

Dear Friends and Neighbors

Greetings!

Some of you know me, some of you have had the opportunity to speak with me as I've walked through your neighborhood during the recent election, others of you, I look forward to meeting soon. As your newly elected Mayor, "Thank -you" for the warm response I've received from you, the citizens of "our town". Let me introduce myself.

As a long time resident, I appreciate the good values, kind people and their positive influence on my family. My son, Benjamin, is an Eagle Scout and goes to Century College. My son, Alex, is an active Scout at age 13. Both of them have joined me in China to teach conversational English. But, no matter where we travel, we always come back home, home to Maplewood. While I grew up in northern Minnesota, Maplewood is where my roots are. Like you, I'm concerned about Maplewood and preserving our quality of life. I know Maplewood is a great city with hard working people who care about their neighborhoods.

Prior to being elected Mayor, I served on Maplewood's Community Design Review Board where I was its chairperson for the past two years. As a self employed, practicing, neighborhood attorney, I deal with real issues, with real people, every day. Previously, I was employed for eight years in property development (real estate department) at Target Corporation's headquarters. Having been on the Board of Directors for several organizations, I have participated in long term planning, cost-benefit analysis and budget development.

MY TOP PRIORITIES

- To promote a positive, forward-looking vision for Maplewood's Future that includes new business development while preserving neighborhoods, parks and open space.
- To provide positive leadership by being an effective, respected consensus builder as well as a tenacious advocate for the citizens.
- To advocate for accountability in how Maplewood tax dollars are spent.
- To champion initiatives that promote an open and transparent government that welcomes citizen input and participation.

These were my priorities set forth during the campaign and they remain my priorities today. These priorities are my commitment to you, the residents of "our town". I invite you to cut out "My Top Priorities" from this article and tape them to the refrigerator. These priorities are the foundation for the next four years as I serve as your Mayor.

I believe it's important to have citizen involvement in our government and the decisions that are made. I believe it's important not only to encourage discussion, but to actively engage in it. I believe it's important to bring divergent ideas to the table during those discussions. To this end, the "Visitor Presentation" period during the City Council meetings has been moved from the end of the agenda to the beginning of the meeting before the Council conducts old or new business. "Visitor Presentations" is the citizens' time, at an open microphone, on the record, to address and petition their elected officials regarding

nonagenda issues. Currently, the agenda for City Council meetings is posted on our city web site, www.ci.maplewood.mn.us. To better inform citizens of upcoming agenda items, I am researching the possibility of posting the agenda for Maplewood's City Council meetings on public access channel 16 as a feature entitled "On the Agenda". Additionally, we will be continuing the monthly Mayor's Forum but with a twist. Plans are being made to televise the Mayor's Forum on public access television and allow viewers to participate by telephone with those attending the forum.

The South Leg meetings have been a successful initiative and will continue. However, the next step is to bring council-neighborhood meetings to other areas of Maplewood. So if you don't live in South Maplewood and feel you are being left out, well, we will be coming to your neighborhood soon. Throughout the year, there will be council-neighborhood meetings scheduled at the various fire stations to reach out to the citizens.

As the Mayor of Maplewood and a community leader, I want to hear from you on how we can better serve Maplewood to promote an open and transparent government that welcomes citizen input and participation. The citizens are the City.

Call me: 651.774.1490 or send a message: mayorlongrie@yahoo.com

Best Regards,
Diana Longrie
Mayor

