



COMMON GROUND

TOWARDS A
STABLE, UNIFIED
METROPOLITAN
REGION

FALL
2007

Mega-Developments: MAMMOTH OPPORTUNITIES

Large-scale, public-private development projects are being proposed throughout the Twin Cities. In fact, just the five projects detailed on the following pages will account for tens of thousands of new jobs and housing units. They will carry a total development value estimated in the billions of dollars. These mega-developments typically request a significant level of governmental participation and public financial support, often justified through promises of significant public benefits. The impact of these projects—both positive and negative—will be felt by all of us throughout the region. However, if history is any guide, their impacts won't be distributed equally.

THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

The seven counties that form the Twin Cities metropolitan area are growing. In fact, the state projects that our region will gain more than 1.2 million new residents by 2030. And we're not only growing, we're prosperous: we rank among the top ten states in both per capita income and median household income.

But that prosperity doesn't extend to everyone living in the Twin Cities. Minnesotans of color (roughly 14 percent of the overall population) are significantly more likely to live in poverty, be homeless and be the victims of crime. And there remains a huge gap between job and income growth in the more affluent suburbs as compared to the core cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Low-income people and communities of color in the Twin Cities suffer from these inequities despite the outward appearance of prosperity in our region.

Our metropolitan development patterns are significant contributors to these racial and economic disparities. Seventy percent of our entry-level jobs are in the suburbs, while many of the workers who need those jobs live in the urban core. Our woefully underdeveloped transit system prevents many

See **Mega-Developments**, page 2

On the Inside



Roads vs. Homes!
Preserving Affordable
Manufactured Housing
in Eden Hills

PAGE 4



LRT "Stops for
Us" Proponents
March in
Rondo Days

PAGE 8



Transit Partners:
Grassroots Activists
Push for Expanded
Transit Funding

PAGE 10



New Affordable
Housing Web-site:
How is Your City
Performing?

PAGE 13

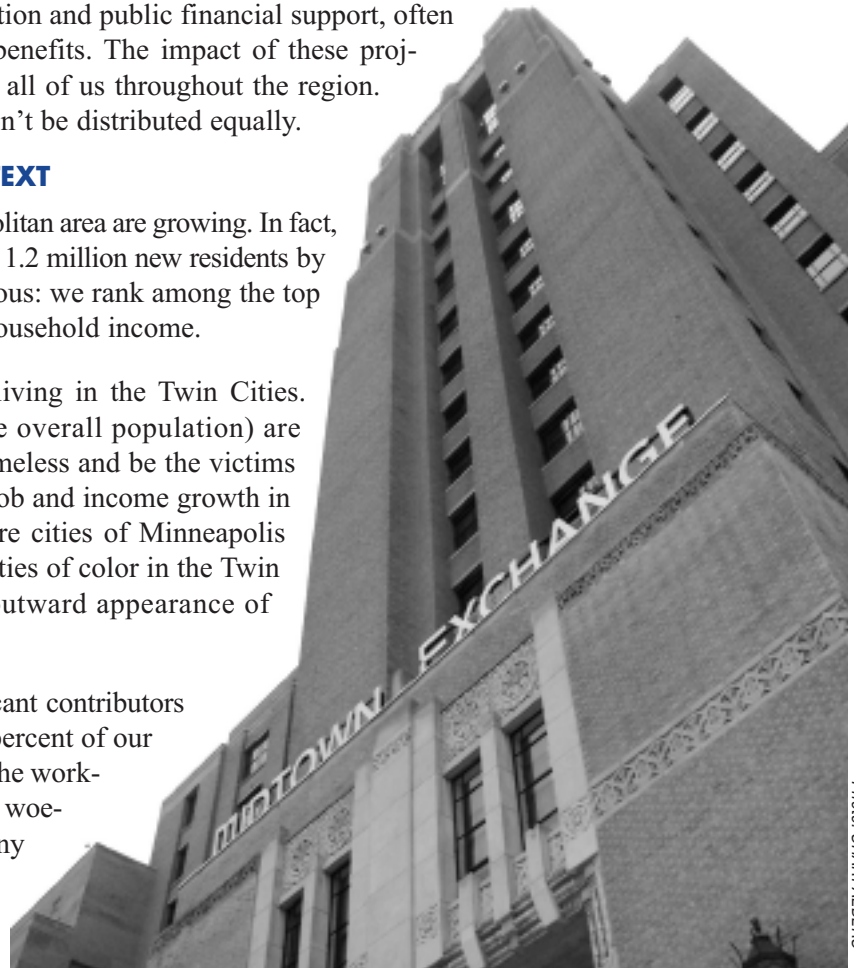


Photo: SHARI ALBERS



Mega-Development: Mammoth Opportunities *continued from page 1*

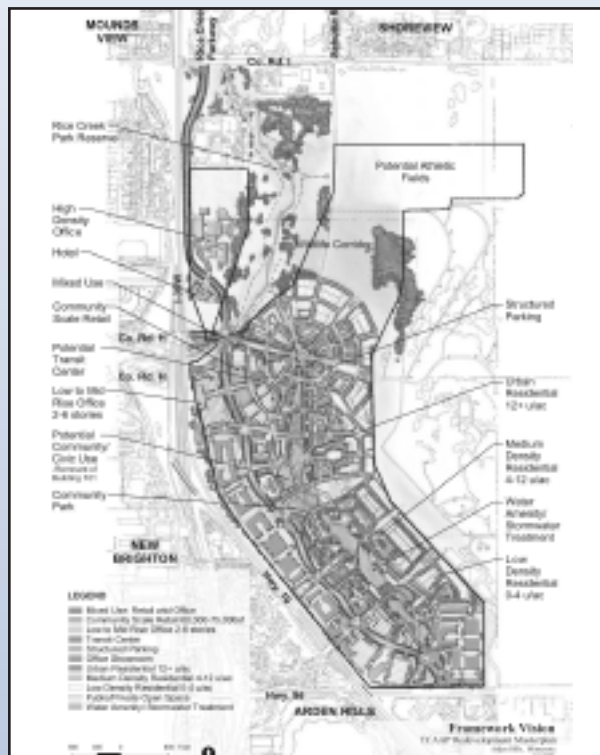
low-income people from seeking employment too far from home. Exclusionary zoning practices thwart the construction of affordable and multifamily housing in many cities. And reinvestment in older urban areas has had a dual effect: bringing in desirable business opportunities and services and revitalizing community corridors, while at the same time threatening to displace low-income people and people of color.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO CHANGE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

However, there is an important opportunity imbedded in this growth and, specifically, in these mega-development projects to reverse some of these trends. Large-scale projects *can* deliver creative, mixed-use developments that employ a variety of equitable development aspects: building at higher densities, providing a richer mix of incomes and housing types, generating living-wage jobs, establishing green building and renewable energy standards, supporting fair labor practices and setting strong women and minority contracting goals. Furthermore, mega-developments can attract and support transit and be a key way for cities to meet their comprehensive planning, land-use and housing goals.

Redevelopment of the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP) Site in Arden Hills:

TCAAP, the region's largest tract of undeveloped urban land, could soon be transformed into a mixed-use development featuring up to 2,400 homes, more than 3 million square feet of office space, a 40-acre wildlife corridor, 25 acres of open space and trails, and 70 acres of athletic fields. The city is considering tax-increment financing for private development projects on the site. A potential spin-off effect of this new development involves widening the adjacent U.S. Highway 10; this would likely lead to displacement of about 100 residents of a manufactured home park bordering the southwest corner of the development site—and eliminate the city's largest stock of affordable homes in one fell swoop. [The Alliance is supporting efforts to preserve these homes; see related story, page 4]



Graphic: www.ci.arden-hills.mn.us/index.asp?Type=B

Redevelopment of the Ford plant in Saint Paul:

Located along the Mississippi River, the 136-acre Ford Motor Company manufacturing plant will close in 2008, taking with it more than 1,800 living-wage union jobs and leaving the future use of the site up in the air. The Saint Paul Planning Commission has put together a task force to generate a new vision for one of the larger developable urban parcels left in the Twin Cities. The Alliance has been working with core leadership of the local United Auto Workers, United Food and Commercial Workers, Sierra Club, Friends of the Mississippi River, Clean Water Action, MICA and student organizers from Macalester College to promote a vision for locating green manufacturing business on the site. Residents and community groups are also pressing for affordable housing, renewable energy and green building techniques, provisions of new open space and park land, and full utilization of the 13-acre rail transit way connected to this unique site.

Mixed-Use Development at 38th and Hiawatha in Minneapolis:

The Longfellow Community Council (LCC) is in negotiations with a developer to incorporate community benefits into a proposed two-to-three-block mixed-use development at 38th Street and Hiawatha Avenue, now home to the abandoned Purina Mills. LCC's goals include increased access to affordable housing, environmentally sensitive construction and design, employment and economic opportunities, pedestrian and bicycle use, and public meeting space. LCC also has a strong interest in holding the developer accountable to constructing buildings that recognize the history of the neighborhood.

The problem is that opportunities for community benefits are often missed. When public subsidies are involved, it becomes even more appropriate—and feasible—to call for this accountability. The five examples outlined here alone could represent billions of dollars of public investment in the metro area. Community groups and local units of government must leverage these public and private investments to provide affordable housing, job development, living-wage requirements, small business assistance, and environmental improvements to areas of the Twin Cities that most need them.

Communities struggling to resolve racial and economic disparities or to fulfill needs for affordable housing, access to transit and good employment, should expect private enterprises that receive public investments to bolster rather than undermine their efforts. When private developers and

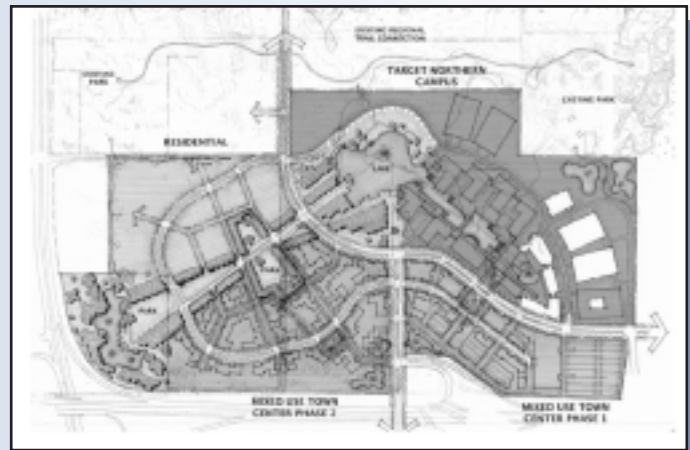
investors enjoy profits from publicly supported redevelopment projects *and* the project closes disparities or builds social capital and healthy communities, a “double bottom line” is achieved and we all benefit. That’s why the Alliance is providing support to coalitions working to incorporate community-defined outcomes into the redevelopment projects—ensuring that they are both profitable to the developer and a social and economic asset to existing residents

Of course, to capitalize on these opportunities, community members must be informed, engaged and organized. As you’ll read in the following stories, the Alliance and our allies are working to do just that. We are committed to helping community residents, leaders and organizations show that they powerfully endorse developments that assist in eliminating disparities, revitalizing communities and lifting people out of poverty.

Expansion of Target Corporation’s World Headquarters to Brooklyn Park:

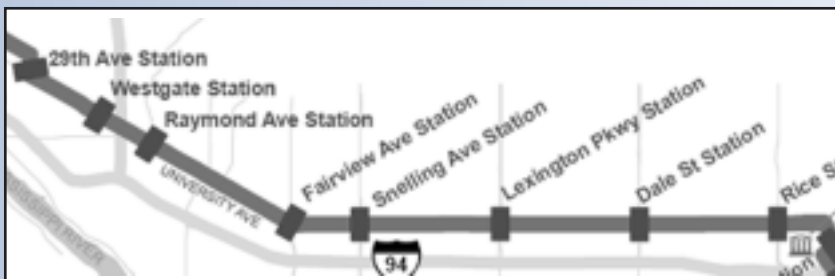
Target Corporation plans to develop a \$2 billion northwest campus of its world headquarters in Brooklyn Park. The result: a new downtown complete with parks, infrastructure, 30,000 jobs (15,000 of those created by Target itself) and 3,000 housing units. Residents are wary of the plans, as the city tried in 2004 to make room for new development by wiping out 900 units of affordable housing that were home to many people of color. The Alliance is supporting efforts by groups like the African American Action Committee of Brooklyn Park, the interfaith group Isaiah, the Community Stabilization Project, and the Housing Preservation Project to ensure that city and county tax abatements are leveraged to include affordable housing provisions, women and minority hiring, living-wage job opportunities, and transit improvements for community residents.

Graphic: www.brooklynpark.org/sitepages/pid1080.php



Development of Central Corridor LRT along University Avenue in Saint Paul:

The city of Saint Paul is in the midst of a design process for a \$1 billion public investment in the Central Corridor light rail transit line that will run along University Avenue. Anticipating millions of dollars in new investments to the corridor, current residents have raised social justice concerns. Gentrification and displacement are the chief worries of the local community. Residents want to ensure that subsidized development along the corridor brings accessible living wage jobs to the community, creates affordable housing opportunities and preserves small businesses. [See related stories, page 7-9]



Graphic: www.stpaul.gov/initiatives/centralcorridor

Roads vs. Homes! Arden Manor Residents Fight Highway Project

By Steven Renderos, All Parks Alliance for Change

Arden Hills is a city that is sliced and bordered by large highways. Local traffic and rush hour commuters spill over from surrounding communities to use U.S. Highway 10 to avoid the intersection of I-35W & 694. According to local residents, a recently proposed road expansion plan will encourage even more commuters to utilize Arden Hills as a shortcut or bypass.

One of the most ambitious plans being considered by the city is an expansion of U.S. Highway 10 and County Road 96. The plan has a disproportionate effect on one of the city's few sources of affordable housing, the Arden Manor Mobile Home Park—targeting nearly 50 homes for removal or demolition. It is difficult to find community when city and county transportation plans threaten to rip apart long standing neighborhoods.

"What we're hoping for is that we get a fair shake for the people living in here that really need and deserve it, so they can continue on without worry."

—Patrick McLafferty

Over 250 families call Arden Manor home. The majority are low-income families and retired citizens. They own their manufactured homes and rent the land underneath them. A small lake at the center of the park provides a green refuge to local residents. Geese roam freely in the park. A city park with a playground and a basketball court provide a space for kids to play, as does a swimming pool for hot summer days. Everyone looks after each other. It's difficult to picture a more perfect neighborhood from the inside.

ORGANIZING TO STAY IN THE COMMUNITY

To prevent the dislocation of these homes and generate alternative planning solutions, the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is providing technical assistance to the park residents and organizers from a manufactured home park advocacy

group, All Parks Alliance for Change (APAC). As the Arden Manor residents have said to their city leaders, the park residents have as much right to live in Arden Hills as anyone else. And the city's need to preserve and create more affordable housing opportunities outweighs the needs of commuters traveling down Highway 10 and County Road 96.

Park residents being impact by this highway expansion are told that the expansion is driven because of safety concerns. But the residents believe that the real reason is the empty land that sits across from Arden Manor. On the other side of Highway 10 sits an empty former ammunitions site known as the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP). The TCAAP property will be the site of an immense redevelopment project, including new retail stores, office buildings and housing.

Up until late May of 2007, the residents of Arden Manor had been kept out of the loop of this highway expansion—almost until it was too late. APAC, a statewide manufactured homeowner's tenants union and Alliance coalition member, held a meeting with 65 residents from Arden Manor five days before the Arden Hills city council was scheduled to vote on the concept plan. At that meeting it became apparent that the park residents had not been properly notified by city staff about the plan. APAC and the Arden Manor leaders sprang into action, organizing a door knock in the park over Memorial Day weekend to get people to attend the city meeting a day after the holiday weekend.

Over 100 residents flooded city hall on a Tuesday evening, carrying with them 150 signatures on a resident association petition. At the city council meeting it became quickly apparent





that the city council members had no idea how controversial this issue really was. Several residents, one by one, went up and spoke about the impact the highway expansion would have on their lives.

PUTTING THE BRAKES ON A MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR ROAD PROJECT

Patrick McLafferty, a resident of Arden Manor, began his public comment by saying "I'm a fighter; I've been a fighter all my life." He went on to talk about how upset he was that this expansion plan had been developed without the input of their community. He had one simple request: "Please table your vote on this plan until you've sat down and talked to us first." The city obliged. A previously scheduled public meeting on June 19 to talk about relocation compensation became the next focal point of discussion.

As the city meeting on June 19 approached, Arden Manor residents worked hard on developing an agenda that would take the concerns of their community into account. Their overall goal was to develop a plan that had no impact on their park. Over 225 residents attended the community meeting, where they patiently sat through an extended presentation on how they would be relocated and compensated in the event of a partial park closing due to the highway project. As the city-sponsored relocation specialist finished his remarks, residents lined up at the microphone to question the entire enterprise—because of a lack of authentic community engagement, transparency and consideration of alternative road improvement plans.

After three hours of back and forth, the residents of Arden Manor had made their point. Kristy Effinger, the secretary of the Arden Manor Resident Association, stood up to address Arden Hills Mayor Stan Harpstead and pointed at the map of the concept plan that was projected on a giant wall. Each home that would be affected by the highway expansion was marked

HOUSING PERFORMANCE OF ARDEN HILLS

Arden Hills has one of the lowest affordable housing production performance levels of any city participating in the Livable Communities Act (LCA) program, based on the analysis of Kirk Moorhead of the Housing Preservation Project. The good news is that the city can easily remedy this situation by locking in on new affordability goals for the future development of the TCAAP site.

1996 – 2010 LCA HOUSING GOALS FOR ARDEN HILLS

Total unit goal:	474
Total units built:	13 (all ownership units)
Balance needed:	461 additional units by 2010

2010 – 2020 AFFORDABLE HOUSING GOALS (LAND USE PLANNING ACT)

Total unit goal:	288 additional units
Total units needed by 2020 to meet city affordability goals:	749

TWIN CITIES ARMY AMMUNITION PLANT (TCAAP) REDEVELOPMENT

Residential units to be built:	2400 units
% of those units needing to be affordable to meet 2010 goals:	19.21%
% of those units needing to be affordable to meet 2020 goals:	31.21%

Met Council LCA grants

Taking these figures into account, there's a clear argument for the city to do more to preserve and produce more affordable housing, especially since Arden Hills has received hundreds of thousands of dollars in Met Council LCA funding.

Funding the City

- In 2002 they received \$75,000 of Livable Communities Demonstration Account funding.
- In 2006 they received \$200,000 in Tax Base Revitalization Account funding.
- In 2001 and 2002 they received \$350,000 in Local Housing Incentives Account funding (this funding award was split with a few other northeast suburbs for some single family housing rehab programs coordinated by Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation).

by a green square. She said, "Mr. Mayor, we are more than just green squares on a map, we are people, we are families." While the mayor did not reverse course on the preferred road improvement plan, the city did commit to meet with the resident association board again before they made any decision on the road project.

In the meantime, the leaders of the resident association have been very busy, meeting with their state senator, state representative, county commissioner, Congresswoman Betty McCollum, and local allies (other homeowners and members of the faith community). They have now garnered enough support among city council members to delay any decision for the time being, denying the plan the three city council votes necessary to advance it to the county.

Three months have gone by since the park residents attended that first city council meeting. At this point, key allies on the city council are trying to move a plan forward that would avoid dislocating nearly every home in Arden Manor.

Minneapolis and St. Paul Economic Inclusion Policies Examined

Both the city of Minneapolis and the city of St. Paul have policies in place to maximize the inclusion of people of color, women and persons with disabilities in city contracts. But how well are they working? This question has been elevated recently by two efforts detailed below.

STUDY FINDS CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS IS FAILING TO FULFILL ITS CIVIL RIGHTS ORDINANCE OBLIGATIONS

In May, the University of Minnesota released an evaluation of the city of Minneapolis' Department of Civil Rights' Contract Compliance Unit. The report was commissioned by the city's Department of Civil Rights to fulfill the city's obligations under a civil lawsuit. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the Contract Compliance Unit's implementation of the city's public policy that "seeks to both protect traditionally disadvantaged groups from discrimination and to expand employment and economic opportunities to all city residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or disability".

Key findings of the study include: 1) Entities governed by the Civil Rights Ordinance are NOT in full compliance with their hiring, contracting, reporting, monitoring and enforcement mandates; 2) The consequences outlined in the ordinance for failure to comply are NOT being applied to firms that are in non-compliance; and 3) The "excessive non-compliance, failure to implement consequences, poor communication, ineffective coordination, lack of clarity and lack of resources needed to...fulfill the mandate prescribed in the ordinance **do not convey a sincere commitment to achieve full compliance**".

You can find a full copy of this report on the city of Minneapolis web site: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007meetings/20070629/docs/CCU_Report_5-24-07.pdf

Meanwhile in St. Paul, several organizations (including Alliance member organizations Community Stabilization Project and Jewish Community Action along with the St. Paul NAACP, the National Association for Minority Contractors and Kaposia) have been concerned about similar issues for some time. They formed the Equal Access Working Group and pushed the city to perform an audit of its performance in this arena. Their success is detailed below.

SAINT PAUL AGREES TO PERFORM AUDIT OF CITY'S ECONOMIC INCLUSION EFFORTS

Public officials in Saint Paul have formalized a "first step" commitment to increase the number of women, people with disabilities and minority contractors that do business with the city. On April 18, 2007, the Saint Paul City Council passed a

resolution authorizing city officials to conduct a comprehensive review and audit of the city's efforts related to inclusiveness in city economic opportunities.

The audit will review the city's administrative application of federal, state and local laws designed to maximize the inclusion of women, minorities and people with disabilities in city-funded construction projects, contract procurement, developer selection, program services and initiatives. The resolution is part of a collaborative effort between the city and the Equal Access Working Group to improve the city's economic inclusion efforts. Funding for the project has been provided through grants from the Saint Paul Foundation and the Bremer Foundation, as well as the city of Saint Paul.

In a city press release, Mayor Chris Coleman said, "The results of this project, along with those of the disparities study will give us new insight into city processes and provide tools to help us better capitalize on the diverse talents of our local workforce."

The Equal Access Working Group, a coalition of organizations that advocate for increased opportunities for women, minorities and people with disabilities, led the effort to persuade the city to perform an audit. They have long advocated for review of the city's practices as a means of opening the city's economic opportunities to a wider base.

Clifton Boyd of the local chapter of the National Association of Minority Contractors and a member of the Equal Access Working Group said, "This audit will not be a namby-pamby overview of the city's process, but a very complete examination of how the city has sought to engage minority contractors on all of its projects."

Julia Grantham, a board member of the Community Stabilization Project, also believes that an audit and its recommendations will help the city reach important diversity goals, particularly as they relate to projects such as the University Avenue light rail corridor redevelopment. "The city needs to ensure local jobs for people who live along the corridor," she said. "The audit will help the city improve their implementation of programs such as Federal Section 3, which mandates making a good faith effort to hire from a direct project area. We need the city to do better—and that is what the audit is all about—doing better."

The audit contract was awarded to Hall Legal, S.C., a law firm based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with a practice that emphasizes civil rights and equal opportunity in employment, housing, education and contracting matters. The firm was recommended by the Equal Access Working Group.

Fighting for Community Benefits on Central Corridor

By now, most people living in the Twin Cities know that more light rail lines are likely headed our way. The details of the plans for the next wave of light rail transit (LRT) development, however, are not yet set in stone. Take the proposed Central Corridor LRT line, for example. Many questions remain about plans for the line. Where will it stop? How will it be aligned? And how will the new line affect the fabric of existing communities it touches?

These questions remain unanswered despite prolonged planning—and the devastating collapse of the I-35W bridge last month only adds more confusion to the mix. The University Avenue Community Coalition (UACC), staffed by the Alliance and comprised of community members and a host of organizational partners, has been working to quell some of that uncertainty by providing very specific criteria for how decisions should be made regarding LRT and subsequent development along the Central Corridor. They are currently focused on the following two priorities.

STOPS FOR US

First, LRT stops should be located where people—specifically low-income people and people of color—already live, work, go to school and do business. Rather than simply being a mechanism for the white middle class to pass quickly between Minneapolis and St. Paul, the Central Corridor LRT should provide a way for low-income residents and residents of color to get around their communities, access employment opportunities and attract people to existing businesses. UACC's Stops for Us campaign (www.stopsforus.com) is advocating for stops at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues in St. Paul—areas of rich racial and cultural diversity that could benefit from a new community resource like LRT if it is done right.

RACIAL IMPACTS POLICY

UACC is also promoting an LRT-development criterion that could prove to be a national model for incorporating equity concerns into new development decisions: a racial impact

policy. Often when a city is faced with decisions regarding major new development proposals, it engages in an economic impact study that evaluates the potential positive and negative economic consequences the development will have on existing communities. UACC is asking the city of St. Paul to take the existing economic impact policy one step further to evaluate the consequences of new development on existing *communities of color*. As one community member told UACC, a major concern of existing residents, particularly those who remember I-94's near-destruction of the Rondo community, is "displacement of people who have lived here a long time, who have generational history here." A racial impact policy would help address the issues being raised by people of color along the avenue who do not want to be left behind when the LRT and related development inevitably transform their neighborhoods.

These strategies are key goals of UACC as the Central Corridor LRT debate heats up and important decisions about the future of the avenue are made. Our collective success in influencing the city to include equity recommendations in its planning processes represents a hopeful trend. UACC spent considerable time this spring tracking the work of the city's Central Corridor Task Force, and many equitable development policy concepts made it into the task force's final development strategy. The task force set goals to preserve the existing affordable housing stock, promote inclusionary housing, provide good jobs, preserve businesses, create wealth for existing residents, and to use LRT as a catalyst for "lifting up the many communities along its length."

We know that goals are one thing and implementation is another, and that's why our work has shifted now from promoting goals to promoting action. But with these goals guiding development, the promise of future LRT lines in our region to lift people out of poverty and benefit communities of color seems a little more certain.



Photo: R.J. MALLER

The University Avenue Community Coalition: Amplifying the Voices for Justice

UACC parades at Rondo Days, Hosts Event on Racial Wealth Divide, Helps Pass Zoning Ordinance

One of the key strategies for the University Avenue Community Coalition has been gathering input from community members about their vision for the future of the avenue.

RONDO DAYS

UACC members marched in the Rondo Days parade, which commemorates the historic African-American neighborhood that was displaced in the 1960s when Interstate 94 was constructed through the heart of St. Paul. The nearby community along University Avenue is again being threatened with displacement due to redevelopment associated with creation of the Central Corridor light rail transit line. That's why UACC members rode their Justice Train through the crowd (see photo below), chanting "LRT stops that benefit the community," "good jobs," and "affordable housing"—eliciting the cheers and thumbs up of parade-goers.

So what LRT stops would benefit the community? Community members had a chance to share their ideas at UACC's Rondo Festival

booth. Visitors participated in a hands-on survey, using push pins on an aerial map to show where they live and where they want LRT stops to be located (see photos on page 9). The vote was overwhelmingly for stops at Western, Victoria and Hamline Avenues.

When asked to provide comments detailing their thoughts about LRT development along University Avenue, community members had much to say. One community member stated the city needed to "protect small, independent businesses" and create "a mitigation fund for small businesses during LRT construction, and ensure access to (existing area) businesses." Another thought the city should "assess job needs for construction of LRT and operating LRT...and teach skills over the next three years to neighborhood people, so they can become the best people for the jobs." These sentiments, along with concerns about housing preservation,



Photo: R.J. MALLER

The University Avenue Community Coalition: Amplifying the Voices for Justice

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echo those raised by hundreds of residents in UACC-sponsored community and candidate forums earlier this year.

RACIAL WEALTH DIVIDE EVENT

UACC and the Alliance organized a public forum featuring University of Minnesota Professor Rose Brewer, an expert on race and wealth and the co-author of the *Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide*. Professor Brewer helped participants understand both the history and current realities of race and wealth in this country. Local city council candidates Melvin Carter, Debbie Montgomery and Russ Stark were asked to respond to these challenges by addressing ways to spur wealth creation and racial justice for communities of color along and near University Avenue.

To learn more about the racial wealth divide, you can find *The Color of Wealth* at the University of Minnesota Bookstore, at both the St. Paul and Minneapolis libraries, or online at powells.com.

TOOLS FOR GUIDING DEVELOPMENT

The city of St. Paul recently passed an interim zoning overlay that is a step toward increasing community control over development decisions along the corridor. The ordinance—which UACC advocated for—means that new land uses along the corridor must conform to transit-oriented development standards for the next twelve months. The transit-oriented development encouraged by the overlay includes two-story minimum building heights, buildings set close to the street, limited parking, and restrictions that limit auto-related development like convenience and car rental stores. The ordinance will give the city time to gather community input as zoning and development policies, recommendations and strategies are considered.



Professor Rose Brewer



Photos: R.J. MALLER

University Avenue Community Coalition – community members, allies, partners working for equitable development and community benefits on and near University Avenue: Aurora-St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation, Community Stabilization Project, Got Voice – Got Power!, ISALAH, Jewish Community Action, Just Equity, Minnesota ACORN, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, Service Employees International Union Local 26, Transit for Livable Communities, United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 789, and community members.

Transit Partners: Grassroots Activists Push for Expanded Transit Funding

By Unny Nambudiripad, Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

With the passage of the Motor Vehicle Sales Tax in November of 2006, Minnesota created the first dedicated source of funding for transit and continues to move towards the establishment of a comprehensive, efficient and affordable transit system for the Twin Cities. Once fully implemented, the referendum will provide about one-third of the necessary funding to our regional transit system. But the struggle to secure a stable, permanent source of transit funding for our growing region is still ongoing.

The primary vehicle for attaining this vision is called Transportation Choices 2020, which Transit Partners has been advocating for with increasing momentum since 2005. It would establish a half-cent regional sales tax to double the bus system, as well as build out a network of light rail, commuter rail and bus rapid transit. The system would be built by 2020, and would provide funds both for construction and operations.

Transit Partners is a coalition of faith-based, environmental, labor and civic organizations. The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability partners with this coalition to organize a stronger grassroots voice for expanding our transit system. During the 2007 legislative session, several Transit Partners member organizations worked together to mobilize activists and develop an infrastructure to recruit volunteer leaders to expand the campaign. Transit Partners created a Grassroots Organizing Committee, consisting of ISAIAH, Transit for Livable Communities, Sierra Club North Star Chapter and the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability.

Transit Partners conducted its first- ever Leaders Day at the Capitol on January 25. Approximately 30 grassroots leaders came to the Capitol to learn about the legislative process and transportation policy. They told their legislators that increasing funding for transit is crucial to the quality of life and the economic integrity of the region.



Senator Gen Olson (second from right) meets with Transit Partners Sandy Ahlstrom, Mary Lincoln, and Tim Carlson. Photo: Patience Caso of Transit for Livable Communities

Following the success of the Leaders Day, Transit Partners turned out constituent leaders at legislative field hearings on transit and published letters-to-the-editor in local and regional newspapers. They went to the Capitol for a transportation rally, the Transit Partners legislative breakfast, and several Transportation Choices 2020 hearings.

Over 50 activists made phone calls, sent post cards, wrote letters and lobbied their legislators. The coalition has seen increased cross-organizational advocacy, leveraging the policy, technical, and organizing skills, as well as the legislative and organizational relationships, to create a powerful voice for transit.

The work paid off. The Minnesota House of Representatives and the Minnesota Senate passed a bill that would provide more than two-thirds of the funding that Transit Partners had advocated for. Unfortunately, the legislation met the governor's veto and proponents fell just a few votes short of a veto override.

For more information on transit legislation and policy and how to get involved, please visit the Transit for Livable Communities website at www.tlcmnnesota.org.

APRIL POLL FINDS STRONG SUPPORT FOR NEW TRANSIT FUNDING

Raise Taxes To Reduce Congestion: In an April 2007 poll, 61% of metro area residents chose "higher taxes to fund highway and transit improvements in order to reduce traffic congestion" rather than tolerate "increasing traffic congestion in the future to minimize tax increases." The willingness to pay more in taxes was broad-based and bipartisan. It was supported by majorities of Republicans (56%), Democrats (69%), and Independents (58%) and majorities in the region's stable areas (64%) and growth areas (59%).

Support For Transportation Choices: To deal with congestion, residents gave high levels of support to "building a network of light rail and commuter rail lines" (85%). Residents also supported "doubling the bus system's capacity and routes" (66%).

Balanced Funding Solutions: Residents supported a half-cent sales tax to meet the region's transportation needs, favoring this approach over a roads-only solution. A transit-only sales tax proposal was preferred by a 64%-34% margin. The support for a transit-only sales tax was broad-based and bipartisan. It was supported by majorities of Republicans (54%), Democrats (72%), and Independents (61%) and majorities in the region's stable areas (70%) and growth areas (55%).

Note: The poll was conducted by Decision Resources, Ltd., for the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. It was run April 16-23, 2007, and included 625 residents in the seven-county Twin Cities region. The poll's margin of error is +4%.

Collapse of I-35W Bridge May Lead to a Special Legislative Session

By Russ Adams, Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

Two colossal events in the month of August have set the stage for a potential fall special legislative session. The first one, as Governor Pawlenty noted on August 2, was a “catastrophe of epic proportions”—the complete collapse of the I-35W bridge spanning the Mississippi River near downtown Minneapolis. This horrific event quickly became a national media story, in part because it touched, in some universal way, nearly every driver in America who makes a daily commute over our country’s many rivers and waterways.

The second tragedy was also abrupt and unexpected: the severe flash flooding in southeastern Minnesota due to record amounts of rain from one day’s worth of storms. This natural disaster caused unbelievable levels of destruction to several small towns, washing out bridges and homes and killing seven people. It also further fueled talk of a special session this fall.

The I-35W bridge collapse was a major story for almost a week around the United States, particularly because an obvious question arose in the face of the tragedy: “How could this happen here and could it happen in your city?”

Nearly everyone in the Twin Cities metro region could look at this story and think about the last time they crossed the bridge and contemplate what twist of fate may have placed them at the wrong time on that small stretch of the freeway.

WISE PUBLIC INVESTMENTS

Nearly lost in the many reports about the bridge collapse was this significant detail, first reported by Tom Lyden of KMSP news: the region invested in a very expensive 800 megahertz emergency radio system a few years ago to allow our first responders (fire, police, and medical crews) to communicate freely in the event of a major disaster. Lyden noted that the decision to purchase the equipment

was somewhat controversial at the time, but “tonight it worked flawlessly.”

Further demonstrating the wisdom of recent public investments, the city’s new wireless broadband system had just come online in the downtown area a few weeks before the bridge collapse. When cell phone lines started to become impossibly jammed with citizens calling their loved ones to make sure they were okay, the city’s Wi-Fi vendor did a remarkable thing: US Internet

announced (within two hours of the bridge collapse) that they would make the Wi-Fi signal available for free for 12 hours to allow people to make contact via the Internet and free up the cell phone lines for families of those who were caught in the collapse of the freeway.

Finally, extensive emergency drills and simulation trainings paid off when the city’s emergency response plan had to be put into action. Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak, city staff, the police and fire departments, and the entire city council deserve enormous praise for their willingness to invest in thorough emergency preparedness plans.

HARD QUESTIONS ARE BEGINNING TO BE RAISED

On the other side of the public investment debate, questions have inevitably—and appropriately—been raised regarding who should be held accountable for the failure to properly reinforce the I-35W bridge and what level of investment should be made in transportation now.

Meanwhile, new bridge construction decisions are unfolding at a rapid pace. The Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Council recommended a 10-lane replacement bridge (two lanes wider than the original structure), but ruled out making the bridge capable of carrying light rail transit, much to the chagrin of the city of Minneapolis. Citizens attending a MnDOT public hearing

See **Collapse May Lead to a Special Legislative Session**, page 14

The citizens of our state should reject absolutism when it comes to investing for our common good. . .the “no new taxes” approach has finally been unmasked. . .a short-sighted, maintenance-deferring, pass-the-bill-on-to-the next-generation abdication of political responsibility.

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability’s coalition partner groups and staff wish to extend our most heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of those people who were injured or who lost their lives in the tragic collapse of the I-35W bridge over the Mississippi River in Minneapolis.



Smart Growth Sampler

TAXPAYER-SUBSIDIZED JOB PIRACY FAVORS NEWER AREAS, COSTS CENTRAL CITIES AND INNER-RING SUBURBS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES that were originally intended to help revitalize older areas are instead being used by outlying suburbs to pirate jobs and tax revenues from older cities in the Twin Cities metro area. Local officials need a cooperative structure to curtail zero-sum job piracy and focus instead on jointly promoting the region. And the state should use incentive deals as leverage to make more jobs transit-accessible and alleviate traffic congestion.

Those are the key findings of a report released by Good Jobs First with the support of the Ford Foundation. The Thin Cities: How Subsidized Job Piracy Deepens Inequality in the Twin Cities Metro Area examines 86 business relocations involving 8,200 jobs and \$90 million in subsidies that occurred in the Twin Cities metro area between 1999 and 2003.

"This is the largest study ever performed of subsidized corporate relocations," said Greg LeRoy, executive director of Good Jobs First and lead author of the study. "It suggests that the economic war among the suburbs may be a bigger problem than the so-called 'economic war among the states.'"

Comparing places that lose jobs to those that gain them, the study finds that the relocations have the net effect of creating deeper regional inequality by measures of poverty, unemployment, welfare, or tax base wealth.

It finds that four-fifths of the relocations were outbound and 22 of the companies moved outwards more than 10 miles, receiving subsidies such as free land and property tax breaks from outlying communities. Despite the region's traffic congestion crisis, nearly 70 percent of the relocations arrived at locations that are inaccessible via public transit. That means fewer job opportunities for low-income workers who cannot afford a car.

The report recommends convening a cooperative regional system, making transit access a requirement to qualify for job subsidies, and modernizing the metro area's Fiscal Disparities Act tax-base sharing program to reflect 35 years of growth.

Good Jobs First is a national resource center promoting accountability in economic development and smart growth for working families. The Alliance provided technical assistance for the report, which is available at <http://goodjobsfirst.org/pdf/thincities.pdf>.

REGIONAL EQUITY '08: THE THIRD NATIONAL SUMMIT ON EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL JUSTICE AND SMART GROWTH

JOIN MORE THAN 1,000 LOCAL, REGIONAL, STATE AND NATIONAL LEADERS who have moved from conversation to action to advance the policies that secure social and economic equity for all residents in our communities. The conference will take place on March 5-7, 2008.

In New Orleans, where the world bore painful witness to the lingering inequities this society still faces, the summit will offer participants a venue for in-depth exploration of the groundbreaking achievements, innovative strategies and lasting policies that connect low-income/low-wealth communities to resources and opportunity. Through interactive panels, speakers, caucuses and diverse multimedia experiences, we will develop a deeper focus on implementation and policy options, and will examine what regional equity looks like on the ground in communities across the United States.

The agenda for the 2008 summit will include: issue-based sessions, a forum for creating a regional equity movement, skills-building trainings and regional case studies. Summit participants will include leaders and advocates from the nonprofit, public policy, philanthropy, business and academic arenas that share a commitment to full economic and racial inclusion based on the belief that everyone should have the opportunity to participate and prosper in society.

The first summit, held in Los Angeles in 2002, attracted a diverse group of more than 650 community, policy and foundation leaders. The second summit, in Philadelphia in 2005, had more than 1,300 participants and was characterized by a spirit of engagement and eagerness to explore and apply strategies that promote economic and social equity. That summit, held in partnership with the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities was hailed as "an extraordinary success," and "a stellar event of monumental importance" that challenged conventional thinking about the paths to opportunity in America. In March 2008, that engagement will continue to grow as we move together toward achieving an inclusive and just society.

THE MINNESOTA LEGISLATIVE REPORT CARD ON RACIAL EQUITY 2005-2006

THE MINNESOTA LEGISLATIVE REPORT CARD ON RACIAL EQUITY assesses the performance of the Minnesota Legislature and the governor during the 2005-2006 biennium on policies that address and strengthen racial equity and opportunity in the state. It also assesses legislative efforts that strengthen American Indian tribal sovereignty.

Race matters in Minnesota. In a state long proud of its progressive tradition, a state once seen as a leader in work for equity and inclusion, a state where most of us strongly value equality of opportunity and want a community that is just and fair. Race matters. Minnesota leads the nation in commonly accepted quality-of-life indicators such as educational achievement, health, wealth and homeownership. Meanwhile, those and other indicators show a distinct racial bias that contradicts our most deeply held values. Go to Organizing Apprenticeship Project's website at <http://oaproject.org> to access the report.

New Affordable Housing Web Site: How is your City Performing?

The Housing Preservation Project (HPP) has launched a new web site designed to help citizens, advocacy groups, elected officials and local decision makers plan for a sufficient supply of affordable housing in their communities. The following is an excerpt from the HPP web site, which can be seen at www.TCHousingPolicy.org

HOUSING PRESERVATION PROJECT LAUNCHES COMP PLANNING WEB TOOL

The first decade of our new century began with 170,000 lower-income families in the Twin Cities metropolitan area poorly housed by federal standards. Unless dramatic new solutions are found to this problem, more than 20,000 households will be added to this number each decade. More and more of our working families will be paying beyond what they can afford, or forced to reside in substandard housing. The economic vitality of the region will also be threatened.

This web site is dedicated to the premise that part of the key to closing the affordability gap is to get cities to do more. Cities cannot close this gap by themselves—additional public funding is essential—but cities play a critical role in getting low-cost housing built, and there is considerable room for improvement. If all cities combined a political commitment with imaginative use of available tools to promote affordable housing, we could stretch our current resources significantly farther.

Every municipality in the seven-county metropolitan area must update its comprehensive plan by 2008, including plans and implementation programs for providing adequate housing opportunities that meet its share of the regional housing need.

Planning and development techniques exist that could make significant inroads in these problems. This web site is intended as an evolving resource that will provide tools for citizens to advocate for effective plans and implementation programs in their communities.

This web site is a tool for citizens to advocate for effective housing plans and implementation programs in their communities.

HPP WEB SITE HELPS PEOPLE & POLICYMAKERS TO:

❑ UNDERSTAND THE NEED

Learn more about the background on affordable housing problems in the metropolitan area; descriptions of affordable housing programs and how they work; and the legal framework under which cities are required to address these problems.

❑ IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

Learn more about the most effective housing policy practices that local governments can employ.

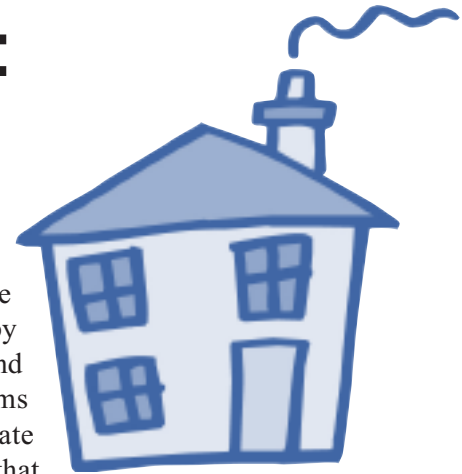
❑ ACT LOCALLY

Learn more about your city's demographics, housing history, and current and future housing goals. Find out about what practices your city has used, or not used, and how effective those practices have been. Learn how to determine if your city is making maximum use of best practices and how to encourage your city to do more.

The Met Council's Worst Housing Performers

Performance of municipalities who have received Livable Communities Funding:

	<u>2010 GOALS</u>	<u>2010 PROGRESS</u>	<u>% OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING GOAL ACHIEVED</u>
1) Excelsior	65	0	0.0%
2) Dayton	221	1	0.5%
3) Long Lake	93	1	1.1%
4) Arden Hills	474	13	2.7%
5) Mound	288	12	4.3%
6) Orono	280	12	4.3%
7) St. Louis Park	1084	100	9.2%
8) Jordan	1472	142	9.6%
9) Brooklyn Park	1000	99	9.9%
10) Vadnais Heights	555	71	12.8%



Bridge Collapse May Lead to Special Legislative Session *continued from page 11*

In Roseville criticized the state for not building for the future of the region by including public transit in the bridge design. The Minneapolis City Council passed a resolution outlining a set of principles regarding the replacement bridge, including light rail transit or bus rapid transit lanes. Public dissatisfaction over MnDOT's recommended bridge design seems to have forced a reversal by the governor; on August 17, he indicated that "from an engineering standpoint" it appeared that the new bridge could be built to be "LRT-capable."

WHAT NEEDS TO BE FIXED?

Calls for a special session to examine Minnesota's bridges and road infrastructure arose within two days of the disaster. The intended outcome of this session would be to pass a large spending bill to take care of the hundreds of "structurally deficient" bridges in the state.

The greatest concern among transit advocates is that a special session might rush to produce a partial transportation spending bill, one that would seek out new revenue for bridge repair and road projects, but would leave transit improvements off the table.

A major effort will be expended by organizations from many issue sectors (environmentalists, the faith community, seniors, alternative energy proponents and housing advocates) to ensure that any bill coming out of the special session would tackle Minnesota's transportation-and infrastructure-repair challenges in a comprehensive manner, including building in a robust funding mechanism for public transit.

In the wake of the bridge collapse, the citizens of our state should reject absolutism when it comes to investing for our common good. Proponents of a vital, multi-modal transportation system should move forward with a strong bill in the next session now that the "no new taxes" approach has finally been unmasked for what it is: a short-sighted, maintenance-deferring, pass-the-bill-on-to-the-next-generation abdication of political responsibility. The hope is that most legislators will seize this opportunity to make things right by passing a long-term funding package to fix our roads and bridges, and grow our bus and rail service.

Tour de Sprawl is "Tour de Dakota" This Year

Each fall, the Sierra Club North Star Chapter organizes a bike ride like no other! This unique "conference on wheels" is a fun, leisurely tour that highlights growth and development in the Twin Cities. The event combines a scenic bike ride with educational rest stops, where we hear from expert guest speakers about the communities we are visiting from the seats of our bicycles. The Tour de Dakota (formerly "Tour de Sprawl") appeals to both the serious recreational rider and those who rarely ride their bike. Riders enjoy good food, fun atmosphere, mechanical support and even a post-ride party!

The 2007 Tour de Dakota takes place on Saturday, September 15, and will explore first-hand the growth and development of Dakota County.

Highlights include:

- Sustainable visitors center at Lebanon Hills Regional Park
- Pleasant downtown Rosemount
- Innovative residential developments in Apple Valley and Lakeville
- Cobblestone Lake
- Spirit of Brandtjen Farm
- Farmland and natural areas of Dakota County

This is a very leisurely paced ride of about 24 miles. Everyone convenes at a few rest stops along the way to enjoy views and hear from expert guest speakers about current land use issues. The ride lasts around four to five hours. See the Sierra Club North Star Chapter web site at <http://northstar.sierraclub.org/> for details.



New Staff Members Join the Alliance

Tracy Nordquist, Development & Communications Director



Tracy Nordquist joined the Alliance in March as our first development & communications director. Tracy has spent the last five years raising money for local nonprofit organizations. Before joining the Alliance she was the development director at the Resource Center of the Americas and director of development and communications at the Minnesota Environmental Initiative. She also served on the board of directors of the Minnesota Environmental

Fund. Tracy holds a masters of public policy degree with a focus in public and nonprofit leadership from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

Mike Asmus, Administrative Coordinator



Mike Asmus joined the Alliance in March as our administrative coordinator. Mike has spent the last two years working in the labor movement as an organizer for SEIU and is currently returning to college to study history.

Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

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www.metrostability.org

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a coalition that links faith-based, social justice and environmental organizations to address the issues of economic development, fair and affordable housing, transit, and the environmental consequences of sprawling growth. The Alliance engages communities in eliminating racial and economic disparities in growth and development patterns in the Twin Cities region.

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MEMBERS

African American Action Committee	Transit for Livable Communities (TLC)
Alliance for Change (APAC)	Unitarian Universalists
Community Stabilization ProjectAll Parks	Affordable Housing Partnership
Environmental Justice Advocates of MN (EJAM)	University UNITED
Family & Children's Services	
Fresh Energy (formerly ME3)	
HOME Line	
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)	
Jewish Community Action	
League of Women Voters of MN	
Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC)	
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAH)	
Minneapolis Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD)	
Minneapolis Urban League	
Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of Minneapolis and St. Paul	
St. Paul Area Coalition for the Homeless	
The Sierra Club, North Star Chapter	

The work of the Alliance is generously supported by the following
FUNDERS:

F.R. Bigelow Foundation

Otto Bremer Foundation

Headwaters Foundation for Justice

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Minneapolis Foundation

Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation

St. Paul Foundation

and by individual contributions from people like you.

Join the Movement for a Just and Equitable Region

Support the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability!

Yes!!! I support the work of the *Alliance for Metropolitan Stability* to engage communities in eliminating racial and economic disparities in growth and development patterns in the Twin Cities region.

☐ *You can count on me! Here's my tax-deductible contribution to support your efforts:*

_____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$25 _____ \$100 _____ \$250 _____ \$500 _____ (Other \$_____)

☐ *Please contact me so that I can become more involved:*

_____ write letters to editor _____ attend public hearings _____ serve on a committee

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

*Make checks payable to: [Alliance for Metropolitan Stability](#)
and send to: Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, 2525 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55406*



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