



Minneapolis Connects



Minneapolis Neighborhood & Community Relations

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April – May 2013

The 38th Annual Neighborhoods, USA Conference is coming to Minneapolis in May



Minneapolis is excited to host the 38th Annual 2013 Neighborhoods USA (NUSA) Conference from May 22 – 25 at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis. This event is expected to bring over 800 people to the Twin Cities from across the country.

The conference kicks off on Wednesday, May 22, with pre-conference workshops, including a bike tour of Minneapolis, and an opening celebration at the Nicollet Island Pavilion. Thursday and Friday will be filled with workshops and with keynote addresses by eco-entrepreneur Majora Carter, Professor John McKnight, and author Peter Kageyama. There will be the traditional NUSA Neighborhood Pride Tours, and a Friday evening celebration at Minnehaha Park. The conference concludes with NUSA Board elections, a post-conference workshop: *Visualizing Neighborhoods: A Hack-a-thon for Good*.

Take advantage of the early registration rate of \$200. The standard registration rate of \$300 for the 2013 NUSA Conference will go in to effect after Friday, April 26th. Complete conference details, including workshop descriptions and registration materials, can be found at www.nusa.org

NCR Participates in the Southside Housing Fair

Over 1,000 people attended the 19th annual South Minneapolis Housing Fair on April 13. The Housing Fair is a free event produced for the benefit of Minneapolis residents by Minneapolis Community Education, Coldwell Banker Burnet, and representatives from 12 neighborhood organizations. NCR is a platinum sponsor of the Housing Fair.

The Housing Fair provides a variety of housing resources - from contractors for those looking for help with small project or planning a dream renovation, to options for renters considering becoming first-time homeowners. The Housing Fair was held at a new location the year, the Minneapolis Sports Center, a site offering convenient access to transit and plenty of free parking. Also new was the addition of the Hennepin County Fix-it Clinic, which offered free volunteer assistance with repair of home appliances and electronics that otherwise might end up in a landfill. The South Minneapolis Housing Fair is typically held in mid-April. Watch for next year's 20th anniversary event!



Join Minneapolis and Celebrate American Indian Month this May



Photo by Jerry Auginash

Each year, Minneapolis takes part in American Indian Month, which is a celebration of the community during the month of May in Minnesota. American Indian organizations showcase programs and services that are available to support and enrich the community. A parade held on Wednesday, May 1st will kick off a month of events in the area with a number of festivities taking place in the City of Minneapolis.

To join the activities, please visit the Community Calendar for more information: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/WCMS1P-090688>.

City Council approves study on pathways to cleaner, more sustainable energy options for Minneapolis consumers

On April 12, the City Council approved a proposal to draft an energy vision that details what the City wants from a sustainable, 21st century energy system. The action also calls for a report that explores the various paths the City could take to achieve its energy goals, including examination of potential utility partnerships, changes to how the City uses energy utility franchise fees, and the potential for municipalization of one or both energy utilities.

This action comes as the City prepares to enter into energy franchise negotiations with Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy. State law currently limits Minneapolis' authority over utility in franchise agreements, however the City is seeking legislative changes to allow negotiations with Xcel and CenterPoint to explore how Minneapolis could make progress towards its goals for sustainable energy, improved air quality, equity, and green jobs. The City wishes to explore options to achieve its energy goals outside the existing franchise agreement structure.

This measure helps frame the future franchise negotiations with Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy, as well as the City's work to get more clean-energy options for consumers. The City currently has utility franchise agreements with Xcel Energy for electricity and CenterPoint Energy for natural gas. These agreements, which were signed in the early 1990s, both expire at the end of 2014. The City is in the early stages of preparing for negotiations for new agreements.

The measure allocates \$250,000 to draft comprehensive "Energy Vision" goals and complete a thorough review of the options and implications of the various pathways to meet the City's energy goals. Specifically, the Council action would:

- Direct City staff to draft an updated set of "Energy Vision" goals for a future energy system. These goals may address the greenhouse gas intensity of the system, use and ownership of renewable energy, energy efficiency outcomes, reliability standards, affordability, and access to energy use information. These draft goals will be presented to the City Council by August 2013.
- Direct City staff to conduct a study that provides an overview of the various paths the City could take to achieve its Energy Vision goals. City staff will provide a progress update to the City Council in November 2013, and a final report will be presented to the City Council by January 2014. The report will include:
 - A review of the current legislative and legal landscape;
 - An examination of existing municipal utilities in Minnesota and across the country (utility performance, history, shared models, etc);
 - A report on the "municipalization pathway," to include the process and schedule, preliminary cost estimates to move down that path, how municipalization may help Minneapolis achieve its Energy Vision goals, and identification of any potential barriers.
 - A review of alternative pathways, which may include utility partnerships, state legislative or Public Utilities Commission changes, and how energy utility franchise fees may be used for City programs.

For more information, go to the City's energy utilities franchise agreements web page at

www.minneapolismn.gov/energyfranchise.

Apply for openings on Minneapolis boards and commissions

Volunteers on City of Minneapolis boards and commissions provide valuable insights, help shape key policy decisions and provide community-based input into administration of services. Applications are now being accepted for the over 47 open positions on 10 boards and commissions that the City Council and Mayor will appoint this spring. Applications will be reviewed beginning Friday, April 26th; however the positions are open until filled. For a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions as well as additional information visit the boards and commissions website at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/index.htm>.

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