

West Side Community Organization



Dear Julia,

We are saddened to learn of the passing of Gilbert de la O. His legacy will live on in the community that he grew up in and gave so much to, the West Side.

Gilbert was a powerful leader and a wonderful storyteller. In [a 2017 interview](#), he reflected on an early win working with WSCO to save the Riverview Library:

"I can remember that a lot of people were mad. It seems like our community was the last to get things... so there was a committee that got together to save the library. It was kind of cool. Revolution works!"

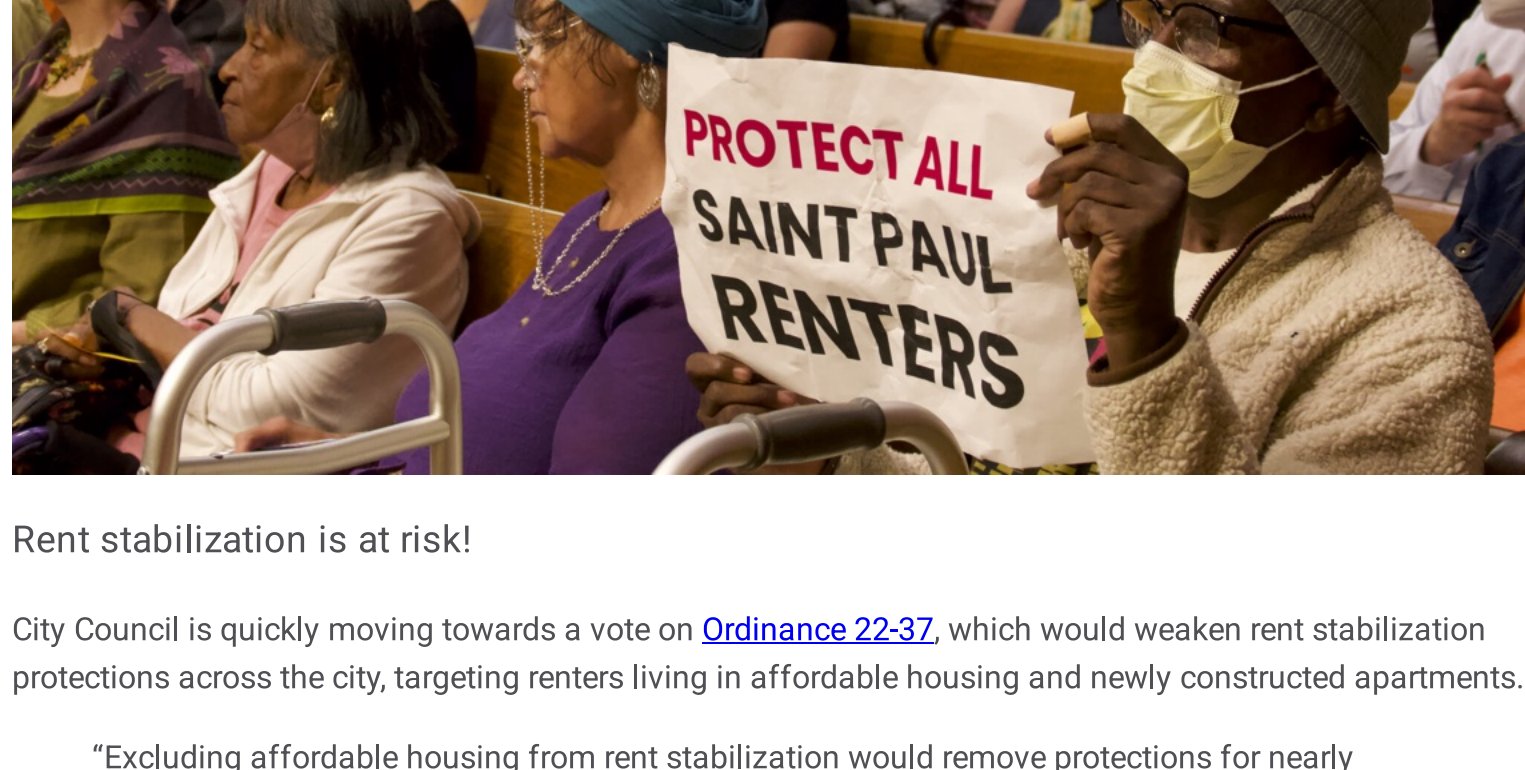
You can also listen to Gilbert share [his reflections about his life](#) in an interview with the Minnesota Historical Society.

"To be the first Latino school board member in St. Paul, to lead in the Latino movement, to make sure people are taken care of," said Carlos Franco. "He's paved the way for a lot of people in this state, to make sure that we can step into places and feel confident we belong in those spaces."

"He always had the West Side's best interest in mind and wasn't afraid to tell anybody, they're missing out by not providing the resources needed in community, that you are not going to continue to overlook our community," said Franco." – [Kare11 News](#).

We send our heartfelt condolences to Gilbert's family, friends, and community.

Above: Gilbert (front row, seated) surrounded by friend and neighbors at the first Juneteenth celebration on the West Side in June 2021.



Rent stabilization is at risk!

City Council is quickly moving towards a vote on [Ordinance 22-37](#), which would weaken rent stabilization protections across the city, targeting renters living in affordable housing and newly constructed apartments.

"Excluding affordable housing from rent stabilization would remove protections for nearly 20,000 St. Paul renters, including myself and my neighbors, who are disproportionately low-income, BIPOC, disabled, immigrant and elderly – the people who need protections most. The council should reject these proposals when they make their final vote on Ordinance 22-37." – Saint Paul renter Katherine Banbury in the [Minnesota Reformer](#)

Take action: contact our City Councilmember Rebecca Noecker at 651-266-8620 or ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us and let her know why it is important to you that she oppose Ordinance 22-37, and stand with her constituents who voted to keep rent stabilization strong for everyone.

Above: Renters packed City Hall to urge representatives to respect the people's vote and keep rent stabilization strong. Photo by Max Nester, Minnesota Reformer.



Recreation as Resistance

This weekend! Join us on Saturday, September 10th from 10:30am - 1:30pm at Pickerel Lake in Lilydale Park. This is a free, family-friendly event open to all.

Learn fishing, birding, kayaking, Indigenous yoga, or jump into a skillshare on how to tie knots and hang a hammock. Take a medicinal plants walk, or a hike through the woods. Learn to Double Dutch or hula hoop, have your chakras aligned and learn to meditate, or join us painting a canoe!

RSVP



Fall Harvest Gathering

West Side, thank you for growing a strong food justice network this year! We're celebrating with a Fall Harvest Gathering. Join us for a big meal at the Capitol View Communal Garden, with fun activities for the whole family. Everyone welcome!

RSVP



Coming in October and November– save the dates!

- Sunday, October 2nd, 12-6pm, Castillo Park: [West Side Best Side Art Fair](#)
- Sunday, October 23rd, 2:30-4:30pm, Wellstone Center: Shared education series: [Visions for Our Collective Future](#)
- Sunday, November 6th, 4-7pm, Harriet Island Wigington Pavilion: WSCO Annual meeting: Stories of Our Past, Visions of Our Future

View our full calendar of events at www.wSCO.org/calendar



Stories from the Flats

Many of our neighbors lived through the floods on the West Side flats, but instead of receiving assistance from the City, they were displaced and their homes were demolished.

"The word came down in '52– I would have been seven. There was a flood. It took its toll down there [...]. And so the city decided instead of putting a dike, which they did eventually, 'why don't we just clear them all out and make an industrial park?'"– Anthony Vasquez, pictured, above (photo by Elizabeth Leonardsmith).

Learn more about this history, and come to the unveiling of a special photo exhibit of portraits of neighbors who grew up on the flats at our Annual Meeting on November 6th.

RSVP



Community Announcements

- **Voices Forum:** WSCO will not be having a West Side Voices Forum in September– please check out our full [events calendar](#) for many powerful ways to connect this month, and [RSVP for October Voices Forum](#) on October 11!
- **Nominate the next West Sider of the Year!** The spirit of this award is to honor those who work collaboratively in community with dedication to the values of the West Side. [Learn more and fill out a nomination form!](#)
- **Art Fair Vendor Applications Open:** Local artists and organizations are invited to table at the West Side Best Side Neighborhood Art Fair! To apply, please complete both a Vendor Application and the Vendor Agreement by 9/23. [Apply here!](#)
- **Apply to join the Early Learning Legislative Advisory Committee** to explore the creation of a program to ensure early care and education for all Saint Paul's children. Applications due this Sunday, September 11. [Learn more and apply here!](#)
- **2023 City Budget** The Saint Paul City Council invites you to share your thoughts on the proposed city budget. During the public hearing, community members will have two minutes to provide their feedback. [Learn more here.](#)
- **Winter sports registration** is now open! This season, we are excited to announce that registration fees have been eliminated for winter basketball for 10U and up (ages 9+) at all recreation center sites. For more details and registration links, [click here.](#)
- **Free Farm Stand:** this Sunday and every Sunday from 3:00pm - 5:00pm in Parque Castillo!

Have a community announcement to share? Email genevieve@wSCO.org!

#WestSideStrong

WSCO organizes people of West Side to build collective power to advance justice and racial equity in the community for all people. We envision a just, united, self-reliant West Side where all of our people are connected, safe, healthy and successful. We are West Side proud. We are West Side strong.

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Please note: WSCO staff are currently working via a hybrid model, both remotely and in-person. All in-person community events require participants to follow COVID safety precautions recommended by the CDC.