



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Attention: If you want help translating this information in language other than Hmong, Spanish or Somali, call 311

Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800;

Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llame 612-673-2700;

Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 7-25-12

Cam's next Seward Office Hours:
Tuesday, August 28th, 9:30-11:00am
Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St

Items:

- 1) Voter ID – It's Worse Than You Think
- 2) Seward Market / Kaah at Zoning Board of Adjustment
- 3) Victory on Hiawatha Transmission
- 4) Vikings Stadium
- 5) Minneapolis Supports DREAMers
- 6) Farmers Market Finder
- 7) Fire Department Evaluation
- 8) Civilian Police Conduct Review Authority
- 9) Electric Assist Pedicabs
- 10) Unisys Contract Audited
- 11) 311 for Smartphones
- 12) Recycling at Major Events
- 13) Solicitors Ordinance
- 14) Sewer Repair Work on West River Parkway
- 15) Planning Commission Approvals Recommended
- 16) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Council has received an informative and disturbing report from our City Clerk and Elections Department on the potential impacts of the proposed "Voter ID" Constitutional Amendment. You can read the report here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/elections/WCMS1P-094785>. I have also added some analysis of this topic on the Second Ward blog. The bottom line is that this amendment will make it much harder for many Minnesotans to vote, and create significant difficulty and cost for the Minneapolis Elections Department. It will do away with same-day registration and vouching, create a new "provisional ballot" system, and have unclear but significant impacts on absentee voting. I am also convinced by the League of Women Voters' argument that the ballot language passed by the Legislature does not accurately reflect what the Constitutional Amendment would do. I am hopeful that, for this reason, the Minnesota Supreme Court will keep this question off the ballot this fall. If not, I urge you to **vote no**.
- 2) The Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) will hear the application for a side yard setback variance for the Seward Market / Kaah Coffee Shop tomorrow, **July 26th**, at 4:30pm in Council Chambers. City Planning staff have recommended that the ZBA approve this variance application. Staff has also recommended a set of conditions for the approval, including providing windows on at least 10% of the west wall, and that there should be no blank walls over 25 feet long.
- 3) The City has won a major victory on the Hiawatha Transmission Line. On a 3-1 vote, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission approved a tariffing plan for the Midtown Hiawatha Transmission Line where all costs, including the extra costs associated with burying the line underneath 28th St E, are to be distributed throughout Xcel Energy's five state rate base. In other words, the Minneapolis ratepayers will not be required to bear any extra costs for the project beyond those paid by all other rate payers in Xcel's territory.
- 4) As you have likely heard, on a razor-thin 7-6 vote, the City Council gave local approval to the Vikings stadium bill that passed the Legislature in May. I strongly opposed this and repeatedly spoke out against it. I believe that redirecting more than ½ billion dollars in city sales tax revenue to primarily benefit a private company is fiscally irresponsible, unfair to Minneapolis taxpayers and violates the City Charter. The enormous size of the public subsidy is unacceptable and the long term debt of \$575 to \$850 million dollars, that Minneapolis would be responsible for paying off, is too big a burden to place on Minneapolis. I believe that any stadium deal that uses Minneapolis sales tax money should be put to the voters, as is required by our City's Charter.

- 5) The City of Minneapolis is the first city in the US to go on record formally supporting President Barack Obama's policy directive to the Department of Homeland Security to defer deportation of undocumented children. I am very proud that the City has taken this action in support of a policy that will positively impact the lives of many members of our community.
- 6) The City now has an online interactive map at www.minneapolismn.gov/farmersmarkets that makes it easy to find one of the 29 convenient farmers markets now operating in Minneapolis.
- 7) An independent comprehensive evaluation of the Fire Department was completed earlier this month. The information and recommendations Emergency Services Consulting International and will be shared at a committee meeting tomorrow and will help us identify short, mid and long term strategies to improve effectiveness and increase efficiency.
- 8) I have serious concerns about a staff initiated effort to alter civilian police conduct review processes in Minneapolis. The plan, presented to the Public Safety Civil Rights and Health committee July 25. While I see the need to improvements, especially in light of recent unfortunate state law changes, I have concerns about merging the police department's internal affairs with the civilian review authority and making the citizen/civilian component advisory only. It also removes the residency requirement and focuses more power with the chief. At the committee I successfully moved to have staff provide an analysis of how this compares to a reform proposed by the current Civilian Review Authority board and conduct two community meetings on the changes. The proposal is set to return to the committee on September 12 for a public hearing.
- 9) I have given notice of intent to introduce an ordinance that would allow electric-assist bicycles to be used as pedicabs in Minneapolis. The City had been prohibited from allowing this by state law, until Senator Scott Dibble included legislation in this year's transportation omnibus bill that clarified that electric-assist bicycles are a type of "bicycle," not a type of "motorized bicycle." The Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee has taken a position in favor of this ordinance change, and I look forward to working through the details with them, City staff, and the pedicab industry.
- 10) The City's Internal Audit department has conducted an audit of the City's information technology contract with the Unisys Corporation. The contract, which began in 2007 and ends in 2015, is currently valued at **\$86,363,655**. The audit found significant issues in our contract management with Unisys and I continue to have serious concerns about the amount of money the City spends on this information technology contract, and the lack of oversight found in this audit compounds that concern. In June the Council referred this report to the Ways and Means Committee for further review.
- 11) People in Minneapolis can now request City services using a free application on their smartphone and similar devices. So far ten common service requests are available and more will be added soon. Those who use Blackberry or Windows Phone devices can report service requests to Minneapolis 311 by visiting SeeClickFix.com on their mobile browser. The mobile app is available in the App Store or in the Android Market on your smart phone. Just search for "Minneapolis 311."
- 12) The City Council voted to require all large block events and all parades and races on Minneapolis streets to recycle. The changes are designed to reduce the amount of trash being generated at these events. Beginning Jan. 1, 2013, organizers of any block event with more than 2,500 in attendance and any parade or race that uses City streets will need to have a written recycling plan for the collection of all paper, cardboard, plastic, glass and metal containers.
- 13) The City Council approved new rules for door-to-door salespeople intended to protect consumers and make it more difficult for out-of-state companies to exploit youth workers. Under the new rules, salespeople and transient merchants will be required to wear a City-issued photo identification card. To make things easier for schools and youth groups doing fundraising, the City will approve group identification cards at no cost. The photo identification rule does not apply to canvassers, including people who advocate for religious, social, or political causes.
- 14) The Metropolitan Council's sewer repair work along West River Parkway north of Seward has been extended until September. The work was begun in February, and the Met Council believed it would be finished by June. However, the project was more difficult than they expected, resulting in this extension. If you have any questions, you can call or email John Hemming at 651-602-4517 or john.hemming@metc.state.mn.us, or Tim O'Donnell at 651-602-1269 or tim.odonnell@metc.state.mn.us.
- 15) Planning division staff is recommending that the City Planning Commission approve the application for an expansion of a legal nonconforming dormer and the variance needed to complete the planned renovations at 3128 E 25th St. They are also recommending approving the Jefferson bus line request to amend the conditional use permit to allow for an expansion of their bus garage/maintenance facility at 2100 and 2200 E 26th St and 2528 Snelling Ave. to allow their parking and operations area to be reconfigured onto excess property acquired from the City of Minneapolis.
- 16) There are openings on the Civilian Police Review Authority, Housing Board of Appeals, and Senior Advisory Committee. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov.