



# Phillips Partnership

safety—jobs—housing—infrastructure  
for the Phillips neighborhood

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**Children's Hospitals and Clinics**  
*Brock Nelson, CEO*

**Fannie Mae**  
*Missy Thompson, Director,  
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**The Minneapolis Foundation**  
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*Mayor R.T. Rybak*

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# Update

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## Phillips Partnership to Aid Chicago-Lake Crime Initiative



*The Intersection of Chicago Avenue and Lake Street.*

Since its inception in 1997, the Phillips Partnership has targeted safety as a key focus of its work in the Phillips neighborhood. Until now, the Partnership's work on safety has involved empowering residents to tackle neighborhood livability issues through the Community Crime Prevention Initiative (CCPI). CCPI, which has met every month since 1999, has been instrumental in developing noise standards, organizing trash pick-ups, and forging a closer working relationship between citizens and police officers on the community's SAFE team.

Now, at the request of CCPI's members, the Partnership has decided to expand its work on safety issues by undertaking a more direct effort to reduce crime

at the troubled intersection of Chicago Avenue South and Lake Street. Although crime in Phillips has been on the decline in the last few years, street crime at the Chicago-Lake intersection remains a concern for neighborhood residents and local businesses. Codefor reports reveal that the crime rate in Phillips dropped roughly 20% from 1998 to 2001, from 2,373 reported serious crimes to 1,899. According to police and residents, the remaining criminal activity is concentrated more on the arterials and busy intersections within Phillips, including the Chicago-Lake intersection. Between 11/8/01 and 5/8/02, there were 24 crimes at the intersection of Chicago and Lake alone, according to Codefor

charts developed by the Minneapolis police. Most of the crime at the intersection is related to drug dealing and drug addiction. Last year, Chief Robert Olson posted a squad car 24 hours per day at the intersection, but the resulting improvement disappeared when staffing levels returned to normal.

Last month, the Phillips Partnership began helping to build a coalition between residents, the police, and area businesses to substantially reduce crime at the corner. The Chicago-Lake Crime Workgroup has already held its first two meetings, and a strategic plan is beginning to take shape.

### **A Broad-Based Coalition Forms**

The members of the Crime Workgroup represent the wide

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**Chicago and Lake**  
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range of individuals and institutions with a stake in building a safer, more prosperous intersection. Law enforcement representatives include Inspector Sharon Lubinski and Lieutenant Kris Arneson of the Minneapolis Police Department's Third Precinct, as well as Chief Jack Nelson and Captain Dennis Haven of the Metro Transit Police. Councilmember Robert Lilligren's staff person, Andrea Jenkins, is an active participant in the Workgroup. Members from the business community include John Wolf, owner of Chicago-Lake Liquors, and Ken Palmer, the manager of the Wells Fargo branch office at Chicago and Lake. Pastor Lee Cunningham of Messiah Lutheran Church is also participating, and has opened the Church's assembly room for meetings. Rounding out the Workgroup is longtime Phillips resident and activist Muriel Simmons, who is lending her expertise and firsthand knowledge of the neighborhood.

While each member offers a different reason for joining the effort, they all share a strong desire to bring about lasting, meaningful improvements at Chicago and Lake. According to Lieutenant Kris Arneson, "The police invariably have the best success in addressing neighborhood crime when everyone in the affected area works together to find solutions. The change in the last couple years at Franklin and Bloomington is a perfect example of the positive developments that can occur when law enforcement, the business community, and neighborhood residents join forces."

Pastor Lee Cunningham says that Messiah Lutheran's participation in the Crime Workgroup is part of the Church's mission to forge new connections to the

Phillips neighborhood. "As a member of the faith community of Phillips, Messiah Lutheran is committed to reestablishing a meaningful connection between the church and the people of the neighborhood. Our involvement in the Crime Workgroup offers a concrete opportunity to achieve that while simultaneously addressing a specific problem within the community."

John Wolf, the owner of Chicago-Lake Liquors, points out that the intersection's reputation as a hotbed of criminal activity inevitably hinders efforts to promote much-needed business development. "As a business owner, I know that the public's perception of Chicago-Lake as

## The members of the Crime Workgroup represent the wide range of individuals and institutions with a stake in building a safer, more prosperous intersection.

unsafe is the first, biggest hurdle to promoting retail development here," says Mr. Wolf. "I committed to joining this Workgroup because I would like nothing better than to see this corner realize its potential as a major hub along a revitalized Lake Street retail corridor."

Muriel Simmons says that the intersection is well placed for a turnaround, but cautions that a successful crime prevention initiative must include intervention and outreach to the individuals caught in the cycle of crime. "With the new Heart Hospital at

Abbott Northwestern and the promise of new access from the Interstate, this area is really starting to blossom," says Ms. Simmons. "Our challenge in encouraging that revitalization is to address some of the root causes of the problems at Chicago and Lake, rather than simply pushing criminal activity into the neighboring areas."

### Diversity at Work: Devising a Multi-faceted Strategy

At its first meeting on May 28, the Workgroup dug into the challenging work of identifying both short and long-term strategies to reducing crime at Chicago-Lake. A number of approaches naturally involve law enforcement. For example, Workgroup members from the Minneapolis Police Department and the Metro Transit Police are working together to identify ways in which their respective forces can work together more efficiently at the corner. Other suggested approaches for increasing the effectiveness of the police force include enlisting the help of Hennepin County probation officers to identify loiterers at the corner. The Workgroup is exploring the possibility of increasing the police presence through "buyback" funding, which uses community block grant and weed & seed money to pay officers' overtime wages. The Workgroup is also examining the impact of the drug court's sentencing policies on recidivism, particularly as it relates to identified drug dealers.

John Wolf of Chicago-Lake Liquors and Ken Palmer of Wells Fargo have agreed to reach out to fellow members of the business community and enlist their support of the Crime Workgroup. The Workgroup has obtained the identity of the owner of one of the more troublesome properties and is

## Phillips Part I Offenses, 1998-2001

Year	Number of Reported Crimes
1998	2,373
1999	2,097
2000	1,929
2001	1,899

*The U.S. Dept of Justice defines Part I Offenses as those that indicate a high level of criminality within a community. They include homicide, rape, assault, robbery, burglary, theft, arson, and motor vehicle theft.*

working on ways to encourage the absentee landlord to take greater responsibility for the problems at the building.

At the group's first meeting on May 28, Muriel Simmons reported that four neighborhoods—Central, West Phillips, Midtown, and Powderhorn—are planning a "blockbusting" party at Chicago and Lake for early July. The Workgroup has pledged to support the party, which will feature music, food, and reach-out efforts to address the needs of the people who frequent the corner. Phillips Partnership staff is also working developing a plan to connect people shopping for drugs with treatment options.

While the work of the Chicago-Lake Crime Workgroup is just beginning, it is already clear that its key strength lies in the diverse voices and experiences of its members, as well as their firm commitment to achieving real change at Chicago and Lake. As Muriel Simmons puts it, "We stood up to crime before, along Portland Avenue in the past three years. We'll stand up again against crime at this corner." ■

# Health Careers Institute Update

As the Health Careers Institute's spring semester draws to a close, the school's staff and stakeholders are stepping back to celebrate the year's successes and evaluate its challenges. Total enrollment rose to 373 students this year, an increase from last year's enrollment of 317.

## Extending the Career Ladder: A Multi-Faceted Approach

A core component of HCI's mission is to provide students with opportunities to achieve substantial, sustainable advances along the career ladder. Perhaps the best illustration of HCI's success in accomplishing that goal was the enrollment of 144 current hospital employees in HCI classes during the last two years. Abbott Northwestern Hospital employees have been particularly well-represented at HCI, but recruitment from both Children's Hospitals and HCMC is also on the rise. In fact, Children's Hospitals & Clinics has set a goal of doubling the number of employees who attend HCI during the next year. According to Children's Hospitals CEO Brock Nelson, the benefits are numerous. "We believe that encouraging and assisting our employees to pursue advanced health care training benefits everyone," says Mr. Nelson. "The hospital ends up with a highly-skilled, loyal employee, while the employee is able to move into a more advanced career without sacrificing the benefits of an existing employment relationship with the hospital. HCI's proximity to the hospital and convenient class schedule enables our employees to obtain this training without sacrificing their current jobs."

HCI is also expanding the scope its curriculum as part of its



*HCI student April Muhammad-Oyekan.*

efforts to extend the career ladder. This year, 81 students enrolled in the school's new general education courses, which are designed to fulfill prerequisites for more advanced, two-year degree nursing and medicinal technician programs. HCI will continue to offer additional general education prerequisites next year, and plans to provide mentorship to students who continue with advanced programs on the MCTC campus.

MCTC has selected HCI as the site to demonstrate the first Health Care Core Curriculum classes this summer. According to MCTC Director of Nursing, Jane Foote, "The core curriculum will create greater flexibility for students, especially since it will be delivered both at the school and via the Web. More important, the core curriculum will provide students with a base of knowledge that they can apply to any health occupation, and will better equip them to choose the direction of their health careers." This summer's "test run" of the program at HCI will include courses in Behaviors

for Success, Communication in Health Care, and Health Care Ethics. Upon completion of the core curriculum, students will be able to either take a two-credit nursing assistant "skill set" course, or move into careers with less direct patient care, depending on their preference.

Finally, HCI is working closely with the Hennepin County Administrator to develop accelerated training programs for foreign-born health care professionals. Many immigrants have had health care training and experience in their home countries, but are prevented from practicing in the United States by a daunting and labyrinthine licensing process. HCI and Hennepin County are teaming up to devise a strategy to tap this rich resource of skilled health care workers by helping these individuals return to their chosen careers.

## Focus on Phillips: Improving Recruitment a Key Goal for Next Year

As an outgrowth of the Phillips Partnership's job training initiative in the Phillips neighborhood, the Health Careers Institute had an initial goal of recruiting at least 50% of its students from the Phillips neighborhood. The school's flexibility, convenient location, and career-oriented training has proven attractive to a wide range of students, however, and enrollment from Phillips has fallen short of the 50% goal. HCI also received significant Empowerment Zone funding in its first two years, and the availability of tuition scholarships through that program led to unexpectedly high numbers of students from areas beyond Phillips, including adjacent neighborhoods and portions of Near North Minneapolis.

Notably, students from the Empowerment Zone, while not part of HCI's original target population, share many of its attributes, including a history of poverty and reduced accessibility to education and job training.

Nonetheless, consistent with HCI's commitment to serve the people of Phillips, the HCI Board of Directors recently authorized the hiring of a part-time recruitment coordinator to increase enrollment from the neighborhood. This coordinator will build deeper and more direct relationships with communities within Phillips in order to maximize residents' chances to benefit from the opportunities at HCI.

## Student Stories Continue to Illustrate HCI's Positive Impact

As always, this year's students have inspirational and moving stories to tell about their decision to pursue a health career through HCI. The experience of student April Muhammad-Oyekan offers a great testament to the powerful combination of accessible education, guaranteed employment, and personal resolve and determination.

Shortly after moving to Phillips from Chicago several years ago, Ms. Muhammad-Oyekan suffered a brain aneurysm and required brain surgery that left her in an intensive recovery and rehabilitation program for over a year. Although she had been a licensed nursing assistant before the aneurysm, her doctors recommended that she undergo retraining before returning to that job. Ms. Muhammad-Oyekan says she's not sure how she would have managed to complete her retraining without the tuition scholarship she received from HCI. The school's convenient location—just three blocks from her home, and right next door to Children's Hospital—enabled her to finish the program while

**HCI**  
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holding down a job in housekeeping at Children's.

After graduating with top marks, Ms. Muhammad-Oyekan took a CNA position at Children's. She now plans to enter the RN program and is in the midst of taking prerequisite courses at MCTC and HCI. "HCI was a godsend to me, and the fact that I can work on my RN requirements there is an added bonus," she says. "I always wanted to be an RN, but I chose to be a parent first," she says. "Now that my kids are grown, it's my time. I want to be in a financial position to help my daughter and granddaughter pursue their education, when that time comes." She hopes to use her education to help others in her new community. "After I obtain my RN degree, I'd like to work in the TAMS [Teen Age Medical Services] program in the neighborhood. I've felt very much at home in Phillips since I moved here, and I would like to be able to give something back."

Ms. Muhammad-Oyekan gives HCI high marks for giving people a chance to improve their lives, and she often encourages others to look into the program. "My best friend and her sister will be starting the CNA class soon, and I'm always telling my coworkers to check out the school. It's important for people to have avenues to improve their lives, but they also need the right information to find available opportunities." She attributes her success to a combination of good fortune, the outstretched helping hand she encountered at HCI, and her own tenaciousness and determination. While she had to overcome her share of obstacles to pursue an education, she cannot imagine having turned her back on the opportunity. "As I see it, if someone is offering you knowledge and is willing to help you foot the bill, you should do whatever you can to take advantage of that." ■

## infrastructure

# Full Speed Ahead: I-35W Access Project Gains Momentum

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) of the I-35W Access Project has been hard at work, trying to build a plan to make I-35W work to benefit the South Minneapolis neighborhoods. The I-35W Access Project is beginning to take shape.

### The Design Process

The City's Department of Public Works is managing a comprehensive traffic study to determine the best way to manage traffic in local streets resulting from the Access Project and the potential reopening of Nicollet Avenue at Lake Street. The study also evaluates the impact of planned developments in the area, including the Sherman Associates plan to redevelop the existing K-Mart site while re-establishing the Nicollet/Lake intersection. At the request of participating neighborhood organizations, some city streets are being considered for change from one-way to two-way.

The PAC's workplan is a composite of environmental and traffic design studies. Project staff have developed a set of recommendations from this work. Project design plans will be presented to PAC members and voted on at their August 27 meeting. In mid-September, the PAC will hold a series of open house/public meetings to give community members the opportunity to learn more about the proposals and provide feedback to the PAC, Project staff and consultants. At their September 24 meeting, PAC members will review the designs to be submitted to the Phillips Partnership, Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis for their approval.

### The Funding Matrix

The estimated cost for the pro-



*Preliminary design layout, I-35 Access Project.*

ject is now \$150 million. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) has committed \$97.8 million to the project. Federal funding has been obtained so far in the amount of \$8.7 million and \$8.8 million. Another \$34.7 million is being requested from Congress leaving \$9.5 million needed from County, City and Metropolitan sources.

"We're pleased to have reached an agreement with MnDOT regarding the funding of this project," emphasized County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin. "It is not a simple proposition to make I-35W work better for the neighborhood. We're reaching an agreement of what that should look like. MnDOT's support needs legislative approval for increased levels of transportation funding and is crucial to moving ahead with project plans."

### A Gateway Opportunity

A major feature of the Access Project will be to construct the bridges and ramps that incorporate neighborhood approved mitigation and enhancement measures. The goal is to take full

advantage of the opportunity to integrate aesthetics and neighborhood identity missing from the roadway's original design. The project will incorporate pedestrian-friendly access, public art, neighborhood gateways and other features that make a statement about entering South Minneapolis. This will welcome people into neighborhoods, in contrast to the existing design characterized by many as a detriment to the neighborhood. "We really hope that this thoughtful design process will restore a sense of community pride and create a genuine gateway," said Mike Gramling, PAC member representing Powderhorn Park neighborhood and Vice-chair of the PAC Subcommittee working on the mitigation and enhancement measures.

South Minneapolis neighborhoods have long suffered from inadequate access and the absence of a plan for I-35W. Our goal is to not only rectify this immediate problem, but plan well into the future so that the reconstruction serves as an opportunity for growth and neighborhood prosperity. ■

## Minneapolis Mayor R. T. Rybak

Earlier this year, the Phillips Partnership welcomed Mayor R. T. Rybak to its ranks. The Mayor joined the Partnership after taking office in January 2002, but his interest in the Phillips neighborhood long predates the recent mayoral election. His connection to Phillips has its roots in his childhood, when his parents owned a drug store in the neighborhood. As Mayor Rybak recalls, "I spent many evenings and weekends at the store, eating dinner at the Chef Café and delivering prescriptions. The neighborhood shared a real sense of integration and community-building in that era. Unfortunately, that dynamic began to erode following the freeway construction in the 1960s, which has challenged the community's sense of connectedness and vitality."

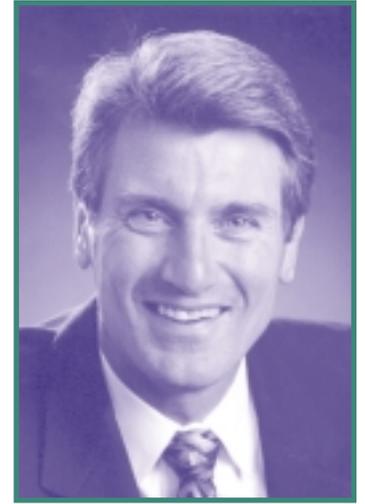
In the years prior to assuming public office, Mayor Rybak gained significant experience in business development while still devoting substantial energy to community activism. At the time he was elected, he was a business consultant with a variety of clients. In the late 1980s, he served as the first director of development for the Downtown Council, where he raised private funds to bring new companies to the city, worked to retain small businesses and artists displaced by development, and helped bring the Farmer's Market to Nicollet Mall. Mayor Rybak also spent much of his career in journalism, serving as the publisher of the *Twin Cities Reader* and working as a reporter for the *Minneapolis Tribune* in the late '70s and '80s. The Mayor has a long and varied history of com-

munity service, which has run the gamut from service on the boards of non-profits to coaching Little League and leading a Cub Scout troop.

Mayor Rybak has long been a champion of comprehensive, farsighted urban planning that incorporates environmental stewardship, transit solutions that promote independence from the automobile, and affordable housing. Indeed, the Mayor has made affordable housing one of his top priorities, and he finds this aspect of the Phillips Partnership's work particularly compelling. As he puts it, "The Partnership's housing initiatives in Phillips present an excellent means of achieving some of the goals I have set for my administration."

The Mayor's business experience and public service make him keenly aware of the potential for innovation and success inherent to the public-private partnership model. "I have witnessed firsthand the effectiveness of a dynamic, entrepreneurial business approach to solving problems," says Rybak. "The Phillips Partnership is a prime example of how we should move energetically, across the sectors, to strengthen our neighborhoods. It offers a remarkable formula for progress, and a great opportunity to work on the issues that matter to the City." The Phillips Partnership's ability to leverage public and private investment is especially attractive, given the City's current budget challenges. "My job as Mayor is to find ways to do more with less," he says, "and partnerships between government and the private sector are critical to achieving that."

Mayor Rybak has deep personal roots in the Phillips neighborhood. His role as the leader of the City, his personal ties to the community, and his experience in business development all combine to make him a welcome addition to the Phillips Partnership. As he puts it, "Despite its current challenges, the Phillips community, with its rich history and wealth of diversity, is a great asset to the City, and I embrace the chance to join the Partnership's efforts to foster the neighborhood's revitalization." ■



Mayor R. T. Rybak.

## housing

### Growing by Leaps and Bounds: Property Values Continue to Rise in Phillips

Once recognized for its crime-ridden streets and depressed property values, the Phillips neighborhood is making headlines yet again. This time the news out of Phillips is the growth in home values and livability. Over the past years, the Phillips neighborhood has seen a remarkable resurgence in its housing market, jumping from an average price of \$46,598 in 1997, to an impressive \$117,363 in 2001, an increase in value of nearly 60%. As the property values continue to rise, the community has rebounded.

"It's remarkable," commented Minneapolis Foundation Pres-

ident Emmett Carson when referring to the condition of the houses lining the stretch of Portland Avenue between 26th and 28th streets. "Where once we saw boarded up properties, there are now brand new homes and apartment buildings. This neighborhood has received more than a face-lift, it has been transformed."

#### An Extension of Success

Continuing its commitment to sustained affordability and increased livability in Phillips, the Partnership is currently exploring

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# housing

## **Property Values** *from page 5*

a potential Phase II to the Joseph Selvaggio Initiative (JSI). In its first phase, the Initiative invested \$7 million in rehabbing 24 affordable apartment units; exterior improvements for 69 homes; and designing streetscape improvements within an eight block area bounded by 26th and 28th Streets, and Chicago and Portland Avenues.

“The Selvaggio project was such a huge success,” expressed County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin. “It really lifted both the physical appearance and the spirit of the neighborhood. We hope to be able to continue the progress and precedent estab-

lished by this initiative.”

Partnership staff will work together with Project for Pride in Living (PPL) to conduct a preliminary feasibility study to identify possible initiative options. At the conclusion of the study, staff will deliver their findings and recommendations to the Partners at the next quarterly Partnership meeting June 17. Should a Phase II be added to the JSI agenda, the Partnership would engage Phillips residents in the overall design process by implementing a community advisory committee consisting of residents, community leaders and members of both the faith and business community.

“The tangible results of the Joseph Selvaggio initiative are vis-

ible everyday as I look across the street from the hospital,” said Abbott Northwestern President, Denny DeNarvaez. “It has made such a difference, not only in raising the visual value of the neighborhood, but in the spirit of both the residents and the employees of Abbott Northwestern that feel part of the community. It has helped to restore pride in the neighborhood.”

### **A Solid Foundation**

Other housing initiatives in the neighborhood have contributed mightily to the success story in Phillips. Portland Place, the Phillips Park Initiative, and the Hope Community’s efforts have lifted urban blocks within Phillips. The Partnership’s Sel-

vaggio Initiative focused on stabilizing affordable housing in the Phillips neighborhood. Though there is still work to be done, the work of the Partnership has spurred both the private and public communities to redefine and overcome a once negative stigma associated with the Phillips neighborhood.

“The City continues to applaud the outstanding performance of the Phillips Partnership in addressing sustainable affordable housing in the Phillips neighborhood,” says Mayor R.T. Rybak. “It lays a great foundation and sets a high standard for further non-profit development and community engagement.” ■



Phillips  
Partnership

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