

**News from Cam Gordon
Council Member, Second Ward
December 2007**

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward2/>

West Bank Station Location Meetings. Two important Central Corridor Light Rail West Bank Station Location meetings are coming up in December. The Metropolitan Council has indicated that they will make a final determination about the location of the station early in January. Both these meetings will present plans and gather community input to help influence that decision.

West Bank Community Coalition Land Use Committee
Wednesday, December 12, 6:30pm
at Brian Coyle Community Center

Public Meeting Convened by the Metropolitan Council
and Minneapolis Council Member Cam Gordon
Monday, December 17 6:30-8:00pm
at Brian Coyle Community Center

Seward Coop Groundbreaking. Please join me, Mayor Rybak Seward Coop staff and others for the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Seward Coop **on Tuesday, December 4, at 1pm** at the new store site on the corner of Franklin and Riverside avenues.

Arsenic Biomonitoring. The Minnesota Department of Health is proposing a "biomonitoring" pilot project in the South Minneapolis Arsenic Contamination Site, which includes west Seward. Biomonitoring basically means measuring the amount of a chemical in people's bodies to determine how much exposure to that chemical they have had. 100 Children will be tested for arsenic, probably in 2008. They are still in the development stages of the project, and are planning to present their preliminary proposal for the project at a community meeting on **Thursday, December 6, at 7pm** at the Midtown YWCA at 2121 E Lake St.

Comprehensive Plan Update. The City Planning Department is completing a major update to the City's Comprehensive Plan that attempts to look ahead to what kind of City we envision being in 2030. A working draft of "The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth" is available in public libraries and at www.minneapolisplan.info and will be presented at a series of open houses in January.

Comments can be submitted to the City online at www.minneapolisplan.info, emailed to lanupdate@ci.minneapolis.mn.us or mailed to: Haila Maze, Senior City Planner, CPED, 350 South 5th St., Rm 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415.

The community meetings in South Minneapolis are listed below:

- North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Avenue North, January 8, 5:30-7:30pm
- Lake Hiawatha Community Center, 2701 E. 44th Street, January 12, 10amnoon
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Recreation Center, 4055 Nicollet Avenue South, January 17, 7-9pm
- Mill City Museum, 704 S 2nd Street, January 28, 11am-1pm
- Eastside Neighborhood Services, 1700 2nd Street NE, January 29, 4-6pm

City Budget. Throughout November the Ways and Means Committee has been considering the Mayor's proposed budget for 2008. On December 11th at 5 pm, the City will hold its Truth in Taxation public hearing with adoption scheduled for December 12th. The proposed budget, as

amended by the Ways and Means Committee, includes a 1.8 million decrease in LGA (Local Government Aid), an increase of 8% to the property tax levy and the removal of the 2% wage cap for employees. Many departments were required to reduce their budgets for 2008 because of reduced available funding, including the BIS, Public Works, and Regulatory Services Departments.

Some new spending highlights of the proposed budget include:

- \$300,000 to hire 4 new 911 operators
- \$4.3 M to the police department
- \$150,000 for community micro-grants to prevent gang graffiti
- \$100,000 to fund the Youth Violence Prevention Committee Implementation plan
- \$75,000 to fund the Youth are Here buses of the Youth Coordinating Board
- \$75,000 to fund Youth Violence Prevention grants
- \$75,000 to help residents plant trees on private property
- \$100,000 to fund the next round of climate change micro grants

The full budget is available for review at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance

New CLIC Appointee. I will be appointing Seward resident and past SNG Board Member Becca Vargo Daggett to the Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC). CLIC makes recommendations to the City Council and Mayor on capital improvement program development and annual capital improvement budgets. Becca has lived in Minneapolis since 1996. She has an MS in Science, Technology and Environmental Policy from the Humphrey Institute, and got to know city government while working on the New Rules Project of the Institute for Local Self-Reliance. She now works for financial services company UBS.

Entertainment License Change. The Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee has voted to eliminate the requirement that small restaurants and coffee shops have a "Place of Entertainment" license for storytelling, readings, and music performed by 3 or fewer non-amplified musicians. I think this is a step in the right direction for supporting small businesses and local artists. I am also interested in allowing more musicians to play at once and changing our regulatory scheme from prohibiting amplified musicians (no matter how quiet) and allowing acoustic musicians (no matter how loud) to focusing on the actual sound levels being generated.

School Election Reform. I encourage residents to consider supporting a school board election reform proposal (known as the "Davnie Bill") that will be coming to the School Board next month and possibly, if they do not approve it, to the voters in 2008. I think the proposal offers us a way to improve representation, help hold elected officials accountable and make them more responsive, simplify our government structure, improve possible collaboration between jurisdictions and open up the system to political diversity. If enacted, it would change the School Board from the current 7 at large seats to 9 seats voted in by 3 at large seats and 6 district seats. The six districts would mirror the Park Board districts (although district lines could be redrawn after 2010). The enabling legislation states that the School Board can implement this law or let it go to on the 2008 election ballot. The School Board is scheduled to vote on this issue during their **December 11** meeting.

Immigration Issues. The Council has passed a resolution limiting the participation of MPD officers to working with Immigration and Customs Enforcement only on matters relating to human trafficking and narcotics. I am working with civil rights advocates to bring the issue of human trafficking to the Public Safety & Regulatory Services committee.

Hybrid Buses. Responding to the Council's urging and in support of our Downtown Transportation Action Plan, the Met Council has recently added 19 new hybrid electric buses to its system. The new buses, along with 150 more to follow over the next four years, deliver 22 percent better fuel mileage and produce 90 percent fewer emissions than the buses they replace.

When the new 19 buses are placed in service Monday better than one-third of all local bus trips on the Nicollet Mall will be operated with hybrid electric models.

Step-Up Jobs Available. Students who would like to participate in the STEP-UP summer jobs program can submit an application now through January 11. STEP-UP is a paid summer jobs program for Mpls youth ages 14 to 15, and ages 16 to 21. STEP-UP for students ages 14 to 15 is a program operated by the [Minneapolis Employment and Training Program](#), which teaches youth good work habits and provides them with wages and an opportunity to contribute to a local community-based organization. STEP-UP for youth ages 16 to 21, is operated by [Achieve!Minneapolis](#) and provides the youth with paid positions with local employers and teaches them skills they need to succeed on the job. More information and applications are available on the Web at: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/metp/stepup_home.asp

Building Blocks Awards. Nominations are now being accepted for the annual Building Blocks Awards. All block clubs that did not win this award in 2006 are eligible to apply. To nominate a block club (your own or a neighbor's), answer these questions: How has life on the block improved through the block club's efforts? How does the block club build connections between people? In what ways does the block club work with the Minneapolis Police Department? Describe the events, activities and meetings of the block club. When did the block club start? What are the boundaries of the block club? Be sure to include the name, address, phone number, and e-mail address of each block club leader for the club you are nominating, as well as your own (the nominator's) name, address, phone number, and email address. Nominations must be received by Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2008 one of the following ways: you can e-mail them to ccpsafe@ci.minneapolis.mn.us; you can fax them to (612) 673-2512, or you can mail them to: Community Crime Prevention/SAFE, c/o Building Blocks Awards, 4119 Dupont Ave N, Minneapolis, MN 55412.

Ruhland Award. The MPD is also seeking nominations for its 2007 Teresa S. Ruhland Youth Award, which is given annually to a Minneapolis resident volunteer who does an outstanding job of getting youths involved in the community. Self-nominations are welcome. To submit a nomination for this award, write a brief essay about how the nominee's involvement has improved the quality of life for adults and youths in the block club. Consider how the nominee has helped youths build community, involved youths in safety education and crime prevention, and worked with youths to resolve community problems. Be sure to include the same information as for the Building Blocks Awards, and send it to one of the same places.

University Area Alliance. The inaugural meeting of the University District Partnership Alliance was held on November 29, 2007. The Alliance is a 17 member group of representatives from the neighborhoods around the University, the University itself and the City of Minneapolis. I am one of three City representatives on the Alliance. The work of the initial Alliance will focus on a University Partnership District with geographic boundaries consistent with those in the neighborhood impact report approved last year and forwarded to the State Legislature. The Alliance includes the Minneapolis neighborhoods of Cedar Riverside, Marcy-Holmes, South East Como, University of Minnesota neighborhood, and Prospect Park. Last year the legislature appropriated \$750,000 to support the creation of the Alliance and to provide for one or more demonstration projects to be carried out under the direction of the Alliance.

Snow Emergency Alerts. To receive Snow Emergency alerts, go to www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/snow, and to get more info you can call the Snow Emergency hotline at any time to find out if one is in effect. The number is 348-SNOW.

Department Head Reappointments. The Executive Committee has voted to advance the reappointments of City Coordinator Steven Bosacker, City Assessor Patrick Todd, Fire Chief James Clack, Civil Rights Director Michael Jordan, Health Commissioner Gretchen Musicant, Public Works Director Steve Kotke, and CPED Director Mike Christensen. These reappointments will go before the appropriate committees for public hearings.

Solid Waste Collection. The Council is poised to issue the first Request for Proposals (RFP) in decades for our private-sector solid waste pickup services. I am supportive of this direction, for several reasons. I believe that good government demands open, transparent and competitive processes for contracts. I also believe that an open process presents a good opportunity to get better labor agreements for solid waste employees. I will be pushing to include this in the RFP, along with cost and contractual obligations. I am also interested in giving competitive advantage to organizations that increase the ecological sustainability of their operations.

Midtown Eco Energy. I am closely following the proposed Midtown Eco Energy (MEE) biomass facility. I encourage all interested residents to attend the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency public hearing on this project on **December 13, 6-8:30pm at the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E 31st St.** I have heard both from the MEE project director and the MPCA that, contrary to some rumors that have been circulating, the proposed biomass plant **will not** burn garbage in the form of Refuse Derived Fuel. I still remain undecided as to whether this project will be a net benefit to the community, and will push for the highest possible level of emissions controls, given the project's close proximity to residential neighborhoods. Please share any input you may have on this project with my office before the 13th.

Minnesota Innovation Center. This Month the Council will accept a Redevelopment Program Grant award from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) in the amount of \$520,000 to demolish the Del Mar IV grain elevator to facilitate construction of the Minnesota Innovation Center. The Minnesota Innovation Center project is the first phase of the redevelopment of an obsolete industrial area into a University-related Research Park (URP). The presence of several 200-foot tall concrete grain elevators presents a significant impediment to redevelopment of the area.

No-Heat/Low Heat. I am working with Council Member Remington and Children and Family Services to reform the City's No-Heat/Low-Heat ordinance and policies. We have already succeeded in convincing staff to change their administrative citation policies to begin giving fines to property owners after a building is inadequately heated for 24 hours, down from a previous deadline of 72 hours. In addition, we are proposing a change to the complicated ordinance that currently requires landlords to turn on heat when the temperature gets below 60 degrees. Our enforcement clock resets when the heat goes over 60 degrees, leaving tenants of bad landlords without heat for much of the fall. We are proposing to change this to a simple date range (September 21 through May 1) during which landlords must start providing adequate heat.

Openings on City Boards and Commissions. There are openings on the Civilian Police Review Authority (closes 12/7/2007), Heritage Preservation Commission (closes 12/31/2007), Latino Advisory Committee to the Mayor and City Council (closes 12/28/2007), Minneapolis Telecommunications Network (Closes 1-4-08), Rental Dwelling License Board of Appeals (closes 12/14/2007), and Zoning Board of Adjustment (closes 2/1/2008). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Yours, in peace and cooperation,

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