

March 3, 2009

Dear Third Ward Resident,

This year the City of Minneapolis will hold elections for the City Council. I am running for re-election as the Third Ward City Council Member and I am asking for your support.

For the last four years, I have been working with many people throughout the city and region to make the Third Ward and the City of Minneapolis a better place to live, work, and play.

Our successes are many! I want to specifically highlight the following:

- Together we have continued to build our ward as a safe, welcoming place and maintained our commitment to keep public safety as our number one priority for the ward.
- We have added additional housing for our seniors, homeowners, and renters.
- We have faced the challenges of the mortgage foreclosure crisis by aggressively punishing those involved in illegal and fraudulent mortgage activity. We have formed partnerships with Hennepin County, for-profit and non-profit organizations, our state, and federal elected representatives to develop successful assistance programs for those in need.

My commitment to community engagement is as strong today as it was when I hosted our nine neighborhoods at our first Third Ward Summit on March 4, 2006. In 2007, the Summit focused on public safety and improved regulatory services, and the most recent Summit (October 2008) focused on transportation. At the Summits, we have shared our hopes and dreams, developed priorities for the ward, and outlined our vision for the future of the Third Ward and our City. Attendees at our Summits have included all of the department heads in the city of Minneapolis, the city coordinator, the Mayor's office chief policy aide, our Hennepin County Commissioners, our legislators, park board, school board, and library board members. Together, we identified and developed our priorities for 2006 and each of the following years.

Our number one priority has been improved public safety in our neighborhoods including additional officers, increased patrol visibility, and community outreach in both the Second and Fourth Police Precincts of the Third Ward.

Our second priority was increased enforcement by the regulatory services department in order to deal effectively with livability issues, problem tenants, and problem businesses.

I am pleased to say that, even though we still have much work to do, both these priorities have been achieved. In addition, we have increased our joint effectiveness in the city, and each neighborhood has had increased leadership and participation. Together we have made the Third Ward the up-and-coming place!

Another outcome of our first summit was the formation of the Third Ward CARE monthly meetings. Residents, for-profit and non-profit organizations, churches in our ward, the 2nd and 4th police precincts, the University of Minnesota police chief, Hennepin County probation officers, Hennepin County attorney's office, regulatory services, and housing inspections have effectively improved hundreds of problem properties and businesses.

We have closed businesses that have used an unusual amount of city resources, as in One case with Wafanas, which used more than \$500,000 of our city resources in one year. I will continue to focus on expanding economic opportunities through the prudent delivery of regulatory and public safety enforcement.

I have always believed that the Mississippi River, a National Treasure that adjoins our ward, has been too long ignored. Over the last three years, one of my goals was implementation of the Above the Falls Plan for improving the upper Mississippi riverfront in North, Northeast, and Southeast Minneapolis. To achieve our goal, I convened and co-chaired, with Jon Olson, President of the Park Board, a Blue Ribbon Task Force of notable civic, government, and local leaders from our city. The result of the Task Force was the recommendation that a new Minneapolis non-profit corporation responsible for the upper riverfront and riverfront improvements be created. In 2007, the Minnesota Legislature along with, the Minneapolis City Council and Park Board, jointly approved the new Minneapolis Mississippi Riverfront Corporation. As co-chair of this newly formed organization, our vision is to achieve the Above the Falls Plan, and sustain our riverfront for all to enjoy!

Another goal of mine was to forge a new relationship with the SE neighborhoods and the University of Minnesota. In 2007 the Minnesota State Legislature, the University of Minnesota, and the City of Minneapolis approved the Alliance, fostering a historic new relationship. As a member of the Alliance Steering Committee, we passed a zoning moratorium at the City Council, created innovative programs to increase home ownership, recommended changes in the delivery of city services, increased student involvement in the organization, and strengthened our relationship, as well as our communication, with the University of Minnesota and city departments. We are in the process of preparing for our report to the Minnesota Legislature in 2009.

Another accomplishment is the proposed renovations for the deteriorating, historic Florence Court, the courtyard homes, and the expansion of the courtyard. In addition, the development of new apartments will create an improved gateway to the Marcy Holmes neighborhood and the University of Minnesota, with the added benefit of removal of a polluted gas station site. It is an example of what can be achieved through the successful collaboration of the developer, the neighborhood, myself, the planning staff, and the historic preservation and planning committees of the city.

Another example of a successful collaboration was the receipt of a \$432,000 grant from the City of Minneapolis Great Streets Neighborhood Business District Program, which received unanimous support from the City Council. The grant is for the catalytic investment in the new \$70 million 24-hour YWCA and athletic center, retail and office complex on West Broadway in the Third Ward! This is a strategic project for the revitalization of West Broadway on the North side in Minneapolis.

I am looking forward to the next four years with a high level of enthusiasm and commitment to public safety and enforcement activity with our regulatory agencies. I am committed to future opportunities for increased transit options. Such transit options include multi-modal means of transit and celebrate the role of our bikers and pedestrians as integral parts of our overall transit plans. I am committed to energy efficiency and creating sustainable housing that reuses current structures and encourages local businesses to reduce the dependency on existing energy resources while providing living-wage jobs for our community members. Moreover, I am committed to continue to build partnerships that help create a viable city that will be able to move us into the next century. As we have demonstrated, we will face our challenges courageously and will

work with our partners to create new job opportunities, infrastructure, green technology, and other innovative solutions!

I am convinced that there are opportunities that lie within the challenges before us. My experience in the private and public arenas, coupled with my leadership skills, has created the momentum for positive changes that our ward has seen in the past three years. I am committed to continue the important work we have started and to face these challenges together with you.

“For that is the true genius of America -- that America can change. Our union can be Perfected and what we have already achieved gives us hope for what we can and must achieve tomorrow.” President Barack Obama, November 4, 2008.

With great humility, I ask for your support!

Thank you!

Diane Hofstede
Third Ward City Council Member