



Council Member Lisa Goodman, City of Minneapolis

# WARD 7 E-NEWS

## Take advantage of higher temperatures to clear your sidewalk



As winter winds down over the coming weeks, warmer days will create opportunities for home and business owners to work on removing ice that may have stuck to sidewalks in bitterly cold temperatures. Ice can be more dangerous and intimidating than snow, and in colder temperatures it can be next to impossible to clear it. With any occasional reprieves from those temperatures, property owners may be able to break through down to the bare pavement so neighbors, mail carriers and emergency responders have a safe route.

Sidewalks are a critical part of our city's transportation system. For people on the way to and from their cars, the bus, the train, and even for the entire trip, clear sidewalks make the difference between a comfortable, safe route and a potentially hazardous or even impossible one. That's why it's important for homeowners and businesses to keep their sidewalks cleared down to the bare pavement.

### 2011

#### Lunch with Lisa

February	23
March	23
April	27
July	27
August	24
September	28
October	26

### What property owners need to remember this snow season:

- **Keep on top of the snowfall** – Staying caught up will help you with each snowfall. When you shovel snow and clear ice, shovel the sidewalks on all sides of your property, the full width of the sidewalk down to the bare pavement. Corners can take special attention; make sure a wheelchair can get through on your block. When possible, remove all ice from sidewalks. Remember, you are as responsible for clearing ice on your sidewalk as clearing snow. Ice
- **Remember garbage and recycling pickups** – Solid waste collection crews are out working, even after a heavy snowfall. Make sure to clear a path three feet wide from your garbage cart and recycling bin to the alley or street. Also make sure your cart and bin
- **Know the rules** – Minneapolis ordinance requires that property owners clear sidewalks after a snowfall within 24 hours for houses and duplexes and four daytime hours for apartment and commercial buildings.
- **Help is available** – If you need help shoveling, you can contact City of Minneapolis senior services at (612) 673-3567 to find out what resources may be available in your neighborhood.



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### Inside this issue:

Resident Survey	2
Plymouth Bridge Open	3
Community Gardens	2

Continued on Page 2.....



## clear your sidewalk continued .....

- **Help get the word out** – Download and share a snow shoveling flyer (at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sidewalks](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sidewalks)) to tell others about the rules and importance of sidewalk snow clearance.
- **Help your neighbors** – Lend a hand to neighbors who may have a hard time shoveling, or help out if there is an empty home on your block.
- **Make a report** – You can always file an online complaint or call 311 to report a sidewalk that is not shoveled. Last year, Minneapolis received more than 6,000 reports of unshoveled sidewalks. If the City of Minneapolis gets a report or discovers that a sidewalk is not properly cleared, Public Works will send a warning letter and give the property owners a chance to clear it. If the sidewalk does not get cleared, the property owner may be issued a citation with a fine. Crews will remove the snow and ice from the sidewalk. The property owner will be billed for this service, and unpaid bills will be added to the owner's property tax.

For more information on snow removal, go to [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/snow](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/snow).

## Help us make Minneapolis better by taking the Resident Survey

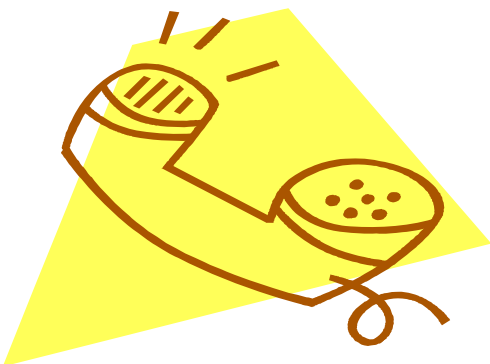
Over the next few weeks, answering your phone could help us improve Minneapolis for you and other residents.

Beginning Monday, Jan. 31 and continuing through February, the City of Minneapolis will survey residents to get their perspectives about the quality of services the City provides. Approximately 1,100 residents will complete the telephone survey, which is being conducted by the National Research Center, Inc., an independent research firm. People contacted to complete the survey will be selected randomly, with the goal of reaching a diverse cross-section of Minneapolis residents.

If you are contacted to participate in the survey, please take the few minutes necessary to provide your honest opinions about how we're doing in Minneapolis. For most people, the survey will take about 20 minutes. The City of Minneapolis is eager to use the results to help create a Minneapolis with the best quality of life for everyone. Please pick up the phone and participate.

Results from the survey are used in the business planning efforts of City department. The survey will be translated for people who prefer to take it in Spanish, Hmong, Somali, Laotian, Oromo or Vietnamese.

The City has conducted similar surveys in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2008; it's part of Minneapolis' ongoing effort to improve services and involve people in their local government. For more information or to see the past survey results visit [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/results-oriented-minneapolis](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/results-oriented-minneapolis) and click on "Residents Survey."



## Plymouth Avenue Bridge opens to pedestrian traffic

The Plymouth Avenue Bridge over the Mississippi River, which closed to traffic after the discovery of corroded cables in its structure, reopened today to pedestrian traffic. However, it will remain closed to motor vehicle traffic until necessary repairs can be made.

During routine maintenance and repair work in October 2010, the bridge was found to have significant deterioration in its post-tensioning tendons. While the bridge's design is not fracture-critical, a thorough analysis led Public Works to conclude that the bridge will not be reopened to motor vehicle traffic until repairs can be completed. However, the analysis indicated it is safe to allow foot traffic on the bridge, so Department of Public Works has reopened the bridge to pedestrians.

Starting Jan. 6, the sidewalk on the downstream side of the bridge is open to pedestrian traffic. Because of the limited space on the sidewalk, cyclists should walk their bikes across the bridge.

The Plymouth Avenue Bridge, which opened in 1982, connects north and northeast Minneapolis. Before its closure, it carried more than 14,000 vehicles a day. That traffic has since moved to other river crossings, including the Broadway Avenue Bridge six blocks north of Plymouth Avenue or the Hennepin Avenue Bridge in downtown Minneapolis.

City engineers are now evaluating design solutions to make the necessary repairs so the Plymouth Avenue Bridge can reopen to motor vehicles. The City is also working to identify possible funding sources for the repair work, and has made the Plymouth Avenue Bridge its top funding priority at the state legislature this year. While the project costs are not yet known, it's estimated that the repair will cost between \$7 million and \$10 million.

## Tired of winter? Think spring!!!!

### Groups can lease Minneapolis-owned vacant lots for community gardens

With seed catalogues arriving in the mail and flower and garden shows around the corner, now is a good time to look into establishing a community garden in your neighborhood. The City of Minneapolis has 13 vacant lots available for qualifying groups to lease for community gardens. These City-owned lots were selected because they are not appropriate for development. This means that they will remain available for years of gardening even as the economy changes and redevelopment picks up.

The Community Garden Pilot Program began in 2010 with 18 lots to help make Minneapolis more beautiful, provide healthy food and build community. Five of the lots are already leased to community groups. The City of Minneapolis supports community gardens in its commitment to promoting access to good nutrition, improving the ecological footprint of the city, encouraging active and healthy living and providing spaces for human interaction, food production and beauty in our daily lives. In addition to these lots, Minneapolis already has about 100 community gardens throughout the city.

Lots are available first-come, first-served to qualifying groups. Experienced community garden groups may be eligible for three- to five-year leases, while groups gardening for the first time will start with one-year leases. A qualifying group will be a not-for-profit or a group with a not-for-profit sponsor. The garden will need to have liability insurance. Applicants should be ready to discuss the layout of the community garden, how it will be managed and how it will engage and benefit the community.

The Community Garden Pilot Program is part of Homegrown Minneapolis. Homegrown Minneapolis is an initiative of the City of Minneapolis to help grow, sell, distribute and eat more healthy, locally grown foods within the city and the surrounding region. A community garden program is one of nine Homegrown Minneapolis recommendations adopted by the City Council. For more information on the Homegrown Minneapolis Community Gardens Pilot Program, visit [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs) and click on "Homegrown Minneapolis" or call (612) 673-2597.

