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## SERVICES FROM NORTHLAND STRATEGIES

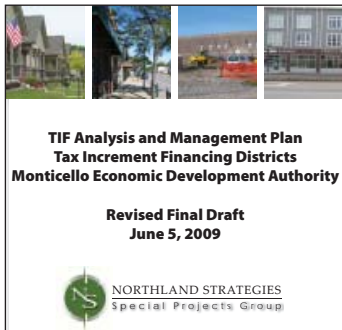
Six of the most disappointing words for a consultant to hear are "I didn't know you did that!" To help avoid this situation, we want to be sure that existing and potential clients are aware of the full range of service we provide. Northland Strategies is a financial planning and problem solving resource for local governments and development companies. This profile highlights our services and some examples of how we have used our skills and experience to benefit clients.

### Tax Increment Financing

Northland Strategies provides a complete array of services related to the use of tax increment financing (TIF). From the evaluation of potential projects to the creation of TIF districts to the management of existing districts, we provide the assistance needed to make effective use of this powerful development tool.

#### *Case Study - Monticello TIF Management Plan*

The Monticello EDA retained Northland Strategies (through a competitive proposal process) to perform a comprehensive analysis and management review of tax increment financing districts. In this project, Northland undertook a complete review of the eighteen (18) existing TIF districts in Monticello. The study resulted in a comprehensive management plan containing strategic actions and cash flow projections for the overall TIF system and for each TIF district. Among the findings and recommendations of this study were options to leverage resources from three pre-1990 districts and strategies to make best use of a large downtown district constrained by the five-year rule.



### Special Taxing Districts

Special service districts and housing improvement areas are two underutilized public finance tools. Special service districts finance improvements and services in commercial districts. Housing improvement districts finance improvements to areas of owner-occupied housing. Our staff has pioneered the use of these tools and brings valuable experience to your projects.

#### *Case Study - St. Louis Park Special Service Districts*

Northland Strategies helped the City of St. Louis Park with the process of establishing two special service districts. The districts will be used to finance maintenance of streetscape improvements and other enhanced services over a ten-year period. Northland worked with staff to incorporate details of the service plans into the ordinances and resolutions required to establish the district and levy the service charge. In total, Northland staff has worked on six special service districts in St. Louis Park, with services covering all aspects of the process.



**Northland Securities** is committed to keeping local governments informed of the latest tools, issues and trends in public finance.

Northland's Public Finance Group specializes in the public finance needs of municipalities and governmental agencies across the Upper Midwest. Our public finance professionals have the depth of experience in the municipal bond industry that serves our clients well, as they navigate through the complexities of the financial markets.

As a diversified financial services firm, we provide financial advisory services and are also a significant underwriter of municipal debt. This provides a distinct advantage to our clients. Not only can they draw upon our experience to develop a sound finance plan, but also our expertise in the credit markets, to get first-hand market information useful in the structuring and timing of their financing.

Our mission is to "provide direction and produce results." Northland Public Finance is committed to developing long-term client relationships by providing sound advice, creative solutions, and the desired results.

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## Group Decision Making

A public finance consultant may not be your first thought for the design and facilitation of group process. Successful projects require more than the technical expertise to analyze finance alternatives. The ability to involve key parties in exploring ideas and reaching agreement to act is essential. Northland Strategies brings experience in a wide range of group decision making projects, including town meetings, focus groups, council/staff workshops, and special project task forces.



### *Case Study - Andover Strategic Goal Setting*

The ongoing operation of city government may not present opportunities to step back and discuss "the big picture". The City of Andover used a strategic planning workshop process to give council members and department heads a forum for exploring key community issues. Northland Strategies designed and facilitated this process. The strategic planning workshop led to elements of a community vision and consensus on critical goals for staff in the coming year.

## Financial Planning

Growing demands and shrinking resources heighten the need for long-term financial planning. Financial planning encourages cities to explore options for funding needed capital improvements and services. Financial planning promotes the best use of limited financial resources. It allows cities to anticipate, rather than react. Northland Strategies combines experience and analytical skills with process facilitation. Creating commitment to act is the difference between successful planning and a study report sitting on a shelf.



### *Case Study - Shorewood Utility System Planning*

This project was initially viewed as a "rate study". As Northland explored issues with staff, it became clear that the real need was for long-term planning for utility operations and capital investment. Northland used a series of workshops with the city council to convey background information, obtain guidance, explore alternatives and reach consensus. This process resulted in:

- A clear understanding of the critical issues facing sanitary sewer, water and stormwater management services.
- Long-term strategies for user charges, including the ability to avoid user charge increases in 2010.
- Plans to finance capital improvements.
- Use of reserves to establish a "community infrastructure fund" as a means for internal funding of capital improvements.

## Comprehensive Support

Northland Strategies is part of Northland Securities' comprehensive approach to financial advisory services. Our financial planning and problem solving services lead seamlessly to implementation. The ability to test the viability of potential debt solutions within a broader context by using the knowledge of our municipal underwriters and traders is a valuable aspect of our services.



### *Case Study - Burnsville Financial Advisor*

In 2009, the City of Burnsville solicited proposals and selected Northland Securities to serve as its financial advisor. We are currently working with the City on a variety of projects, ranging from capital improvements to economic development. This initial work for Burnsville illustrates Northland's capacity to serve Minnesota cities:

- We conducted the competitive sale of three bond issues in January 2010.
- After reviewing the implications with Northland's municipal trading desk, we recommended alternative payment dates for these issues (moving from the traditional dates of August 1 and February 1). This change allows debt service payment to occur after receipt of tax revenues while keeping all annual P&I in the calendar fiscal year.
- Northland reviewed existing debt and discovered a refunding of outstanding improvement bonds that allows the City to reduce future property tax levies.
- Northland is conducting a comprehensive review of pay-as-you-go TIF note calculations. One outcome of this review will be a spreadsheet for ongoing use by City Staff.
- Northland Strategies is using its experience in redevelopment and financial planning to help the City create strategies for the redevelopment of the Minnesota River Quadrant area.

**For more information about the services available from Northland Strategies, please contact:**

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*The information in this summary is based on sources believed to be reliable, but does not purport to be complete and is not warranted by Northland Securities, Inc.*