



Ward Six News

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Racial Equity: The Case for Funding Our Parks

By Council Member Abdi Warsame

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation board, under the leadership of Superintendent Jayne Miller and President Liz Wielinski, produced a road map to bring racial equity to our neighborhoods.

The Park Board's plan to use \$11 million in new city funds to address park board infrastructure, as approved by the Minneapolis city Council. It does so in accordance with criteria to address the racial, income and societal gaps that exist in our city. This is an objective criteria based approach and it is critical for this city.

In the 6th ward, where there is an enormous concentration of minority groups, with low incomes and the largest population of children under the age of 18 would see significant investment in Currie Park in the heart of Cedar Riverside, Peavey Park in Ventura Village, and Matthews parks in Seward neighborhood, as well as the Phillips pool. These investments will provide measurable health benefits for our seniors and allow thousands and thousands of children of color to feel like first class members of this city.

My support for any Park Board funding plan was contingent to addressing the racial equity gap in our city. This means prioritizing funding for parks in neighborhoods that are densely populated, growing, and containing higher-than-average concentrations of poverty. I am proud to have supported an agreement that had language requiring Park and Recreational board to include an equity component.

This 20-year park plan provides an estimated \$250 million in funds to revive our neighborhood parks, combined with the Park Board's commitment to distribute the money based on racial and economic equity factors would be a significant statement our city can make to our residents and our country.

We truly are a city that looks to serve everyone regardless of their race, color or creed.



Abdi Warsame - Minneapolis City Council Member for the Sixth Ward

City Passes Landmark Sick and Safe Time Ordinance

I am proud to have co-authored the safe and sick time ordinance. This new [ordinance](#) which was approved allows paid sick and safe time for most workers within the city limits. Phased enforcement begins July 1, 2017.

With some exceptions, the new ordinance governs employers with six or more employees and employees who work at least 80 hours a year in Minneapolis. Requirements include:

- Workers may use sick and safe time for their own health and certain family members' health.
- Victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking may use sick and safe time to receive medical treatment and other necessary services.
- Workers must be compensated at the same rate they would have been paid if they worked the missed shift.
- Workers will accrue one hour of sick and safe time for every 30 hours worked and can carry over accrued but unused sick time to the next year.
- Workers may use sick time to stay home with a child if school is cancelled because of a health emergency or weather conditions

With this ordinance, the City takes a critical step in preserving and protecting safety, health and general welfare. The City Council found that paid leave is a key contributor to healthy individuals, families and communities, which are the foundation of well-functioning societies. Paid leave creates the opportunity for family members to both earn a living and to provide care for their loved ones.

Paid sick and safe time is intended to:

- Ensure that workers can address their own health needs and the health needs of their families.
- Reduce public and private health care costs by enabling workers to seek early and routine medical care for themselves and their family members.
- Protect workers from losing their jobs while they use sick days.
- Safeguard the public welfare, health, safety and prosperity of Minneapolis' residents, workers and visitors.

Work Place Regulation Staff Directions and Amendments made by Warsame

I moved a number of staff directions and amendments to help small businesses and the most vulnerable that would be impacted by this ordinance.

Staff Direction #1

Warsame moves to direct Community Planning & Economic Development, the City Coordinator's Office, in collaboration with the Department of Civil Rights to develop a proposal for the creation of a Small Business Compliance Program focused on supporting small businesses as they work towards compliance with the new Workplace Regulations ordinance. The program and its personnel should focus on technical assistance and administrative resources for small businesses up to 15 employees. The program should be capable of providing support for the City's diverse small business and new immigrant communities. Staff is directed to report back to the Committee of the Whole by September 21, 2016 with a program proposal and to include additional funding requests to account for the program in their 2017 budget proposals.

Staff Direction #2 by Warsame

To further articulate and clarify the City Council's intent in Chapter 40, section 110(b):

"(b) The director shall develop and implement a multilingual and culturally specific outreach and community engagement program to educate employees and employers about their rights and obligations under this chapter. This outreach program shall include media, trainings and materials accessible to the diversity of employees and employers in the city",

The City Council directs staff from the Department of Civil Rights to:

- Collaborate and consult with staff from the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department and the Office of the City Coordinator, among others as necessary, to plan and implement multilingual and culturally specific outreach and community engagement to educate employees and employers about their rights and obligations under Chapter 40.
- Collaborate, consult, and contract with community-based organizations equipped with the specific expertise, cultural competence, and relationships necessary to most effectively reach and communicate with the full diversity of employees and employers in the city, particularly those most affected by Chapter 40.

Amendment Amend section 40.90 to read as follows:

40.90 - EFFECTIVE DATE

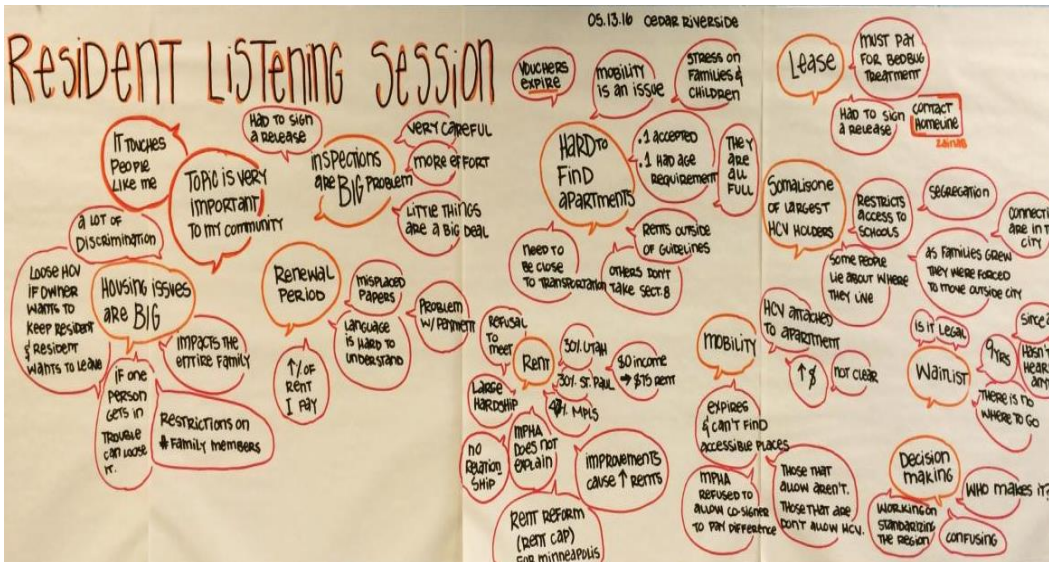
(a) This chapter is effective July 1, 2017.

(b) For alleged first violations arising during the first twelve months following the effective date of this chapter, other than violations of section 40.240, the department must only mediate disputes and issue warnings and notices to correct. For subsequent violations arising during the first twelve months following the effective date

of this chapter and for violations arising after that time period has passed, the director may impose the relief and penalties provided in section 40.120.

(c) For employers, other than chain establishments, operating in their first twelve (12) months after the hire date of the employer’s first employee are required to provide unpaid sick time but are not required to provide paid sick time. After twelve (12) months the employer will be subject to the ordinance providing paid sick time. These sections will sunset five (5) years from the effective date as defined in section 40.90 (a), at which point the employer will be subject to full enforcement.

Housing Choice Voucher Listening Session



Participants expressed how housing is a big issue for them. There was an overall theme of how this is a hard program to be a part of and how discrimination play into this. It was repeatedly stated that the areas we were talking about impacts “people like me”.

During the discussion a series of concerns regarding the Housing Choice Voucher Program were expressed.

A few mentioned out of many were:

- Few choices for families
 - As families grow, they move out of the city due to lack of larger units
 - Loose the social network
 - HCV availability restricts access to schools
 - Promotes segregation
- Apartments are hard to find
 - Many are full or vouchers are not accepted
 - Creates a lot of stress on children and families
 - Rents are higher than what the guidelines will allow

- Lack of communication
 - MPHA does not explain issues related to HCV
 - Changes in the percentage of rent covered by program is unclear
 - Rent increases and how that impacts the voucher are not communicated well
- Waitlist is a problem
 - Some mentioned being on it for 9-10 years
 - There is nowhere to go
 - Many have had little or no communication about it since the application

This dialogue continued to create awareness and informs the processes to look at potential changes to the civil rights ordinance, as well as advocating for parallel initiatives related to HCV.

Music and Movies in the Parks Offers Free Summer Entertainment in Your Area

Summer is fast approaching, and that means it's time for the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's [Music and Movies in the Parks](#). More than 250 free outdoor concerts and movies will be hosted in parks across the city.

Music in the Parks

Since 1892, local Minneapolis artists and bands have put on a show every day in the summer for their residents and neighbors. Genres vary from swing, folk, rock, bluegrass, classical and much more. The 2016 season fills the air daily with music at six outstanding concert venues running from Memorial Day to Labor Day.

- **Lake Harriet Band Shell:** Weekdays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2 and 5:30 p.m.
- **Nicollet Island Park:** Mondays at 7 p.m.
- **Father Hennepin Bluffs Park:** Tuesdays at 7 p.m.
- **Minnehaha Park:** Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at 7 p.m.
- **Bryant Square Park:** Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.
- **Theodore Wirth Park:** June 14, July 12, Aug. 16 at 7 p.m.

Movies in the Parks

Movies in the Parks will travel to more than 45 neighborhood parks throughout the summer. The season runs from Monday, June 6 to Saturday, Aug. 27. All showings begin 15 minutes after sunset.

Concerts and movies are free, and everyone is welcome. Bring lawn chairs, blankets, food and bug spray. For the most up-to-date schedules and weather related information, visit www.mplsmusicandmovies.com. You can also keep track of Music and Movies in the Park on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

City approves historic funding plan for streets and neighborhood parks



COURTESY: MINNEAPOLIS CVB

Mayor Hodges and the City Council approved a landmark agreement that will equitably address needed funding to repave City streets and maintain neighborhood parks far into the future. The measure will provide \$800 million over the next 20 years to help the City and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board keep up with needed maintenance and operations costs in an equitable fashion.

Under the plan, there would be \$33 million in funding for City streets and neighborhood parks for up to 20 years to meet urgent, ongoing needs. About 82 percent of the funding would be paid through property tax increases, providing for:

- Street maintenance.
- A guaranteed minimum annual funding of \$21.2 million a year above the current City general fund expenditures for street capital projects.
- \$800,000 increase in base budget for street maintenance beginning in 2017.
- Neighborhood parks
- Startup funding of \$1.5 million will go toward maintenance and operations of the neighborhood park system.
- City will recommend a one-time \$3 million base levy increase to the Board of Estimation and Taxation.
- An additional \$8 million in annual capital funds for neighborhood parks. Combined with \$2.5 million already provided through the Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee, amounting to \$10.5 million in guaranteed minimum funding.

A key concern for elected officials is that this increased funding will be used equitably throughout the city. The agreement includes language requiring both Public Works and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to use this additional funding in accordance.

Interactive Map Makes It Easy to Find Farmers Markets in Minneapolis

Farmers Market season is here! And the City of Minneapolis has an online interactive map that makes it easy to find farmers markets all over the city. Clicking on the map pins at www.minneapolismn.gov/farmersmarkets will show the address, season dates and opening times for each market. The map will be updated as information becomes available on 2016 schedules.

Nearly 40 farmers markets, mini markets and farmstands are expected to operate in Minneapolis this year.

Local produce



It's easy for people to buy local produce. Most of the markets accept "electronic benefits transfer" cards as payment to give residents on federal food assistance easier access to fresh, healthy food. Some of the farmers markets are mini markets, special small markets that the City licenses to get more fresh and affordable produce on the table in low-income neighborhoods.

Local produce is nutritious and affordable. Buying food directly at a farmers market strengthens the community between the farmer and the eater, and it supports the regional economy by allowing the local farmer to keep 80 to 90 cents per dollar of sales. Many Minneapolis residents can reach a farmers market on foot or by bicycle, which are good ways to exercise and don't pollute. Many of the farmers markets also serve to build community with prepared food, environment-themed educational activities and music.

Check out [Homegrown Minneapolis](http://Homegrown_Minneapolis) for more ways to get healthy, local food on the table. Homegrown Minneapolis is a citywide initiative expanding our community's ability to grow, process, distribute, eat and compost more healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods.

You Can Still Sign Up For Organic Recycling

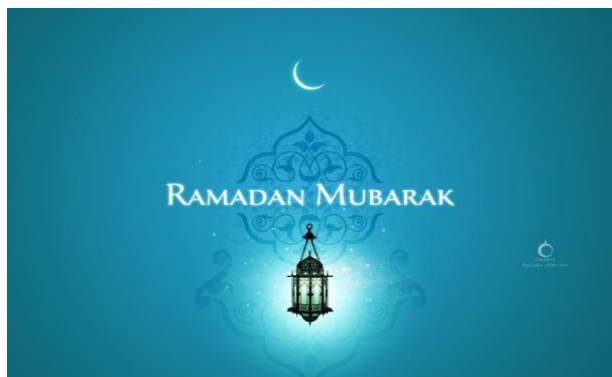
The spring rollout of organics recycling carts is nearly over. If you've already signed up for a new organics cart and expect it in the spring rollout, you can check [here](#) to see which week your cart will arrive.

If you haven't signed up yet, you can still get a green cart in a week or two when you sign up. And there's no extra charge.

Find more information at www.minneapolismn.gov/organics



Ramadan Mubarak!



Ramadan is a Muslim holy month that occurs on the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar and lasts for 29 or 30 days. This year, Ramadan begins June 5.

During Ramadan, practicing Muslims spend the daylight hours fasting. This means they abstain from any food and drink from dawn to sunset. One of the key purposes of fasting is to experience how a hungry person feels and to understand what it is like to have an empty stomach.

It teaches one to share the sufferings of the less fortunate. Fasting during Ramadan is considered one of the five Pillars of Islam — five activities that shape Muslims' lives. Ramadan is also known as the month of forgiveness, charity and generosity.

Neighbors close to mosques and Islamic centers can expect to see heavy traffic during Ramadan beginning at sundown until about 1 a.m. Heavy traffic will significantly increase during the last 10 days of Ramadan, from 9 p.m. to as late as 5 a.m. There will also be a significant change to the East African community's activities and day-to-day operations during daylight. Some food businesses or coffee shops may close or operate fewer hours.

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