DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
Rich Lallier, Director

CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

Dan Haak, Manager
Street Engineering/Construction
900 City Hall Annex
25 W. Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102-1660

Telephone: 651-266-6080
Fax: 651-292-6315

The Most Livable City in America

October 12, 2012

Dear Property Owner:

The City of Saint Paul's Department of Public Works will hold a neighborhood meeting to present a proposed Residential Street Vitality Program (RSVP) project to be constructed in your neighborhood during the summer of 2013. (see map on the last page for more details) This meeting is an opportunity to learn about the construction process and to inform city staff of your concerns. The meeting for the **MADISON-BENSON** RSVP project will be held at:

6:00-8:30pm, Wednesday,
November 7, 2012

Hillcrest Recreation Center
1978 Ford Parkway

General Street Reconstruction Information:
Street reconstruction includes concrete curb and gutter, storm sewer drains, sewer and water main repair as needed, bituminous pavement, sodded boulevards, boulevard trees, lantern style street lighting, concrete outwalks, concrete driveway aprons and public art. In addition, as part of the City's Emerald Ash Borer Management Program, all ash trees in the boulevards will be removed by the City prior to the start of construction. Construction will begin in the spring of 2013 and be completed in the fall (November) of 2013.

Specific Topics to be discussed at the meeting are:

Street Widths:
Most of the existing streets in the project area are between 30' and 32' wide. Due to the existing topography and the proximity of existing mature boulevard trees, we are proposing to reconstruct the streets close to the existing width. The proposed street widths are as follows:

Adrian Street between Montreal Way and Thurston – 36' wide
Benson Avenue between Madison and Rankin – 32' wide
Benson Avenue between Homer and Leland – 32' wide
Glenn Terrace between Benson and RR – 20' wide
Munster Avenue between Sue and Edgcumbe – 32' wide
Selma Lane between Ivan Way and Montreal – 16' wide
Snelling Place between Rockwood and Benson – 30' wide
Springfield between Benson and West Seventh – 32' wide
Stewart Avenue between Rankin and Homer – 32' wide
Stewart Avenue between Davern and Maynard – 32' wide
Sumner Street between Norfolk and Sheridan – 32' wide
Wheeler Street between Shepard and Norfolk – 30' wide
Wordsworth Avenue between Prior and Edgcumbe – 32' wide

These proposed street widths are not fixed. If residents would like a narrower or wider street width, this meeting is an opportunity to vocalize that preference.

Ash Trees in the Boulevards
In 2009, a noxious insect, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), was found to have invaded the Hampden Park neighborhood of Saint Paul. In states like Ohio and Michigan, where this insect has gained a foothold, EAB has proven to be deadly to nearly all ash trees. Wishing to cost effectively replace trees likely to be affected in a timely manner, the City has decided to remove all boulevard ash trees where major construction is scheduled. In the Madison/Benson RSVP project there are 51 ash trees that will be removed and replaced with other species in conjunction with this street project. The City's policy for dealing with the Emerald Ash Borer will be further explained at the meeting.

Water Services:
As part of this project, Saint Paul Regional Water Services will replace all **lead** water services from the water main to the property line at no additional expense to the homeowner. This is typically done ahead of the Public Works project starting. Not all homes in your area have services that are lead pipe. You will be contacted by letter, which will indicate whether or not your service will be affected by this replacement program. If you wish to replace your portion of the service, which is behind the property line, you must hire a private contractor. **Saint Paul Regional Water Services** will also send out a list of contractors. You can contact the service desk at **651-266-6270** if you have any questions.

The homes that are affected will receive a notice the day before their water is temporarily shut off for this replacement work.

The hydrants and water main may also be replaced near your property. The hydrants are typically replaced during the winter and early spring. In these cases you will be notified on your front door that you will be out of water for the day. The water main replacement will be done during the Public Works construction project. In cases where the water main in front of your home needs replacing, you will be put on a temporary water service that runs above ground while the main is installed and tested

Gas Meters:
If you still have gas meters inside of your home, Xcel will probably be working on your block to update their system and to move those meters to the outside of the house. For more information about natural gas work on your street, please contact **Mike Madigan, Xcel Energy,** at **651-265-7068.**

Sewers:
The Contractor will be installing or repairing storm or sanitary sewer mains and building catch basins. The City will check the mainline sanitary sewer and connections. If there are indications that your service connection is bad, we will send you a letter suggesting that you have it repaired.

If you have problems with your sanitary sewer service, now is the time to get it fixed. **You can save money if your service is repaired during construction versus after.**
Repairs to the connection or to the sewer service from the property line to the main can be done by the City's contractor. You will need to sign a waiver form if you would like the City's contractor to do the work. Waiver forms will be available at the meeting or can be obtained by calling **Barb Mundahl** at **651-266-6112**.

Any work required on private property should be done by a private contractor. All work on the sanitary service is at the property owner's expense. Please contact the **Sewer Utility Service Desk** for information regarding your sanitary sewer service at **651-266-6234**.

Outwalks:
Outwalks will be moved if they are within 5' of an existing tree, to help prevent tree roots from heaving the walk up in the future. Carriage walks are the narrow sidewalks that run adjacent to the curb. These will be removed with street construction. The City does not replace them. If you do not want an outwalk please let me know. Otherwise a 3' wide outwalk will be constructed at every residence.

Boulevard Gardens:
Some residents have **boulevard gardens**. They will likely be damaged during construction. If you have plants you want to keep, I suggest moving them. The Contractor will install topsoil within the boulevard and sod after the street work is done. If you do not want sod, please give me or the city inspector a call and let us know. Sprinkler systems in the boulevard may also be damaged during construction. It is the property owner's responsibility to remove or replace their sprinkler system.

Boulevard Rain Gardens:
The City of Saint Paul is partnering with the Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) to promote the installation of rain gardens as part of this project. Residents may choose to have a rain garden installed within the boulevard in front of their property at no cost. Where feasible, the City will install a curb cut, create a small depression behind the curb, and install rain garden soil and hardwood mulch.

CRWD will provide the native plants and coordinate a neighborhood planting day after completion of the street work. Site visits will be conducted this spring to determine acceptable locations and identify potential utility, tree or outwalk conflicts. Homeowners are responsible to maintain the gardens, which includes watering until the plants are established and regular weeding throughout the growing season. Please note that many locations in this project area will not be appropriate for rain gardens due to very shallow bedrock. The streets in this project that would be appropriate for rain gardens are **Sumner Street, Wordsworth Avenue and Munster Avenue.**

Public Art

In 2009, the City Council passed an ordinance that 1% of the cost of most public construction projects in Saint Paul be designated for the addition of public art to that project. Some examples of public art will be shown at the meeting to explain what this means to the project, and to help the neighborhood start to think about public art opportunities for the Madison-Benson area. For more information, contact Public Art Ordinance Administrator, **Regina Flanagan at 651-266-9159**.

Street Lighting:

New lantern style street lights will be installed in the project area. The existing street lights on wood poles will be removed once the new street lights are operational. The wood poles will be removed if they only carry a street light. If they also have electrical, phone or cable TV lines, they will remain in place. Xcel and other utilities do not bury their over-head lines as part of construction projects like this unless that work is paid for by the affected property owners.

Assessments:

The project is funded by **assessments** from the property owners and by street improvement bonds. The property owner's assessment covers approximately 25% of project cost. The 2013 assessment rates have not yet been set. We anticipate them to be around **$60.00 per linear foot of street frontage**. Corner residential lots are assessed for the short side only. Commercial lots, including apartment buildings are assessed for both sides.

Assessments will be approved in the fall of 2013. A bill will be sent to the property owner. Whatever portion of the bill that is not paid within 30 days will automatically go onto the property taxes, where it can be paid over 20 years with simple interest. There is a senior citizen deferment program. For more information, contact **Lynn Moser** at **651-266-8851.**

Reconstruction Project Options:

Optional Delay Policy: An individual street block may be removed from a project under the following conditions: A petition stating the property owners' request that the City remove the listed block from the project area. The requesting property owner will be responsible for circulating the petition. The petition must be signed by owners of 75% of the property footage abutting the block proposed for removal. The petition will be validated by Public Works and sent to the District Council. If approved by the District Council, the final decision to remove the block will be made by the City Council at the public hearing for the project.

Existing sidewalk may be replaced dependent on severity of condition. At this time, there is no intention of installing sidewalks where none exist today. New sidewalks can be added where no sidewalk exists by request of the neighborhood or an individual property owner. Additional assessments may apply to new construction. Contact **Al Czaia** at **266-6108** for more information.

Alley paving is not part of the RSVP project. However, alley paving may be requested by the abutting property owners and may be done in conjunction with the project. This work is 100% assessed to the abutting property owners and typically runs about $25/ L.F. or a little higher. This work must get council approval before we can add it to the project. The contact person is **Scott Brimer** at **266-6225**.

We plan to start construction in the spring of 2012 and be completed by fall. You will receive a letter from the construction manager about a week before we start work on the project. I recommend keeping the letter for the useful numbers that you may need later during construction.

Weekly project updates will be available on the web site:
www.ci.stpaul.mn.us/government/publicworks/construction.

Questions or comments? Please contact me at 651-266-6112.

Sincerely,

Barbara Mundahl, P.E.
Project Manager