

## BERGER FOUNTAIN TO FLOW AGAIN: STATE FUNDS \$1.8M

By Jana Metge



(Image: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board)

After years of neighborhood advocacy, Berger Fountain restoration secures \$1.8 million in state funding for repairs, a new plaza and future construction.

The Minnesota State Legislature has awarded \$1.8 million to fund the restoration of the Berger Fountain in Loring Park and the construction of a new plaza, ex-

ceeding the project's 2026 fundraising goal of \$1.5 million by \$300,000.

Neighbors, elected officials and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board staff gathered May 21 to celebrate the award. Speakers included Sen. Scott Dibble, Rep. Katie Jones, former Rep. Frank Hornstein, Park Commissioner Jason Garcia and Minneapolis City Council Member Elizabeth Shaffer, along with her policy aides David Berge and Marty Carlson.

Park Board staff were also recognized, including park planner Emma Pachuta and Berger Fountain project manager Andy Schilling.

The award caps years of citizen-driven advocacy. In 2023, then-Rep. Hornstein submitted a bill to finance the project, and the effort secured \$200,000 through the Legacy Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.

That amount paid landscape architecture firm Damon Farber

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## WAS THE MALL PARK EVER TRULY REVIEWED?

By Steve Kotvis



Once a conceptual vision, The Mall Park redesign is moving closer to reality, raising questions about public input, neighborhood impacts and trust in the planning process. (Image: Steve Kotvis)

As The Mall redesign moves closer to implementation, some residents question whether a conceptual planning process has been treated as approval for major roadway and park changes.

**How a standard planning process may be failing a uniquely complicated place.**

What began in 2018 as a conceptual planning discussion, part

of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's 2020 Southwest Service Area Plan, has evolved into something much larger: a debate over public process, implementation and trust.

The Southwest Service Area Plan was the end result of a long-range conceptual planning process covering 42 parks across Southwest Minneapolis. Ideas for The Mall Park from the Citi-

zens Advisory Committee, comprising residents from all over Southwest Minneapolis, included roadway reductions, expanded green space, potential coordination with nearby Hennepin County property and a “woonerf-style pedestrian treatment at the

**“When conceptual planning begins functioning as implied approval for implementation, do residents really have input?”**

eastern end of The Mall. (Some of these ideas were intended to complement the weekly Farmers Market that has since relocated away from The Mall Park.)

A relatively small number of people, about 60, gave feedback specifically about The Mall proposal during the Southwest Area plan development (partly because it occurred during the Covid pandemic when public meetings were limited). About 10 comments were categorized by the Park Board as opposing the proposal, while 12 supported it.

The much larger share of responses expressed concerns or uncertainty or offered suggestions. And these comments came from participants living throughout the Southwest Service Area, not necessarily from the residents living closest to the project and most directly affected by its operational impacts.

That process served an important purpose. But many nearby residents increasingly believe a conceptual planning process is now being treated as though it already constituted approval for implementation.

**Conceptual planning and implementation review serve fundamentally different purposes.**

One asks: What could this place someday become?

The other asks: What exactly are we building, how will it function, what are the operational impacts, and does the public support implementation?

That second stage typically occurs through the Neighborhood Park Plan process tied to NPP20 funding and implementation, where project review becomes more detailed and site-specific.

For The Mall, that level of public review has yet to be completed.

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# 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY 1976-2026

## Hill & Lake Press

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**HILL & LAKE PRESS**  
P.O. Box 50052  
Minneapolis, MN 55405  
[www.hillandlakepress.org](http://www.hillandlakepress.org)

#### Staff

Craig Wilson, Editor  
[craig@hillandlakepress.org](mailto:craig@hillandlakepress.org)  
Christopher Bohnet, Production

Courtney Cushing Kiernat,  
Photo Editor  
[courtney@hillandlakepress.org](mailto:courtney@hillandlakepress.org)

Jill Field, Copy Editor

Kathy Low, Copy Editor

Jeanette Colby, Website Editor

Barb Davis, Advertising  
[barb@hillandlakepress.org](mailto:barb@hillandlakepress.org)

Carla Pardue, Outreach  
[carla@hillandlakepress.org](mailto:carla@hillandlakepress.org)

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## letters TO THE editor

*Our goal is to offer readers diverse perspectives on newsworthy events or issues of broad public concern to the Hill & Lake community. Our copy limit is 300 words (750 words for a commentary or as space permits), and we reserve the right to edit for clarity and length. We do not publish submissions from anonymous sources; all contributor identities must be verified.*



(Image: Courtesy of Jim Lenfestey)

### Trickster Tales Return After 40 Years

After nearly 40 years in a drawer, a collection of Coyote trickster tales is finally being published that somehow survived raising four children, deadlines at the Star Tribune and decades of neglect in what I call my Drawer of Forgotten Projects.

“Coyote and the Thunderbird: New Tales for the Book of Coyote,” to be published June 10 by Calumet Editions, began many years ago when I was teaching Native American literature and the literature of comedy.

To this day, I jokingly claim I did not actually write these stories myself. I prefer to believe the coyote characters painted by California Indigenous artist Harry Fonseca leapt down from my office wall after hours and dictated them directly into my Macintosh computer.

The stories follow trickster Coyote after he steals a mythic red 1956 Thunderbird and hurtles across North and South America stirring up laughter, trouble and occasional wisdom.

Along the way are coyote pups in the Sierra Nevada, Trout Mother on the Continental Divide, rock bands, baseball games, presidential campaigns, Wall Street schemes and Buffalo

Woman Cafe.

Last fall, encouraged by Calumet Editions publisher Ian Graham Leask, I reopened the manuscript files for the first time in decades and was astonished by how strange, funny and unruly the stories remained.

I’ll be reading from the book Wednesday, June 10, from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Minnesota Museum of American Art in St. Paul, where Fonseca’s coyote artwork “Shuffle off to Buffalo” is currently on display, and again Friday, June 12, from 6 to 9 p.m. at Lowry Hill Gallery in Minneapolis next door to Sebastian Joe’s, where Chocolate Coyote ice cream will be available.

After all these years, it seems only fair to let Coyote loose again.

Jim Lenfestey  
Lowry Hill

### Hennepin’s Bike Lane Problems Should Not Be Repeated

I found the piece in the May issue on the Lyndale redesign project, “Will Lyndale Become the Next Hennepin?” both informative and thought-provoking.

As a resident who uses many modes of transportation, including walking, busing, biking and driving, I find Hennepin Avenue frustrating in nearly every mode.

My greatest concern is the bike lane design. While I appreciate the added distance from vehicle traffic, I am now in a constant state of hypervigilance at intersections during my commute to the Mill District.

In just two days of spring commuting, I experienced several near misses with drivers turning through intersections who seemed completely unaware of my presence.

The challenges do not stop with cars. Cyclists are constantly navigating pedestrians who often do not realize they are standing in a bike lane.

The current layout does little to intuitively distinguish pedestrian walkways from bike lanes, and the interaction between bus stops and bike lanes creates additional danger for both pedestrians and cyclists.

In one day alone, I narrowly avoided two collisions with bus riders stepping directly into the bike lane after exiting buses. One involved a blind woman whose cane provided no detectable cue before she entered the lane.

Minneapolis needs to more thoroughly evaluate how we design roads for true multimodal transportation.

I commend the decision to delay the Lyndale project to allow for additional stakeholder input and review.

We cannot afford to repeat the mistakes made on Hennepin Avenue.

Madeline Turbes  
The Wedge

### I Like the New Hennepin Avenue

I like the remake of Hennepin Avenue. It is much safer no matter which mode of transportation I use.

I live in Lowry Hill and work in Lowry Hill East and am fortunate to walk, bike, bus or drive to just about everything I need and want to do.

I especially like the mid-block crosswalks, one my family has nicknamed the Rinata crosswalk.

I don’t like that businesses suffered during the remake of Hennepin Avenue, nor that some have closed or continue to struggle.

I don’t think the design is the issue with Hennepin; rather it’s the jerks sharing our roadways in cars, on bikes and on foot. I’m not sure what to do about them besides wish they’d go away.

Until that happens, I’ll be patient when driving and look both ways when walking or biking, as well as continue to support local businesses and embrace investments in our community.

Sonja Elias  
Lowry Hill

1976

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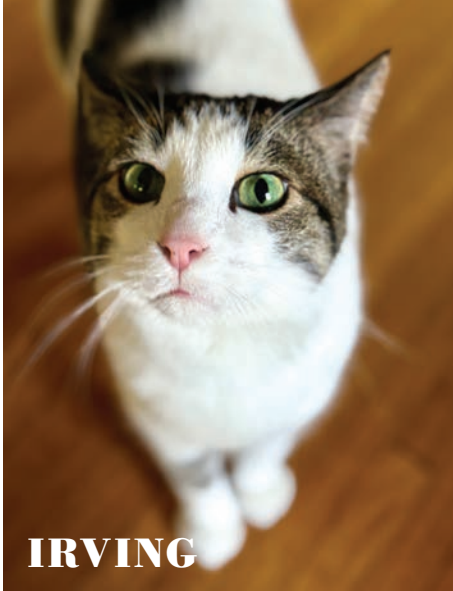
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## A LITTLE DOLLOP OF CROW. A CROW WING.

By Susan Lenfestey

*Just when you think you've figured out who makes the decisions, another committee appears. Some facts corrected. Some questions answered. Some skepticism preserved for future use.*

In the May issue of the Hill & Lake Press I wrote that the non-compromise Lyndale plan would take down 52 mature trees. I also wrote that the non-compromise plan would have passengers exiting a parked car into an active bike lane. Both statements were questioned by a reader.

I take my opinions lightly but not my facts. I checked with the Hennepin County media department and was told the number of trees to come down was between 50 and 60.

Since then, Commissioner Marion Greene has pointed out

to me that the compromise plan takes down 45 trees, so there is not much difference in total number of trees to be cleared in either plan. She added that not all the trees are mature, and that the county is already planting replacements.

The county media department also told me that they have "removed the conflict between people exiting vehicles in the parking lane and people biking in the only area where that had been an issue." Kudos to the county for their attention to this matter. And for their corrections to the plan.

Finally, I implied that the city has the final say on the Lyndale Avenue plan. The situation appears to be more complicated.

According to Hennepin County, the municipal consent process has historically been collaborative. The City Council votes on

whether to approve a county road project within city limits, and the mayor may sign or veto that decision.

State law provides a mechanism for resolving disputes when

**"A compromise may be dead, but confusion remains very much alive."**

a city and county cannot agree on a county state-aid highway project. Under Minnesota Statutes § 162.02, Subdivision 8a, a county board may request that the Commissioner of Transportation appoint a dispute resolution board

consisting of a county commissioner, county engineer, city council member or mayor, city engineer and a representative of the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

The board reviews the proposed project and makes a recommendation to the Commissioner of Transportation, who has the authority to approve a project following the board's recommendation. Whether that process would ultimately be used for Lyndale Avenue remains unknown

*Susan Lenfestey writes for the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in Lowry Hill..*

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**BERGER FOUNTAIN TO FLOW AGAIN** Front page

to build out the designs and will also cover cleaning out the underground vault, removing old plumbing and wiring and purchasing benches for the new plaza.

From 2022 through 2025, the project secured an additional \$1.3 million. Combined with Park Board funds, that money paid Damon Farber — selected through a competitive process — to complete a feasibility study, lead a community engagement and visioning process, and develop a concept plan which the community approved at the 2024 National Night Out event hosted by the Woman's Club.

"This public space will center on peace, welcoming and a place

for community to meet each other," Dibble said at the celebration. "Places like this are healing and needed in community."

**Next Steps**

Work on the underground vault will begin soon.

The Park Board will contract with the state to draw down the funds, set a timeline, build out construction documents and bid out the fountain and plaza work.

Details will be posted as they are defined, but contracting is the first step — and it will set the timeline.

The Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC) and Friends of

Loring Park have a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the Park Board. From that, the groups will develop a fundraising agreement that will include the use of the \$1.8 million in state funding.

The award is the result of a citizen-driven legislative approach by the Berger Fountain Task Force, CLPC and Friends of Loring Park, working with Sen. Dibble and Rep. Jones.

This demonstrates the power of people's voices.

**With Thanks for Help With the Celebration**

Thanks to musician Mark Stillman, to Fawkes Alley Coffee for

refreshments and to consultant Jonathan Swoyer, who completed the project description for the Capital Committee. Thanks also to all the speakers and to emcee Kevin Winge, Aquatennial Board chair.

*Jana Metge is executive director of the Citizens for a Loring Park Community, celebrating 56 years of placemaking. More at LoringPark.org.*

**WAS THE MALL PARK EVER TRULY REVIEWED?** Front page

That distinction matters because the concept is no longer theoretical. A Metropolitan Council sewer reconstruction project planned for 2026 or 2027 is viewed by supporters of the redesign as an opportunity to accelerate a partially vetted \$2 million park project that includes roadway closures and circulation changes capable of altering how the area functions day to day.

Governments often coordinate infrastructure and redevelopment projects to avoid rebuilding the same space twice. But the resulting broad conceptual vision suddenly began accelerating toward physical implementation without a fuller project-specific review taking into account informed neighborhood concerns about real operational consequences.

Furthermore, unlike most neighborhood park planning, the proposal for The Mall reaches directly into questions of traffic circulation, emergency access, parking, loading and neighborhood connectivity.

The Mall functions simultaneously as public space, roadway, neighborhood connector and access corridor within a constrained lake-area street network shaped by lakes, congestion and limited east-west movement options.

A process designed for typical neighborhood park improvements may be inadequate when applied to a place that functions simulta-

neously as parkland and transportation corridor.

Even the Park Board itself has acknowledged the distinction between conceptual planning and implementation review. In April 2025, former Commissioner Billy Menz introduced a resolution calling for roadways disturbed during the sewer project to be restored to existing conditions while directing the Park Board to "re-engage the neighborhood" before future redevelopment under the 20-Year Neighborhood Parks Program. That language implicitly recognized that the earlier Southwest Service Area planning process is not the same as implementation review.

Yet many residents no longer believe that distinction is recognized. Increasingly, project supporters speak as though the core question has already been settled because years of conceptual planning discussions previously occurred.

Once the proposed redesign began taking clearer shape, the neighborhood response became far more concentrated and organized. Following presentations of the proposal by Park Board planners, the East Isles Neighborhood Association circulated a petition opposing the project design and asking that neighborhood input be meaningfully incorporated into the implementation-level review process. The petition gath-

ered nearly 900 signatures.

Supporters of the design that would add roughly 0.2 acres of parkland by closing sections of The Mall roadway justify the redesign as a forward-looking project that would expand parkland and create a more pedestrian-oriented public space. At-large Park Board Commissioners Tom Olsen, Meg Forney, Amber Frederick and District 4 Commissioner Jason Garcia support this redesign.

Many residents also ask: At what operational cost? Not simply the roughly \$2 million associated with the redesign itself, but the broader day-to-day impacts imposed on how the neighborhood functions for the people who actually live around it and move through it.

A traffic and parking study has been conducted, and a fire department access review is reportedly underway. But a review of the traffic analysis suggests it remains limited in scope, focusing primarily on whether nearby street infrastructure can absorb redirected traffic volumes. The study area did not extend north beyond 28th Street or south toward Lagoon Avenue, leaving broader neighborhood circulation impacts largely unexamined.

While Park Board planners report that neighborhood review is still to come, residents also understand they will likely be

presented with a design framework that already includes roadway closures. If future public feedback is limited primarily to benches, plantings, lighting or other design refinements, residents may reasonably ask whether they are being invited to shape the project or merely rearrange details within an outcome already decided.

Public trust depends on communities believing that implementation decisions receive meaningful project-level scrutiny before major changes move forward. When conceptual planning begins functioning as implied approval for implementation, do residents really have input?

Cities evolve. Infrastructure must be repaired. Parks should improve over time.

*Steve Kotvis writes for the Hill & Lake Press. He lives in Bryn Mawr.*



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# MINNEAPOLIS'S ECONOMY IS STRUGGLING. LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS FOCUSED ELSEWHERE.

By Craig Wilson



Former retail location of Lowry Hill Meats. (Image: Sam Maguire)

A Lowry Hill commercial property co-owner and long-time Minneapolis resident says city leaders and county commissioners need to focus on Minneapolis's economic revival.

Ask David Wilson what has gone wrong with Minneapolis's economy, and he does not start with interest rates or office vacancy. He starts with City Hall.

"We have some elected officials running the city who think it's a priority to address foreign policy and niche social issues instead of focusing on the most urgent issue impacting residents in Minneapolis — our struggling local economy," Wilson said.

Wilson, who is a gay man, cites the City Council debating sex club licensing while the commercial property tax base collapses, and Hennepin County commissioners who have not brought their downtown workforce back to the office as downtown commercial property values plummet due to, among other challenges, remote working. Both, in his view, reflect a failure to understand the dire condition of the city's commercial real estate market, and more broadly a lack of focus on promoting job growth and business creation.

Wilson knows the cost of that lack of focus up close. He is a

co-owner of the Burch Building on the corner of Hennepin Avenue South and West Franklin Avenue, a property that was fully leased prior to the pandemic, but now has sat vacant for 3 1/2 years and is costing the ownership group roughly \$450,000 a year to hold. The building's retail and office suites are in move-in condition in what should be a prime location between downtown and Uptown.

The owners have had a team of brokers working to lease the space, offering rents at a fraction of what they were prior to 2020, but interest has been primarily from vape shops and cannabis dispensaries, which they don't think enhance the building or neighborhood. So still today, no tenants.

"The demand for retail and office space has plummeted across the city," Wilson said. "Restaurants are closing, small business owners are struggling and big companies aren't growing their employee base in the city," Wilson said.

The building is worth only a third of its January 2020 value, and the owners cannot find a buyer even at that price. Ownership successfully petitioned Hennepin County to reduce the building's valuation and taxes paid on the property, a process that is happening across the city, especially among the highest-value commer-

cial properties. The sharpest edge for Minneapolis residents is the change in the local property tax base. As commercial valuations collapse, the tax burden will migrate onto homeowners. Hundreds of millions of dollars of valuation have been removed from the tax rolls in the last couple of years, and

Infrastructure projects that take too long to plan and execute, and that hollow out commercial districts by the time they are completed. Operation Metro Surge and the federal immigration enforcement that came with it.

The Trump administration publicly vilifying Minneapolis and Minnesota, undermining the region's reputation and ability to attract investment capital. And the worst self-inflicted wound, Wilson argues, is a City Council that isn't focused on the city's economic recovery and cannot work well with itself or with the mayor.

The symbolic moment, for Wilson, came with the council's recent debate about licensing sex clubs. "When moderates and conservatives across the metro who might dine, spend their money in the city, who might recreate in the city, who might invest in the city, read the headlines that this is what the City Council's paying attention to, it just adds another check mark for a reason why they're not bringing their money, they're not bringing themselves, to our city."

## The County That Hasn't Come Back

The part of Wilson's critique that is underreported is aimed at Hennepin County.

Downtown Minneapolis office vacancy has climbed to over 30%, a record high, double the 15% that was normal in a healthy central business district before the pandemic.

According to Wilson, the second largest downtown employer, Hennepin County, has not brought its office workforce back in any meaningful way. The county states that its remote work policies help with service delivery and employee retention, and the county doesn't have an obligation to help fill downtown office vacancies.

Yet a growing body of evidence suggests that long term, remote work doesn't necessarily improve employee performance or retention: Hennepin County headquartered companies Best Buy and General Mills recently announced bringing hybrid workers back to the office

**"We have some elected officials running the city who think it's a priority to address foreign policy and niche social issues instead of focusing on the most urgent issue impacting residents in Minneapolis — our struggling local economy."**

the tax burden once paid by these commercial properties is being shifted to residential properties.

## The Fault Lines

Ask Wilson what is actually wrong, and he recites a long list. The pandemic and the shift to virtual work hit every major American city, he said, and Minneapolis is not unique there.

What is specific to Minneapolis is the stack of additional shocks on top. The murder of George Floyd and the unrest that followed. The contentious and ongoing debate at City Hall about how best to ensure public safety.

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Former dining rooms of The Burch restaurant. (Image: Sam Maguire)

four days a week.

And the county's remote work policies are contributing to the conditions causing downtown commercial real estate values to fall, slashing property taxes paid by these properties and reducing demand for the hundreds of small businesses downtown that rely on office workers.

"It really concerns me that Hennepin County hasn't brought their downtown office workers back," Wilson said. "There are thousands

## "What we need is an economic 'Marshall Plan' for Minneapolis."

of Hennepin County employees whose salaries are paid in large part through Minneapolis property taxes, and those people are not working downtown and they're not supporting all the small businesses downtown that rely on office workers. The county's remote workforce policies aren't aligned with its purported economic development goals to creating vibrant, people centered places and develop, attract, retain and grow businesses."

Wilson said he reached out in January to Commissioner Marion Greene, who represents Lowry Hill and downtown on the Hennepin County Board, to request a con-

versation about the return-to-office issue. According to him, Greene acknowledged the concern and indicated she would be open to talking, but Wilson is still waiting for a meeting.

In May, the Hill & Lake Press reached out to Greene's office for comment on a similar assertion from developer Stu Ackerberg. According to County Commissioner Marion Greene last month, "approximately 4,472 employees are assigned to downtown county facilities. Of those, about 2,241 work in a hybrid model, 1,411 are fully in person and roughly 810 are fully remote. The vacancy rate in the county's downtown office buildings is about 14%."

Wilson's broader concern about the county is about its focus. Hennepin County is the largest funder of local government services in the region, with responsibility for health, libraries and a significant share of the safety net.

"The county board is flying under the radar for most Minneapolis residents," Wilson said. "It holds significant political power and a very large budget, yet we need greater engagement from county commissioners to support Minneapolis's economic recovery. Minneapolis is by far the largest municipality in the county in both population and economic output — when the city thrives, the entire county benefits."

### An Economic "Marshall Plan" for the City

But the county can't fix the city's economic problems on its

own. "What we need is an economic "Marshall Plan" for Minneapolis," said Wilson, when asked what the one thing he would like the city to do.

"The City Council and mayor need to stack hands on an economic revitalization plan they can use as a guiding light for what to prioritize, where to spend money, where to provide leadership and support for our community."

Wilson said his view on whether the current City Council can work on such an ambitious plan is mixed. "I like to think that all our City Council members have the best interests of the city front of mind, but the polarization and infighting is hurting our city, and the lack of consensus between the Council and mayor on what they need to work on together puts the city's economic recovery at risk."

### A Detroit Warning

Wilson grew up in the Detroit suburbs and watched how the economic decline of Detroit impacted the entire southeast Michigan region. The parallel he sees to Minneapolis is not racial, he said, and not necessarily economic. It is governmental.

"The one similarity that comes to mind between Detroit back in the 1970s and 80s and Minneapo-

## "Bottom line, we need our city leadership, no matter their politics, to all agree that we need prosperity."

lis today is dysfunctional municipal government," Wilson said.

Historically a thriving city, Detroit had political leaders who thought its economic vitality would continue, no matter the challenges caused by deindustrialization, suburbanization and misguided city leadership.

So when you look at the city's fiscal decisions during this time, its policy and management decisions, instead of countering the threats

to Detroit's economy, city leaders made conditions worse." Fifty years later, Detroit's residents are still enduring the results of economic decline.

When asked for solutions, Wilson said, he would make economic development the guidestar for the city — focusing on measurable job growth, business creation and prosperity for people who live and work in Minneapolis.

The mayor, City Council and staff would prioritize spending time and taxpayer money on initiatives that make the best economic impact on the city. Staff would gather and publish data on what kinds of jobs and businesses are being created in the city, what the impediments to economic growth are and what policies need to be created or changed to encourage economic growth. And he thinks the city can be pro-business without compromising on its residents' core values.

"Minneapolis can be a city that is pro-business and at the same time committed to fair and equitable economic development. And with a growing economy and the extra revenue that flows from prosperity, Minneapolis will have more funds to invest in our residents' most urgent issues like affordable housing, public safety, addiction and mental health. Minneapolis could — and should — become a national example of what a pro-business, ethical-business city looks like."

"Bottom line, we need our city leadership, no matter their politics, to all agree that we need prosperity," Wilson said.

Back inside the empty restaurant space on Franklin Avenue, that prosperity is still somewhere over the horizon.

Wilson and his partners have talked about handing the building back to the bank and decided, at least for now, not to. "We don't want to just dump this building and give up on our city" he said.

*Craig Wilson is the editor of the Hill & Lake Press. He lives in Lowry Hill.*



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# LYNDALE SHOULD WORK FOR EVERYONE, NOT A VOCAL FEW

By Ryan Knox



Proposed changes to 2400 block of Lyndale Avenue South, at left, and 2700 block of Lyndale Avenue South, at right. (Images: City of Minneapolis).

*A compromise forged through 2½ years of public input now faces accusations that it was cast aside behind closed doors.*

This year marks Knox Jewelers' 42nd year in LynLake. The future of Lyndale Avenue is of the utmost importance to my family's business, our employees and our clients.

Almost 2 1/2 years ago, dozens of concerned business owners and citizens met to talk with Hennepin County Commissioner Marion Greene about the future of Lyndale. And here we are again.

According to Hennepin County's pre-project usage data, every day on Lyndale there are roughly 30,000 people traveling by car, 2,000 traveling by bus and between 500 and 2,000 people walking. At peak, the data show about 200 bicyclists use the corridor — but on most days that number is in the dozens, and in winter, fewer than 10.

That's fewer than 10 bicycle users a day.

So after 2 1/2 years of public input, we are

**“We find this backdoor redesign to be poor governance.”**

looking at a road design with dedicated bike lanes for a handful of cyclists on a road that serves 30,000 drivers a day. Does that make sense?

Of course not. But here we are.

For this entire project, a small but very loud voice has pushed for dedicated bike lanes on Lyndale. Given that the roadway has a finite amount of space, adding those lanes requires giving something up — narrower travel lanes, the removal of parking, or both.

Those are not painless tradeoffs. Our businesses depend on clients who travel from across the metro area, almost always by car. Customers are happier — and have better experiences — when they don't have to deal with traffic, congestion and limited parking.

**How did we get to dedicated bike lanes in the first place? A bit of history.**

Late last year, a shared use path version of the Lyndale plan was handed to a handful of people at the city. That design was the culmination of years of public feedback, including tens of thousands of comments. Instead of a dedicated bike lane, it would have mixed pedestrians and cyclists on a single path. Was it perfect? No. But many of us considered it a reasonable compromise.

The shared use path design, however, never went to the Climate and Infrastructure Committee for review. A select few decision-makers shot it down and told county staff to put a dedicated bike lane into a new plan.

In a democratically governed city, decisions required to be made by the “council” should be made by a Council — not by a select few. The shared use path design should have gone to committee, as is proper protocol. It shouldn't have been kicked back behind closed doors. We find this backdoor redesign to be poor governance.

**“In a democratically governed city, decisions required to be made by the ‘council’ should be made by a council — not by a select few.”**

And it may get worse. Supporters of what they call “Livable Lyndale” — which in practice means no parking and far fewer cars — are now pushing the county and the City Council to install a corridor-long dedicated bus lane in place of all the parking on northbound Lyndale.

**A dedicated bus lane does not make sense, either.**

Total Metro Transit ridership dropped 3% in 2025 from 2024, the Star Tribune reported, and the system has never come close to recovering from the pandemic — despite millions of dollars in upgrades to bus rapid transit lines and minimal route reductions. Route 4, the bus that serves Lyndale, is worse: according to Metropolitan Council data, Route 4 annual passenger trips remain about 40% below pre-pandemic levels.

Ridership is down 40% — and supporters are actively asking to remove small-business parking for a dedicated bus lane. Yet again, this is absurd.

Dedicated bus lanes haven't resulted in better ridership numbers. They are merely making the bus trip faster and more convenient while shifting additional hours of congestion onto vehicle traffic — the same vehicle traffic Lyndale businesses depend on.

Lyndale doesn't need dedicated bike lanes or dedicated bus lanes. It needs to function

as a thoroughfare for all users. Catering to a small subset of the population at the expense of everyone else will push drivers away. They will decide the hassle of coming here isn't worth it.

Once they stop coming, business will start to dry up. Owners will struggle to pay their bills. Storefronts will go vacant. And when storefronts go vacant, you get graffiti, drug use and crime.

Lyndale also doesn't need any more shady backdoor dealings on this project. The county has gathered stakeholder input for more than 2 ½ years. It has a shared use path design that was a compromise for all — and it needs to stick to that design when it meets with the City Council.

If and when the council votes on a plan that wasn't considerate of all public input, we will ask the mayor to veto it until we have one that is.

We hope you will stand with us when the time comes.

*Ryan Knox is co-owner of Knox Jewelers at 2921 Lyndale Ave. S., where his family has done business in LynLake for 42 years. Figures cited above are drawn from Hennepin County's pre-project usage analysis, Metropolitan Council ridership data and Minnesota Star Tribune reporting.*



# LYNDALE REDUX: HENNEPIN DÉJÀ VU?

By Susan Lenfestey

*Neighbors thought the debate was settled. Then a new Lyndale Avenue plan appeared, reopening questions about safety, access, trees and the future of one of Minneapolis's most beloved commercial corridors.*

Over 100 people gathered at the VFW on Lyndale Avenue on May 18 to discuss recent changes made to the plan for the reconstruction of Lyndale Avenue. Lyndale is a county road, and the process calls for collaboration between the city and county.

Hennepin County Commissioner Marion Greene was there to listen to concerns and answer questions. The plan is scheduled to go before the City Council for approval early this summer.

The meeting was called by members of Vibrant Lyndale, a coalition of business owners and nearby residents, after they learned that the compromise plan that had been worked out over two years of community input had been scrapped in favor of a new plan backed by the bike lane coalition and by Commissioner Greene.

The compromise plan calls for a shared bike and pedestrian pathway, requiring less pavement, thus retaining a center turn lane and wider parking lanes for cars, things business owners believe are necessary to attract customers.

The new plan reverts to an older version which includes a dedicated bike lane and a separate path for pedestrians, requiring a wider swath of pavement in front of storefronts, the loss of a center turn lane at some intersections and a reduction in the size of the parking lanes.

No one disputed the benefits of biking, or the need to upgrade utilities and manage runoff. But what happens on the surface of Lyndale is where people disagree. Business owners want to make it easier for customers from the entire metro area to access their establishments, which they believe means keeping convenient parking on the street. Bus and bike lane proponents believe that we need to reduce our reliance on cars and need better bus service and safe bike lanes.

**“My customers will now have to climb over three snowbanks before getting to my door!”**

— Saed Wadi,  
World Street Kitchen

The compromise plan, which was believed to be the final plan, was meant to balance the needs of both. The new final plan reverted to favoring the wishes of the bike lane proponents.

Given the volatility of emotions on the issue, a contentious donnybrook might have ensued, but it didn't. Those who showed up overwhelmingly opposed the new plan, and a colorful group of business owners, longtime residents and Uptown legends took to the mic to pepper the commissioner with questions and concerns.

## Accessibility

Saed Wadi, owner of World Street Kitchen on Lyndale, led off the evening showing slides of the two plans, noting how the changes would narrow the roadway and the parking lanes, and require plowing of three different lanes. “My customers will now have to climb over three snowbanks before getting to my door!”

**“I stand by this plan. It's the safest plan.”**

— Marion Greene,  
Hennepin County Commissioner

## Necessity

Another speaker questioned the need for a dedicated bus lane.

“There is 40% less ridership and they're asking to remove small businesses' parking for a dedicated bus lane. The improvements to our transit system via dedicated bus lanes are not improving ridership numbers. Customers will decide that the hassle to travel in this area is not worth it.”

## Trees

The new final plan would remove between 50 and 60 trees; the compromise plan would remove 45 trees.

**“We are paving the right-of-way from border to border, like cramming six pounds of asphalt into a three-pound bag.”**

— Tim Keene

Tim Keene, a lifelong resident of South Minneapolis, said, “I'm here to speak on behalf of the voiceless. And the voiceless that have not had an opportunity to participate are the trees.”

There's going to be an additional net loss of trees on the revised plan compared to the original. We are paving the right-of-way from border to border, like cramming six pounds of asphalt into a three-pound bag. We're suffering from a lack of imagination when it comes to what our urban canopy could and should be.”

Commissioner Greene responded that new trees are already being planted “in order to get out ahead of that.”

## Comparison to Hennepin

Several speakers asked if there had been any data gathered on the effects of the Hennepin makeover on Hennepin businesses. Others asked if the county would provide financial aid for businesses during the construction period.

**“I've been trying to sell Muddy Waters for four years now. People keep trying to buy it, and then they bail out when they find out what the taxes are.”**

— Jon English,  
Lyndale property owner

Commissioner Greene replied that data had not been gathered, and that funding wasn't a possibility. She added that there are plans to have bigger and better signage than there were on Hennepin about

businesses being open. “We need money, not signs,” grumbled someone in the audience.

## Redundancy

Neighborhood residents and business owners who spoke against the new plan prefaced their comments with statements of support for biking — when possible. But they questioned why there needs to be another bike lane, given that Bryant Avenue, a desig-

**“The people that still come by bikes, the crime's so bad, the bikes are all stolen. They come out and there's tires laying around, bikes chopped up.”**

— Randy,  
co-owner, CC Club

nated bike highway, runs parallel to Lyndale just a few blocks east.

The only response came from a member of the audience who said that the connec-

Continued on page 10

## MY EXPERIENCE DURING HENNEPIN CONSTRUCTION

By Nadine Shaver

My husband and I have operated Namaste Café on Hennepin Avenue for 15 years. I wanted to share what the last two years of construction have meant for our business.

The second year of construction was worse than the first. In 2025, our sales were 15% lower than in 2020, which had been our worst year during the pandemic.

Compared with non-construction years, our takeout and delivery business declined by 50%. Liquor sales also dropped by 50%, while licensing fees remained the same. We received complaints from customers and delivery drivers about access during construction, and some left negative online reviews.

We surveyed our customers during construction and found we had about 80% fewer visitors from the suburbs and other neighborhoods than in a typical year. Many people simply avoided Uptown because they did not want to deal with traffic delays and construction.

From my perspective, it would be better to complete major street reconstruction in one year rather than spreading it over multiple years. Even if construction is happening several blocks away, customers often avoid the entire corridor.

A restaurant cannot survive on neighborhood customers alone. We need people who drive in from other parts of the city and region.

I also think policymakers should consider relief for businesses affected by long-term construction. Property taxes can increase because of street improvements even while businesses are losing revenue.

We are happy to see people using the E Line and hope to see more activity in the bike lanes. My hope is that the city continues promoting Uptown and helping people feel welcome to visit during and after construction.

## LYNDALE REDUX Page 9

tion to the Bryant bike highway at Franklin is dangerous. “So let’s fix that!” replied someone else.

## The Process

Concerns about details of the new final plan were matched by questions about the process. How did a compromise plan that was arrived at after more than two years of community engagement and thought to be headed to the city for approval get shelved in favor of a plan promoted by the bus and bike lane advocates?

Commissioner Greene replied that it all came down to safety, and what she heard from national experts. Asked if she supported this plan, she answered that she did.

In a follow-up statement

to the Hill & Lake Press, she wrote, “I stand by this plan. It’s the safest plan. The City of

**“H & B Gallery has been on Hennepin Avenue for over 45 years. But we became complacent. We thought the city was going to watch out for businesses. They haven’t.”**

— Jonathan Campbell,  
H & B Gallery

Minneapolis expressed operational safety concerns with previous iterations and communicated that in order to secure city support, the county would need to address those concerns. Together the county and city made modifications to further address safety.”

If the council approves the plan, Vibrant Lyndale and other opponents will ask the mayor to veto it. If he does, the county will appoint a mediation board to resolve the dispute. If he does not, the plan will move forward, with construction slated to start in 2028.

Susan Lenfestey writes for the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in Lowry Hill.



## A NEW YOGA STUDIO TAKES ROOT IN KENWOOD

By Paula Chesley



Annie Hanson, owner of the Kenwood Yoga Studio, and studio space located below Birchbark Books. (Images: Paula Chesley)

*Kenwood Yoga Studio brings a mix of movement, mindfulness and community to a renovated basement space beneath Birchbark Books.*

Annie Hanson had owned Nordeast Yoga for 13 years when she saw the writing on the wall. Ownership of her building had turned over five times since the pandemic, and each time the rent was raised. Due to a city variance, she couldn’t have any signage for the studio. A change was needed, but what would that look like?

One day, she was at Cedar Lake East Beach with her friend Pallas Erdrich and talked about her studio issues. “I have a crazy idea,” Pallas said. “We have a bunch of storage space in the basement of Birchbark Books that isn’t used to capacity. What if you had a yoga studio there?”

With her boyfriend, Justin, who is “very creative,” Annie went to visit the space. “I thought, ‘This was pretty rough; I don’t know if we can do it.’ But Justin said, ‘I think it’s possible

— let’s sit on it for a bit.’ And he was the one who helped me transform the space into the studio you see today.”

Kenwood Yoga Studio opened in March, and many students from Nordeast Yoga followed Annie to the new location. For Annie, who lives in Bryn Mawr, Kenwood wasn’t a far jump. “The community has been very welcoming and supportive,” she said. “They’re thrilled to have a business that provides an amenity they use.”

Walking into the studio, a first sight is the many plants, followed by the charm of an older building with exposed brick and wooden beams. A faint smell of incense or palo santo creates a mood without being overbearing (notes this allergy-afflicted writer). The bright colors evoke a 1970s vibe, a similar aesthetic sought on the studio’s social media.

“I wanted to get back to basics,” Annie said. “There’s no app, you don’t sign up online, you just show up. If there’s a class on the schedule, someone

will be here.”

As students trickled in for a class, the feeling of community quickly became apparent. There was background chatter about weekend plans, families and gardens in both the lobby and in the studio while students stretched and prepared for class.

**“I wanted to get back to basics. There’s no app, you don’t sign up online, you just show up.”**

The Saturday morning 10 a.m. class is one of the more energetic practices on the schedule, but even that, Annie says, is built with all bodies and all levels in mind. Multiple invitations throughout class reminded yogis to listen to their own bodies and

that they are the experts in what they’re feeling.

Annie discussed her yoga mentors and philosophy with the clear passion of an experienced practitioner. Her first passion in yoga is Ashtanga, a rigorous, energetic, set sequence of poses. “But Ashtanga can be a polarizing practice, and I love everything.” It was important to her for Kenwood Yoga to have all types of practice, from yoga nidra, a practice of stillness and meditative rest, to energetic vinyasa, with gentler practices of yin, restorative and slower movement such as hatha.



### KENWOOD YOGA STUDIO

Annie Hanson teaches 15 classes per week. Other instructors are: Kimberly Ashlynn, Nell Benson and Lauren Kvasnicka.

Class schedules and other information are at – [kenwoodyogastudio.com](http://kenwoodyogastudio.com)

Location – 2101 Penn Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55405

Questions – [info@kenwoodyogastudio.com](mailto:info@kenwoodyogastudio.com)

# A TINY PARK DUE FOR BIG IMPROVEMENTS

By Quinton Courts



(Image: City of Skate)

(Image: Find a Grave Memorial)

Community input is shaping plans for East Isles' historic pocket park, where restoration of the Thomas Lowry statue will be the first priority in a \$232,000 improvement project.

A tiny Minneapolis park lying within a Hill & Lake neighborhood is soon due for some updates and upgrades. Smith Triangle, its official name, is small and highly urban, located at the northwest corner of 24th Street and Hennepin Avenue in East Isles.

According to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board website, it is classified as a "triangle and other tiny park," and it is designated as a neighborhood park that serves nearby residents. The park is one of 37 designated triangle parks in the Minneapolis park system, and one of two in East Isles.

The Park Board website has links that chronicle the histories of different parks within the system. The site notes that Smith Triangle was "graded and seeded in 1901. Curbs and gutters were not put in until 1909."

The park did not see any major changes until 1967, with the addition of the Thomas Lowry statue. Designed and executed by sculptor Karl Bitter, the statue was originally located in Virginia Triangle and was relocated when the state highway department purchased the park from the park board when the Lowry Tunnel was created.

Michael Jones, staff lead from the Park-Board's planning division, has been executing

the community engagement plan as part of the planning process meeting with the East Isles Neighborhood Association, Temple Israel, neighboring businesses and even a representative of the local skateboarding community.

**“The scope of the project includes specific funding to first prioritize renovations to the existing Thomas Lowry Memorial Sculpture.”**

Per the plan, "The scope of the project includes specific funding to first prioritize renovations to the existing Thomas Lowry Memorial Sculpture. The remainder of the funding is to support additional site improvements throughout the park.

Community engagement efforts within the East Isles neighborhood and with other key

stakeholders will ultimately inform what improvements will be prioritized for this project."

In both the March and May meetings, Jones and the East Isles Neighborhood Association discussed the current condition of the park and priorities for making it more welcoming and active.

Neighbors voiced concerns that the park feels neglected, has poor lighting and occasionally hosts drug activity. Hopes for park upgrades include restoring the historic statue, improving lighting, creating intentional landscaping, and even providing a space for local skateboarders.

The first priority of the limited funding of \$232,000 will be allocated to renovation of the statue. The remainder of the funds will be directed to site improvements based on community feedback. At the May meeting, it was proposed to approach the park project in two phases: restoration of the statue first, and then site upgrades with remaining funds.

Many world-class cities have small pocket parks that serve as an oasis in a concrete jungle, where one can stop for a rest and enjoy some greenery. Some even provide recreational opportunities. These parkettes are also often host to historic statues or monuments. Minneapolis is fortunate to have a park like Smith Triangle, which has the opportunity to have all of the above.

Quinton Courts writes for the Hill & Lake Press. He lives in East Isles.

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**LYNDALE AVENUE IS ABOUT TO CHANGE FOREVER.  
DON'T MAKE LYNDALE ANOTHER HENNEPIN AVENUE!**

On June 11th, the City Council will vote on a redesign plan for Lyndale Avenue that looks strikingly similar to the controversial Hennepin Avenue redesign — including:

- A separated bike path
- Permanent concrete medians down the center of the roadway
- Narrowed driving and parking lanes
- Removal of 52 mature trees
- Major changes to parking, traffic flow, left turns, deliveries, and business access

*Once these concrete medians are installed, they are permanent.*

Residents, customers, employees, and business owners are deeply concerned this redesign will:

- Make local businesses harder to access
- Remove critical parking and loading access
- Create traffic backups and unsafe turning patterns
- Narrow parking lanes so significantly that passengers may be forced to step directly into traffic when exiting vehicles
- Create dangerous winter conditions with snow, ice, narrowed lanes, and limited room for drivers and pedestrians to safely navigate
- Leave little, to no room, for snow storage along the bike lane side of the street, creating serious challenges for pedestrians trying to safely exit vehicles and access local businesses during Minnesota winters
- Remove 52 mature trees that define the character and beauty of Lyndale Avenue
- Permanently change the character and accessibility of Lyndale Avenue

Many community members fear Lyndale Avenue is being pushed toward the same failed model that has sparked major backlash on Hennepin Avenue. *This is not a temporary experiment — it is a permanent reconstruction that will impact Lyndale for decades.*

**THE CITY COUNCIL VOTES JUNE 11TH**  
*If you want your voice heard before this plan is approved, now is the time to act.*



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO SIGN THE PETITION TODAY!**

**Protect the future, safety, and accessibility of Lyndale Avenue before it's too late.**

For more information, go to — [VIBRANTLYNDALE.ORG](http://VIBRANTLYNDALE.ORG)



**Vibrant Lyndale**

# BACKYARD CHICKENS ARE HAVING A MOMENT IN MINNEAPOLIS

By Courtney Cushing Kiernat and Dawn & Tim Prinsen

*Once a novelty, backyard chickens are becoming increasingly common in Minneapolis, where residents are drawn to fresh eggs, sustainability and the simple joy of keeping a flock.*

Mo, Dot, Chewy, Biscuit and Guinness excitedly scamper behind Tim Prinsen as he carries a pail of mealworms and grain into his East Bde Maka Ska backyard.

Tim and Dawn Prinsen's flock of five chickens is as much a part of their family as Chili, the dog who has watched over them since they were day-old chicks.

The Prinsens are not alone in their passion for backyard chickens. As of May 2026,

more than 300 Minneapolis households held permits for chickens, including 15 in Wards 7 and 11.

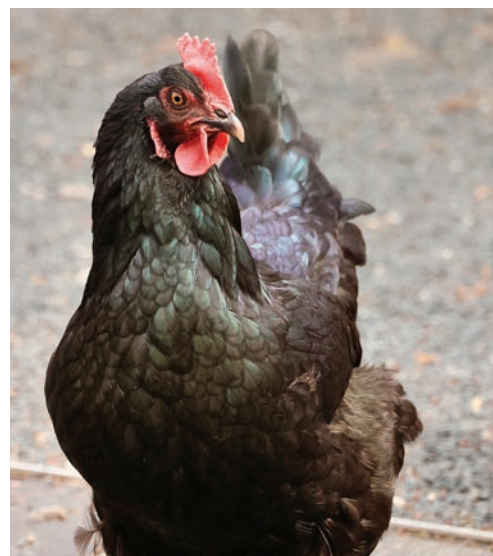
Raising chickens in Minneapolis requires several regulatory steps, including an inspection by Minneapolis Animal Care and Control. In response to growing interest in backyard flocks, the City Council amended its domestic animals ordinance in 2016. One significant change allowed residents to keep six or fewer chickens without obtaining consent from neighbors.

The Prinsens got their first flock in 2015 and were required to secure approval from neighbors, including renters in a 30-unit apartment building. Today, residents may keep

up to six hens as long as they comply with permit requirements. Animal Care and Control notes that permit holders must complete educational requirements and maintain appropriate structures to keep the birds safe.

One important caveat: Roosters require a special permit.

*Courtney Cushing Kiernat photographs and writes for the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in Kenwood.*



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**Ed Bell**  
ebell@cbburnet.com  
612.720.4747



**Barry Berg**  
Barry@berglarsengroup.com  
612.670.3600



**Kate Buckley**  
KGBuckley@cbburnet.com  
612.817.7554



**Leslie Bush**  
lcbush@cbrealty.com  
612.419.1441



**Stephane Cattelin**  
Stephane@CBRealty.com  
612.703.8229



**Amy Cohen**  
abcohen@cbburnet.com  
952.484.7577



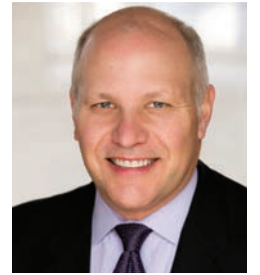
**Barb Davis**  
bjdavis@cbburnet.com  
612.554.0994



**Paige Gibson**  
paige@  
paigegibsonhomes.com  
651.788.0887



**Christine Hazel**  
chazel@cbburnet.com  
612.963.6229



**Rod Helm**  
rhelm@cbburnet.com  
612.720.9792



**Tim Hyde**  
TAHyde@cbburnet.com  
612.859.8842



**Bob Kessler & José Kosar**  
rkessler@cbburnet.com  
612.386.6148  
JKosar@cbburnet.com  
952.237.8201



**Jonna Kosalko**  
jjkosalko@cbburnet.com  
612.695.3136



**Chad Larsen**  
Chad@berglarsengroup.com  
612.968.6030



**Ann Laurent**  
AMLautent@CBBurnet.com  
612.859.8842



**Tom Lickteig**  
tlickteig@cbburnet.com  
612.227.6227



**Betsy Lucas**  
Betsy@CBRealty.com  
612.327.5905



**Rebecca Peterson**  
rrpeterson@cbburnet.com  
612.325.0141



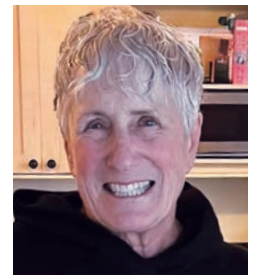
**Sandra Rieger**  
sandra.rieger@cbrealty.com  
612.964.1956



**Judy Shields**  
jshields@cbburnet.com  
952.221.1723



**Shane Spencer**  
shane.spencer@cbrealty.com  
614.256.8500



**Susan Stryker**  
Srstryker  
@cbrealty.com  
612.839.6360



**Isaac Teplinsky**  
isaac.teplinsky  
@cbrealty.com  
612.655.6456



**Ana Vogler**  
ana@cbrealty.com  
651.235.4230



**David K. Wells III**  
David@dkw3.com  
612.845.8186



**Ruth Whitney Bowe**  
ruth.whitneybowe  
@cbrealty.com  
612.644.3033



**Ellyn Wolfenson**  
ejwolfenson  
@cbburnet.com  
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### 1470 W 35th Street Minneapolis 4 BR 4B | 2 CR garage | \$749,900

Step into this timeless 1910 residence, lovingly maintained by the same family for 89 years. Rich with original character, the home showcases preserved oak woodwork and refinished hardwood floors on the main level. The spacious layout features a large living room, formal dining room with a built-in buffet, sunroom, and a cozy library with pocket doors. The eat-in kitchen is enhanced with a butler's pantry adding both charm and convenience. The second level includes a primary bedroom with a full ensuite bath, two more bedrooms and a full hall bathroom. The third floor includes a fourth bedroom, full bath and large family room. This lovely home boasts solid bones and remarkable vintage details. The attached heated 2-car garage connects through a breezeway. Situated on a corner lot just a few blocks from Bde Maka Ska, ideal for buyers seeking charm, space, and the chance to make it their own.



**Kate Wall**  
Klwall@cbburnet.com  
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# CLEANING, GREENING AND ADOPTING A DRAIN

By Henry LaBounta



(Images: Henry LaBouta)

Hundreds of volunteers braved cold weather this spring to remove trash from neighborhood lakes and streets, while local residents continue to lead efforts to keep storm drains and waterways clean year-round.

This year the Earth Day cleanups fell on a cold, windy day, but that didn't deter 234 volunteers from helping clear trash from Lake of the Isles, Bde Maka Ska and our streets. Volunteers from seven Hill & Lake neighborhood associations, together with the Isles Bun & Coffee staff, helped pick up 1,167 gallons of trash and 23 syringes.

Since 2022 there have been 124 cleanup events in the neighborhood involving 1,857 volunteers who have picked up 19,585 gallons of trash, 282 syringes, a gun, shopping carts, bikes and a sunken canoe. Hats off to the volunteers!

### Adopt-a-Drain

We can do a better job of protecting our watershed by keeping debris out of lakes in the first place.

People are surprised to learn that everything that goes into a storm drain ends up in the lakes and rivers. The only thing that should go down the drains is rainwater. Even leaves contribute to the algae problem.

You can help by adopting a drain. It is free, fun and requires minimal effort. Adopt-a-Drain is a national program started as part of the Center for Global Environmental Education at Hamline University.

The program has been implemented in more than 170 jurisdictions across the country and engaged more than 21,000 people, leading to more than 1 million pounds of debris

being kept from our local bodies of water.

Go to [mn.adopt-a-drain.org](http://mn.adopt-a-drain.org) and enter your address to see the map of your street. The yellow drain icons show the drains available to adopt. Feel free to adopt more than one.

I have adopted eight drains and estimate that last year I spent 30 minutes total keeping them clean. You only need to check the top of the drains to make sure they're clear of leaves and debris.

**“People are surprised to learn that everything that goes into a storm drain ends up in the lakes and rivers.”**

We even have a friendly neighborhood competition going on. Currently, East Isles is in the lead with 82% of its 209 drains adopted, the highest in the nation. Lowry Hill has only 48% adopted, but it also has 408 drains, more than any other neighborhood. This is your chance to bring glory to your neighborhood — and protect a lake.

You can also name your drain when you adopt it. We will hold a Drain Name Contest again this year. Here are some of the winners from 2024: Funniest Drain Name — Stormy Drainiels; Best Cultural Ref-

erence — Purple Drain; Green Drain Name — Save the Drain Forest. Get creative and enter the contest at [bit.ly/3Sde1Ou](https://bit.ly/3Sde1Ou) or scan the QRcode above.

This work is made possible with the support of a Hennepin Good Steward grant from Upstream MN. Thanks also to the Green Guardians Ambassadors in all nine neighborhoods, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and the many volunteers who help.

Cleaning up is a great way to meet neighbors and to get outside to make a visible difference.

### Want to get involved?

East Isles Neighborhood Association's Green Team hosts a Lake of the Isles cleanup from 9:30-11:30 a.m. on the second Saturday of the month. Meet at Euclid and Lake of the Isles.

East Bde Maka Ska Neighborhood Association hosts a Bde Maka Ska cleanup from 9-11 a.m. on the

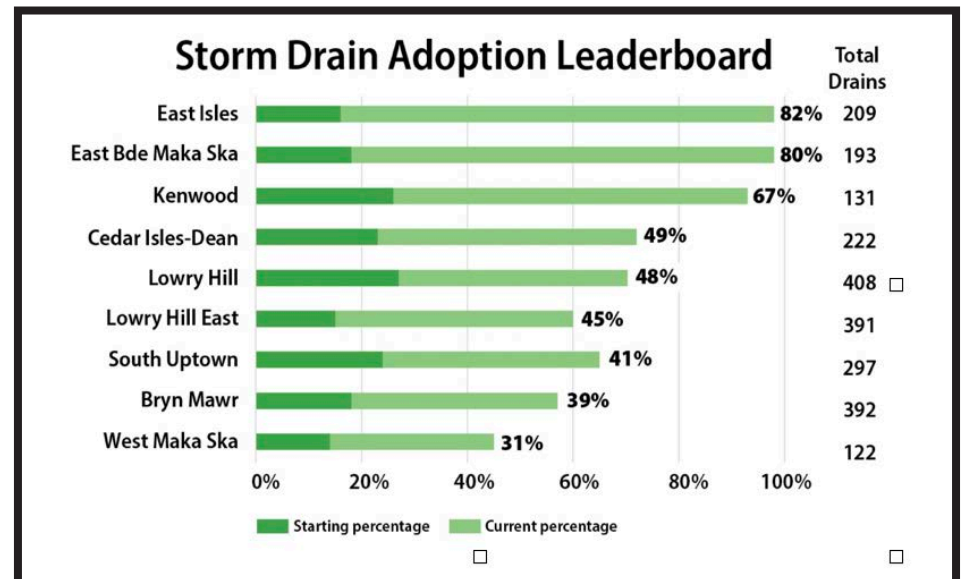
third Saturday of the month. Meet at the Sailing Center, 3010 E. Bde Maka Ska Parkway. Cleanup gear is provided, but boots are helpful in getting close to the shore. There are many more events on the volunteer platform HandsOn Twin Cities. Just search for Green Guardians MN at <https://handsontwincities.galaxydigital.com/need/>.

In related good news, the contract for the Lake of the Isles trash boom at Euclid Avenue has been extended.

This is just one of the many outfalls where the storm water enters the lake. Technicians clean out the boom and shoreline regularly. Thank you, City of Minneapolis and Freshwater.

For more info contact Henry at [greenguardiansmn@gmail.com](mailto:greenguardiansmn@gmail.com).

Henry LaBounta lives in East Isles and is chair of the East Isles Neighborhood Association Green Team.



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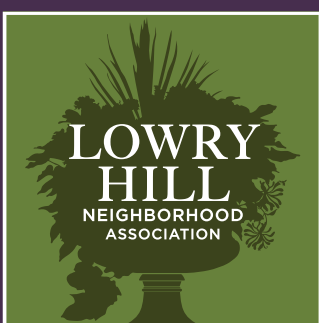
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# Lowry Hill Update

**Super Sale registrations open online late June / early July!**  
 On Saturday, Sept. 19, a wave of 100+ yard sales will sweep the area. Mark your calendars, and sellers, start stockpiling!

**Rent relief and community building efforts remain a priority**—many residents still can't leave their homes due to ICE. Whether you need resources or are looking for ways to help, visit [lowryhillneighborhood.org/ice](http://lowryhillneighborhood.org/ice).

**Did you know storm drain street trash pollutes lakes and rivers?** Debris breaks down in the elements, then drains into our waters. But adopting a drain is free, and takes only a few occasional minutes to maintain: [mn.adopt-a-drain.org](http://mn.adopt-a-drain.org)



**Lowry Hill Board Meetings**

**June 2 • July 7** 1<sup>st</sup> Tues. 6:30 – 8 PM  
 Kenwood Community Center: 2101 W Franklin Ave  
 Join us for neighborhood updates! To join the agenda, please email [lhna@lowryhillneighborhood.org](mailto:lhna@lowryhillneighborhood.org).

**Uptown Farmers Market Opener**

**June 11** 4–8 PM • Thursdays through Sept. 24  
 Lagoon & Girard Ave Plaza (behind the cinema)  
 The location shifted due to construction, but the market setup remains: 25+ vendors, live music, and more!

**Lowry Hill Service Saturdays**

**June 20 • July 18** 3<sup>rd</sup> Sat. 10 – 11:30 AM  
 Meet at Sebastian Joe's: 1007 W Franklin Ave  
 Join us for friendly walks around Lowry Hill! Get outside, meet neighbors, pick up litter, and build community.

**Lowry Hill Ice Cream Social**

**July 19** Sun. 2 – 4 PM  
 Kenwood Community Center: 2101 W Franklin Ave  
 Meet your neighbors and board over free Sebastian Joe's ice cream. All Lowry Hill residents welcome!

**Fishing in the Parks**

**August 22** Sat. 1 – 4 PM  
 SW Cedar Lake: 2630 Cedar Lake Pkwy  
 Free poles, bait, and fishing instruction! All ages and skill levels are welcome, and no fishing license required.

[lowryhillneighborhood.org](http://lowryhillneighborhood.org)  
 for full details, newsletter sign-up and more

# SUMMER MEANS PARTY SEASON

By Molly Mogren Katt



(Image: Courtney Cushing Kiernat)

*From balloons and baked goods to taco bars and beverage delivery, neighborhood businesses can help make summer gatherings easier and more memorable.*

Whether you're hosting a grad party, low-key barbecue or picnic in the park, you can count on help from lots of local businesses to make your event special.

## Uptown Balloon

Uptown Balloon owners Anabel and Edwin Plaza, originally from Mexico and Ecuador (respectively), spent 25 years working in the restaurant business. Anabel always harbored a passion for party planning, creating balloon decor in their basement.

When the space that housed the Corner Balloon at 25th and Hennepin came up for rent in 2022, the Plasas decided to try making their party business a full-time gig.

## “What’s a grad party without balloons?”

Anabel says they started small, focusing just on balloons and a limited assortment of decorations. Today, you'll find tons of latex and mylar

balloons, as well as a small assortment of party plates, birthday candles and more.

It's no shock to anyone that a local balloon business struggled this winter. I sure didn't know a lot of people throwing parties during Operation Metro Surge. (Though it's worth mentioning that when I stopped by in March, I did see a guy buying seven gold mylar letter balloons that included an F, two Cs, K, I and E. Anabel seemed to be inflating a U balloon as I waited.) Add in the fact that helium prices have steadily increased over the last two decades and skyrocketed with the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, it's been a tough go for the Plaza family.

June is often their best month — what's a grad party without balloons? — but one month of excellent sales isn't enough to sustain a family.

So if you're hosting a party of any kind this summer, remember this business.

## Baba's

I love cooking, but when it comes to feeding a crowd, sometimes it's best to just push the easy button. I personally feel so lucky to have Baba's in the neighborhood: Walking into their bright, cheery space on Lyndale I honestly can't believe it used to be that depressing uniform store.

Baba's catering menu offers stunning hummus and snack platters (all come with their delicious pita puffs, which just taste better from the restaurant than they do from the grocery store) and mix-and-match mana'esh and their Arab-style brick oven pizzas.

## Nico Tacos

Nico's Tacos offers another great catering option. Hit them up for a taco bar, or chips and guacamole, or better yet, both!

You can even hire a bartender to sling margaritas on-site, or maybe ask them to whip up a batch of their margarita mix and allow your guests to decide how much tequila is the right amount.

## Kowalski's

There's always Kowalski's, a reliable option for cheese platters, pasta salads and sandwich platters. I'm sure no one in the Kowalski's family would be offended if you transferred their cashew chicken salad into a pretty bowl and said you made it yourself. I want to add a special shout-out to whoever makes their cupcakes — they aren't cheap (\$24 to \$36 per dozen depending on the decoration), but they are notably delicious, and I don't even really like cupcakes. If you're the kind of person who plans ahead, you can order adorably decorated cupcakes (unicorns! Minecraft!). I am not a planner, and whatever basic option I can procure last minute still slays.

## Isles Bun & Coffee

I love to see that line snaking down the sidewalk at Isles Bun & Coffee, but I really don't want to wait in it!

Did you know they offer pre-orders online? I'm talking freshly baked scones, coffee cake and juice. You can opt for pans of baked or frozen cinnamon buns and puppy dog tails, too.

The main problem is feeling like a jerk when you get to skip the line and grab your goods from the bakery side door (which they say often has its own line going these days).

You can also opt to have your order delivered. It costs \$25, but when your to-do list keeps growing, that might feel worth it.

## Lowry Hill Liquor

Raise your hand if you, like me, always forget the ice. Did you know Lowry Hill Liquors offers delivery?

Imagine how great it would be to get cold beer, booze, wine and ice brought straight to your house for your next get-together?

They require a minimum order of \$30 (a 12-pack of Pryes and a bottle of bubbly will get you there pretty quick), and charge \$5 for delivery.

If you're looking for a special order, like a keg, you'll want to make arrangements about a week in advance, but otherwise they can accommodate needs fairly quickly — even day-of — should your guests be thirstier than expected.

*Molly Mogren Katt writes for the Hill & Lake Press and also publishes the “Hey Eleanor!” column on Substack. She lives in the Wedge.*

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# FINDING MY NICHE

By Susan Lenfestey



(Images: Courtney Cushing Kiernat)

*A Doors Open visit to Lakewood Cemetery sends one Uptown couple spiraling delightfully into debates over tombstones, tulips, cremation, crypt real estate and whether eternity is best spent with your spouse — or your funniest friends.*

Like many of us, I have walked the winding roads of Lakewood Cemetery, especially during COVID, and I have attended memorials in the spectacular mosaic-lined mini-Byzantine chapel. But I had never had an occasion to go into the mausoleums.

That changed when I visited Lakewood during Doors Open, the annual weekend event in Minneapolis that allows people to peer into places that aren't normally open to the public, say the Minneapolis Traffic Management Center or the Federal Reserve Bank, or mysterious buildings like the Scottish Rite Temple, the Romanesque behemoth that is on the Historic Register and has graced the corner of Dupont and Franklin for more than a century.

Having anchored the corner of Girard and Lincoln for just under half a century, and knowing that our time to move, or move on, is drawing near, it's probably no surprise that Jim and I were drawn to visit the open doors of Lakewood Cemetery. (Rest assured, the doors to the crypts and vaults remained firmly closed.)

It was a picture-perfect day, a few clouds in a deep blue sky, warm enough in the sun to bask, but still cool enough to extend the bloom time of flowering trees and the 50,000 tulips planted on the grounds. Yes, 50,000 blooming tulips.

Trigger alert: stop reading now if you haven't already, because this next part may sound — deadly.

The tulips were lovely and the mosaic-lined chapel as dazzling as ever, but it was the sun-filled bays and soaring ceilings of the contemporary Garden Mausoleum, designed by award-winning HGA architects — and HLP neighbors — Joan Soranno and John Cook, that made me feel I could live here forever. Well, you know.

This end game has been a bit of a dilemma for me because Jim, my spouse of 60 years, is very romantic about returning to the earth. He already owns a hillside plot in Lakewood and envisions a majestic tombstone and a very long nap in the soil, never mind the requirement for concrete vaults to keep the ground above him from sinking. He'll work his way around that, he says, one way or another.

Meanwhile, I'm committed to the versatility of ashes. Some here, some there. No dark tomb for me; let's get it over and done. Granted, the eco side of cremation is not good. All that wasted heat and a heavy carbon footprint to boot. But I want no monument or plot, so that shrinks the footprint. And yes, there are green options, but when transitioning to eternity, I'm a bit of a traditionalist.

So there we were, like kids on a college tour, trying to envision ourselves fitting into this place. Not to go full ghoulish here, but in one columbarium I spotted the niche of beloved comic Dudley Riggs, and in another, the niche where the ashes of a friend reside,

**“We don't have to spend eternity in the same bedroom, so to speak.”**

the most fun-loving and generous woman I have ever known. And there was an empty niche next to her. If I act quickly, I can choose my suite mates.

And here's the thing: Jim and I don't have to be in the same bedroom, so to speak. He can recite poetry to the microbes and I can party with my pals in the award-winning house of my dreams. Yet we are in close enough proximity that should our children or their children choose to pay us a visit, there's only a knoll between us.

I am not being facetious or ghoulish. I will turn 80 in September, and it's past time to figure these things out.

In previous visits to Lakewood I'd been struck by the beauty of the sheltering oaks and awed by the spiritual presence of leaders like Paul and Sheila Wellstone. But I'd never thought about making my forever home so close to my temporal home.

I write not to bury myself, but to praise Lakewood. How lucky we are to have this welcoming campus just a stone's throw away, in Uptown no less, where Hennepin comes to a dead end.

*Susan Lenfestey writes for the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in Lowry Hill.*



## IF YOU GO...

Don't wait to die. There are many ways to enjoy Lakewood now, from yoga to tea ceremonies to death cafes.

For dates, times and tickets, go to [www.lakewoodcemetery.org](http://www.lakewoodcemetery.org).

Here are just a few of the offerings:

### MORNING BIRDING AT LAKEWOOD

This activity is fun for all ages and open to birders of all experience levels. Binoculars are provided.

### STORIED WOMEN OF HISTORY

This walking tour highlights the courage, resilience and influence of women whose essential contributions — often unrecognized — shaped cultural, educational and social advancement.

### LEADING THE WAY: REMARKABLE FIRSTS

This walking tour honors individuals remembered here for remarkable and meaningful “firsts.” Spanning generations, these stories include breakthroughs in medicine, moments of social progress and unique experiences.

### BUILT TO REMEMBER: THE ARCHITECTURE OF LAKEWOOD

On this walking tour, guides will lead you from intricate mosaic designs to modern and sustainable buildings.

### ROOTS OF RESILIENCE: BLACK MINNESOTANS

Tour guides will lead you as you explore the groundbreaking stories of African American people throughout Minnesota's history and visit the monuments that immortalize these Minnesotans.

### MINNESOTA MADE: ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS

This walking tour explores the final resting places of renowned painters, influential musicians and celebrated writers whose work left a lasting mark on the arts.

### DISCOVER LAKEWOOD: TROLLEY TOUR

Hop aboard the trolley for a guided tour of Lakewood's 250 acres of park-like beauty and storied history. You'll take in vistas of the landscape and architecture, dive into the stories of some of Lakewood's notable residents and appreciate the artistry of monuments and sculptures.

# UPTOWN FARMERS MARKET IS BACK!

By Ellen van Iwaarden



(Images: Debra Van De Weghe)

*The Thursday night market returns to Uptown with fresh produce, local artists and a growing role in the neighborhood's revival.*

The popular Uptown Farmers Market will be back this summer on Thursday nights.

The market will be open from 4-8 p.m. every Thursday from June 11 through Sept. 24. Due to the construction at the Seven Points Mall, the UFM will move west to Laagoon and Girard on the MoZaic Plaza.

**“The market’s success is a reflection of everyone’s work. This is an important piece of Uptown’s revitalization.”**

Although the MoZaic Plaza space is smaller than the original location, there will be the same number of vendors, probably 25 to 30 each week. There will be a varied mix of produce vendors, artists, buskers, food trucks, ice cream, treats, kids’ activities and sponsor booths.

The farmer market’s organizer Amy Sanborn is excited by an increase in vendor

applications. “We already have more than enough committed vendors to fill our new space. Plus, we will have honey,” she said, “something we wished we could find last year.”

The new space also has a connection to the Greenway to make walking and biking there more convenient.

The more intimate-feeling space will make it perfect for the musicians — buskers, singer-songwriters, soloists and trios of all genres — that are already booked for this season.

The space is well-designed for a beer garden, and organizers hope that they can bring one to life with alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

The market’s mission is to nourish a healthy, vibrant Uptown, and many credit its debut last summer as the beginning of a new and better era.

Market organizers are encouraging business owners to stay open during the market hours and consider joint promotions.


Moona Moono owner Angie Lee says this approach helped her grow and better serve her community. “When I started staying open later last summer on market nights, I discovered my community really loved having a place to hang out later than our normal 6 p.m. closing time.”

Market organizer Dan Sutton is grateful that Amy Sanborn, Jonathan Beck and the more than 20 members of their volunteer team will be back again this year to steer and promote the market. Team members are residents from all eight of its founding neighborhoods.

Over 100 volunteers helped at the market last summer, tallying more than 3,500 volunteer hours. Uptown supporters who would like to volunteer this year can sign up on the UFM website: [uptownmarket.org](http://uptownmarket.org).

Sutton also credits Tim Prinson and his partners, the City of Minneapolis, Midwest One Bank, Ragstock, Metro Transit, The Minneapolis Foundation, the Uptown Association and all the UFM’s sponsors with having the vision and follow-through to make the market work. “The market’s success is a reflection of everyone’s work,” he said. “This is an important piece of Uptown’s revitalization.”

*Ellen van Iwaarden writes for the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in East Isles.*



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# ANDREA JENKINS: A SOURCE OF COMMUNITY PRIDE

By David Piper



(Image: City of Minneapolis)

*Former Minneapolis City Council President Andrea Jenkins reflects on identity, public service, family and the enduring power of hope.*

Andrea Jenkins hardly needs an introduction. She was the first openly Black transgender woman elected to public office in the United States and served on the Minneapolis City Council from 2018 to 2026, including terms as vice president and president.

She is also an author, activist, poet, founder of the Minneapolis Poet Laureate Program, educator, mother and grandmother.

Jenkins was interviewed at Latunji's Palate, a Black woman-owned social enterprise bakery at 1400 Portland Ave. S. in Minneapolis. A portrait of Harriet Tubman hangs near the counter and becomes relevant as the conversation unfolds.

## You grew up in Chicago. Tell us about that.

I grew up in Chicago, in the Lawndale neighborhood on the West Side.

Chicago is a very segregated city, shaped by redlining and other discriminatory housing practices.

When I was about 13 or 14, my family moved to the South Side, and that's where my coming-of-age years took place.

## Was the South Side integrated or segregated in the 1960s and 1970s?

Black families had started moving into those communities in the early 1960s. My grandparents bought a house on the South Side in 1962.

## What were your coming-of-age years like?

My siblings and I spent nearly every weekend with one set of grandparents or the other, mainly my mother's parents. I had family, friends and a strong sense of community.

High school was a great experience. I attended Lindblom Technical High School, one of Chicago's top public schools.

Many of my classmates became doctors, engineers, programmers and politicians. Nearly 95% of our graduating class went to college.

## How did you end up in Minnesota?

I moved to Minneapolis to attend the University of Minnesota. I later graduated from Metropolitan State University.

## Were you out in high school?

No. I was very much closeted. Bisexual is my sexual identity. Transgender is my gender identity. There is no transition from one to the other.

## When did you first know you were transgender?

I think I knew when I was about 4 years old. I just didn't have the language for it.

The language around transgender identity didn't really emerge until later. I understood who I was, but I did not outwardly express my gender identity growing up.

## How did your parents react when you came out?

I was raised by a single mother. When I came out as bisexual in college, I wasn't disowned or banished from the family, but it wasn't discussed much.

My family has been supportive overall. I didn't come out as

transgender until I was around 30.

It was challenging at first because I was trying to conform for reasons of safety, acceptance and opportunity.

Being transgender is not a choice. If I had a choice, I would probably live a straight life because it's much easier in society.

## Why do politicians pick on trans people?

Because dictators need a foil. They need an 'other' to denigrate and blame.

Transgender people are easy targets because many people don't understand transgender identity. But transgender people have existed throughout human history.

## Can you tell us about your family?

I have three beautiful grandchildren.

My oldest granddaughter attends Southern University in Louisiana.

Another granddaughter was recently accepted to DeLaSalle High School.

My grandson is bright, energetic and sweet. They love me, and I love them.

## Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the future?

To run for office and win, you have to be optimistic.

I'm generally an optimistic person, but I am deeply concerned about the current state of our society and what I see as an assault on democracy.

What gives me hope is Harriet Tubman.

Black people would not be owning businesses or serving in public office without hope.

Those enslaved ancestors, the only thing they had was hope. That's what has moved African Americans forward.

## What are you most proud of?

My daughter and my three grandchildren. Nothing compares to that.

I'm also proud of my public service and policies that ad-

vanced equity and inclusion, including the 2040 comprehensive plan, the \$15 minimum wage, banning conversion therapy and protecting access to gender-affirming and reproductive health care.

## Do you have any regrets?

Regret is a strong word. But I do wish I had come out sooner, and I wish I had sometimes been even more vocal in doing what I believed was right.

## Are you comfortable discussing your health?

I live with multiple sclerosis, which was diagnosed in 2017. It has affected my mobility.

MS is an autoimmune disease. Environmental stress and inequities can compound health challenges in many communities.

## What's next for you?

I have an MFA in creative writing from Hamline University. I'm working on a memoir about my eight years in office during some of the most tumultuous years in Minneapolis history, including the pandemic and the aftermath of George Floyd's murder.

## Anything else you'd like to add?

Writing, consulting, teaching and public speaking are all important to me. I want to remain engaged and useful in my community.

*David Piper is a retired judge and regular contributor. He lives in Kenwood.*



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# BABA'S HUMMUS HOUSE

By Jason Suss



(Images: Baba's)

*Fresh Palestinian flavors, creative coffee drinks and some of the neighborhood's best catering have made Baba's a Lyndale Avenue favorite.*

From pillowy pita puffs and house-made hummus to Palestinian pizzas and crowd-pleasing catering platters, Baba's has become one of the neighborhood's most colorful and reliable dining destinations.

Before we get into this month's article, there's one noteworthy item to mention. Mari's is back open. Remember them? It's now called Mari's Watch Bar and is leaning into being a neighborhood sports bar. Everything else looks about the same: food, drinks, happy hour. Let's hope things work out for them this go-around.

OK, on to this month. Baba's! Located on the west side of Lyndale Avenue and 22nd Street, Baba's is a super cute neighborhood "Hummus House." The interior is bright and colorful, with lots of yellow, pink and blue. It's fun, playful and might even remind you it's time to get more ink for your printer.

The food, being Middle Eastern, is just as colorful: bright red tomatoes, vibrant green parsley, pink pickled onions and yellow cauliflower. There's a reason the Mediterranean/Middle Eastern diet is so popular. It's really fresh, colorful, flavorful, real food.

The menu is Middle Eastern, Palestinian to be more specific. Obviously, hummus is their specialty, but it doesn't stop there. Naturally, there is pita bread, their version also coming in adorable little puffs. The little puffs are perfect for dipping in their house-made toum (a creamy whipped garlic), shatta (similar to a chili paste), tahini (sesame paste) and zhoug (a spicy hot sauce). Along with that, there are pizzas called mana'eesh, sandweeshas (a much preferable naming option to the recent trend of "sandos" or "hand-holds") and bowls. There are several salad options for your gluten-free friends — just make sure they give you their pita puffs.

They have a coffee bar as well, so there are some fun beverage options like pistachio or rosewater lattes. The Palestinian Nitro has a turmeric honey foam.

No cocktails at this spot, but they more than make up for it in their catering options. I use them frequently when I have events. Scroll down their "order online" option on the website and you'll find the catering portion. There is a huge variety of well-curated assortments of their items for any type of occasion. Small gathering and you need some snacks? Choose one of the table spreads for 10: pita, veggies, dips, hummus, falafel and more. Doing a lunch? There are platters of

al meat, cheese and crackers, Baba's is a solid choice. Added bonus: the staff is really friendly.

*Jason Suss spent 15 years in tech before leaving the corporate world to pursue his passion for cocktails. For the past 12 years, he has worked on both sides of the bar at local restaurants. He now lives in Lowry Hill and owns @AProperPour.*

**"Whether it's a quick lunch, a casual dinner with the kids or catering a party and looking for a healthy alternative to the usual meat, cheese and crackers, Baba's is a solid choice."**

sandwiches and salads with lots of options too. Prices work out to around \$10 to \$17 per person — pretty reasonable these days. The mana'eesh pizzas are great to add to a veggie platter. There are lots of dessert options as well: assorted macarons and a few different cakes with a Middle Eastern twist. Fun fact: the Baba's hummus is even available at Costco. That's how you know they've made it big.

Whether it's a quick lunch, a casual dinner with the kids or catering a party and looking for a healthy alternative to the usu-



## BABA'S HUMMUS HOUSE

at a glance

**Address:** 2220 Lyndale Ave. S., Minneapolis

### Known For:

Palestinian-inspired cuisine, house-made hummus, pita puffs, mana'eesh flatbreads, falafel and catering spreads featuring fresh Middle Eastern flavors.

### Fun Fact:

Baba's hummus is sold at Costco, bringing a neighborhood favorite to shoppers across the region.

### Don't Miss:

The pita puffs with toum (whipped garlic sauce), the mana'eesh flatbreads and the colorful catering platters that have become a go-to option for neighborhood gatherings.

# UPTOWN ART FAIR RETURNS WITH NEW LAKESIDE HOME

By Ellen van Iwaarden



Stefani Pennaz, Uptown Association Executive Director, and Uptown Association board member Eric Enge. (Image: Courtney Cushing Kiernat)

After a two-year hiatus, Minneapolis' signature art fair returns with a new lakeside setting, a renewed focus on safety and a mission to help fuel Uptown's comeback.

After two years away, the iconic Uptown Art Fair will return to Uptown this summer. The event, which organizers have named "Art on the Isles," will be held August 7-9, 2026 in a scenic location along Lake of the Isles. The exact location is still being negotiated with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

Uptown Association board member Eric Enge, a key organizer of this year's event, is enthusiastic about the new lakeside location, stating, "The Uptown Art Fair is the crown jewel of Minneapolis summer events, and this is a true art fair venue."

New Uptown Association Executive Director Stefani Pennaz, who lives and works in Uptown, sees the new location as a reflection of the positive changes in Uptown she's seeing. The new dedicated Minneapolis Police Department patrol, city commitments to provide free parking, and the work of "profoundly sup-

portive" City Council Member Elizabeth Shaffer is making a difference.

Pennaz, who started at the Uptown Association on March 18, says, "Every week has brought new energy and positivity to Uptown. Our new location reflects that energy. Come for the nostalgia and make new memories at a great weekend of art, community programming, live entertainment and local business participation."

**"The Uptown Art Fair is the crown jewel of Minneapolis summer events, and this is a true art fair venue."**

The juried art fair will feature national and local artists with about 70% of its booths featuring fine art and 30% of them a makers market with handmade crafts and unique goods. Dogs are welcome, there will be family-friendly activities in a kids' section and

lively puppets from Heart of the Beast, and the contained space will allow fairgoers to stroll from booth to booth within the fair with their alcoholic drinks.

Enge noted that 50% of the proceeds of the fair will be reinvested into Uptown for beautification, small business support and safety. Safety is a key focus for the fair's organizers as well. Both Enge and Pennaz stressed the importance of the public/private partnership which is developing a comprehensive 24-hour safety strategy for artists, fairgoers and neighbors.

Because the new location is further from many Uptown businesses, organizers are working to make sure there are good connections to send fairgoers there before, during and after the fair's open hours of 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Mark your calendars for the 61st annual Uptown Art Fair!

*Ellen van Iwaarden writes for the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in East Isles.*



## UPTOWN ART FAIR at a glance

**What:**  
The 61st annual Uptown Art Fair, reimagined as "Art on the Isles"

**When:**  
Aug. 7-9, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Where:**  
Along Lake of the Isles (exact location pending approval by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board)

- What to Expect:**
- National and local artists
  - Fine art and makers market vendors
  - Live entertainment
  - Family-friendly activities
  - Heart of the Beast puppets
  - Food and beverages
  - Dog-friendly atmosphere

- Community Impact:**
- 50% of proceeds will be reinvested in Uptown
  - Funding will support beautification, small businesses and safety initiatives

**Learn More:**  
Visit the Uptown Association's website and social media channels for updates on artists, programming and the final site location.



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# UPTOWN SHOW-UP EVENT

Images by Courtney Cushing Kiernat



# CONFESSIONS OF A RECOVERING TROLL

A monthly column by Dorothy Richmond



*Suspended for reasons now forgotten, the author discovers life beyond the internet's most argumentative neighborhood.*

Dear Neighbor,

Bless me, readers, for I have sinned. My penance is a lifetime suspension from Twitter, now known as X.

We all have our secrets and hidden lives, and one of mine was Twitter. Now that it's no longer part of my life, there's no need to keep my dalliance private. (I hate the name X, and now that I've been exiled, I'll call it whatever I want.)

I was the ultimate troll, a keyboard warrior with a fake name, no photo, no profile information and not a single post. Yet somehow, I garnered several hundred followers, which always left me wondering: Why?

All I ever did was comment on other people's posts, occasionally pressing the heart button to indicate agreement, though more often expressing vehement disagreement. And always with correct spelling and proper grammar. This alone set me apart from much of the fray inhabiting what is commonly referred to as a cesspool.

The constant use of "your" for "you're" infuriated me, to say nothing of "to" for "too," and the hordes who have never met a possessive or contractive apostrophe they didn't ignore. Do these people not care that their sloppy presentation represents so much more?

As they say, how you do anything is how you do everything.

Carelessness is the hallmark of ignorance, and vice versa. This is true in grammar and in relationships. Carelessness creates confusion, and

for understanding to occur, someone must clarify. All too often, this burden falls on the unsuspecting other party, who gazes in astonishment at the mess. Loss of respect soon follows.

I imagine you're wondering what crime I committed to merit a lifetime ban. I truly can't remember exactly what I wrote, but it was unquestionably snotty. Compared with President Trump's post threatening Iran that "a whole civilization will die tonight, never to be brought back again," or be sent "back to the Stone Ages," my offense was squarely in the shallow end of the Augean stable. Rules for me, but not for thee.

I was on Twitter for about three years after my first suspension the night Trump was elected to his first term. Again, I can't remember what I wrote, but it had something to do with Sarah Palin.

Then Elon Musk took over, proclaiming his commitment to free speech. I went back in for Round Two the way I approach everything: with gusto, curiosity and a sense of fun.

Under Musk, Twitter became a combination of the Wild West and "The Jerry Springer Show" — a place where people wrote things that made me gasp.

**I learned there are entire armies of people who live according to codes I could scarcely imagine.**

Trad wives, those traditional women who defer to their husbands' every decision, demand and desire, were quite the surprise.

Unmuzzled racists abounded, as did misogynists, religious fanatics, hardcore MAGA loyalists, loony leftists, extremists and fetishists of every stripe.

Yet I stayed on, fascinated in the way one can't look away from a massive car crash or a burning building.

Shortly after I was kicked off Twitter, I received notices informing me that I could appeal and perhaps be allowed back into the fold.

But after my initial reaction — gasp! — which felt like someone had unplugged my iron lung, I quickly realized my ouster was a blessing in disguise.

Randy Pausch, the computer science professor who died of pancreatic cancer in 2008, said in his final lecture that brick walls present themselves for a reason: "The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something."

I've climbed over, crawled under and jackhammered my way through many brick walls in my life. But Twitter's paper tiger no longer held any allure. Why fight for something you don't even want? I did not appeal.

Why was I there in the first place? I suppose it was a desire to engage and be heard. But no one listens on Twitter because everybody is too busy shouting, including me.

**It was war, I tell you.**

John Steinbeck wrote that "war is a symptom of man's failure as a thinking animal." Wars, he argued, result from the failure of communication to solve problems and the substitution of violence for thought.

**Psychopathy 101.**

For all my fewer-than-140-character rants, I doubt I changed anyone's mind. I am certain I enraged many whose grammar was so atrocious I simply had to correct it. More than once, I was accused of being a bot.

Now that I'm a couple of months Twitter-sober, I'm sure the Twitterverse misses me as much as I miss it:

Zero.

— Dorothy

*Dorothy Richmond writes for the Hill & Lake Press. She lives in Cedar-Isles-Dean.*

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**July 18th**  
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**August 8th**  
Pizza Karma  
3:30 - 6:30 pm

**SUMMER FUN & WELLNESS 2026**









All Summer Fun & Wellness events are hosted by the Kenwood Neighborhood Organization (KNO) in part, thanks to the generosity of Kenwood neighbors. All KNO events are FREE except for Food Truck items.

Learn more about Summer Fun in Kenwood



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# MINNEAPOLIS STREET RENAMED IN HONOR OF FALLEN OFFICER

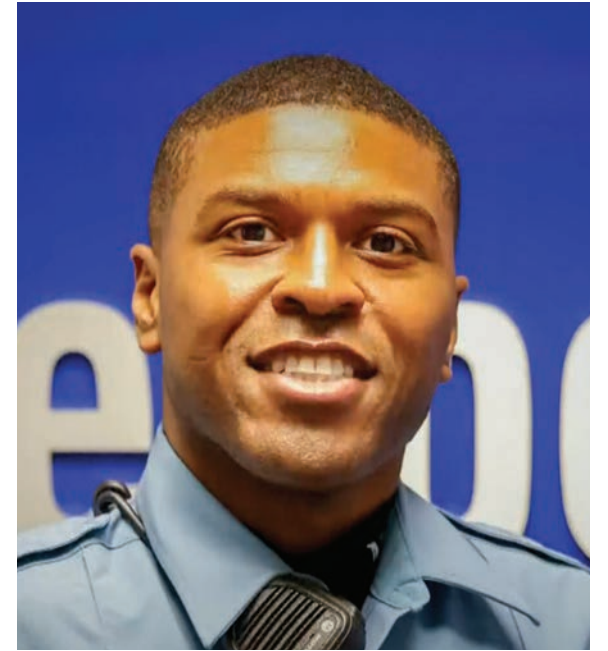


(Images: Craig Norkus)



(Image: Lori Mittag)

## Remembering Officer Jamal Mitchell



(Image: City of Minneapolis)

A stretch of Blaisdell Avenue in Minneapolis, between Franklin Avenue and West 22nd Street, has been renamed “Officer Jamal Mitchell Way” in honor of the Minneapolis police officer killed in the line of duty two years ago. Mitchell died on May 30, 2024, while responding to reported shooting in the Whittier neighborhood. He was ambushed after stopping to help someone he believed was a shooting victim.



*“To line in hearts we leave behind is to not die....”*

— Thomas Campbell

# NEIGHBORHOOD BIKE TUNE-UP AND A “SLOW ROLL”

By Courtney Cushing Kiernat



In partnership with Venture Bikes, located on the Midtown Greenway, the Kenwood Neighborhood Organization (KNO) hosted a bike tune-up and donation spot at the Greenline Extension 21st Street Station. Venture bike staff and Kenwood volunteer bike enthusiasts spent the morning tuning-up bikes. The morning started with a “Slow Roll” ride on the Kenilworth and Greenway Trails, led by Anthony Taylor of Melanin In Motion and Venture Bikes.



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### FROM A SUNDAY SCHOOL GRANDPARENT

“I love that I can periodically bring my grandchildren of varying ages to church, and they’re always warmly welcomed by their teachers with lessons about God’s love that meet their ages and stages. They are always comfortable as visitors!” — Cathy



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## East Isles Summer Update

Celebrate the season at our Summer Social, Wed. June 24! This annual party is a great time to meet neighbors and enjoy live music, good food, bounce houses—and, of course, free ice cream!

The Uptown Farmers Market returns June 11–Sept. 24! More info and volunteer sign-up at [uptownmarket.org](http://uptownmarket.org).

Only 8 storm drains are unadopted in East Isles! Help us reach 100%—adopting is free, easy, and helps prevent street debris from entering the lake: [mn.adopt-a-drain.org](http://mn.adopt-a-drain.org)

Lake of the Isles Cleanups and Safety Walking Club continue monthly. Get to know your neighbors, and put presence in the neighborhood while picking up debris. Any amount of time helps, and all area neighbors are welcome!

And the Neighborhood Super Sale will fall later than in past years: Sat. September 19. Join the wave of 100+ yard sales across several nearby neighborhoods. Sale registration opens June/July on our website—sellers, start stockpiling!

Mark your events calendar using the list at right, and learn about all our efforts at [eastisles.org](http://eastisles.org).



### East Isles Safety Walking Club

June 6, July 11, Aug. 1, Sept. 5 Sat. 10–11:30 AM  
Meet at Levin Triangle Park: 26th St & Irving Ave S  
Get outside, meet your neighbors, pick up litter and contribute to community safety and spirit!

### East Isles Board Meetings

June 9, July 7, off Aug. 2nd Tues. 7–8:30 PM  
Grace-Trinity Community Church: 1430 W 28th St

### Uptown Farmers Market

Thursdays, June 11–Sept. 24 4–8 PM  
Lagoon & Girard Ave Plaza (behind the cinema)  
Location shifted due to construction, but the market setup remains: 25+ vendors, live music, and more!

### Lake of the Isles Cleanups

June 13, July 11, Aug. 8, Sept. 12 2nd Sat.  
9:30–11:30 AM • Euclid Pl & E Lake of the Isles footpath  
All Lake of the Isles neighbors are invited! Cleanup gear and supplies are available at check-in.

### East Isles Summer Social

June 24 Wed. 6–8 PM  
Levin Triangle Park (if rain: Kenwood Rec Center)  
Celebrate summer with neighbors over live music, food trucks, fun and free ice cream!

### Lake of the Isles Super Sale

Save the Date: Sept. 19 Sat. 9 AM–3 PM  
100+ yard sales will sweep six lake area neighborhoods. Sale registration opens on our website June/July!

Dates subject to change—visit [eastisles.org](http://eastisles.org) for the latest.

Visit [eastisles.org/join](http://eastisles.org/join) to:



**Donate** to support neighborhood events, resources and opportunities.

**Subscribe** to our news and follow our social media to get updates on events and resources.

**Join** a Committee e-list to help address green issues, safety, and more!



# THOMAS LOWRY PARK RUBBER DUCKY RACE

Images by Courtney Cushing Kiernat





**THURSDAYS 4-8 PM**  
**LAGOON & GIRARD**  
**STARTS JUNE 11**