

**Memorandum**

DATE: August 22, 2008  
TO: Mayor & Council Members  
FROM: Joel Walinski, Interim City Administrator  
RE: Friday Memo for the week of August 18 – 22, 2008

Work continued on a number of projects and initiatives this week, annexation agreement talks with Greenvale Township, the Water and 5<sup>th</sup> Street Project, the EDA Development Planning Process Education meeting, and the presentation of three transportation studies. All of these are important developments supporting the goals and initiatives identified by the Mayor and Council for 2008. Along with these major initiatives I would like to acknowledge in advance the work and support the PW Divisions and Public Safety Department (Cop Shop) will be providing to the upcoming DJJD event. A number of these folks work long and off hours to help make the event successful, thanks.

Finally, a strong word of thanks to the seasonal and summer intern employees for the work completed this summer. The City of Northfield use summer interns in engineering and the EDA; summer seasonal run the outdoor pool under the direction of Recreation Manager Jason Eisold; and summer seasonal employees are an essential part of getting the work accomplished in the parks, streets, waste water collection system, watering the downtown flower baskets, operating the compost site, and water utility. Those folks are a critical part to getting the work completed, kudos to them.

The following is a list of city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of August 18 – 22, 2008:

**Liquor**

*Submitted by: Stephen DeLong, Director of Liquor Operations*

The havoc created by the construction related to the 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Water Street projects continues to be a negative impact on business, but the worst appears to be behind us. The recent reopening of Water St. to Highway 3 has mitigated some of the inconvenience brought on by the closing of 5<sup>th</sup> Street in July. Overall, sales for the month of July were down relative to last year, and this decline is expected to extend through the month of August as well.

Fortunately, the Liquor Store enjoyed a successful first half of 2008; total sales (without tax) for the first six months of 2008 were \$1,309,544, which is \$43,219 (3.41%) above the same period for 2007. May 2008 set a new record in terms of sales for the store—sprinting past December 2007 for the gold.

Stephen DeLong--still suffering from “hard hat hair”-- visited the site of the new Apple Valley Liquor Store, which is scheduled to open sometime in October. The 15,800 square foot Prairie Style building, under construction at the corner of Pilot Knob Road and 157th Street, will use geothermal heating instead of oil or natural gas. The system will provide all heat and air conditioning for the store, and will supply the cooling for nearly 2,500 square feet of cold storage--that’s a lot of beer!

**Library**

*Submitted by Lynne Young, Library Director*

Kathy Ness and Diana Tallent went to the Community Youth Fairs with Booker at Greenvale and Bridgewater Elementary Schools this week. The kids played "Guess How Many Hand Prints are on Booker" game, and there were lots of visitors, some of whom received the back packs left over from the Summer Reading Program.

The Library Board met on Tuesday evening. The three new committees reported back to the larger group. The committees are Financial Resources, Planning and Partnerships and PR.

The painting project at the library is finished – the trim at the library now sports a bright new coat of protective paint.

Furniture has begun arriving for the young adult and children's areas. The young adult area sports a new café table and stools. We're waiting for new chairs with desks that pull up from the side. The children's room features a new loveseat, designed to be a more comfortable place for children to share with the parents, caregivers, siblings and friends. These purchases are made possible by gifts from the Friends of the Library from the proceeds of last year's spelling bee.

This year's spelling bee is scheduled to be held Thursday, September 25, at the Grand. Mark your calendars.

Lynne Young joined Renee Lowery, Director of the Buckham Memorial Library in Faribault in presenting budget requests to the Rice County Board of Commissioners.

## **Public Services**

### **Building**

*Submitted by John Brookins*

St. Olaf will receive a TCO (temporary certificate of occupancy) today for the east end of the new Science Building. The TCO was issued last week for the west end of the building. They are aiming for a final occupancy inspection on August 29th. Classes are scheduled to begin on September 3rd.

Culvers' plans are in and the preliminary plan review is complete. The permit for this project will be issued next week.

The City Council approved the second reading of the rental ordinance. Letters will be going out to District 2 property owners soon to get the inspection scheduling under way. The goal is to have District 2 inspections completed by the end of January 2009.

### **Community Development**

*Submitted by Brian O'Connell*

The Community Development Director and the Interim City Administrator met with Greenvale Town Board Supervisors on Tuesday evening and gave a proposal with respect to the items that the City of Northfield is expecting to see in the orderly annexation agreement between the City and the township. Greenvale Town Supervisors indicated that they are going to get assistance in negotiating the agreement and plan to continue to meet on this issue monthly until the agreement is complete.

A draft of the development regulations prepared by ACP Planning consultants was received late this week. Staff will be reviewing the regulations in anticipation of the site visit by ACP next week, which will include a meeting with the Land Development Regulations Advisory Group.

### **Economic Development**

*Submitted by Michele Merxbauer and Brian O'Connell*

The new Economic Development Directory, Jody T. Gunderson, started this week. Jody comes to us from Iowa with several years in City and County development behind him. We are excited to welcome him to Northfield!

THE EDA conducted an informational meeting on Thursday evening related to the numerous steps that must be undertaken to prepare for an industrial park, as well as position the City to have property at a “shovel ready” conditions. Shovel ready means that all planning, zoning, environmental and land development design decisions have been made. It does not mean that all infrastructure is in place, but rather that the design for infrastructure improvements and the strategy to finance the improvements have been finalized.

**Housing**

*Submitted by Michele Merxbauer*

Staff is moving forward on the PUD and platting process for Spring Creek Commons. A request for proposals for this process will go out soon, with the anticipation that the firm can be hired and the first Planning Commission meeting for preliminary plat and PUD conceptual plan can occur in late October.

**Planning**

*Submitted by Dan Olson*

The Planning Commission and City Council will meet next Monday night to discuss the draft Comprehensive Plan at the Council Work Session. Staff will give a PowerPoint presentation on the Plan highlights. On Tuesday, the Zoning Board of Appeals/Planning Commission will review a variance request and a Conditional Use Permit for exterior storage at the Waste Management facility on Highway #3. This week, planning staff attended the Transportation Plan presentation on Wednesday, as well as the discussion about the annexation west of the Northfield Hospital on Thursday. Consultant ACP will be in town next week for a few days to meet with Staff to iron out the draft Land Development Regulations.

**Engineering**

*Submitted by Katy Gehler Hess, City Engineer*

**WATER STREET PARKING / FIFTH STREET RECONSTRUCTION**

Heselton finished up utility construction in the intersection of Fifth Street and Division Street late in the week. Worked was slow due to the bedrock that was encountered. Once utility construction was complete, Hesleton began hauling in Sand and Class V gravel, and getting the intersection ready for curb and gutter. Bituminous Materials Inc. was on-site to pave the first leg of Phase III on Fifth Street from Water Street to Division Street late in the week. North Country Concrete was also on-site during the latter part of the week working on sidewalks along Fifth Street from Division Street to Water Street. They also started on some of the concrete work along the promenade area. Culberts Nursery continued working the plantings along the riverbank.

Work next week will concentrate on the Division Street and Fifth Street intersection. This intersection will be concrete with four brick paver crosswalks similar to the Fifth Street and Water Street intersection. Hesleton has given the City of Northfield a date of September 3rd that the intersection of Division Street and Fifth Street will re-open to traffic. Utility construction will continue on the second leg of Fifth Street from Division Street to Washington Street, and is expected to wrap up at the end of next week. Also, concrete work and electrical work will continue in the promenade area along Water Street.

At the progress meeting this week the project schedule was discussed. Due to the bedrock encountered the utility construction was slowed. It is anticipated that the block of 5<sup>th</sup> Street from Division to Washington will be closed until after DJJD. Any unfinished areas will be brought to grade with gravel for the weekend event. This was discussed with the DJJD committee; they did not believe this would be of concern for the event.

**CANNON RIVER RETAINING WALL REHABILITATION**

Sunram Construction worked on the top cap of the retaining wall this week. Once the cap has cured the railing will be installed which will complete the work on the wall. They removed their cofferdam after giving the footing 7 days to cure. Next week they will concentrate on re-pouring the concrete sidewalks in the park area, and getting the railing installed on top of the new wall.

### **WOODLEY STREET**

The MnDOT Civil Rights Office verified the contractor complies with the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) requirements this week. The bids will be presented to the council for acceptance and project award on Monday, August 25, 2008.

### **TRANSPORTATION STUDIES**

The results of the transportation studies were presented at a joint meeting on Wednesday. The studies include the NW Corridor Study, the TH 19 Access Management and Safety Study, and the Northfield Transportation Study. The purpose of the meeting was to get feedback from the council on the proposed plans prior to presenting the final reports for consideration in September. A copy of the plans will be available in the council office. The transportation plan is available online a copy will be available at the library.

### **Public Works Operations**

*Submitted by Brian Erickson, Public Works Operations Engineer*

### **Facilities**

*Bernie Shakal, Facilities Supervisor*

The pool at the Wellness Center reopened this Monday on schedule, with many repairs being made around the pool area, such as tiles that became loose, lights in the pool that get changed out every year when the pool is emptied and the pool pressure washed with detergent. Other work continues in the women's locker room with wall repair due to moisture problems, we have replaced wallboard and are now applying tiles that match the other existing tiles. Johnson Controls work is nearing completion in the mechanical room supplying heating and cooling to the pool area. Air was being supplied to the pool room when it opened on Monday, but other mechanical work has to be completed.

Library cooling issues were addressed this week when it was discovered that condensing units serving a portion of the building were plugged and not functional.

Late this week we are back in the Arena doing more preparation work, which included air duct cleaning before the boards are installed around the rink.

### **Recreation**

*Jason Eisold, Recreation Manager*

The pool is wrapping up another wonderful season. The warm weather this past week has seen great attendance. Through Thursday the pool has had over 37,000 visitors to the facility, and average of 485 patrons per day, topping last years mark of 36,000. The final day for the pool will be this Sunday. The last event at the pool will be Wednesday, September 3 from 4:00-6:30pm the first annual Doggie Dip!! Contact 645-3017 for more details.

The arena ceiling is almost complete along with the painting of the interior. Remaining items include perimeter concrete pour, dasher board installation and mechanical equipment installation.

### **Streets and Parks**

*TJ Heinrichy, Streets & Parks Supervisor*

The Street and Parks department saw another of their seasonal summer seasonals employees leave for the year. Mike Hintz assisted with a variety of tasks.

Heywood Park saw the installation of its new playground equipment. The Men of Northfield were a volunteer group did the install. They did a fabulous job! The last item we're waiting for is the rubber mulch to be delivered. After that the neighborhood children can use the equipment.

We assisted the Engineering Department with sign installations on 5<sup>th</sup> St infrastructure project. The crew also started preparing the office and miscellaneous equipment that will go to an auction facility next week. This past week there various potholes and bituminous repairs made.

All City parks were mowed and cleaned for the week. We received formal documentation of the City's Tree City USA re-certification. The were signs installed at the entrances to Northfield along with a flag and crystal statue given to the Interim City Administrator.

**Transit**

Brian Erickson, Public Works Operations Engineer

*This week the transit grant application was completed sent in to Minnesota Department of Transportation. The grant process is something that is done annually in order to insure that there are sufficient funds to operate the public transit system here in Northfield.*

*As always for anyone interested in the Transit system please call 645-7250 for additional information.*

**Wastewater**

**Glenn Lindroos, Wastewater Superintendent**

Steve Nyhus, a representative for the Minnesota Environmental Science Review Board (MESRB), of which Northfield is a member, visited the wastewater treatment facility to discuss where the organization's focus will be this year. MESERB is a joint powers board dedicated to the research, study, and analysis of environmental issues important to Minnesota. MESERB reviews and analyzes the scientific and economic foundation of state and federal environmental standards, develops methods and programs to improve environmental protection in a cost effective way, and communicates information and findings to governmental bodies and agencies, the public and other interested parties. This year's main focus will be participating in the development of new rules involving nutrient trading. This is legislation that will allow entities that operate much more efficiently than rules require to sell part of excess reductions to entities that for whatever reason are not making standards. The idea is to provide economic incentives for better environmental protection. The devil is in the details, however, and it is MESERB's goal to have the final rules understandable and affordable to its members as well as improve the environment. Wastewater treatment is a huge investment for all Minnesota cities and the group's main goal has always been to assure the dollars invested are applied where they do the most good.

**Water**

**Doug Lien, Water Superintendent**

Crew Leader Scott Murphy and Erik Beumer filled, flushed and took bacteria samples on the new water main that was installed at the intersection of 5th and Division Streets. The bacteria sample will be read today and if the sample reads negative for bacteria, we will put the new water main into service.

Scott and Dean Huschle located six water services for a townhome association on Highland Avenue. The association wants to replace their driveways and wanted their services located so they can bring the curb stops up to grade if they happened to be under their driveways. Scott and Dean found two of the six services curb stops to be in the driveway area.

With the dry weather, we have been pumping and average of 3,793,600 gallons of water per day for the last five days. The daily average for 2007 was 2.3 million gallons per day. This is 60% more water used during this dry spell. This is not unusual for most years during the months of July and August. The Water Division will be contacting the Northfield News about running a news article on proper watering times and techniques.

The Water Division awarded C & S Nelson Construction the #2 pump house remodeling project this week. Demolition will start in a couple of weeks.

cc: Department Managers