.com/holiday-markets) for more information.

## PANCAKE BREAKFAST, CRAFT, KOLÁČE BAKE SALE

Nov 23, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. C.S.P.S. Hall. \$6-\$30. No reservations needed, public welcome! Koláč (apricot, cream cheese, poppy seed, prune, raspberry) \$2 each To reserve a craft table: [activities@sokolmn.org](mailto:activities@sokolmn.org). Learn more at [sokolmn.org/all-events](http://sokolmn.org/all-events).

## NATALIE MACMASTER AND DONNELL LEAHY: A CELTIC FAMILY CHRISTMAS

Dec. 5, 7:30 p.m. Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. \$34-83. Get ready for an exhilarating night of festive cheer with the Celtic Family Christmas performance, starring powerhouse fiddlers Natalie MacMaster and Donnell Leahy, their family, and their world-class band. Their high-energy performance promises exciting new versions of classic Christmas favorites, sure to get feet stomping, hearts racing, and set spirits ablaze. Tickets and more at [ordway.org/events/celtic-family-christmas](http://ordway.org/events/celtic-family-christmas).



## FAMILY MOVIE: COCO

Nov. 19, 6:15 p.m. West 7th Library. Free. Join West 7th Library and Keystone Community Services for our featured movie: Coco! One Friday night a month we'll show our favorite movies on the big screen in the gym. Bring your favorite blanket & snacks--and wear your pajamas if you like. Fresh hot popcorn will be served! Learn more: [sppl.org/locations/w7](http://sppl.org/locations/w7).

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## BUDGET, PG 1

of Educators Contract Action Team, The referendum boils down to ensuring students have what they need in every classroom.

“From the ground level, [the levy] looks like not cutting teachers and paraprofessionals,” Hall said. “Are we getting adequate federal funding for special education? No. And so some of these teachers are providing the most vital services for our most vulnerable kids.”

Teresa Mozur, an SPPS parent who is organizing the Yes for SPPS campaign said her support of the referendum boils down to ensuring her child has the best possible education.

“As a middle class family we don’t have the privilege of being able to afford a private school, so having a public school system that I know my daughter will get the absolute best education possible is really important,” she said. “We made a decision to send her to the school she’s at now to limit the number of disruptions because we knew the school we live by was going to be closing, and the idea that I would have to potentially question quality education on top of all of this is not where any family wants to be.”

Hall, the 2013 Minnesota Teacher of the Year, has two children who are both in SPPS schools and her husband also teaches in the district, said the conversation around the referendum has brought her gratitude toward her fellow teachers and the administration.

“When I look at schools across our country and across the world and I look at what my kids get, the commitment their teachers give them, the fairness that the building administrators use when they lead the schools, I’m so grateful,” she said.

## Not a fix-all

While the proposed levy would provide relief to the district, it doesn’t solve long-term funding issues with public education in the state - one which will raise the average property tax bill in St. Paul a little more than \$300 next year.

“When you look at the aggregate of [Ramsey] county, \$0.23 of every dollar goes to schools,” Stanley said. “That is why so many schools in Ramsey County are going out for referendum right now.”

St. Paul’s referendum would bring in about \$37 million annually, based on enrollment. That number would remain static, however, based on enrollment in the district and not account for wage increases or inflation.

Stanley said, despite the 2023 legislature tying student funding to inflation capped at 3%, that

past legislative decisions have put many school districts in a funding bind.

“We know that, since 2003, had education funding been tied to inflation, St. Paul Public Schools alone would have an additional \$50 million,” Stanley said, noting that the 2025/26 budget deficit was \$51.1 million.

“There’s a big difference between \$51.1 million and \$1.1 million,” she said.

Mozur agreed, saying a fix at the state legislature is required to ensure all schools are properly funded.

“Students and families of today shouldn’t have to pay for the decisions of decades ago,” she said.

The full question on the ballot reads as follows:

**School District Questions**  
To vote for a question, fill in the box next to the word “Yes” on that question. To vote against a question, fill in the box next to the word “No” on that question.

<b>ISD No. 625</b> <b>School District Question 1</b> <b>Approval of New School District Referendum Revenue Authorization</b>
The board of Independent School District No. 625 (Saint Paul), Minnesota has proposed to increase the School District's general education revenue by \$1,073 per pupil, subject to an annual increase at the rate of inflation. The proposed new referendum revenue authorization would be first levied in 2025 for taxes payable in 2026 and applicable for ten (10) years unless otherwise revoked or reduced as provided by law.
Shall the new referendum revenue authorization proposed by the board of Independent School District No. 625 (Saint Paul), Minnesota be approved?
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> No

BY VOTING “YES” ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.

*Approval of New School District Referendum Revenue Authorization The board of Independent School District No. 625 (Saint Paul), Minnesota has proposed to increase the School District's general education revenue by \$1,073 per pupil, subject to an annual increase at the rate of inflation. The proposed new referendum revenue authorization would be first levied in 2025 for taxes payable in 2026 and applicable for ten (10) years unless otherwise revoked or reduced as provided by law.*

*Shall the new referendum revenue authorization proposed by the board of Independent School District No. 625 (Saint Paul), Minnesota be approved?*

BY VOTING “YES” ON THIS BALLOT QUESTION, YOU ARE VOTING FOR A PROPERTY TAX INCREASE.

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ENDORSED BY SAINT PAUL LEADERS



State Representative Maria Isa Perez Vega, Ramsey County Attorney John Choi, Council President Rebecca Noecker, Council Member Saura Jost

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