



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

Cam Gordon

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**Council Member Cam Gordon's
Report to Southeast Como, 8-11-09**

Cam's next Southeast Como Office Hours:
Tuesday, September 8th, 9:30-11:00am
SECIA Office, 837 15th Ave SE

Items:

- 1) Parade of Community Gardens
- 2) TIF Districts
- 3) Expansion of Premises Near Stadium
- 4) Street Lighting Fee
- 5) Garage Requirement
- 6) New Crime Alert Service
- 7) Neighborhood Policing Plan
- 8) Downtown Garbage Burner
- 9) 2008 Bike Counts
- 10) Alliance Activities
- 11) Ranked Choice Voting
- 12) New Sister City: Najaf, Iraq
- 13) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) Congratulations to the Accord Community Garden at the corner of 15th and Como Avenues for being honored in this year's Parade of Community Gardens!
- 2) The Council has voted by a narrow margin to delay a decision on whether or not to renew the Tax Increment Financing (or TIF) districts that were established in 1979, to continue to fund our neighborhood groups and debt relief for the Target Center, until after the Mayor proposes a 2010 budget. This was a compromise between those Council Members, like me, who want to keep the agreement we reached during the last budget negotiations and renew the TIF districts, and those who want to "preserve our flexibility" to not renew the districts. I strongly support renewing the districts, for three main reasons. First, I feel that the Council committed to ourselves and the public, during our deliberations about the next phase of neighborhood revitalization, that we would continue to use the TIF districts to fund our neighborhoods. This is why we successfully advocated to the Legislature to allow us to renew them. Second, given the budget constraints the City faces, I fear that if we force neighborhood funding to compete for general fund dollars, we will not live up to the commitments we've made to continue funding neighborhoods. And third, setting aside some money for neighborhood associations to invest is smart during tough times, just as it is during more flush times. I will continue to argue in the strongest possible terms to renew these districts, to provide a defined and reliable revenue stream for neighborhoods. You can read more about the history behind this decision and further analysis at my blog.
- 3) I have been asked by two bars owners (Sally's and Stub and Herbs) near the new U of M Stadium to help change City ordinances to allow them to increase the number of times (currently four) they can apply to expand sales of alcohol into their parking lots during gopher games. I have asked the owners to talk to neighborhood association leaders and the Stadium Area Advisory group. I am supportive of this idea provided there are strict conditions placed on the bars and the geographic area is limited to within a block or two of the stadium.
- 4) Public Works staff has proposed a new street lighting fee. Currently, the \$3 million a year needed to keep the street lights on in the city comes from the general fund, which gets around 20 percent of its money from LGA, which has been cut by \$21.3 million. This proposal has passed the Transportation and Public Works committee, and will come before the full Council on August 14th. I am generally hesitant to approve new fees, rather than raising the revenue we need through our established tax system.

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 dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' an wac 612-673-2188.

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- 5) Council Member Schiff has proposed a requirement that new single family homes and duplexes must have a detached garage. This passed committee, and I plan to support it at the full Council. There will be a variance process for this new requirement, which will allow houses to be built without garages where a genuine hardship can be proven. I will also be advocating with staff that we change the Administrative Review portion of the Zoning Code to reflect that detached garages are no longer optional. I hope this will allow us to require higher quality design throughout the city.
- 6) The Minneapolis Police Department has launched a new crime alert service that you can receive by cell phone, through e-mail, or online. Anyone can sign up to stay connected with important public safety news in their area, including crime alerts, community updates, and important advisories. Signing up is easy—just go to www.nixle.com. On the page, you can find Minneapolis under the “featured cities” section.
- 7) Residents in every Minneapolis neighborhood have unique opportunities to work with police to help shape their Neighborhood Policing Plan. Beginning in 2007, every neighborhood in Minneapolis has its own plan, which is developed by the police and community working together. The plans are updated each year, so you’ll have a chance later this year to attend a meeting in your neighborhood to create the 2010 policing plans. To find out when and where the meeting is in your neighborhood, call 311 or visit the City’s Web site at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us and type “neighborhood policing plans” in the search box.
- 8) The HERC conditional use permit application has been held over in the Zoning and Planning Committee until early September. No decision was made in July regarding the appeal of the Planning Commission's denial of the requested amendment to the conditional use permit that would allow them to burn more garbage. The Committee ended up not taking public testimony after learning that the County intends to agree to suspend the time limit on this matter while they work with state officials from the MPCA and the state attorney general's office to determine if an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) (which could then lead to an Environmental Impact Statement or EIS) might be required.
- 9) The 2008 Bicycle Count Report is now available. Among other things, the study found that the number of bicyclists *increased 15%* between 2007 and 2008. 15th Avenue SE north of 5th Street is the busiest location for bicyclists, with an estimated *3,570 bicyclists per day*. More info is available at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles
- 10) The University District Partnership Alliance has a number of activities coming up in the next month. The U-area ordinance changes that the Alliance has supported and that I have moved forward have unanimously passed the Zoning and Planning committee and I expect them to pass the Council on August 14. The Alliance will hold a workshop on Saturday, August 15 to look at future trends for the District. And the first home purchased by the Alliance, at 405 Fifth Street SE, will go on the market this month.
- 11) This fall, Minneapolis voters will be able to rank our choices for Mayor, City Council, Park Board and Board of Estimate and Taxation. To learn more about the system and see a sample ballot, please check out <http://voteminneapolis.org>.
- 12) The proposal I worked on with Council Member Betsy Hodges to form a new sister city relationship between Minneapolis and Najaf, Iraq, has passed the Council unanimously. I look forward to meeting with elected officials from Najaf and strengthening this relationship over the coming years.
- 13) There are openings on the Civil Rights Commission (closes 8/14) and Public Health Advisory Committee (open until filled). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.