



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 3-24-10

Cam's next Seward Office Hours:
Tuesday, April 27, 9:30-11:00am
Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St

Items:

- 1) 2010 Census
- 2) Chief Dolan Reappointed
- 3) Pawn Shop Proposed for Cedar/Minnehaha
- 4) Multifamily Recycling Amendment Passes Committee
- 5) Spring Sweep
- 6) Emerald Ash Borer in Minneapolis
- 7) City Trees
- 8) Greenway Rezoning
- 9) Energy Efficiency in City's Legislative Agenda
- 10) Solar Rebates
- 11) Homegrown Minneapolis
- 12) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) Watch your mailbox in the coming weeks for your copy of the 2010 Census questionnaire. We need everyone to participate, so that Minnesota will receive the resources, representation and recognition we deserve. It's estimated that Minneapolis will lose around **\$1 million** over the next decade for every **100** residents who are not counted in the 2010 Census. The census is also used to distribute congressional seats to states, and Minnesota is on the cusp of losing one.
- 2) Despite the fact that I voted against the reappointment of Police Chief Tim Dolan, his reappointed was approved on an 8-5 vote by the Council. I based my decision on the "Safe City Resolution" that the Council passed when we first appointed Chief Dolan in 2006, which lays out an accountability framework for the Chief. My office did a thorough analysis of the ten performance measures included in that resolution, and found that on five of the measures the Chief's performance was either unsatisfactory or unacceptably poor. These include his handling of citizen complaints sustained by the Civilian Review Authority, the continuing lawsuits against the City for police misconduct and other police-related issues, and the Department's pattern of unresponsiveness to the Council. You can read the full analysis at my blog. There are also positive things to report on the Chief and I can appreciate why a majority of my colleagues supported him. Now that he his reappointed I look forward to working with him to improve safety in the city and to improve community relations, community policing and police accountability.
- 3) I have been approached by an entrepreneur who is interested in establishing a "Max It" pawn shop at 815 Cedar, near the corner of Cedar and Minnehaha, in the space that has most recently been a motorcycle repair business. I asked him to formally engage with SNG to get your opinion on his plans.
- 4) My amendment to the City's multifamily housing recycling mandate passed the Regulatory Energy and Environment committee unanimously earlier this week. This measure will clarify and increase the enforceability of the City's existing mandate, by laying out a defined fine schedule and removing the unused "waiver" system by which property owners can make the case that they cannot offer recycling services. I am confident that it will also pass the full Council.
- 5) The City's spring street sweep is coming up. It will start on April 12th. Please look for the signs on your street to avoid getting ticketed or towed.

If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact Matt Bower at (612) 673-2188 or Matthew.Bower@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

If you want help translating this call – Hmong– Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2188;

Spanish – Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llame 612-673-2188;

Somali – Ogow. Haddii aad dooneysa in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' an wac 612-673-2188.

- 6) Emerald ash borer has been found in Minneapolis, right across the river from Seward in Prospect Park. It poses a threat to the 200,000 ash trees in Minneapolis, which make up more than 20 percent of the city's canopy. The Park Board's Forestry Department is working (only during cold months) to take down both the infected trees and any boulevard ash in the City that are unhealthy or that the nearby residents would like removed, so that we can get a head start on replanting. There are a few ways that you can help slow the spread of the disease and re-leaf our city:
- Do not move ash wood for any reason between spring and fall
 - Plant a new tree on your property (see item 4 below)
 - If you have an ash tree either in your boulevard or on your private property, consider having it removed and replaced with a different species of tree (but only during cold months)

I have concerns about the pesticide treatments currently being advertised, for several reasons. These chemicals have not been proven to significantly increase the life of a tree, the injections will have to continue for the life of the tree, and these chemicals have been found in surface water in other cities that have been living with EAB for some time.

- 7) More than 1,000 trees are being made available to Minneapolis residents for planting this spring. The trees cost \$25 each, and are approximately six feet tall with a one-inch trunk. Residents can order one tree per household, and all trees are available first-come, first-served. Varieties of trees available are Fat Albert spruce, pagoda dogwood, Kentucky coffee tree, blue beech, Merrill magnolia, regal prince oak, Canada select chokecherry, Redmond linden and burgundy belle maple. Orders for trees can be placed at www.treetrust.org. You can also order a tree by calling (651) 644-5800 or picking up an order form from your local library. In previous years the trees have sold quickly, so place your order early. Folks who order trees will need to pick them up on one of three days at the Minneapolis Impound Lot, 51 Colfax Ave N. Saturday, May 8, 7am-3pm, Sunday, May 9, 8am-noon, Monday, May 10, 3pm-7pm.
- 8) I have worked hard to find the consensus of the Seward neighborhood, especially those who live just north of the Midtown Greenway, on the proposed rezoning of parcels along this premier non-motorized path. Working from the neighborhood's planning efforts, I have made some amendments to the staff's proposals that I think better reflect the wishes that the community has expressed. One area is the so-called "island of residential" between 29th and 30th Avenues. I was able to convince the Planning Commission, with the help of my colleague Gary Schiff and Planning Commissioner (and Seward Resident, and School Board Member) Carla Bates to support a medium-density Office Residential district on the north side of the Greenway just south of the existing residential, rather than staff's proposed R4 zoning. Near 36th Ave S, I successfully moved to change the staff's rezoning of existing industrial parcels to low-density residential, to a medium density R3 residential that will facilitate positive reuse of these parcels. I am continuing to look for a consensus solution to the west of 36th, where staff is recommending keeping the industrial zoning and adding the "industrial living overlay district."
- 9) The Council has voted to update our legislative agenda to include support for legislation that allows local governments to create tax assessment systems to help property owners to make energy efficiency and renewable energy investments. This would allow us to use the "Berkeley Model" of helping homeowners who can't afford to pay cash for these sorts of environmentally-friendly improvements. In the long run, it will decrease the energy use in the City, increase property values, and help people spend less on their energy bills. I have been advocating for such a system for years, and I'm glad to see the Council finally taking a position in favor of it.
- 10) The State's Office of Energy Security is offering rebates of up to **\$10,000** on solar electric and solar hot water system installations. For applications, go to www.energy.mn.gov and type "solar electric rebate" or "solar hot water rebate" in the website's search engine. Also, Xcel Energy has launched a Solar Rewards program, to help customers afford solar panel installations on their homes or businesses. For conditions and other details of the program, go to xcelenergy.com/solar, and select "Minnesota" from the drop-down list on the left. You can also request information by sending an e-mail message to SolarProgramMN@xcelenergy.com. By installing a solar energy system in your home, you'll save money on your monthly utility bills and also help reduce your environmental footprint by using fewer resources. In addition, you could be eligible for a 30-percent federal tax credit. For more information on the tax credit, go to www.energystar.gov.
- 11) The Homegrown Minneapolis initiative continues to move forward. There was a report today to the Public Safety and Health committee on the progress we've made on implementing the Homegrown recommendations. There are also a number of related events coming up, including a Jams and Jellies workshop put on by the University of Minnesota Extension on March 30th from 1-4:30pm in Rogers, MN. The registration fee is \$25. For more information, visit the Homegrown Minneapolis website at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp.
- 12) There are openings on the Animal Care & Control Advisory Board (4/2), Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities (4/2), Heritage Preservation Commission (closes 4/2), Latino Advisory Committee (closes 4/2), Pedestrian Advisory Committee (closes 4/2), Public Health Advisory Committee (open until filled), Senior Citizens Advisory Committee (closes 4/2), Workforce Council (closes 4/2) and Zoning Board of Adjustment (closes 4/2). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.