

Dear Neighbors,

As we move into the winter season, we enter a time when families and communities gather, reflect, and find warmth together. November marked Native American Heritage month – we uplift the stories of the Dakota peoples, who were forcibly displaced from what is now St. Paul for its rich natural resources. We honor the Dakota people, whose innate relationship with this land embodies the teaching *Mitákuye Oyás’iŋ – we are all related.*

This season, we hold close the immigrant families who are experiencing fear and uncertainty due to the removal of temporary protected status (TPS). **WSCO stands firmly against the hateful rhetoric being directed toward our Somali community and remains committed to protecting and uplifting all our immigrant neighbors.**

In this newsletter, you'll learn more about how we are organizing to protect our immigrant communities and ways you can get involved in collective action. You'll also learn about community engagement opportunities happening before our offices close for the year, as well as highlights from what we've been working on this past month. As winter settles in and the new year approaches, **we continue building a West Side where every neighbor feels safe, supported, and connected.**

We Keep Us Safe.

A Statement on Immigration Enforcement From WSCO

West Side Community Organization is a community-based nonprofit that has served as the Saint Paul's West Side (District 3) for over 50 years. We work alongside our residents to build collective power, advance justice, and ensure racial equity for all people in our community.

During these challenging times in our community, our city, and our state, **it is more important than ever that we stay united, support one another, and protect our neighbors.**

This morning, we received a report of a suspicious vehicle at El Burrito. Our team immediately arrived on site to ensure the safety of our community and to observe for any potential activity. Upon arrival, we identified two SUVs with tinted windows. After monitoring the situation, we confirmed that the individuals inside were simply having lunch. No enforcement activity took place.

We denounce the presence of all entities targeting immigrants and the current administration's efforts to attack and criminalize communities of color. What we are witnessing is a system that punishes civilians not for wrongdoing – but for trying to work, raise families, and contribute to their communities. These efforts are not protecting anyone. They are destabilizing neighborhoods, tearing families apart, and spreading fear. It is a coordinated strategy to keep our communities from feeling safe, powerful, or connected. **But our strength comes from standing together. Our strength comes from refusing to let these tactics divide us.**

We want to encourage our community to continue observing carefully, verifying information, and getting trained so we can keep one another safe – **while also avoiding unnecessary alarms.** If you see any suspicious activity on the West Side (ZIP code 55107), call or text 612-946-8940. Let us always lead with the spirit of the Hummingbird: protecting our community with clarity, courage, and care.

WSCO calls on all neighborhood organizations and fellow District Councils: **get organized.** Build networks now. Mutual defense begins at the local level. If it can happen to one of our communities, it can happen to any community.

To our West Side community, we recommend the following:

✘ **Stay connected** to us for our Hummingbird Initiative meetings, trainings, and resources. Sign up for our newsletter to be the first to know of any upcoming activities, or reach out to thi@wSCO.org.

✘ **Connect with the Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Committee (MIRAC).** Follow them on social media. Sign up for their emails. Attend their trainings, so you're prepared to safely respond to activity in your neighborhood.

We invite this to be our community mantra:

We refuse to be intimidated.

We refuse to let our neighbors be taken in silence.

We refuse to let fear define who we are.

We protect each other.

We look out for each other.

We will show up – again, and again, and again. Because when we say all our families matter, we mean it.

From the Flats to the Future

Inheritance Fund Closing Celebration

Join WSCO for a gathering to honor West Side Flats descendants, acknowledge the community power that made this reparative milestone possible, and celebrate the closing of the 2025 Inheritance Fund!

Today, four West Side Flats descendants have already received downpayment assistance for a new home, with three more applications currently pending. This progress is the result of years of community advocacy – decades of West Siders demanding that reparative action be taken for the generational harm done to their families. The Inheritance Fund is one meaningful step forward.

Sun, Dec 14

1:00 PM – 1:45 PM

10 River Park Plaza

We hope you will join WSCO and our community partners for a brief but heartfelt celebration of this milestone as we continue building a reparative, community-led legacy for the West Side Flats!

[REGISTER HERE](#)

ROBERT STREET WE DESERVE SAFE, GREEN STREETS! SHARE YOUR INPUT

From 2026 to 2028, Robert Street will be reconstructed from the ground up – and West Siders have set a strong vision and accountable plan to ensure this project benefits us, the people who call this neighborhood home.

Through our work as your neighborhood organization, WSCO knows West Siders want to live in a sustainable community with public green spaces and a vibrant diversity of trees. In fact, tree removal will be one of the first impacts we can all see and feel as utility work on Robert St. begins in 2026.

For a big project like Robert Street, MnDOT is required to provide funding for **"Visual Quality Improvements"** – including replanting trees. For Robert Street, MnDOT has \$200,000 for these improvements and community members have already weighed in that greening the corridor is a top priority. The initial Visual Quality plan is expected in January and WSCO will create opportunities for community members, like you, to share your input.

Stop by Backstory Coffee Roasters for community office hours with the project manager, Chris Bower, and share your vision for Robert St!

Wed, Dec 10

12:00 PM – 2:00 PM, drop in anytime!

432 Wabasha St

Public Hearing on Proposed 2026–2027 County Budget and Tax Levy

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing on **Thu, Dec 11 at 6 pm** in the Council Chambers (3rd floor of City Hall, 15 W Kellogg Blvd) to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the proposed budget. Residents who wish to speak will have 3 minutes to give their testimony. More details about the proposed budget can be found on [Ramsey County's budget page](#).

We'll See You in the New Year!

WSCO closed Dec 19 - Jan 2

The WSCO office will be closed from Dec 19 - Jan 2. During this time, our staff is unavailable to take meetings and respond to email or phone calls. The Hummingbird Network will remain active and will respond to any urgent calls, texts, or emails.

COMMUNITY PROGRESS REPORT

Here's a quick look at what we've been up to the past month!



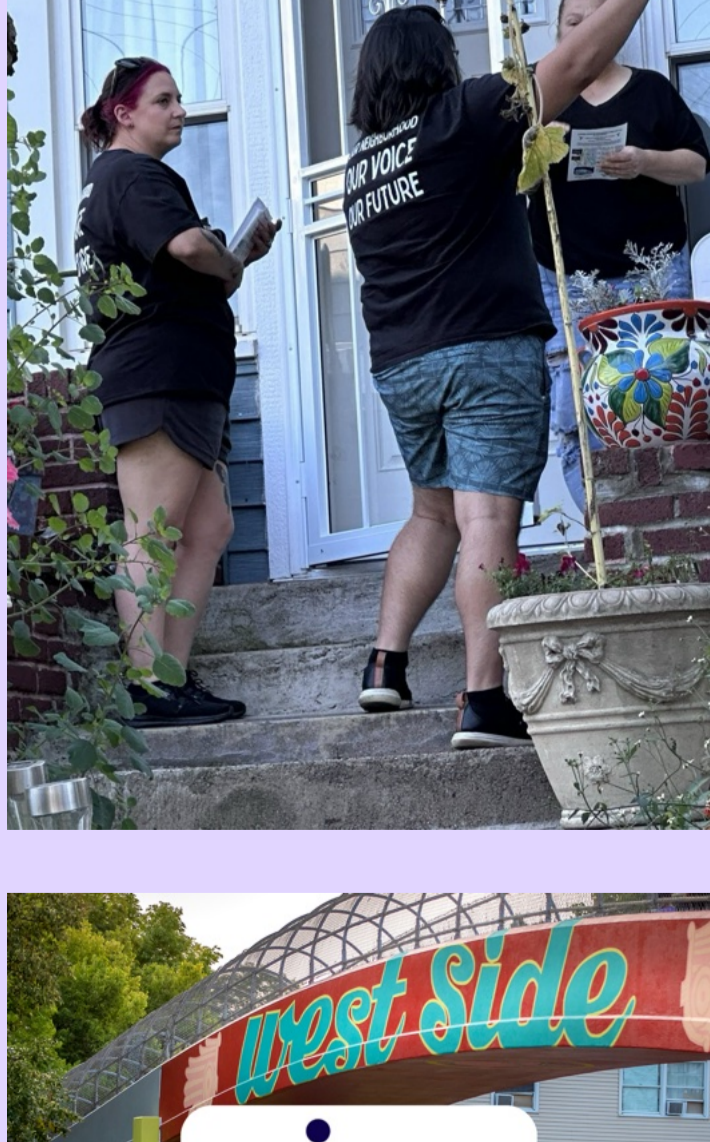
MN Capital Investment Committee Visits the West Side

Last month, we put out a call for West Siders to show up and be visible during the Minnesota Capital Investment Committee's stop on the West Side – **and show up we did!** We extend our gratitude to the state legislators who visited to witness the deterioration of the Robert Street viaduct and to consider investing in this long-overdue project.



Upstander Training

We received over **100 sign-ups** for the Hummingbird Initiative's Community Upstander Training last month! Thank you to everyone who participated and for your commitment to keeping our neighbors safe. **Public trainings will begin again in the new year** – stay tuned!



Southport Leadership Committee

Our Southport residents continue to **lead with determination.** Since July, they have met weekly, engaged with city and state officials, and connected with neighbors to raise awareness about the environmental dangers in their area. They have been diligently gathering evidence and moving at a deliberate pace **to build a strong and effective campaign for environmental justice.** Their leadership is driving this work forward.



Give to the Max - Thank you!

To everyone who supported WSCO during Give to the Max Day 2025, **we extend our deepest appreciation.** We were overjoyed by the generosity of our community and grateful for every contribution that strengthens our mission. We are strongest when we have a community plan, when we have strong connections, and when we have a place to go for support.

If you missed Give to the Max, there is always still time to give! See below.



Whether you're new to our work, or a longtime partner, we thank you for joining us in making the West Side a place of abundance, community, security, wealth, and vitality. Your support today secures a solid foundation for the future of the West Side.

[Donate Today](#)