

**City of Ramsey
Weekly Update
February 7, 2013**

1. **February 7, 2013**

Weekly Update

1.

Meeting Date: 02/07/2013

Information

Weekly Update

February 7, 2013

Attachments

Weekly Upate

Form Review

Form Started By: Kathy Schmitz

Started On: 02/05/2013 08:45 AM

Final Approval Date: 02/05/2013

WEEKLY UPDATE

Administrator's Report



February 7, 2013

Tuesday, February 12, 2013

- 5:00 p.m. – Personnel Committee – Lake Itasca Room
- Immediately Following Personnel – City Council Work Session – Lake Itasca Room
- 7:00 p.m. – City Council – Council Chambers
- Immediately Following CC – HRA – Council Chambers

Thursday, February 14, 2013

- 6:30 p.m. – Park and Recreation Commission – Council Chambers

Preview of Next Week

Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce State of the Cities Luncheon – Tuesday, February 12, 2013 – Harvest Grill at Bunker Hills Golf Club – 12800 Bunker Prairie Road NW. Registration begins at 11:00 a.m. followed by lunch and program from 11:30 to 1:00 p.m.

Personnel Committee (5:00 p.m. – LIR)

- Discuss Municipal Center Meeting Room Revenue for Building Maintenance Staffing Needs
- Consider a Resolution to Address Building Maintenance Staffing Needs
- Discussion Regarding 2013 Union Contract Negotiations for AFSCME, LELS-Patrol and LELS-Sergeants (Discussion Closed to the Public)

City Council Work Session (Immediately Following Personnel – LIR)

- FOR DISCUSSION ONLY: Receive Presentation from the Charter School Fund in Regard to Potential Charter School Development

City Council (7:00 p.m. – CC)

- PUBLIC HEARING: Adopt Ordinance to Vacate Right of Way and Drainage and Utility Easements on the TOWN CENTER GARDENS 3RD ADDITION Plat for SEASONS OF RAMSEY; Case of Podawiltz Development Corporation/The Seasons of Ramsey Limited Partnership
- Public Hearing and Request for Adoption of City of Ramsey 2013-2017 Capital Improvement Program
- Consider Preliminary Plat, Final Plat, and Site Plan Approval for SEASONS OF RAMSEY Located at the Northeast Intersection of Bunker Lake Boulevard and Town Center Drive; Case of Podawiltz Development Corporation/The Seasons of Ramsey Limited Partnership
- Adopt Ordinance to Amend City Code Section 117-118 Entitled The COR Related to Twenty Four (24) Hour Drive Thrus
- Adopt Resolution #13-02-029 to Enter into a Residential Recycling Program Agreement to Receive SCORE Funds for 2013
- Adopt Resolution #13-02-039 Approving Reimbursement Request to Anoka County Housing and Redevelopment Authority for Residential Property Acquisition

- Consider Second Offer to Purchase Surplus City Owned Land -- Windsorwood Property-
-PORTIONS MAY BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC
- Consider purchase of 14590 Armstrong Blvd. NW, Ramsey, Minnesota (Wiser Choice
Liquor Store) from M&W Holding Company, LLC. (the "Property") **PORTIONS OF
THIS DISCUSSION MAY BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.**
- Attorney-Client Privileged Discussion regarding the pending Isanti County District Court
lawsuit titled "County of Isanti, Plaintiff, vs. Kieth Kiefer, Defendant, vs. City of Ramsey
and City Administrator, Kurtis Ulrich, in his official capacity and individually, Third
Party Defendants."

HRA (Immediately Following CC – CC)

- Landform Professional Services, LLC's Contract with Ramsey HRA

Park and Recreation Commission (6:30 p.m. – CC)

- Recommend the Decommission of Titterud Park's Tennis Court
- Commission/Staff Input
 - Report on Skating Rink Usage
 - Discuss Subcommittee to Refine Components/Theme for Elmcrest Park's
Playground

Council Update

Department Highlights:

Building Maintenance

- Strip and wax floors
- Snow and ice removal
- Re-core finance department doors

City Clerk

- Working with a new business w/re to their licensing requirements – Second Hand Goods
- Met with Police & Fire Chiefs re Special Events Permit – 5K run to benefit DAR
- Met with Planning and Police to discuss licensing of in-door shooting ranges

Finance

- Outside Consultation regarding Arbitrage Calculation
- Sent 2013 Budget Summary Report for Reporting In Anoka Union
- Reconcile LTD and PERA Life invoices, prepare payroll adjustments for 2013 LTD rate
changes

Fire

- Notable Responses
 - 1/31- P.I. accident at Hwy 10 and Tungten St NW. Unit arrived to find a two
vehicle accident, no injuries. Crews assisted with traffic control.
 - 1/31- P.I. accident in the 18400 block of Baugh St NW. Unit arrived to find a two
vehicle accident involving a school bus. Crew assisted with patient care, traffic
and clean up. One person transported.
 - 2/2- Code blue response in the 6500 block of Riverdale Dr. Crew assisted with
patient care on scene and in ambulance during transport.
 - 2/6- P.I. accident at Ramsey Blvd and Nowthen Blvd. Unit arrived to find minor
injuries. Assisted patients into ambulance and directed traffic.

- Fire Administration
 - Finalized Annual Report
 - Working with business owner on code requirements for hazardous material storage
- Training this week: Railroad Emergencies for Responders

HR

- Prepared for Union Negotiations
- Conducted City Engineer Interviews
- Submitted data for Short Term Disability Insurance quote

IT

- Attended meetings with EPA, Marco, Franz Reprographics, Matrix Comm. & HP to discuss some of the City's current projects: Engineering/Community Dev. Plotter Replacement & Digital Signage. We're still collecting quotes on both projects, but would like to make a decision before the end of Q1.
- The Police Department Front Desk workstation has arrived as is being configured. The IT department is also talking with LOGIS regarding receipt printing solutions that don't involve the old dot-matrix style printers we're currently fitted with. These new solutions would likely use hardware we currently own, so as to eliminate the need to purchase more equipment.
- Attended the LOGIS IT Management meeting to determine the stage of the Advanced Authentication approval process. LOGIS is currently in talks with the BCA and FBI and addressing concerns they may have regarding which authentication method would work for all parties. They hope to reach a decision by our April meeting.

Parks

- Staff is organizing for the installation of two large windows (new) for the south side of the Park Center Building at Central Park. The windows will add natural light into the meeting area and also aid in passive solar heat gain in the winter
- Staff continues to work with Great River Energy on a suitable landscape replacement plan for the extreme west edge of Alpine Park where all the trees under the powerline will be removed
- Progress is being made in reconciling the numbers for a water appropriation permit with the DNR for irrigation from a well at Elmcrest Park

Planning/Building

- Meeting with potential workforce housing developer
- Several meetings in regard to Seasons of Ramsey and requested amendments
- Conference call in regard to changes to TOD Grant Program (Metropolitan Council)

Police

- **We've all Been There.** On January 30th, a Ramsey resident reported the theft of a utility trailer from his yard. The complainant had not seen the trailer for awhile but thought the theft occurred sometime in the past week. The following day, the complainant's wife contacted the police department to report the trailer was "for sale" on Craig's List. Pictures of the trailer were provided to investigators by the person selling the trailer. The pictures were shown to the complainant and he determined that the trailer was not his. On February 1st, the complainant contacted the police department and reported he had located his trailer. He indicated that he had a "senior moment" and forgot that he used his trailer early this winter to haul insulation to a rental property he owned. The trailer was right where he left it. Another case cleared by the Ramsey Police Department.

- **Have Not Been There.** An officer received a call that the trash cans and a recycle bin had been left at the street in front of a residence for months. There was also a large amount of debris in the area. The officer spoke to the homeowner and advised him he needed to bring the cans back to the house and clean up the mess. When asked why the cans had been there so long, the homeowner stated he was lazy. Unknown how the weekly trash was getting to the can.
- **Chaos Presentation.** This past Wednesday, Chief Way presented a training session to a group of 18 newly promoted Sergeants at the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association Leadership Academy being held at Camp Ripley. The presentation is entitled "Chaos, Lessons Learned" and deals with the chaos that occurred following the building explosion that took place in Ramsey in 2004.
- **Outstanding Work.** Officers were dispatched to a call of a male who had fainted and possibly not breathing. Two of the three Ramsey officers that were working at the time were tied up on a domestic assault call. The third officer was not close to the call location when it came out. A two person Ramsey Reserve car was close to the call and responded. Upon arrival, they found the victim not breathing. The Reserve Officers initiated CPR and attached a defibrillator unit to the victim. Additional Emergency Medical Services units arrived on the scene. The CPR efforts were successful and the victim's heart started beating on its own. He was transported to Mercy, where he remains in critical condition at the time of this report. Because of the quick response, appropriate diagnosis and proper actions by the reserves, the victim's heart was started again. The reserves had been through CPR refresher training just a week earlier. Nice job by Reserves Bagne and Grant! It should be noted that Chief Way has scheduled a commendation to take place for these two Reserve Officers during the "Presentation" section of the Council agenda on Tuesday evening.

Public Works

- All snow for us this week. Started with clearing arterial roads on Friday night, followed by city wide plowing starting at 0500 on Saturday. We don't plow sidewalks or trails on overtime, so that phase of plowing started at 0500 Monday. With all of these little nuisance snow falls, crews have been out every day this week clearing off the arterial roads and salting intersections, plus clearing the top floor of the parking ramp. With all this plowing activity we need to re-stock our supplies! Salt, magnesium chloride, and cutting edges have been ordered and are on the way.

Utilities

- Following the fourth quarter utility billing process utility personal downloaded a "constant leak report" that was collected while meter reading. This report alerts us to homes that have a constant water leak somewhere in their home. Typically it is a toilet that has a worn out flapper valve allowing water to slip by. Utility personal than print out a letter and insert a toilet leak detection kit (dye kit) this assists the resident in determining which toilet is leaking.
- This week we have also shoveled and plowed snow almost every day. All four pump houses need to be kept clear and sidewalks shoveled and salted. When time allows, we also clear snow at several hard to reach lift station sites and our three water towers.

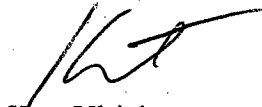
Save the Date:

- **Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce Casino Royale Gala Dinner Fundraiser** – February 22, 2013 – New Location This Year – Greenhaven Golf & Banquet Center, Anoka. Dinner starts at 7:00 p.m. The City has ordered a table at the event. *Attached to*

the Weekly Update is a Flyer for the Anoka Area Chamber of Commerce Casino Royal Gala.

- **The Mayor's Trail Ride** has been rescheduled for February 23, 2013, due to lack of snow.
- **Flaherty & Collins Project Tour** – February 26, 2013 – noon and 4:00 p.m. Meet in main foyer of City Hall.
- **Northgate Church/Performing Arts Center Groundbreaking** - Saturday, March 23 at the site. Groundbreaking is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. More details will follow as they become available.

Best regards,



Kurt Ulrich
City Administrator

Attachments: NMMA Documents Approved at the January 23 Board Meeting
2013-2014 NMMA Legislative Action Plan
2013-2014 North Metro Perspectives: Comprehensive Tax Reform for MN
2013-2014 Transportation Issue Overview
Governor Mark Dayton – NMMA's Four Wishes for 2013
Anoka County Press Release: Anoka County Receives Sunny Award:
Achieves Perfect Score for Transparency



Andover

Anoka

Blaine

Brooklyn Center

Brooklyn Park

Champlin

Circle Pines

Coon Rapids

Dayton

Lexington

Maple Grove

Minneapolis

Mounds View

New Hope

Osseo

Ramsey

Spring Lake Park

Associate

Members

Anoka County

Hennepin County

National Sports
Center

Business Partners

2013-2014

NMMA LEGISLATIVE ACTION PLAN

The North Metro Mayors Association was created in 1987 to serve as the non-partisan champion organization encouraging private and public investments in the north suburban area. It is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Mayors and City Managers/Administrators of the member cities. In addition to the member cities, the NMMA is supported by area businesses enrolled as Community Partners and serving as Business Sponsors.

www.northmetromayors.org

NMMA LEGISLATIVE ACTION PLAN 2013-2014

FINANCIAL POLICY:

1. Work with the Governor, the NMMA Legislative Delegation and other interested local units of government to reform certain onerous unfunded state mandates, with special focus on storm water permitting and legal notice publication requirements.
2. Work with the Governor and NMMA Legislative Delegation to reform onerous unfunded state mandates, e.g., storm water permitting and legal notice publication requirements.
3. Advocate for NMMA perspectives in debates over comprehensive tax reform proposals.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS:

1. Assist the North Metro TH 610 Crossing Coalition to secure the necessary funds to complete TH 610 in part by ensuring that the Governor, Legislature and Mn/DOT designate TH 610 a first priority transportation project for funding.
2. Assist the North Metro I-35W Corridor Coalition in securing funding for implementation of results from the Managed Lane Study between Minneapolis and Forest Lake.
3. Assist the City of Ramsey, Anoka County, and Mn/DOT in securing funding for the construction of the Armstrong Blvd. (CR83) and U.S. Highway 10 interchange.
4. Work with Mn/DOT, Legislative leadership and transportation committees, Governor's administration, Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Transportation Alliance and key Congress members and staff to secure increased transportation funding as recommended by the Governor's Transportation Finance Advisory Committee.
5. Work with the Cities of Dayton, Maple Grove, surrounding communities, Hennepin and Anoka Counties, Mn/DOT & the Metro Council to resolve area transportation system improvement issues.

GOVERNANCE:

1. Work with the League of Minnesota Cities, Metro Cities and other local government partners in a collaborative manner to advance key local governmental legislative objectives.
2. Conduct Legislative Candidate forums in NMMA member City districts so as to inform Candidates on NMMA issues and to assist voters in determining their choices,
3. Host NMMA Legislative Delegation meeting early in each Legislative Session and as needed and work with the Delegation to advance NMMA legislative goals and objectives.
4. Engage NMMA Community Partners in Legislative efforts to more effectively carry the NMMA message to elected officials and the Governor's administration.

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

1. Lead efforts to promote public and private sector investments in the North Metro Area by cosponsoring a regional "Summit" conference for prospective private investors in collaboration with current business partners and area Chambers of Commerce.



Andover

Anoka

Brooklyn
Center

Brooklyn Park

Champlin

Circle Pines

Coon Rapids

Lexington

Maple Grove

Mounds View

New Hope

Osseo

Ramsey

Spring Lake
Park

Associate

Members

Minneapolis

Anoka County

Hennepin
County

National Sports
Center

Business
Partners

2013-2014

**NORTH METRO PERSPECTIVES:
COMPREHENSIVE TAX REFORM
FOR MINNESOTA**

January, 2013

The North Metro Mayors Association was created in 1987 to serve as the non-partisan champion organization encouraging private and public investments in the north suburban area. It is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Mayors and City Managers/Administrators of the member cities. In addition to the member cities, the NMMA is supported by area businesses enrolled as Community Partners and as Business Sponsors.

www.northmetromayors.org

OVERVIEW

Much has been written and said about the need for comprehensive tax reform in Minnesota. There are frequent references to the “Three Legged Stool” that argue the need for the balanced use of Income, Sales and Property Taxes to fund state and local governments. Our “Perspective” is that consideration of a “fourth” leg should be included in the debate about “reform”. That fourth leg is the growing dependence on “User Fees” at all levels of government. Whether or not we use the three or four legged stool as a metaphor, we likely all agree that the stool is shaking from stress in all legs. The question is how to establish long term stability in the funding stream supporting vital public services while we wrestle with economizing and streamlining them.



This perspective will address only the Property Tax leg of the stool since we believe that it is the one that is most complicated and misunderstood. In doing so, we suggest that the “Leg” is not a singular entity but rather a leg comprised of three strands. Those three strands comprise the basic source of revenue supporting the delivery of local government services: Property Taxes, the Metro Area Fiscal Disparities tax base sharing program, and Local Government Aids. The reason for this view point derives from the fact that a change in any one of the “strands” creates frequently unanticipated changes in the others, as well as the “Fee” leg. An example of the “unanticipated consequence” syndrome is the fallout from the elimination of the Market Value Homestead Credit program without prior understanding of the interrelationships with and the impacts on the other strands.

LEG # 1: PROPERTY TAXES

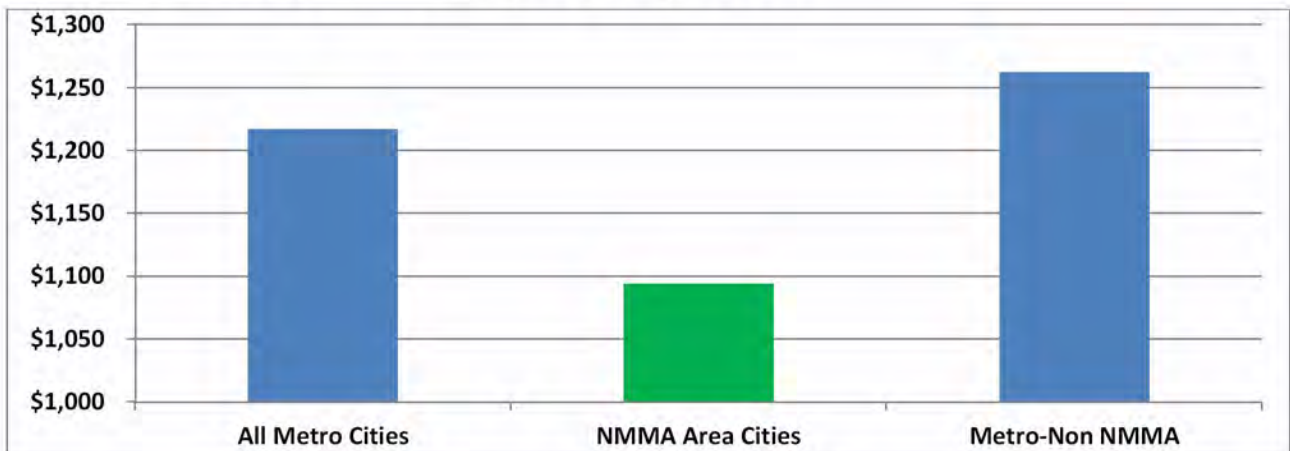
As noted in the Overview above, property taxes are arguably the most complicated and thus most misunderstood of any of the stool legs. In part that is due to the impacts on the home or business owner paying the bill received from the County that includes outcomes of isolated decisions made by City, School District, County, Special Taxing Districts and Metropolitan agency elected and appointed decision makers. Certified property tax levies imposed via those

decisions in each jurisdiction are based in part on assumed receipt/non receipt of local government aids (LGA) in the other strand and reflect the estimated total taxing capacity that in turn reflects the total value of taxable properties.

Due to differing tax rates on differing classifications of properties, relative changes in values can shift burdens from homes to business or vice versa even if the total levy doesn't change even when the combined levy is held constant.

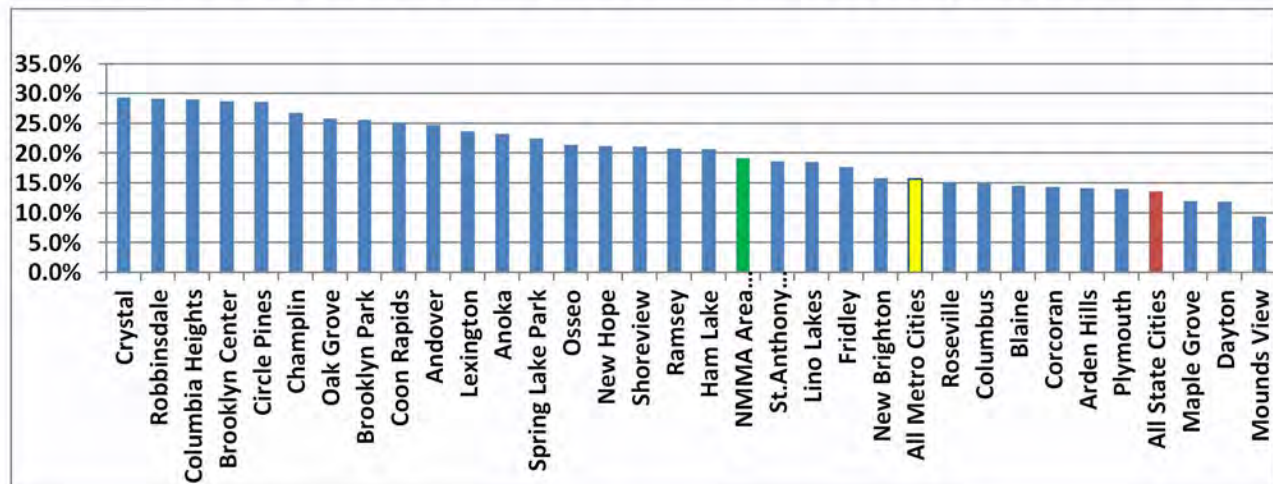
A key measure of a community's "ability to pay" property taxes is the "Total Tax Capacity" per capita in the jurisdiction. As evident in the following chart, collectively, North Metro Area Cities have less capacity than the rest of the Metro communities. Consequently, changes in any of the legs or strands can create serious problems for area taxpayers.

Chart #1: Metro City Total Tax Capacity/ Capita-2012



Another consideration is the changing nature of the State and National economy and the trickle down effects on communities. One measure of that effect is the relative difference in impact on each jurisdiction due to property value changes that reduce the tax capacity of the community. For example, the following chart demonstrates the adverse impact on NMMA area communities created by the economic downturn that began in 2008.

Chart #2: NMMA Area % Loss of Total Tax Capacity 2008-2012



The consequence of lowered tax capacity is the need to raise tax rates just to keep even with increasing costs. Unfortunately, that puts less wealthy communities at a competitive disadvantage in efforts to redevelop outdated/contaminated properties. Consequently, those communities need more support from the other tax system legs. Clearly, NMMA area cities are shouldering the more severe consequences of the economic downturn impact on property values as compared to the rest of Minnesota cities.

LEG #2: METRO AREA FISCAL DISPARITIES PROGRAM

There is an old saying that “it takes an entire village to raise a child.” In a very real sense it also takes an entire region to foster economic development. That is one reason to applaud current efforts to ‘think as a region’ on job creation and competition with other regions. But, put another way, local governments and school districts throughout the region bear the cost of successful economic development regardless of where the development happens to be located. The city in which it is located bears the costs associated with property related services such as police and fire. But the workers going to the development every day come from throughout the region—and the cities, counties and school districts in which they live and commute from also bear real costs. These costs come from providing normal governmental services, including education, to their residents.

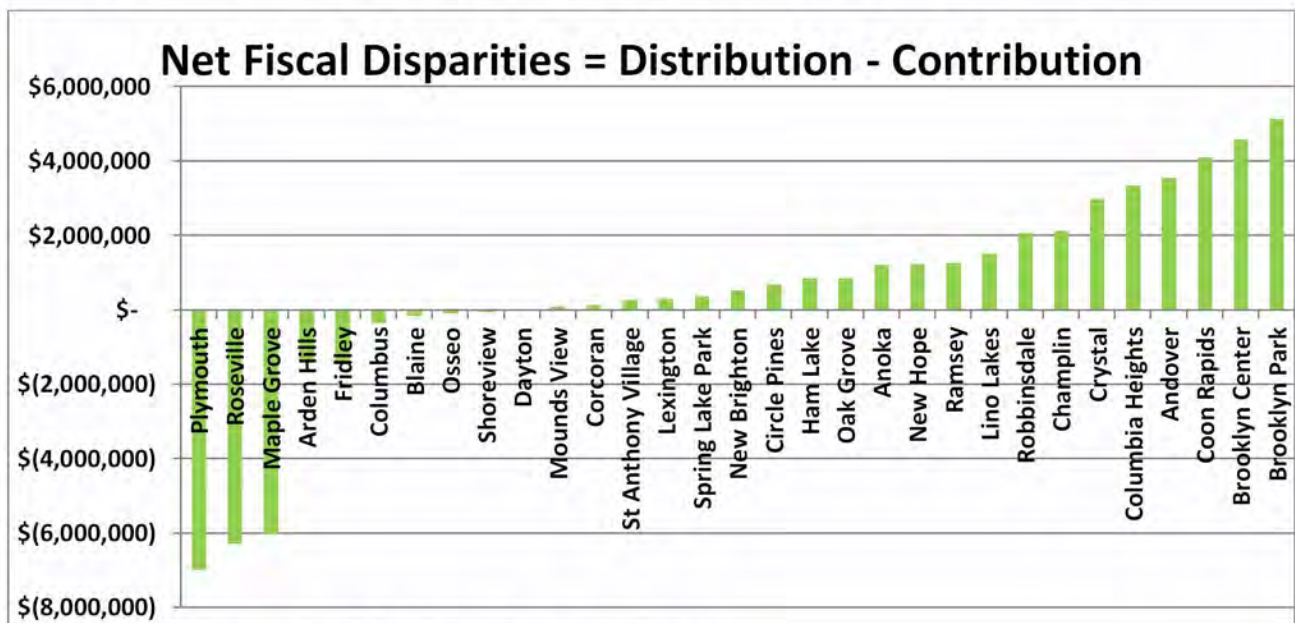
The Metropolitan Revenue Distribution Program was enacted by the Legislature in 1971 and went into effect in 1975 following challenges to the constitutionality of the program. Led by Rep. Charles R. Weaver and the Citizen’s League, the “Fiscal Disparities Program” responded to growing concerns about competition for and subsidization of economic development projects

and the disparate impacts on local tax rates. The heart of the solution was and continues to be the sharing of a part of the new property tax base value. Since enactment, 40% of the value of new commercial/industrial development is contributed into the Metro “Pool”. That value is then shared proportionally based on relative property wealth in each taxing jurisdiction, providing them at least a portion of the burden of new regional growth.

The Northern Suburbs have traditionally played a significant role in regional economic activity by providing the work force and the affordable housing needed to support regional growth. Every day thousands of workers leave their homes in the Northern Suburbs and go to jobs elsewhere in the region because there are not enough new jobs in the area. It is also true that the geology of the area is conducive to serving as a water supply source for the region. While there are many factors affecting development patterns, the lower growth rate in our Northern Suburbs leads to tax bases below the metropolitan average.

The recent recession has made Fiscal Disparities even more crucial to the financial wellbeing of the Northern Suburbs. **Chart 3** shows how important Fiscal Disparities is for many NMMA Area cities. Significant net increases in **Total Taxable Tax Capacity** from Fiscal Disparities enable these cities to maintain vital services while keeping tax rates lower. **Total Taxable Tax Capacity** is defined as the taxable property value remaining after adjustments for TIF Districts and Fiscal Disparities Program Contributions and Distributions.

CHART # 3: 2012 NMMA Area Tax Base Change due to FD Program*



* Cities below the 0\$ axis are net contributors

Any proposed change to Fiscal Disparities that would reduce the program benefits to recipient cities (such as lowering the contribution percentage or putting limits on the contributions from any given city) will reduce the ability of the entire region to finance the costs associated with economic development. Any proposal which would divert a portion of the fiscal disparities pool for other purposes, regardless of the merit of that purpose, must consider that Fiscal Disparities is not “magic” money. Fiscal Disparity funds are property taxes paid by business so that governmental services, including education, can be supplied throughout the region. Any diversion of these property tax dollars means either less service or increased property taxes in the region.

Chart 4 demonstrates the flow of funds to Metro area taxing jurisdictions. If, for example, a proposal was to divert 20% of the pool, regardless of the purpose, Metropolitan School Districts would suffer a hit of almost \$36.5 million (.2 X \$182 million).

CHART #4: Metro Area Payable 2012 Fiscal Disparities Distribution

County	Cities	Townships	School Districts	Special Districts	County	Total
Anoka	\$21,419,269	\$227,905	\$25,787,790	\$3,264,226	\$21,301,969	\$72,001,159
Carver	3,526,523	116,256	5,533,530	565,136	4,448,085	14,189,530
Dakota	23,179,764	221,757	26,288,814	2,723,351	15,749,077	68,162,763
Hennepin	76,589,380	66,265	65,601,532	14,272,450	66,471,814	223,001,441
Ramsey	28,193,129	249,540	37,985,974	12,797,045	41,808,173	121,033,861
Scott	5,771,140	242,602	7,157,484	812,940	5,464,882	19,449,048
Washington	10,875,223	100,768	13,917,353	1,636,777	8,952,261	35,482,382
Seven County Total	\$169,554,428	\$1,225,093	\$182,272,477	\$36,071,925	\$164,196,261	\$553,320,184

LEG #3: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AIDS (LGA)

The Local Government Aid program was established in the 1970’s as part of the “Minnesota Miracle” legislation that profoundly changed the tax system structure at all levels of government. The purpose of the program was and still is to provide sufficient funds to enable Cities to provide adequate levels of basic services. Since 1970 the formulas used to determine aid

distribution amounts have been change but still rely on outdated mathematical calculations that do not provide transparent and logical outcomes. The most recent formula change occurred in 2008, resulting in additional funding for older, fully developed suburban cities. More recently, State budget deficits have forced significant cuts in the funding level that in turn affect outcomes of the distribution formula.

The current LGA Program’s funding distribution formula is greatly influenced by the relative “wealth” of the city’s tax capacity. As shifting economic forces play out across the state and across different property classifications, individual property owners may experience bewildering increases or joyful decreases due to the complicated formulas at play. As Chart #5 illustrates, Greater Minnesota Cities appear to have been less impacted by the drop in property values and thus taxing capacity without raising tax rates. However, a closer look in Chart #6 shows that GMC values held on longer but are now also dropping. Ultimately, any consideration of changing the currently outdated formula for distributing Local Government Aid funds must recognize that “NEEDS” are a dynamically changing situation.

CHART # 5: % Loss of Total Tax Capacity 2008-2012



CHART # 6: Time Impact on Total Tax Capacity



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In summary:

- Many NMMA Cities trail others and have been hit harder by lost tax capacity due to the economic slump
- Greater Minnesota is now seeing similar loss of tax capacity
- The Fiscal Disparities Program addresses the need for a regional perspective on economic development benefit sharing
- Loss of tax capacity value requires greater attention to LGA reform

We need to have a realistic, apolitical and fact based dialog on the complexity of the current public finance and taxing infrastructure supporting and constraining the best that governments at all levels can contribute to the prosperity and well-being of all Minnesota citizens and businesses. We cannot tolerate additional changes without understanding the full consequences of the outcomes. The “Four Legged Stool” must be sturdy, well balanced and enduring so that wiser long term investments can be made. Period!



Please address questions or comments to Bob Benke, Director, Research & Advocacy Services, NMMA at 612-669-0274 or bobbenke@comcast.net.



- Andover
- Anoka
- Brooklyn
Center
- Brooklyn Park
- Champlin
- Circle Pines
- Coon Rapids
- Lexington
- Maple Grove
- Mounds View
- New Hope
- Osseo
- Ramsey
- Spring Lake
Park

2013-2014 TRANSPORTATION ISSUE OVERVIEW

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- Minneapolis
- Anoka County
- Hennepin
County
- National Sports
Center
- Business
Partners

The North Metro Mayors Association was created in 1987 to serve as the non-partisan champion organization encouraging private and public investments in the north suburban area. It is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of the Mayors and City Managers/Administrators of the member cities. In addition to the member cities, the NMMA is supported by area businesses enrolled as Community Partners and serving as Business Sponsors.

www.northmetromayors.org

NMMA 2013-2014 TRANSPORTATION ISSUE OVERVIEW

BACKGROUND:

In previous Legislative Sessions, the NMMA has advocated for increased highway and transit funding to address problems created by lack of resources for improving Minnesota's transportation infrastructure. Knowing that they were addressing only one-third of the funding gap, the 2008 Legislature enacted Chapter 152, the first gas tax and vehicle registration fee increase in many years. Since then, increases in gasoline costs, increased purchases of more fuel efficient vehicles and the economic downturn have led to reduced travel and gas consumption. Reduced travel and fewer sales of new vehicles have further reduced actual versus anticipated revenues coming into the Trunk Highway account. Solutions to the transportation infrastructure funding problem are needed to reduce congestion, improve personal and goods movement mobility and to improve safety.

In its earlier version of Mn/DOT's Statewide Transportation Plan, a statewide \$50 Billion shortfall in necessary transportation infrastructure investments was identified with a \$40 funding gap for the Metropolitan Area. Since 2008, Mn/DOT has completed its "Go Minnesota" Plan that provides a 50 year perspective on transportation system opportunities and needs. Mn/DOT and the Metropolitan Council are completing an update of the 2030 Transportation Policy Plan. That plan will incorporate a "More Bang For the Buck" strategy that lessens emphasis on construction of new lane capacity.

The primary example of this new strategy is the recently completed improvements on the I-35W South Corridor. The Metro Plan update will incorporate the findings of several studies, including the Metropolitan Highway System Investment Study that analyzed the feasibility of and opportunity to implement lower cost/high benefit alternative improvements to achieve congestion relief. Also, Mn/DOT has completed a report analyzing options to expand the Mn/PASS 2 (aka Opt in Tolling) system in the Metro area. Mn/DOT is currently completing a "Managed Lane Study" in the I-35W Corridor between Minneapolis and Forest Lake.

The Governor's Transportation Finance Advisory Committee spent a year analyzing system funding needs. Their report was delivered to the Governor in December. Discussion on the recommendations has begun in the 2013 Legislature.

NMMA PERSPECTIVES:

Historically, the NMMA has advocated a set of Principles that should be used when the Legislature considers increased transportation system funding. These principles include:

- **RELIANCE ON INCREASED USER FEES TO FUND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS**
 - USER CONTRIBUTION PROPORTIONAL TO BURDEN IMPOSED
 - TRANSPARENCY OF RELATIONSHIP
 - GENERATIONAL EQUITY

- **CERTAINTY OF FUNDING FOR TRANSIT & HIGHWAYS**
 - LEGISLATIVE ACTION FOR IMMEDIATE IMPACT WITHOUT REFERENDA REQUIREMENTS
 - CAUTIOUS RELIANCE ON UNCERTAIN SOURCES:
 - FEDERAL FUNDING INCREASES
 - TOLL FACILITIES
 - "EFFICIENCIES"

- **PRUDENT FISCAL MANAGEMENT**
 - PHASE IN OF REVENUE INCREASES:
 - AVOID HIGHWAY PROGRAM SURGE/DELIVERY PROBLEMS
 - CONTRACTOR RESOURCE INVESTMENT PAYBACKS
 - LEAD TIME NEEDED FOR MAJOR TRANSIT CORRIDOR PROJECTS
 - PROVIDE RESOURCES TO ADVANCE HIGH PRIORITY CRITICAL BRIDGE, INTER REGIONAL CORRIDOR AND BELTWAY BOTTLENECK PROJECTS
 - BONDING WITH PAYMENTS PAID FROM NEW REVENUE TO STAY UNDER RECOMMENDED LIMITS
 - COMPLETE THE BASIC METRO BELTWAY SYSTEM 6 LANE CONTINUITY.
 - PROVIDE EARLY NEW FUNDING FOR CITY AND COUNTY PARTNERS THAT ALSO NEED HELP.

Commentary

Because funding forecasts show that future revenues will be barely able to maintain current roadways in an acceptable status, Mn/DOT is rightfully placing priorities on safety, critical bridges, system preservation and operational improvements. This prioritization results in very limited funding for system capacity expansions. Gone is the 'Three Thru Lanes' system envisioned for the I-494/694 beltway, at least in the North Suburbs. Gone also is the immediate commitment for completing TH 610 for too many years. The absence of the "Missing Link" is creating safety, environmental and economic impacts on the corridor area affecting over 500,000 area residents due to the very high number of travelers caught in congestion or diverted to local roadways. An example of this impact flows from the plans for Target's expansion of their Brooklyn Park Campus now that TH 610 has been extended to CR 81 thanks primarily to the allocation of stimulus funding from Congress.

Even with implementation of Mn/DOT's proposed alternative solutions with reduced costs, a significant funding gap will continue to constrain needed improvements that grow businesses and jobs that will sustain our future Minnesota economy. The 2013 Legislature and Governor must address this issue in order to provide the infrastructure needed to support a healthy Minnesota for our future generations.

Recommendations

- 1) We recommend that the Legislature adopt and the Governor sign legislation for a road and transit funding increase that meets federal, state, county, city and township road and transit system needs, beginning with a thorough review of the Transportation Finance Advisory Committee recommendations.
- 2) In addition to increasing transportation system funding, we recommend that the Legislature review current statewide funding allocations and outcomes to ensure that all available state and federal funds are being invested in the most beneficial projects.
- 3) The NMMA recommends that completion of TH 610, the very last unconstructed segment of the Metro Freeway System, should be given first priority over expansion or reconstruction of other corridors.



GOVERNOR MARK DAYTON
NORTH METRO MAYORS ASSOCIATION'S
FOUR WISHES FOR 2013

- 1.** Fund construction of the last segment of TH 610 in Maple Grove. Corridor construction began in 1991- it's time to complete this last critical piece of the Metro Area freeway system.
- 2.** Overhaul Minnesota's outdated taxing structure, including:
 - a.** Income taxes and tax expenditures
 - b.** Sales Tax rates and base
 - c.** Property Taxes, including interaction of Local Government Aid amounts and Limited Market Value Impacts
 - d.** Preserve the Metro Area Fiscal Disparities Program
- 3.** Foster a public conversation that will lead to increased transportation funding to meet the needs of a growing population and economy, serving both highway and transit users.
- 4.** Continue efforts to reform or eliminate mandates, especially in the area of official publications and wetland and aquifer protection.



COUNTY OF ANOKA

OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION

GOVERNMENT CENTER
2100 3RD AVENUE STE 700 • ANOKA, MINNESOTA 55303-5024
(763) 323-5700

February 5, 2013

MARTHA WEAVER

Public Information Manager

Direct #763-323-5744

E-mail: martha.weaver@co.anoka.mn.us

Contact: Martha Weaver, Public Information Manager, 763-323-5744, or e-mail: martha.weaver@co.anoka.mn.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anoka County Receives Sunny Award; Achieves Perfect Score for Transparency

Anoka County has received the Sunny Award from the Sunshine Review, a national organization working to promote transparency in state and local government. The Sunny Award is only given to those entities with perfect scores on the Sunshine Review's rigorous website checklist. Anoka County is the only Minnesota county to receive the perfect A+ rating and one of only 113 government entities nationwide to do so.

The Sunshine Review uses a 10-point transparency checklist to evaluate the content of every state and more than 6,000 local government websites. Anoka County was lauded for posting a wide range of content to the county website including a detailed breakdown of the annual budget, audit reports, contact information for elected officials, meeting agendas and minutes, lobbying expenditures, and information about property taxes, permits and licenses, contract bids, and other public records. It can all be found at www.anokacounty.us.

"I am especially proud of this A+ rating because it affirms Anoka County's commitment to be open and accountable to our taxpayers," said Anoka County Board Chair Rhonda Sivarajah. "It

-more-

Anoka County Receives Sunny Award; Achieves Perfect Score for Transparency – Add 1

wasn't long ago that we were rated toward the bottom of the pack. We believe it is our obligation to be completely transparent in how we spend tax dollars and it's terrific to have our ongoing efforts toward that goal recognized in this way."

Michael Barnhart, [President of Sunshine Review](#), a national nonprofit, pro-transparency organization released the following statement regarding how Anoka County, MN received an "A+" transparency grade: "Sunshine Review applauds Anoka County for their excellent transparency score of an 'A+.' By enhancing their website and increasing access to information, Anoka County is proactively championing government openness and transparency. Taxpayers in Anoka County should be proud that their government learned from Sunshine Review's transparency checklist and made rapid improvements to allow more light into their government. We urge all of Minnesota's city and county governments to put the necessary resources into increasing their transparency as Anoka County has done."

-30-

MW:de