

City of Hopkins

# 2007 Annual Report



Partnering with the community to enhance the quality of life

# City Hall



## 2007 Human Rights Award

At the City Council meeting on December 4, members of the Human Rights Commission presented the Human Rights Award to Deb Butler. Butler organized a Neighborhood Watch group and worked on the National Night Out Project in the Blake Corridor area. She also helped form the Blake Road Corridor Project, a collaborative effort with cities, non-profits, school districts, property and business owners, and Hennepin County. Butler has assisted with meetings, taken minutes, recruited people from ethnic groups to be interviewed, located venues, arranged for babysitters, and purchased ethnic food for participants.

## 2007: A Year Of Progress

2007 was a year of continued progress and accomplishments in the City of Hopkins.

The City undertook a community survey in 2007 for the first time in almost twenty years. Survey results illustrated that 83% of residents felt that the City is headed in the right direction and is on track with its initiatives (page 3). The survey also showed strong support for City redevelopment efforts that continued in 2007.

The Excelsior Crossings project to be occupied by Cargill saw the first of three office buildings begin construction (page 4), while two other downtown mixed-use redevelopment projects continued to move forward.

The City continued to offer its popular Citizens Academy. The Academy, a great community-building tool, offers participants an in-depth look into City operations through a series of classes.

While the Citizens Academy has been graduating students consistently for the last few years, 2007 saw the first graduating class of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). CERT team members can provide assistance to the City in the event of an emergency or natural disaster (page 7).

The City of Hopkins and Finance Director Christine Harkess were honored in 2007 by the Government Finance Officers Association with awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

2007 brought the start of a 10-year update to the City's Comprehensive Plan (page 4). Progress was also seen with the continued planning of the light-rail transit (LRT) line through Hopkins. A station area plan was completed with community input that envisions three stations in the City (page 4).

The Council also spent a large part of the year working on its long-range capital plan for the sewer and water enterprise funds. In December 2007, the Council approved a general fund budget that reduced the city tax rate for a third consecutive year.

The Hopkins City Council looks forward to another year of successes and accomplishments in 2008.

# Community

"Small town feel" was the overwhelmingly popular answer when residents were asked what they liked most about Hopkins.



## Citizen Survey Results

What do Hopkins residents think of their city as a whole and the City services that are delivered? In 2007, the City commissioned Decision Resources, Ltd, to conduct a community survey. Professional interviewers polled 400 residents by telephone on a variety of community issues.

The survey showed that Hopkins citizens are very pleased with their community. Overall satisfaction ratings place the City solidly within the top 25% of Metropolitan Area suburbs and among the highest ranking "inner ring" communities. Over 83% of the residents surveyed felt that the City was on the right track.

Two issues dominate current residential concerns: crime and growth. Even so, residents indicate support for redevelopment and new development, targeted at "starter homes" and "move-up" homes, as well as retail shopping and dining. In addition, residents also strongly favor redevelopment to improve the downtown area.

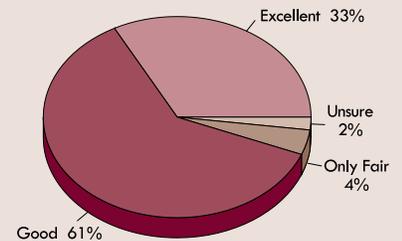
The City of Hopkins excels in its communications with citizens. Residents, including renters, are extremely complimentary in their evaluations of the City newsletter, cable television, the local newspaper, and the City's website.

Asked what they like most about Hopkins, respondents mentioned "small town feel" most often. The major task facing decision-makers remains how to preserve that small town feel and community cohesiveness while targeting development efforts to meet both current tax base and household needs. But Hopkins elected officials and City staff possess an advantage not commonly found in inner-ring communities: strong resident approval of past redevelopment efforts downtown and in the city as a whole.

The survey yielded results applicable to the entire spectrum of Hopkins residents within plus or minus five percentage points, according to Bill Morris of Decision Resources. Decision Resources clients include more than 50 cities and school districts in the seven-county Twin Cities metro area.

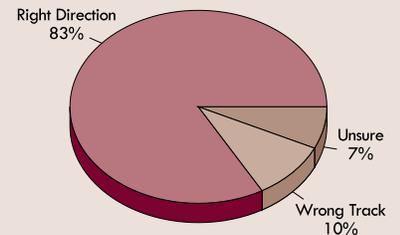
### Quality of life rating

How would you rate the quality of life in Hopkins?



### General direction of the City

Do you think things in Hopkins are generally headed in the right direction, or do you feel things are off on the wrong track?



View complete survey results online at [www.hopkinsmn.com](http://www.hopkinsmn.com).

# Planning & Economic Development

## Work Begins On Hopkins Comprehensive Plan Update

2007 brought the start of Hopkins' 2010 update of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the planning document that guides the city to 2030 and beyond. Special attention is being given to sites with high redevelopment potential in the next ten years. Both the City Council and Zoning and Planning Commission worked on the Plan, and residents provided input through community open house meetings. Additional community meetings are planned for spring of 2008. Comprehensive Plan drafts are due to the Metropolitan Council by the end of 2008.

## Development Updates



### Excelsior Crossings

The construction of Excelsior Crossings, a class A office development that will be home to Cargill employees, progressed ahead of schedule in 2007. An accident-free project was celebrated at a topping-off ceremony in July. The first building on the campus will be ready for occupancy in summer 2008. When complete the office campus will house approximately 3,000 employees in 750,000 square feet.

### LA Fitness

The former Town and Country Dodge site on Highway 7 and 17th Ave was purchased and demolished in 2007 to allow construction of a new LA Fitness center. The facility will be 45,000 square feet when completed in 2008.



### LRT Station

In August of 2007 the final report for the City of Hopkins Station Area Plan was released. This plan was the culmination of prior studies of Southwest Light Rail Transit, new research, and community input. The Station Study envisions three stations in Hopkins: Blake Rd, 8th Ave S, and Shady Oak Rd. The City plans to continue investigating and developing plans for these three locations in preparation for future LRT.





Thirty trees along Mainstreet have been permanently lit as part of Hopkins' marketing initiative.

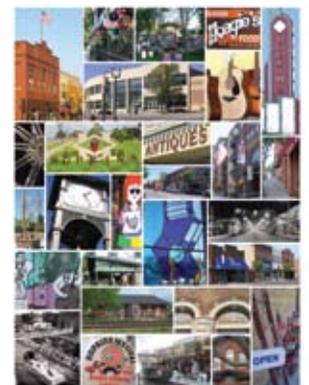
## Think Hopkins Marketing Initiative Starts Strong

The first year of the *Think Hopkins* campaign was a success. The beginning of 2007 kicked off the City's marketing campaign to educate the metro area about all Hopkins has to offer. The campaign began with a new website, [www.thinkhopkins.com](http://www.thinkhopkins.com), that showcases monthly Points of Pride, provides maps and info about local shops and restaurants, and provides updates about local development.

The *Think Hopkins* campaign also created print ads for local papers, postcards, notecards, posters, bumper stickers, and window clings. To encourage folks to get the word out about *Think Hopkins*, vehicles spotted with a bumper sticker or window cling were entered into a drawing for \$100. There were two drawing winners in 2007 with more to come in 2008. Other initiatives included an advertisement at the Hopkins Cinema 6 that began in December 2007 and will run for 6 months, and the permanent lighting of over 30 trees along Mainstreet.



The *Think Hopkins* campaign has many plans in the works for 2008. The *Think Hopkins* committee consists of local business owners, employees, and residents.



HOPKINS  
MINNESOTA  
[WWW.THINKHOPKINS.COM](http://WWW.THINKHOPKINS.COM)

# Police



## Partnering With The Community

In 2005 the level of crime and drug activity in the Blake Road Corridor had grown dramatically. This area, which makes up less than 4% of Hopkins, was accounting for nearly 22% of police calls. Officers were concerned that young children had no positive activities and were repeatedly exposed to crime and safety issues.

The Hopkins Police Department partnered with Hennepin County and Hopkins Public Schools, along with community members, the faith community, and residents, to form the Blake Road Stakeholders Collaborative. This group works to improve the quality of life in the corridor.

- A number of after school and summer programs have been offered to children. In 2007 summer programs for children were expanded from initial efforts for only kindergarten through sixth grade to also include junior high and senior high.
- A Neighborhood Watch group was formed. Over 100 residents have attended Neighborhood Watch events.

In 2007 not only did the crime rate show reductions of 8.3% but residents reported they felt safer in the corridor and the rental turnover rate declined by half.

The community is taking back the corridor and offering a better future to the children, families, and neighbors in the area.

*Back: Minnesota Timberwolves player Mark Madsen runs basketball drills with youth in Cottageville Park. Front: Children from Blake Road take part in summer programming at Eisenhower School.*

## Two Hopkins Citizens Receive Lifesaving Award

The Hopkins Police Department presented two Hopkins citizens with the Citizen Lifesaving Award at the November 7 City Council Meeting.

On September 2, 2007, Hopkins Police responded to a reported drowning incident in the complex swimming pool at Creekwood Apartments (1328 Lake St NE). The victim, 22-year-old Bilal Gedi, was visiting family at the apartment complex. A family member jumped into the pool and Gedi, who did not know how to swim, followed, not realizing how deep (8') the pool was.

The rescuers, Christa Modderman and Tina Hacker, heard screaming from the pool area, saw Gedi at the bottom of the pool, and pulled him out. They determined he had no pulse and was not breathing and administered CPR. Gedi began breathing, but was unconscious and subsequently transported to the hospital.

Gedi survived and attended the ceremony with his rescuers and Officer Stacy Lakotas, who was at the scene.



*Mayor Maxwell reads the lifesaving citation award in front of the City Council on November 7. Pictured from left to right: Officer Stacy Lakotas, victim Bilal Gedi, Mayor Gene Maxwell, and rescuers Tina Hacker and Christa Modderman.*

## The First Community Emergency Response Team

In October 2006 the Fire Department was asked by the Mayor and City Council to look in to starting a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). A CERT team is a group of citizens that are trained to help out in case of a disaster in the city. They are available to assist emergency responders with assessing damage in their neighborhood, making rescues, assessing hazards, and giving basic medical care.

Fourteen people began classes in November, which consisted of eight sessions that culminated with a scenario involving a tornado, complete with multiple victims for the members to triage and rescue from the debris. The class graduated at the December 18 City Council meeting, and will continue to meet on a quarterly basis to learn new skills and keep up with the skills already learned.

The goal of the City and the Fire Department is to have 75 to 100 people trained as CERT Team members and dispersed throughout Hopkins. If there is an emergency or disaster in the city or their neighborhood, CERT Team members can respond and assist until emergency personnel arrive.



*The first CERT class graduated at the City Council meeting on December 18, 2007.*

# Recreation



## New Water Opportunities Cause A Splash

### Wakeboarding

Wakeboarding camp was offered for the first time in the summer of 2007. The interest level for the camp was so high that a second camp was added for late summer. Camps were led on Lake Minnetonka by the local organization 10,000 Wakes Wakeboarding & Water Sports. Campers were taught basic water sports safety, balance and coordination, and several tricks.

### Youth Snorkeling

The high demand for this new opportunity to learn the skills and safety of snorkeling also resulted in more classes being added. Both classroom training and water activities were part of the curriculum. Classroom training was held at West Jr High and included instruction on equipment fit, safety procedures, and the effects of pressure. Water training was held at Shady Oak Beach and included practice in equipment use, kicks, buddy skills, diving techniques, and water entry. A total of 21 students between the ages of 8 and 12 participated in the three snorkeling classes offered.

# Public Works

## A Year of Partnerships

### Residents provide feedback on neighborhood parks

In 2007, the City sent survey forms to residents to gauge their satisfaction with the neighborhood parks. Survey forms were sent to all residents within half of a mile of each neighborhood park and over 500 were returned. Using the survey results and staying within the available park improvement funds, the Park Board will develop a detailed improvement plan addressing improvements at each park. Survey results by park are posted on the City's website.

### City partners with neighborhoods for park improvements

The City partnered with the Park Valley neighborhood to replace the picnic shelter in their park and upgrade landscaping. The City purchased materials and installed footings. A neighborhood group poured the concrete slab, erected the new picnic shelter, and installed the new landscaping.

An Interlachen neighborhood group worked with the City to construct a shelter at Interlachen Park for the neighborhood's ice resurfacer. The City provided electrical service and insurance coverage and the neighborhood group constructed the shelter and operates the ice resurfacer. The shelter is designed to be disassembled and removed from the park each spring.

### Partnership agreement means future improvements for Nine Mile Creek corridor

A partnership agreement was negotiated with Nine Mile Creek Watershed District that results in the District funding over \$2 million in improvements along the entire Nine Mile Creek corridor through Hopkins. The work will begin in fall 2008 and includes correcting streambank erosion problems, replacing culverts under 5th Street South, and upgrading the channel through the Valley Park area to improve appearance and water quality. Additionally, Three Rivers Park District has begun the design for a new regional trail to be built in 2009 that will run, in part, along the creek corridor through Valley Park and into Edina and Richfield.



*The Park Valley neighborhood partnered with the City to replace the picnic shelter in their park, and add new landscaping to its sign.*



## Additional Highlights

### Hopkins Pavilion improvements

The ice arena is brighter and "greener" thanks to lighting fixture replacements that increased illumination while reducing energy consumption. New skate tiles were installed to add a high-quality, colorful, new flooring in the facility.



### Diseased Elm in-house removal work

City crews continue to handle the removal and disposal of diseased elm trees from boulevards and City property. In 2007, City forestry employees removed 209 trees from public property.