



**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**  
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

**RUSS STARK**  
Councilmember

May 19, 2009

**Hamline Midway Library Community Planning Process**

In order to engage the community in developing a positive outcome for the future of the Hamline Midway Library, the City of Saint Paul is initiating a Hamline Midway Library Task Force and hiring a consultant to facilitate the Task Force's work. If it wasn't clear before, the recent proposed closure of the Hamline Midway Library elicited an overwhelming response from the neighborhood that the Library is a highly valued community asset. At the moment, major City budget adjustments are primarily on hold until the Legislature wraps up, and the City's Local Government Aid status is clarified later in the summer. The Mayor has committed to keeping the library open through the end of 2009.

The closure of Hamline Midway Library has been proposed many times over the years as a way to reduce costs during difficult budget times. It is a smaller branch library, and compared to some other parts of the City, the libraries in the western half of Saint Paul are closer together. This process is an opportunity to stabilize the library (and possibly other) services that can be offered at this location for the long-term, and aims to avoid continued threats of complete closure of the library. The upcoming community process will provide space to think and plan proactively for programming in the building that can reduce costs to the City, as well as serve as a model for processes for other libraries in Saint Paul.

The core management team of the Task Force will include Councilmember Russ Stark's office, the Library Department, and Hamline Midway Coalition. The Request for Proposals for the consultant will be sent out by the end of May, and the Task Force will meet twice in June – to get acquainted with the process, and then to select the consultant. Task Force meetings will begin in earnest the week of July 6. The Task Force will include five individuals selected by the Core Team on the basis of applications, and one member each from Hamline University, Hancock Elementary, Snelling Avenue businesses, and Saint Paul Parks and Rec. It will also include two Hamline Midway Coalition representatives, two Library staff members, and non-voting Core Team members. The timeline for this process will be compact: the process will be completed by September 25, 2009, in time for the City Council's budget process for 2010. The completed process will result in potential partnership scenarios and implementation strategies that meet the needs of the community and reduce costs to the City of Saint Paul.

The 13 member Task Force will work with an outside facilitator to assess what current library services that are provided are critical and what services are lacking in the neighborhood and might be a good addition. Part of the facilitator's work, in collaboration with the Task Force, will be to widely gather community input from current library users and non-users. This will be done via at least one public meeting as well as other channels. The goal will be to find partners that can work with the library to meet the expressed needs of the community while sharing the expense of running and operating the facility with the City of Saint Paul. We are optimistic that the result of this community-driven process will result in a vision of library service that will make the Hamline-Midway Library even stronger and more vital.

Once the process is complete, Library Department and others will pursue opportunities identified by the Task Force that meet community needs and fit within the budget constraints of the City of St. Paul.



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**Hamline Midway Library Community Task Force  
Individual Task Force Member Application**

*Task Force Member Commitments:*

- Regular evening meetings Monday or Tuesday (one or the other to be determined)
- Meeting schedule to be determined, but meeting frequency not to exceed two meetings per month
- Two initial meetings before formal Task Force meetings begin:
  - Week of June 15: One preliminary evening meeting to review role and work of the Task Force
  - Week of June 22: one full day, or one afternoon into the evening to interview and select facilitators
- Communicate between meetings with Task Force members via email

*Required Application Materials:*

- Cover letter that addresses:
  - Your relationship to the Hamline Midway Neighborhood and/or the Hamline Midway Library
  - Your reasons for being interested in the Hamline Midway Library facility and in being a Task Force Member
- Résumé

*Application Deadline:*

4:00pm on Monday, June 1

Email to [ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us)

*Contact Samantha Henningson, Legislative Aide to Councilmember Stark, with questions.  
[Samantha.henningson@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Samantha.henningson@ci.stpaul.mn.us) or 651-266-8641.*