

# Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Southeast Como, 4-3-07

**Cam's next Southeast Como Office Hours:  
Tuesday, April 10, 9:30-11:00am  
SECIA Office, 837 15th Ave SE**

## Items:

- 1) Roundtable: the Future of Our Schools
- 2) Dining Out for Life
- 3) Building Blocks Awards
- 4) Block Leader Training
- 5) Streetlights on 17<sup>th</sup> Ave SE
- 6) Parking restrictions at 15<sup>th</sup> and Como
- 7) "McMansions" ordinance
- 8) Downtown Transportation Plan public meetings
- 9) The Future of NRP
- 10) Library Merger
- 11) Community Engagement Report (NRP)
- 12) Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee
- 13) Spray Paint ordinance
- 14) Rain Barrels
- 15) Tree Trust
- 16) Paint-a-Thon
- 17) Window Replacement Loan Fund
- 18) Wind Turbines
- 19) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The School Board is proposing significant changes to our neighborhood schools, including merging Pratt and Tuttle, and closing Tuttle. What can we do as communities and a City to better support our schools, and how should we prepare for these proposed changes? Please join me, representatives of District Parent Advisory Council Area B Kate Towle and Craig Nelson, and other special invited guests for a Roundtable Discussion on the **Future of Our Schools, April 16, 7-9pm, Van Cleve Park, 901 15th Ave SE.**
- 2) Please join me for a **Dining Out for Life** lunch at the **Cliquot Club, 2929 East 25<sup>th</sup> St, on Thursday, April 26, 2007.** A percentage of the proceeds of your meal will go to benefit all the services for HIV-infected individuals offered by the Aliveness Project. For more information, please go to <http://www.aliveness.org/>.
- 3) Congratulations to the **1000 Blocks of 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Aves SE** in Southeast Como and the Cedars Project Lookout Group in Cedar Riverside on winning 2006 Building Blocks Awards for their outstanding efforts to build community and increase public safety in their neighborhoods.
- 4) If you don't have a block club on your block and would like to form one, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct SAFE Office is holding a free Block Leader Training workshop on **Wednesday, April 25, 6:30-8:30 pm, at the 3rd Precinct Community Room, 3000 Minnehaha Ave.** You must RSVP to attend – call 673-2856.
- 5) Working with SECIA staff and residents, my office has helped get approval from property owners on 17<sup>th</sup> Ave SE for Xcel to reinstall two streetlights to replace the one that has been nonfunctional for several months now.

- 6) Again working with SECIA staff and neighborhood businesses, my office has been helping establish parking limitations west of the intersection of Como and 15<sup>th</sup> Aves SE, to help provide easier access to on-street parking for the business node. The last my office has heard is that the Park Board will likely support a two hour parking limit from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday-Friday, with no limits on weekends or holidays.
- 7) I am supportive of Council Member Betsy Hodges' proposed ordinance to address teardowns and "McMansions," which will establish a "gross floor area" maximum, based on the size of a lot. My hope is that this can be a new tool for preventing small single family homes from being torn down and replaced with oversize de-facto "dorms." I am open to working with Southeast residents to strengthen the proposed language, if needed, to make it an effective tool for this purpose.
- 8) The City will host a pair of public meetings in April to discuss recommended changes to Downtown streets, sidewalks, bike lanes and bus routes. The meetings will include a chance to give feedback on a draft of the Downtown transportation action plan. The meetings will be on Wednesday, April 11, 11:30-1 in the Central Library's Doty Room, and Thursday, April 12, 5-7pm in the gathering room at St. Olaf Catholic Church, 215 S. 8th St.
- 9) At the last City Council meeting I was unsuccessful in passing a motion that would have provided a structure for the starting a formal, public discussion about the future of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program at the City Council level. I was successful, however, in getting the discussion going and plan to bring forward an improved proposal at the next Council meeting that will create a City Council Work Group charged with providing recommendations to the full Council about the future of NRP in June or July.
- 10) I was one of two Council Members who voted against the proposed merger of the Minneapolis and Hennepin County library systems. In the end this may be the best solution, and represent the best hope for improving library service in Minneapolis. However, I think that, given the immensity of the proposal, more time and more community consultation is needed. The majorities on the Council and Library Board have voted to give half a billion dollars in assets (in land, facilities and debt payments) to Hennepin County over the next decades, while surrendering our ownership and control. They have voted to very significantly change the Charter outside of the normal Charter amendment process (either a unanimous vote of the Council or a majority approval from Minneapolis voters in a referendum), by asking the Legislature to change our constitution without the consent of residents. I am also very concerned that the representation Minneapolis residents have on the Library Board will be lost, and it will become more difficult to hold anyone accountable for the performance of the library system.
- 11) The NRP Policy Board has released its report on the Minneapolis Community Engagement system. You can download the report here: <http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBAgenda2007/PBA20070326.html>. The City Council is scheduled to take this up later in the month.
- 12) The Youth Violence Steering Committee, which I helped form and on which I represent the Council, met for the first time this week. We are expected to have a draft report ready by August.
- 13) The group I have set up to talk about possible reforms to the Minneapolis Maximum Occupancy codes has met twice. We have reviewed the current codes, laid out our goals for "ideal" maximum occupancy regulations and studied how Minneapolis has regulated occupancy in the past and other municipalities regulate it today. I will widely communicate any outcomes of the Work Group to the neighborhoods, before proposing any reforms.
- 14) I supported Council Member Schiff's Spray Paint ordinance changes, which respond to the needs of hardware stores while better regulating the sale of spray paint, paint sticks and broad-tip markers to minors in our ongoing effort to fight graffiti. Under the new ordinance, these materials must either be under continuous supervision or inaccessible to the public. In addition, a \$42,000 grant from the National Council on Prevention of Delinquency (a hardware retail industry group) will be used to conduct one-time checks on establishments selling spray paint, similar to our tobacco compliance program.

- 15)** The City has received a \$100K grant from the EPA to provide 2,000 rain barrels at a reduced cost of \$45 (or half of standard retail price) to Mpls residents. Starting in late March, you can order one either online at [www.thereusecenter.com/rainbarrels.html](http://www.thereusecenter.com/rainbarrels.html) or over the phone at 612-724-2608.
- 16)** Tree Trust, the nonprofit that Minneapolis works with to plant trees on private property, is providing 1500 trees to residents of Minneapolis. For \$15, participating residents will receive a tree, mulch, and information about proper planting and energy conservation. If you're interested in greening your city by planting a tree, or know anyone else who might be, please go here: <http://www.treetrust.org/orderhere/index.html> or call 651-644-5800.
- 17)** The deadline to apply for the 2007 Greater Metropolitan Council of Churches Paint-A-Thon is May 11<sup>th</sup>. For an application, call 721-8687 x321, or email [dpope@gmcc.org](mailto:dpope@gmcc.org).
- 18)** Lead paint on windows of old houses is now the primary source of lead poisoning in Minnesota. To deal with this problem, the Minneapolis/Hennepin County Lead Task Force (which I co-chair with CM Glidden and Commissioner Dorfman) has drafted a proposal to the State to create a revolving loan fund to replace all windows in pre-1950s homes. I testified at the Legislature on this topic this month, and I urge you to call your legislators and encourage them to support the bill, SF1015, authored by Linda Higgins. One positive side effect of this program, once created, is that it will help improve the energy efficiency of older Minnesota homes.
- 19)** Planning staff are finishing a draft ordinance change to allow broader use of Wind Energy Conversion Systems in Minneapolis. I hope to shepherd these commonsense reforms through the Council process early this year.
- 20)** There are openings on the Charter Commission, the Empowerment Zone Board, the Housing Board of Appeals, the Latino Advisory Committee, the Public Health Advisory Committee, the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Board and the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).