



COMMON GROUND

CONNECTING PEOPLE, PLACES AND ISSUES IN THE TWIN CITIES REGION | WINTER 2010

Alliance Joins Twin Cities Sustainable Communities Initiative

Regional Partnership To Support Increased Community Engagement & Outreach In Transitway Corridor Planning

One of the more underreported stories of the Obama administration is the unprecedented coordination unfolding between three federal agencies: the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Together, they have formed what's being called the Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities. The goal is to align investments and policy in ways that reinforce the missions of all three agencies, while at the same time elevating livability principles like increasing employment opportunities, making housing more affordable, and promoting

healthy, safe and walkable communities.

This approach could maximize public investments by ensuring that multiple goals are met to revitalize urban and suburban communities, lower our overall carbon footprint and stretch scarce public resources. But the federal partnership goes beyond creating a fresh nexus between housing, transit infrastructure, jobs and urban planning. The Sustainable Communities partnership has also clearly elevated the concepts of equity and community engagement in transitway planning. *(continued on page 3)*



1994



Community engagement in transitway planning has been an issue of increasing importance since the Hiawatha LRT launched in 2004. Here, a family studies the future of our transit system. Photo by Transit for Livable Communities.

2007



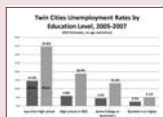
The Stops for Us coalition put the Twin Cities on the map as a region where community organizing changed the way federal and local decisions were made about transitway planning. Photo by RJ Maller.

2010



Community members came to an Alliance Organizer Roundtable on November 17 to hear about the the next phase in community engagement on transitway planning.

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as Hard to Get
Half as Far
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Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

2525 E. Franklin Ave., Suite 200
 Minneapolis, MN 55406
 Phone: (612) 332-4471
 Fax: (612) 338-2194
www.metrostability.org

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a coalition of 26 grassroots organizations that work together to advance racial, economic and environmental justice in the way growth and development occurs in the Twin Cities region.

Executive Director— Russ Adams
russ@metrostability.org

Development/Communications Director —Tracy Babler
tracy@metrostability.org

Associate Director— Maura Brown
maura@metrostability.org

Coalition Organizer— Joan Vanhala
joan@metrostability.org

HIRE Minnesota Coalition Organizer— Marcus Harcus
marcus@metrostability.org

MEMBERS

1000 Friends of Minnesota
 African American Action Committee
 All Parks Alliance for Change
 Community Stabilization Project
 District Councils Collaborative of St. Paul and Minneapolis
 Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota
 The Family Partnership
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 Transit for Livable Communities
 Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation
 Women's Environmental Institute

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

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From the Director's Desk***Entering a New Era of Regional Governance***

It's the beginning of December, and Minnesotans are in the now-familiar position of awaiting the result of a major statewide election. But though that situation is unresolved, transition planning is underway that deserves our attention now. Our new governor will be in a position to appoint

new leaders of major state agencies that control our education, health care, natural resources, transportation and many more critical issues that affect our lives.

Some of the most important, but often overlooked and underappreciated, appointments to be made are the 17 positions that make up the Metropolitan Council board. The Met Council is the regional planning agency for the seven-county Twin Cities metro area, designed in the 1960s as an innovative regional model of governance that could cross local jurisdictions to help plan for future growth. It is perhaps best known for planning and operating our regional transit system, but also plays an important role in helping local governments project and plan for the infrastructure necessary to support growth.

The new governor will appoint a Met Council chair, as well as 16 other members who represent council districts around the region. Any Twin Cities resident with knowledge of regional growth and development issues may apply to be a Met Council member. The new administration will form a nominating committee comprised of seven residents to run the appointments process. The committee will vet potential members with local officials and submit recommendations to the governor, although the governor is not required to appoint members from the committee's list. According to state statute, council members "must be appointed to reflect fairly the various demographic, political, and other interests in the metropolitan area and the districts." The current Met Council chair and membership stay in place until the next governor appoints new members, which should be accomplished by early March 2011.

Environmentalists, affordable housing advocates, transit enthusiasts, and people interested in racial and economic justice in our region will all be watching the Met Council appointment process closely. As our region plans for major expansions of our transit system, grapples with a severe shortage of affordable housing and plans for 1 million new residents in the next 20 years, the decisions these leaders make will be more important than ever. We encourage our next governor to appoint people who reflect the racial and cultural diversity, the dedication to fairness and equity, and the commitment to the common good that will make our region exceptional. The future of our region depends on it.

Russ Adams

continued from page 1

The federal government has articulated an emphasis on improving the way that publicly funded projects include low-income people and people of color in the way decisions are made in our communities. What's really exciting about this effort is that it sets forth in federal policy the core principle that land use is a racial, economic and environmental justice issue.

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities is only a year old, but it echoes the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability's 16-year commitment to ensuring that local and regional agencies advance equity outcomes in urban growth and development projects. We have called on local officials to include community-based organizations and residents in local planning efforts, to give community members meaningful opportunities to weigh in on decisions that affect them, and to help shape and define urban development in ways that yield strong community benefits.

Alliance Joins the effort as Twin Cities Awarded Sustainable Communities Grant

Because of that history, our organization has been invited to participate in one of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities' first initiatives in the Twin Cities. A collaboration led by the Metropolitan Council, and including local government agencies and funders, has been awarded a three-year, \$5 million HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Program grant. The goal of the Twin Cities initiative is to help our regional leaders "build on existing regional planning efforts to advance multi-modal transportation choices with access to jobs and housing, transit- and pedestrian-friendly development, environmental preservation and energy efficiency."

The Alliance, along with Nexus Community Partners and the Minnesota Center for Neighborhood Organizing, has been asked to join this new initiative by creating a Community Engagement Team to help invest \$750,000 to promote community engagement and outreach strategies in transitway planning. The Alliance and the other Community Engagement Team partner groups will not seek or receive any of these funds.

The Community Engagement Team represents a significant opportunity for the Alliance and our many partner organizations to identify and support outstanding community outreach and engagement strategies along proposed transitways in the Twin Cities region. The project also promises to bring significant new resources to local communities that are attempting to plan for and harness the economic and social benefits of transitway development.

Twin Cities Awarded Complementary Living Cities Grant

Meanwhile, this October the Twin Cities was also the recipient of a grant from the Living Cities, a national collaboration of foundations and financial institutions that promotes an integrated ap-

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS

for the Twin Cities Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Initiative:

Increase

participation and decision-making of low-income people and people of color in developing and implementing a long-range vision for our regional transitways

Reduce

social and economic disparities for low-income communities and communities of color

Keep

resident and stakeholder groups informed, engaged and working together

Advance

progress toward shared goals of the community, public agencies and other regional stakeholders

proach to solving cities' problems. Living Cities recently launched its Integration Initiative to help five regions "tackle the greatest barriers to opportunity for low-income residents, including education, housing, health care, transit and jobs." The Twin Cities initiative, led by the McKnight Foundation and the St. Paul Foundation, received a \$16 million investment from that program.

Living Cities work in the Twin Cities will focus along the Hiawatha, Central and Southwest Corridors with two key objectives. First, partners will work to improve access to regional opportunities by advancing the build-out of the transit system. And secondly, they will maximize the community benefits along transit corridors by making certain that those with the greatest need benefit from investment in transit and its attendant development.

Obviously, the Living Cities and Sustainable Communities initiatives are deeply complementary and, taken together, represent an even greater opportunity for our region. Work is underway to fully integrate them in a united "Corridors of Opportunity" effort. The Alliance is excited to be a part of this initiative to forge stronger relationships with a variety of stakeholder groups, individuals, and institutions around the common goal of promoting authentic public participation in major transit project planning and implementation. We look forward to making this a national model in the next few years.

Working **TWICE** as Hard to Get **HALF** as Far

Study reveals Minneapolis has the worst black-white employment disparities in the nation

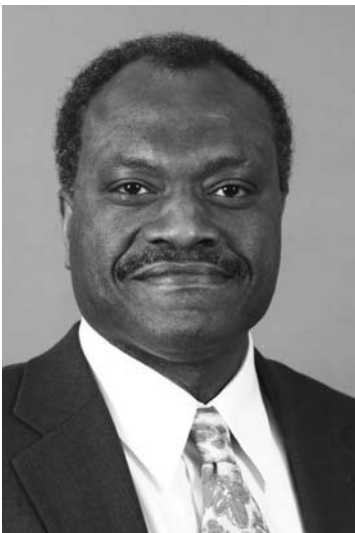
Minnesota is used to leading the nation. We regularly end up near the top of national lists of the best places to live, the healthiest people and highest achieving students. Unfortunately, that image of Minnesota is one that doesn't ring true for many people of color living in our state.

The other side of the story is that Minnesota also ranks among the worst in the nation when it comes to racial disparities in educational outcomes and the criminal justice system. Now we can add a new issue to that list: employment disparities.

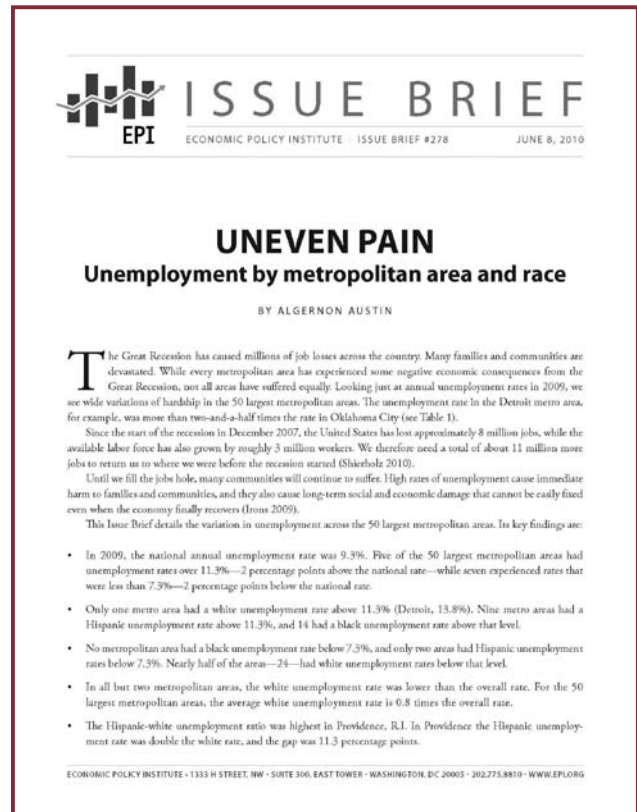
A new study from the national Economic Policy Institute recently revealed that Minneapolis-St. Paul has the highest black-white employment disparities of the top 40 metropolitan regions in the country.

Black people in our region suffered from unemployment rates that topped 20 percent in 2009, while the unemployment rate for whites was lower than the national average at 6.6 percent. That means 3.1 black people are unemployed for every white person. Subsequent research has showed that the unemployment rate for Latinos, Native Americans and some Asians is also significantly higher than the white unemployment rate.

Racial and economic justice organizers already knew times were tough for people of color in the Twin Cities, but the news about our unparalleled employment disparities quickly spread throughout the community late this summer. Organizations like the Jobs NOW Coalition, the Organizing Apprenticeship Project and the Alliance recognized that this information needed to be broadly understood by decision-makers in our community, so we started spreading the word.



Dr. Algernon Austin of the Economic Policy Institute presented his research at an Alliance event September 1.



For our part, the Alliance partnered with Summit Academy OIC to bring public attention to the issue by publishing a commentary in the Minneapolis Star Tribune. We challenged Minnesotans to take the first step in ending employment disparities by building bridges between whites and people of color, by personally committing to hire people of color, and by supporting long-term systems change that would end hiring discrimination for good.

We also partnered with the Minnesota Council on Foundations to host a Sept. 1 event that brought the report's author, Dr. Algernon Austin, to Minnesota to discuss his findings in greater detail with local community members, advocates, organizers, policy-makers and funders.

Dr. Austin's preliminary research indicates that the Twin Cities' employment gap seems to be related to disparities in the black-white high school dropout rate. The median gap in high school dropout rates nationwide was 5.5 percent, but the Minneapolis-St. Paul gap was more than 9.2 percent. Another factor playing a significant role here is the relatively young age of blacks in the labor force compared to the rest of the nation. Yet Dr. Austin was clear that even if these two factors were eliminated, there would still be significant employment disparities in the Twin Cities.

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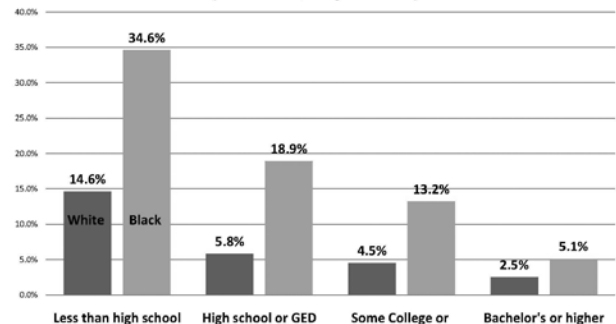
Dr. Austin also discussed national research that provides deeper insight into the systemic barriers that prevent people of color from obtaining employment. For example, a study conducted in Milwaukee showed that a white person with a criminal record was more likely to receive a positive response from a potential employer than a black person with no criminal record. Another study showed that job seekers with “white” names like Greg and Emily were significantly more likely to obtain an interview than job seekers with equal qualifications who had “black” names like Lakisha and Jamal.

Dr. Austin’s message was clear: African Americans in the Twin Cities have to work twice as hard to get half as far as whites. He was, however, encouraged by the tremendous response his study received in our region. Other cities with similarly dismal results had not embraced the data as a way to raise the issue of employment disparities. Now that we have hard data that proves we have a problem that spans all sectors and all races, partners from nonprofits, government and foundations are recommitting themselves to eliminating employment disparities in the Twin Cities.

You can read the full report and find Dr. Austin’s presentation on national and local employment disparities at www.metrostability.org.

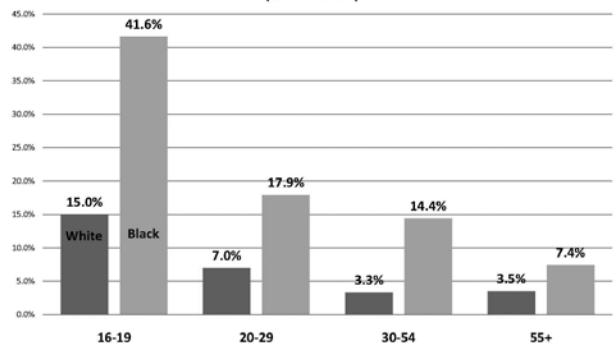
Twin Cities Unemployment Rates by Education Level, 2005-2007

(ACS Estimates, no age restriction)



Twin Cities Unemployment Rates by Age, 2005-2007

(ACS estimates)



Dr. Austin's research shows that whites without a high school degree have a similar unemployment rate to blacks with some college education. Black unemployment rates are double to quadruple the white rate at every age group.

Ending Employment Disparities in the Twin Cities

We know we have the worst employment disparities in the nation. Now what? Local leaders are taking action to change hiring outcomes for people of color in the Twin Cities.

1.Awareness. The Alliance and other partners are connecting policymakers, funders, advocates, organizers and the general public to information about employment disparities in our region.

2.Advocacy and Organizing. A variety of organizations, including the Alliance through HIRE Minnesota, are advancing public policy solutions that address state and local government hiring practices and minority contracting procedures.

3.Training and Hiring. HIRE Minnesota and others are targeting government agencies to ensure job training dollars reach women and people of color. We're also working to ensure that taxpayer funds used to create jobs reach the communities that need it most.



HIRE Minnesota: Progress Requires Multiple Strategies

People of color are still significantly more likely to be unemployed in Minnesota than whites. But after two years of working together, the 70 organizations that make up the HIRE Minnesota coalition have seen incremental improvements in our efforts to advance hiring equity in Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Transportation has made small gains in its employment outcomes, we've passed legislation requiring better hiring transparency and accountability, and we've secured more than \$8 million for job training for women and people of color. Throughout it all, the Alliance has supported HIRE Minnesota by working with partners to develop multiple strategies to make hiring equity a reality in our state.

Community Organizing and Leadership Development

A cornerstone of HIRE Minnesota's work is ensuring that community members are informed about the hiring inequities facing the Twin Cities, and are empowered to do something about it. We started out by mobilizing more than 2,000 people who cared about the problem. This year, we went deeper by training around 100 unemployed construction students on what structural racism is and what steps they can take to dismantle it.

Winston Legister (pictured on page 7) was one of the students we worked with this spring. After completing a two-day HIRE Minnesota training, Winston testified before a legislative committee on why low-income communities and communities of color must be connected to new infrastructure and green jobs opportunities in our state.

Advocacy

Last year, we secured millions of dollars for job training and outreach programs for women, low-income people and people of color. In 2010, we brought innovative new ideas to the Legislature, like adding hiring equity as a requirement of the state bonding bill. Remarkably, that fresh idea passed through two policy committees the first year it was introduced. Our powerful leaders, many of whom have experienced poverty and unemployment firsthand, persuaded legislators that the bonding bill should help put Minnesota's most unemployed populations back to work first.

Direct Negotiations

HIRE Minnesota has built up enough power over the past two years that we can directly negotiate with decision-makers. This year, HIRE Minnesota led a team of community members, MnDOT staff and contractors in developing joint expectations for MnDOT's hiring and contracting procedures.

"Two years ago, community groups didn't have a seat at the table at MnDOT," said HIRE Minnesota founder and Summit Academy OIC President Louis King. "Now we not only have seats, we're driving most of the conversation. That's the difference HIRE Minnesota has made."

We were able to negotiate significant improvements in MnDOT's hiring and contracting procedures that will help ensure more women and people of color receive jobs in future construction seasons.

"Two years ago, community groups didn't have a seat at the table at MnDOT. Now we not only have seats, we're driving the conversation. That's the difference HIRE Minnesota has made." - Louis King, Summit Academy OIC

Public Action

When all else fails, we embrace public action as a way to hold decision-makers accountable for the hiring disparities in our state. After seeing almost no improvement in MnDOT's hiring performance last year, HIRE Minnesota decided to make a statement by organizing a protest at the Crosstown construction project managed by Ames Construction. Ames was awarded what was then the largest road construction contract in state history, even though they were essentially on probation for previous failures to meet hiring goals.

HIRE Minnesota leader Michelle Evans spoke to the media about why she and her fellow trained construction students deserved a fair share of those jobs. "It is crucial for companies to adhere to the minority participation guidelines. Today I ask for all employers to keep their minds and employment opportunities open to people like me," said Evans.

We garnered enough media attention to secure a meeting with Ames' president and MnDOT staff the next week, and earned a promise that they will work directly with us to improve hiring on future projects.

To learn about what's on the horizon for HIRE Minnesota, visit www.hiremn.org.



Winston Legister and Patrick Ness discuss talking points before testifying at a legislative hearing.



White Guys for Racial Equity Return \$4 Million to MnDOT

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has goals for hiring women and people of color each year, but the agency has never met them. If they had met those goals on the 10 largest construction projects in the state this year \$4 million would be in the hands of women and people of color.

The White Guys for Racial Equity, an unaffiliated group of concerned white men, gathered this summer to ask MnDOT to return that \$4 million to the communities that need it most.

The group brought the message that employment disparities have to end in the Twin Cities, and that government can and should be a part of the solution. They presented a check for \$4 million – along with some moneybags for good measure.

To see what happened, search for "White Guys for Racial Equity" on YouTube.com.

Developments to Watch:

Cultural Corridors

In late October, the Alliance organized a roundtable of community organizers for a discussion on the cultural corridors cropping up around the Twin Cities. The idea behind these corridors is to generate interest in a particular neighborhood by drawing attention to the cultural elements that make them unique.

American Indian Cultural Corridor

Franklin Avenue in south Minneapolis plays a central role in modern American Indian urban history. Since the days of federal relocation, Franklin Avenue strikes a unique chord among many American Indian people both locally and nationally. Once a hotbed of American Indian civil rights activism and community activity, the avenue is now home to American Indian residents, businesses, tribal offices and nonprofit organizations. It is from this base the urban American Indian community is articulating a new vision for Franklin Avenue.

Since the inception of the Native American Community Development Institute (an American Indian community development intermediary and an Alliance member group) American Indian people have expressed a desire to see Franklin Avenue developed as a unique destination corridor that celebrates American Indian culture and stimulates economic activity within the community. In 2008, NACDI hosted four community design workshops to engage and solicit ideas and concepts for an American Indian Cultural Corridor on Franklin Avenue from the Franklin Light Rail station area to 11th Avenue. Each session averaged 40 community participants, and from these meetings development concepts for the corridor were created. As the corridor is developed, NACDI will honor the vision of community members, and continue to seek community input and participation in defining the future of the community.

Excerpted and modified from NACDI's web site at <http://www.nacdi.org/aicc/index.cfm>.



The American Indian Cultural Corridor photo by NACDI

World Cultural Heritage District

The World Cultural Heritage District overlaps Saint Paul Planning Districts 7 and 8 (Thomas-Dale or "Frogtown" in Ward 4 and Summit-University in Ward 1). The World Heritage Cultural District's mission is to develop these areas into a significant tourist destination that celebrates, enhances, preserves and connects the cultures of the world represented there. The vision is to have thousands of people visiting Saint Paul's World Cultural Heritage District to learn, connect and have fun. These visitors will generate millions of dollars in revenue for the city, ethnic businesses and cultural organizations, while exploring the area's ethnic art, music, history, businesses and entertainment venues. Although this district will be a destination all its own, it will also be a hub connecting visitors to other cultural destinations via the Central Corridor LRT.

Excerpted from a Culture Brokers Foundation handout on the World Cultural Heritage District. Find out more at www.culturebrokers.com.

African American Heritage Corridor

The African American Heritage Corridor project launched in 2005 to promote the history, achievements and contributions of blacks -- particularly of those from the Saint Paul area. The corridor encompasses several geographic areas of Saint Paul: Downtown and Lowertown, Harriet Island, the Capital Complex, Cathedral Hill, Selby Avenue and parts of the Summit-University neighborhood.

The African American Heritage Corridor will be an important destination for visitors and locals seeking authentic educational activities and entertainment that reflect the African American experience unique to Minnesota. The corridor aims to generate significant economic impact to black people, their neighbors and cities. The current work to further the goals of this project is developing an information center on Selby Avenue and assisting the Selby Avenue Action Coalition in conducting economic development activities on three Selby Avenue sites and the Victoria/Selby Corner.

Excerpted from a Culture Brokers Foundation handout on the African American Heritage Corridor. Find out more at www.culturebrokers.com.

Developments to Watch:

Harrison Neighborhood

Equitable Development in Bassett Creek Valley Rooted in Community Vision

The Harrison neighborhood, located in north Minneapolis, is a low-income area of the city home to 66 percent people of color. For more than 10 years, the Harrison Neighborhood Association (HNA) and Northside residents have been planning for the redevelopment of the Bassett Creek Valley. Directly west of downtown Minneapolis, the valley is 230 acres of under-utilized industrial land that residents hope will one day include a Southwest LRT stop, 3,000 units of housing, 2.5 million square feet of commercial space, up to 6,000 jobs and 40 acres of new green space.

Those projections come from the Bassett Creek Valley Master Plan, which was developed jointly by city staff and more than 650 residents of the adjacent Harrison and Bryn Mawr neighborhoods. The strength of the Bassett Creek Valley Master Plan lays rooted in the long-term commitment by area residents and businesses to ensuring economic development within their community.

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability has been providing HNA with technical assistance and organizing support to help preserve the neighborhood's vision for racial, economic and environmental justice in the Bassett Creek Valley. In 2010, the northeastern end of the site, Linden Yards East, was identified by the Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority as a potential rail storage yard for a proposed terminus station for commuter rail, high speed rail and LRT. We helped HNA leadership build a coalition of faith-based, environmental and affordable housing organizations to fight the rail storage plan and ensure the valley is preserved for transit-oriented development that can be an economic catalyst for the Harrison neighborhood.

In April, HNA and our coalition won the first battle to realize that vision. A group of residents and organizers attended a Minneapolis City Council meeting, and convinced the city to delay a decision to sell Linden Yards East to Hennepin County. Instead, the city council directed city staff to study joint development strategies and provide a final recommendation by December 2010.



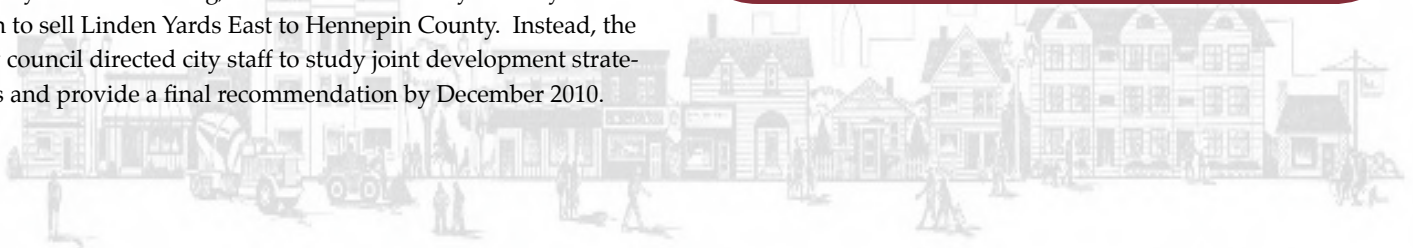
Harrison Neighborhood leaders celebrate the city council decision to delay the rail storage vote.

That next decision is approaching, and our coalition continues to pursue strategies that will bring mixed-use development to Harrison. Recently HNA and allies met with city and county staff in a meeting sponsored by Congressman Keith Ellison to begin the process of coordinating governmental efforts to encourage equitable redevelopment of the Bassett Creek Valley.

To find out how you can get involved in the effort, contact HNA at info@hnampls.org or Alliance Coalition Organizer Joan Vanhala at joan@metrostability.org.

Partners:

Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
Fresh Energy
Harrison Neighborhood Association
Housing Preservation Project
ISAIAH
MICA
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy



Northside Transportation Network Emerges to Bring a Community Voice to Bottineau LRT Planning

Late last year, State Representative Bobby Joe Champion and other north Minneapolis leaders and residents began organizing community members to play a role in planning the proposed Bottineau LRT line.

The group, called the **Northside Transportation Network (NTN)**, has established three main strategies:

1. **To identify neighborhood concerns and solutions for the Bottineau LRT**
2. **To bring information about the LRT back to the community**
3. **To ensure there is an authentic, transparent and accountable community process as the line is developed.**

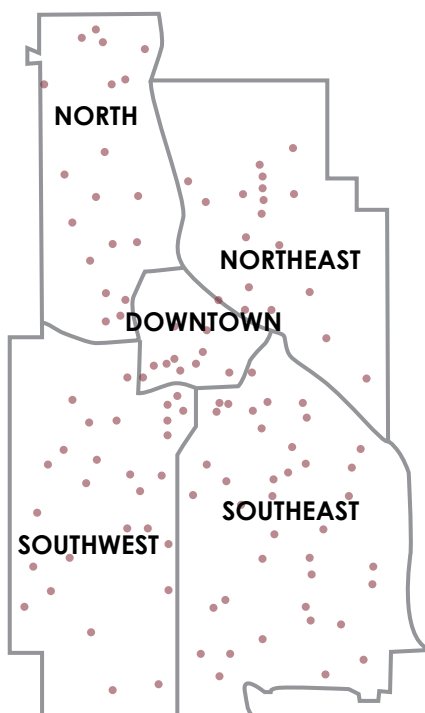
Ultimately, the goal is to leverage the LRT line to bring community benefits to north Minneapolis.

Already, NTN has made great strides in including an environmental justice community voice in the planning process. The group has organized three large community meetings that have allowed around 400 residents to learn about the proposed transitway and share their ideas and concerns.

NTN members have researched and shared information about the LRT planning process and timeline, made recommendations to Hennepin County on early planning documents, and secured a representative for north Minneapolis on the Bottineau Policy Advisory Committee. They also recently took a tour of the Hiawatha LRT line, and met with groups who organized community involvement along that corridor during the planning and construction phases.

Organizations who have joined in this effort are Harrison Neighborhood Association, Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, West Broadway Business and Area Coalition and the City of Lakes Community Land Trust. The Alliance has played a vital support role by providing technical and organizing assistance, and has helped secure participation from some of our members and partners, including MICAHA, the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, ISAIAH and Transit for Livable Communities.

For more information on Northside Transportation Network, go to <http://justcomm.org/nmplstransit/>.



Wireless Community Benefits Reach Minneapolis

This summer, the city of Minneapolis announced that "Wireless Minneapolis" hotspots were live throughout the city. Residents and visitors can now access the Internet free of charge from 117 public spaces like parks, schools and some businesses.

The hotspots were one of the innovative ideas generated through the community benefits agreement that the Alliance and other community groups helped negotiate to govern the city's investment in a wi-fi network. The agreement ensures that the city's investment will help bridge the "digital divide" by providing free Internet access to people who can't afford the service.

Among the other provisions of the community benefits agreement are free wi-fi accounts to nonprofit organizations that provide free public computer access; a Civic Garden that allows free access to information about government, education and community services; and a community grant program that is expected to generate \$11 million for community technology projects.

New staff, board members and member organizations

Marcus Harcus joined the Alliance in July as the new HIRE Minnesota coalition organizer. Marcus is an experienced organizer, who was formally trained by the Organizing Apprenticeship Project. He has been involved in grassroots community organizing since 1995, when he was a Patrick Henry High School student challenging the role of structural inequities in perpetuating the racial academic achievement gap. Over the past several years, Marcus has managed a community visioning project for Northeast Minneapolis and organized with the Northside Community Reinvestment Coalition's foreclosure prevention efforts. Marcus said the HIRE Minnesota position is "challenging to fill, but I love this coalition's work because it is powerful, progressive and we're effective. Organizing and advocating for hiring equity in publicly funded job and career opportunities is critically important work, especially since the Twin Cities have some of the worst unemployment disparities in the nation."



Marcus Harcus



Alessandra Williams

Marcus replaces **Alessandra Williams**, who had been the HIRE Minnesota coordinator since 2008. Alessandra is now pursuing her doctorate in culture and performance at UCLA. Alessandra always kept us organized and focused -- no easy task with a coalition of 70 diverse organizations. On behalf of the entire HIRE Minnesota coalition, many thanks to Alessandra for her leadership and enthusiasm!

Four new members joined the Alliance Board of Directors this spring. Welcome to **Jeff Bauer**, director of community and systems change for The Family Partnership, **Larry Hiscock**, at large member who is also the executive director of the Harrison Neighborhood Association, **Mona Langston**, policy advocate for the Housing Preservation Project, and **Eleonore Wesserle**, a volunteer leader for the Women's Environmental Institute.

The Alliance's member organizations voted to add several new members to our roster this year.

- **Housing Preservation Project (HPP)** is a public interest advocacy and legal organization that works to preserve and expand affordable housing for low-income individuals and families. HPP and the Alliance co-convene the Metro Development table, which meets monthly to connect organizers and advocates working to preserve and expand affordable suburban housing in our region. HPP also participates in our Regional Transitways work, with an interest in expanding the supply of affordable housing near new and existing transitways.

- **Summit Academy OIC** is an educational and vocational training center that prepares and empowers adults residing in the most economically depressed neighborhoods in the Twin Cities to become educated, employed, contributing members of their community. Summit Academy has become an important partner of the Alliance as we work together to end employment disparities in the Twin Cities through HIRE Minnesota.

- **District Councils Collaborative of St. Paul and Minneapolis (DCC)** was formed in 2006 to facilitate neighborhood participation in the development of the Central Corridor Light Rail Transit and ensure that the needs and interests of residents and businesses are represented. DCC was an important partner with the Alliance in the Stops for Us coalition, which secured three missing LRT stations in low-income communities along the Central Corridor.



2525 E. Franklin Ave.,
Suite 200
Minneapolis, MN 55406
Phone: (612) 332-4471
Fax: (612) 338-2194
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JOIN THE MOVEMENT FOR A JUST AND EQUITABLE REGION

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