

City of Hopkins

2008 Annual Report

Partnering with the community to enhance the quality of life



City Hall



2008: A Goal-Setting Year

In 2008, the City Council adopted new goals with a unique focus on building upon Hopkins' strengths as a community. In addition to striving to provide high quality services on a daily basis, the City understands the need to stretch further and envision a better Hopkins. Building on what the City already does well is the best way to take the community to the next level.

Through community feedback, the City Council and staff outlined three main goals for Hopkins to focus on in the next two years. Their 2008-09 Goals & Strategic Plan is broken down into 12 strategies and more than 40 action steps. Here is a brief overview:

Goal 1: Build on the Small Town Feel of Hopkins

A small-town feel is a major part of the identity of Hopkins. Surveys have demonstrated that it is also one of the primary reasons people like living in Hopkins. Efforts in the future need to capitalize on and enhance this important city asset.

Strategy 1: Create a More Vibrant Business Community

Strategy 2: Promote and Enhance City Events

Goal 2: Enhance and Promote Smart Urban Design & Walkability

Hopkins has been recognized as a city that encourages smart urban design. This includes the ability to walk to stores and other amenities. Advancing these goals also improves the small town feel.

Strategy 1: Improve Walkability and Physical Connections in the City

Strategy 2: Go Green

Strategy 3: Healthy City Initiatives

Strategy 4: Plan for Light Rail Transit

Goal 3: Take it to Them

Hopkins has a reputation for strong citizen involvement and engagement. The City needs to build upon that strength by reaching out to deliver our messages and hear from the community. The City will also strive to better educate the community on a variety of city issues, policies and programs.

Strategy 1: Business Recruitment

Strategy 2: Involve Minority Populations/Diversity

Strategy 3: Engage the Rental Community of Hopkins

Strategy 4: "Think Hopkins"- Marketing and Promoting the City of Hopkins

Strategy 5: Citizen Engagement Initiatives

To find out more about the City's goals, visit www.hopkinsmn.com.

The City of Hopkins and Finance Director Christine Harkess were again honored in 2008 by the Government Finance Officers Association with awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Public Works



Public Works and the community: During 2008 the Public Works Department had several opportunities to join with the community and explain its operations, services and equipment. These included the Citizens Academy, National Night Out, and Fire Station Open House, as well as several youth groups touring the Public Works facility.

Improvements To City's Infrastructure Continue

2008 Street & Trail Improvements

The City continued with its pavement management program in 2008 with several street improvements. A major project on Minnetonka Mills Road and 2nd Street NE included total reconstruction of Minnetonka Mills Road with new curb and gutter and storm sewer improvements, plus a mill and overlay of 2nd Street NE. Additionally, the regional trail crossing was upgraded and a new sidewalk was added along both sides of Minnetonka Mills Road. The new sidewalk vastly improves pedestrian safety for residents traveling to and from the popular Cedar Lake regional trail or Burnes Park. By narrowing the roadway and installing new, solar-powered, flashing trail crossing signs the City greatly enhanced the safety and visibility of the regional trail crossing at 2nd St NE.

Planning For Future Utilities Improvements

The City completed a comprehensive study of its utility systems in 2008 to determine future operational and capital needs. One goal of the study was to identify improvements necessary to maintain a safe and reliable water supply for domestic and firefighting purposes. Future improvement projects include emergency backup power generators for wells and the water treatment plant, Well #1 (Moline site) rehabilitation and potential additional future treatment capacity, and additional water interconnections with adjacent cities.

Residential Water Meter Upgrades

In 2008, work also began on an upgrade to the City's residential water meters. All meters are being improved with new radio-read transponder heads and batteries. The work is being done as a four-year, in-house project at substantial savings over contracting out the work.



Top: Street and sidewalk construction underway. Bottom: Completed Minnetonka Mills Road reconstruction and new sidewalk.

Planning & Economic Deve

Gathering Community Input, Making Plans For Hopkins' Future

Comprehensive Plan Update

A substantial portion of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan update was completed in 2008 and established the framework for the future of Hopkins. It will be approved in 2009 by the Metropolitan Council and go into effect in 2010. One of the major updates to the plan includes a new land use type: mixed-use, located near proposed Southwest Light Rail Transit Stations. The mixed-use designation will guide design and encourage transit-oriented development adjacent to the station areas. The plan also calls for the protection and preservation of Hopkins' established neighborhoods and vibrant downtown.



Above: A rendering of the vision for the Blake Road Corridor (Hay Dobbs). Right: Community members take part in a Blake Road Corridor planning open house.



Blake Road Corridor Small Area Plan

Work on the Blake Road Corridor Small Area Plan began in July of 2008. The Plan will provide a long-term vision for the community that will build on existing assets, such as Minnehaha Creek and access to transit, and shape new development at the Hopkins Cold Storage Site and the proposed Southwest LRT Station. Urban design improvements such as pedestrian and bicycle amenities on Blake Road and the redesign of Cottageville Park are also addressed in the Plan. Community involvement was key to the planning process.

LRT Station Planning

Two important steps needed to move the Southwest Light Rail Transitway to reality were undertaken in 2008. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Station Area Master Planning began in July 2008 and will be completed in 2009. Hopkins is slated to have three LRT Stations on the line: in the Blake Road Corridor, at approximately 8th Ave and Excelsior Blvd, and near Shady Oak Road.

Excelsior Crossings Development Update

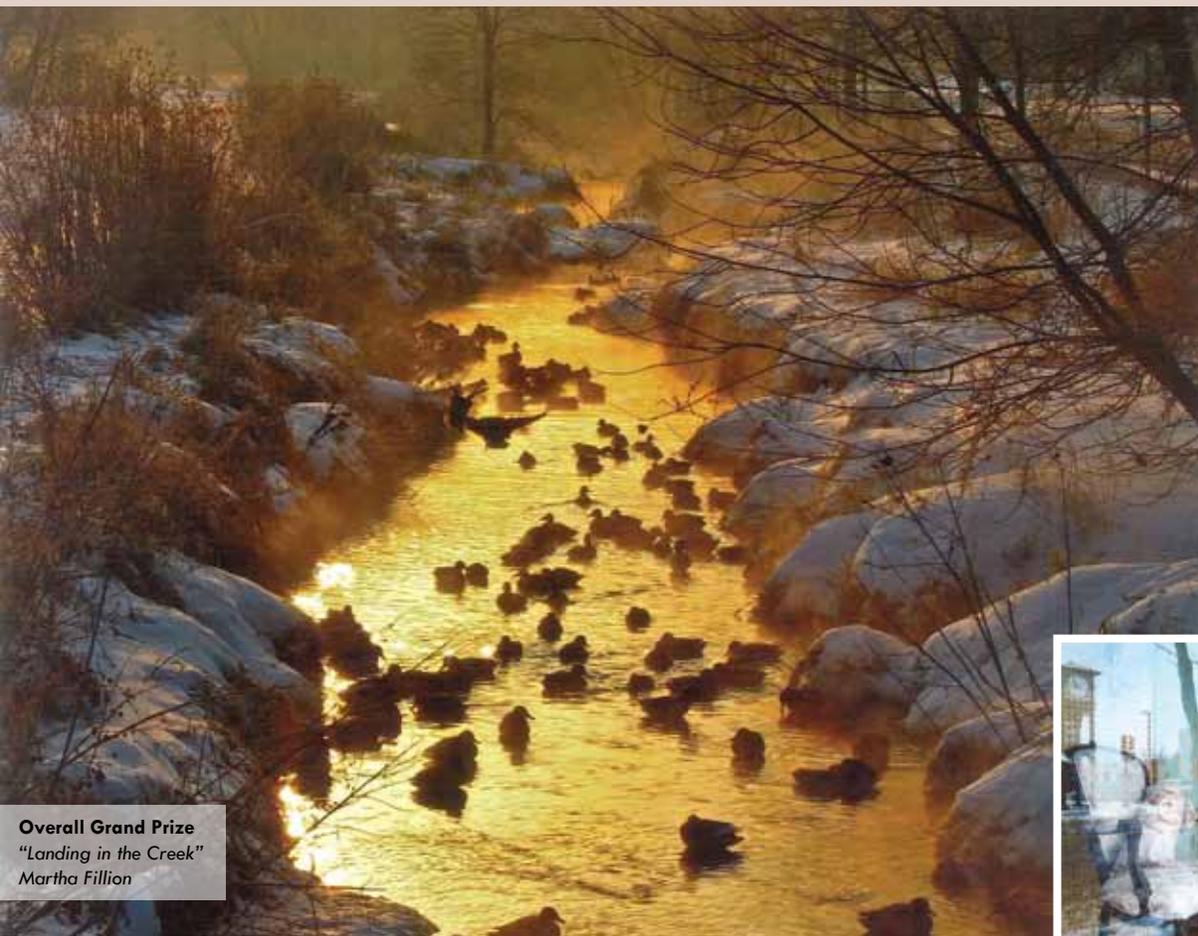
2008 saw the first wave of Cargill employees moving into the Excelsior Crossings campus. On October 30, a ribbon cutting ceremony was held to celebrate the completion of the first building. Construction on the second and third buildings has occurred on an accelerated schedule with anticipated completion dates of summer 2009 and winter 2010, respectively. When fully occupied, 3,300 Cargill employees will be working in Hopkins.

The project has already won several awards, including the 2008 award for the best build-to-suit office space of more than 100,000 sq ft from the MN Chapter of the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties.



Excelsior Crossings as of January 2009

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Overall Grand Prize
"Landing in the Creek"
Martha Fillion

Photo Contest Winners



City Showcases Its Unique Character

The Think Hopkins marketing campaign continued to highlight all the unique assets of Hopkins through its website, www.thinkhopkins.com, in 2008.

The year marked the first ever *Think Hopkins* Photo Contest. Over 160 photos were submitted in nine categories that represented the best that Hopkins has to offer. The City Marketing committee selected a winner in each category, as well as a Grand Prize winner. Winners received \$100, and their framed images will be on display at various city events and buildings.



Category winners from top to bottom, left to right: **Education** "Father's Pride" by Pamela Knetter, **Raspberry Rapture** "Raspberry Parade" by Tony Zakariasen, **Business** "Visuals of Downtown Hopkins" by Shelly Thomas, **Arts & Entertainment** "Hopkins Cinema 6" by Patrick Davidson-Locke, **The Built Environment** "Time for the Holidays" by Don Bouchier, **Recreation** "Hopkins Boys 9-10 League State Champions 2008" by Emily Miller, **Historic Hopkins** "Seeds of Change" by Patricia Isaak, **Outdoors** "Big Trees" by Arianna Madison, **Miscellaneous** "Maetzold Field" by Patrick Davidson-Locke

Police



Task Force Successful In Graffiti Fight

In 2008 the Hopkins Police Department organized a Graffiti Task Force, comprised of staff from the Detective division, as well as the Inspections and Public Works departments. Since studies show that quick removal discourages vandals from re-applying the damage, efforts were made to remove graffiti from public property quickly and to coordinate with property owners to ensure quick removal from private property as well. When graffiti was removed quickly from one area that had been vandalized twice in a week, the graffiti did not return for six months.

The Task Force also developed partnerships with businesses, such as Waste Management. Dumpsters with graffiti are being removed and replaced the same day, free of charge to customers.

Along with quick follow-up on removal, the Detective division coordinated investigative leads with other cities and submitted photographs of local graffiti to a computer system called Graffiti Net, operated by the St. Louis Park Police Department. This computer system matched incidents from other cities and helped identify suspects through comparisons of known events.

Patrol Officers made three key arrests of graffiti vandals prior to May 2008 and incidents of graffiti sharply dropped off in May of 2008.

In 2008, 158 incidents of graffiti were reported in the City of Hopkins, down from 400 incidents in 2007 and similar numbers in years prior.

Reported graffiti incidents in 2008 were down by more than half from 2007.

City Joins Joint Community Police Project

The Joint Community Police Project is a Hennepin County project to ensure healthy, safe, and livable communities for diverse residents. In January of 2008, the Hopkins Police Department became the fourth city to join the JCPP, after Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, and Richfield. Hennepin County employee Tsehai Wodajo became the Community Liaison for the Hopkins Police Department JCPP project.

Major accomplishments of the program during its first year were:

- Formed the Hopkins Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee of 17 members who represent different cultural groups in Hopkins. The Hopkins MAC is very active—they are willing to participate or take a lead in hosting community meetings.
- Conducted Spanish language classes and basic immigration and cultural adjustment workshops for Hopkins police officers.
- Held three community gatherings involving over 150 immigrants
- Created a framework to carry out JCPP activities in 2009

In 2009, a New American Academy class will be taught by police officers to help immigrants understand police procedures and laws.

The City's Community Liaison has also been able to work with immigrant victims of crime. The JCPP is funded by Hennepin County and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety.



Police meet with Somali residents at Ubah Medical Academy



Hopkins Fire Department takes part in the 2008 Raspberry Festival Grande Day Parade.

Community Support Remains Crucial To Fire Efforts

Community Donations Make AEDs Possible In City Buildings

In 2008 the Fire Department solicited donations from the Hopkins Business and Civic Association to purchase Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) for all City buildings, receiving donations from the Hopkins Youth Hockey Association, the Hopkins Rotary, and the Hopkins VFW. With their donations, the Fire Department was able to place AEDs in the Hopkins Pavilion, Hopkins Activity Center, and the Center for the Arts. Thanks to those organizations for their support. Efforts will continue to place AEDs in the remaining City buildings.

Community Emergency Response Team Grows

Since 2006 the fire department has been working to create a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). A CERT Team is a group of citizens that are interested in helping out in case of a disaster in the city. The CERT will be available to assist emergency responders with assessing damage in their neighborhood and then assist by doing rescues, assessing hazards, and providing basic medical care. In 2008 another 25 people were trained in CERT for a total of 50. Recruiting was also done in 2008 which netted 60-70 applications. Another class will be given in the spring of 2009.

Two Citizens Receive Award of Valor

On November 18, at the City council meeting, the fire department and the city awarded two citizens an award of valor for their rescue of a resident of 619 Robinwood Lane. On Monday Oct 13 there was a report of an apartment fire at that address. Chris Norum and Brandon Feist smelled smoke and began to investigate. They saw smoke coming from apartment 8. Chris pounded on the door and could not hear any one. Chris kicked in the door and found smoke to the floor and saw a fire in the living room. Brandon and Chris exited the building and reached up and pulled the occupant from the window to safety.



Mayor Maxwell presents the award of valor in front of the City Council on November 18. Pictured from left to right: Award recipients Chris Norum and Brandon Feist, Mayor Gene Maxwell, and Fire Chief Dale Specken.

Recreation

Summer Favorites Continue To Attract Large Numbers

Tennis in the Parks

Youth and adult tennis lessons were held at various parks throughout Hopkins and Minnetonka during the summer of 2008. A total of 174 children, between the ages of 4-15, participated in youth lessons at beginner, advanced beginner, or intermediate levels. The adult tennis program in the parks had a total of 64 participants throughout three 4-week sessions.



Nearly 200 children participated in tennis in 2008.

New Program Wins State Award

A new outdoor youth hockey program, Rink Rat Hockey, was offered in 2008 for boys & girls. The program was a joint effort with seven other surrounding communities, and saw a total of 85 kids registered. Following the season, the nine participating communities received an Award of Excellence for creative programming from the Minnesota Recreation & Park Association.



Adult Kickball

The Adult Kickball program had a successful year in 2008 with 24 teams participating during the 8-week summer season.

Adult Summer Softball

Softball was in full swing during the summer of 2008. Thanks to the renovation of the Central Park Ball Field #2, an additional 20 adult softball teams were able to participate during the summer season. A total of 119 teams participated in Co-Rec, Men's or Women's leagues.



Arts Center Hosts International Exhibit

The automobile was in the spotlight last summer as automobile-inspired artwork filled the Hopkins Center for the Arts and collectable cars lined Mainstreet outside the Center. With 120 works of art by 49 artists representing 8 countries and 17 states, *VELOCITY: the Art of Motion* was the largest, stand-alone exhibition of automotive art ever held in the United States and the first time such a show was held in the Midwest.

A show of vintage sports cars, one of all-British makes, and a community event titled *Cars & Guitars*, featuring American cars and live music, carried the theme onto the street. An estimated 4,000 community members visited the gallery for this show which garnered national attention.

