

Memorandum

DATE: December 11, 2009
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of December 7-11 , 2009

The monthly updates from Boards and Commissions is an attachment to this weeks Friday Memo.

Staff recently wrapped up participation in the 2010 United Way fund drive. United Way of Northfield supports more than 35 community outreach agencies that help people in crisis, encourage people with disabilities, strenghten our community, promote health and well being, and serve our children and youth. Appreciation and thank you's go out to all of the City staff and elected officials who donated a total of \$4399 through cash donations and payroll deductions. Their contributions help continue the City's long tradition of generosity and support of United Way programs that benefit those in need in Northfield. A thank you also to Ms. Jennifer Nash for cordinating.

As a follow-up to Monday's Council discussion on the 2010 Council Meeting Dates, a memo was sent out to all Boards and Commission Chairs and staff liasion informing them of the potential change in Council Meeting days to Tuesday evenings. The change in meeting days will require several boards and commissions to reconsider their meeting days. Additionally, staff reviewed the changes required internally for meetings and Council packet production deadlines. The Council's change in meeting days provides the opportunity to review and possibly streamline and improve the efficiency of several Board and Commission review and Council approval processes.

A thank you also to the Public Works, Engineering, and Police Department employees involved with the snow removal efforts this week. This was the first significant snow storm of the season with accumulation amounts of 9.5 inches. The standard of performance is to have snow plowing completed, curb to curb, from all City streets within 12 hours after the end of the storm event and the removal of snow from the downtown area within 48 hours after the end of a storm event. A few issues to be addressed along the way, however snow plowing and snow removal was completed late Thursday morning. Thank you to all those involved.

Below is information on city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of Dec 7 - 11, 2009:

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community Development

Submitted by Brian O'Connell, Community Development Director

The Quit Claim Deed, related to the purchase of parcels 92 and 93 from the Department of Transportation, is being reviewed by the City Attorney. Corrections to the legal description were necessary so the actual purchase has not occurred as of yet. The purchase should be completed next week.

Staff plans to follow up with Perkins Specialized Transportation related to their enquiry related to the potential purchase of property owned by the City. Perkins is in a business expansion mode and is exploring the need for additional property to support their expansion needs.

Staff is experiencing a crunch of work load related primarily to the looming deadline for rental inspection for rental units in District #1. Due to this, field inspection duties for rentals have been expanded to include the Housing Manager and the Permit Technician in addition to the Building Official. So far the expanded staff effort has been able to meet the inspection demand. This team effort greatly contributes to the ability to maintain the level of service and meet the expectations of the property owners. Many additional rental inspections are still yet to occur so this approach to providing the inspection service will likely continue for some time to come.

Economic Development

Submitted by Jody T. Gunderson, Economic Development Director

The Northfield Economic Development Authority has partnered with Rice County Economic Development, the University of Minnesota Extension for Community Vitality, and other Rice County agencies to develop a Rice County Economic Impact Analysis. A presentation of the final report was scheduled to occur in Morristown on December 9, 2009, but will be rescheduled due to inclement weather.

The Economic Impact Analysis was designed by University of Minnesota Extension to assist communities in making informed economic development decisions. The analysis features the *QuickTake 100* which highlights the economic impact in a designated county of 100 jobs in a selected industry. Along with the *QuickTake 100*, the analysis also provides an overview of the current economic structure of the county.

The report measures the impact of the creation of 100 jobs in specific industries using the following measurements:

Output: Output is measured in dollars and is equivalent to total sales.

Employment: Employment includes full- and part-time workers and is measured in annual average jobs.

Labor Income: Labor income measures the value that is added to the product by the labor component.

Property Income: Property income is a computation of the value that accrues due to ownership of property.

Direct Impact: The direct impact is equivalent to the initial change in the economy.

Indirect Impact: The indirect impact is the summation of changes in the local economy that occur due to spending for inputs (goods and services) by the industry or industries directly impacted.

Induced Impact: The induced impact is the summation of changes in the local economy that occur due to spending by labor by the employees in the industry or industries directly impacted.

Total Impact: The total impact is the summation of the direct, indirect and induced impacts.

The EDA has already utilized the information from the report for a state grant application and intends to incorporate the analysis in its targeted business recruitment and expansion efforts.

Housing

Submitted by Michele Merxbauer, Housing Manager

Staff has spent the week assisting the building department with rental inspections.

Planning

Submitted by Dan Olson, City Planner

The Planning Commission will meet next week to discuss the Praver-Gill annexation request (the Commission was to discuss this last Tuesday, but the meeting was cancelled due to the weather). This is the first opportunity that the Commission will have to discuss the annexation since the public hearing on

November 24th. The Commission is not expected to make a recommendation next Tuesday on the annexation, but will develop and consider a recommendation a later meeting. The Commission will also be discussing their 2010 goals and the possibility of a new meeting date in 2010. The Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) will also meet next week and will discuss a request from the Friends of Way Park to designate Way Park as a heritage preservation site. The HPC will also discuss their 2010 goals. Planning Staff also participated in a discussion with Carleton College staff on the proposed Fourth Street improvements that are slated for next year.

FINANCE

Submitted by Kathleen McBride, Finance Director

What's in a bond rating? With the City's upgraded bond rating, it is worthwhile to detail a comparison of the rating systems used by both Moody's and Standard & Poor's. The City switched bond rating agencies with the 2009 bond issue – going from Moody's to S&P. The City's previous bond rating with Moody's was A1. Standard and Poor's rating on the 2009 bonds was AA. Shown below is information explaining the higher end ratings from bondpickers.com.

Bond Ratings Explained

Bond rating is in essence an evaluation of the possibility of default by a bond issuer. It is based on an analysis of the issuer's financial condition and profit potential. Bond rating services are provided by, among others, Standard & Poor's and Moody's Investors Service. Bond ratings start at **AAA** (being the highest investment quality) and usually end at **D** (in payment default).

Moody's	S&P	Definitions
Aaa	AAA AAA-	Prime. Maximum Safety. Bonds, which are judged to be of the best quality. They carry the smallest degree of investment risk and are generally referred to as "gilt edged." Interest payments are protected by a large or by an exceptionally stable margin and principal is secure. While the various protective elements are likely to change, such changes as can be visualized are most unlikely to impair the fundamentally strong position of such issues.
Aa	AA+ AA AA-	High Grade. High Quality. Bonds, which are judged to be of high quality by all standards. Together with the Prime group they comprise what are generally known as high-grade bonds. They are rated lower than the best bonds because margins of protection may not be as large as in Prime securities or fluctuation of protective elements may be of greater amplitude or there may be other elements present which make the long-term risk appear somewhat larger than the Prime securities.
A	A+ A A-	Upper Medium Grade. Bonds, which possess many favorable investment attributes and are to be considered as upper-medium-grade obligations. Factors giving security to principal and interest are considered adequate, but elements may be present which suggest a susceptibility to impairment some time in the future.

LIBRARY

Submitted by Lynne Young, Director

The annual Winter Walk Model Train display drew more than 1200 visitors to the library on the evening of Thursday, December 3. The children LOVE this display, and we would like to thank all those who planned and executed this event: Wayne Kivell, Ed Buchwald, Dale Turnquist, John Machacek, Clark Webster, Rick Johnston, Charles and Auggie Schweickert, Ted and Jeanne Zwart, Hal Gargrave, the Northfield Public Library Teen Advisory Board, the Friends of the Northfield Public Library and library staff members Leesa Wisdorf and Kathy Ness. Thanks to all of them, the event becomes more amazing every year.

Did you know that the Northfield Public Library was once located in the YMCA Building – now the Northfield Arts Guild? This and many other tidbits of information about the library are features in the Friends of the Northfield Public Library Calendar for 2010. Mary Schier researched the library's history, discovered pictures and information in archives around town and designed the final piece. They are available at the library for \$5.00. All proceeds go to the Friends of the Library and will support library programs and service. Many thanks to the Friends for this great kickoff to the Carnegie Library centennial celebration.

The professional services agreement with Library Strategies (a division of the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library) has been finalized. Library Strategies staff will meet with the local Study Team during the week of December 21 to begin the process for the fund-raising feasibility study.

Library board and staff members have been meeting with staff from the regional public library system (SELCO) and other organizations in Northfield about applications for legacy funds. Collaborative efforts with the Arts Guild and the Northfield Historical Society are underway. Besides grants through SELCO, the Minnesota Historical Society and SEMAC (Southeastern Minnesota Arts Council) are also offering heritage grant opportunities.

The Northfield Area Foundation awarded the Library Board a grant for a planned Centennial Celebration Concert Series to be held (mostly) on 2nd Saturdays of the month. Margit Johnson continues to work on lining up musicians for these events, and so far has a put together a schedule with a wide variety of talented performers. Thanks, NAF!

PUBLIC WORKS

Facilities

Submitted by Bernie Shakal, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor

Facilities staff was busy this week finishing up outdoor projects. Among these projects was the skylight replacement project at the Waste Water Treatment Facility. The remaining item for this project was spray foam insulation applied to the inside and that was finished on Monday.

With the snowfall and cold temperatures moving in on Tuesday evening, Annie was busy keeping entries to various city facilities open and making sure the heating systems were operating.

Bernie was in St. Cloud Tuesday – Thursday this week, attending a Johnson Control training class to learn more about the City's building automation systems.

Streets and Parks

Submitted by Brian Erickson, Public Works Operations Engineer

The Streets and Parks Staff has been busy this week with plowing snow in the first big snowstorm of the year. Early Wednesday the trucks and other equipment hit the streets at 3:00 A.M. to begin clearing the streets even as the snow fell; due to the continued snow and wind further plowing was required Thursday. The crew started at 12:00 A.M. Thursday with plowing the streets curb to curb as well as doing snow

removal downtown. The downtown was finished at about 9:30 A.M. and plowing finished up just a little later. Over 120 tractor-trailer loads of snow were removed from the downtown.

Water

Submitted by Doug Lien Water Division Manager

Water Systems Technician Jay Hall worked with Midwest Testing on installing the correct circuit board for #4's well house meter. Franek Electric wired the new circuit board and Water Operator Scott Murphy tested the accuracy of the new meter. Everything tested good and #4 well is back in operation.

Wastewater

Submitted by Gerald Ness, Systems Technician

This week twelve hundred cubic yards of Class A Exceptional biosolids were removed from the storage warehouse. The warehouse was emptied by the contractor and applied to area agricultural land as a cost effective soil amendment. The rate of biosolids accumulation requires the warehouse to be emptied several times a year.

cc: Department Managers