

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

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

**Roundtable: the Future of our Schools.** 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 and representatives of District Parent Advisory Council Area B Kate Towle and Craig Nelson for a Roundtable Discussion on the **Future of Our Schools, April 16, 7-9pm, Van Cleve Park, 901 15th Ave SE.**

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/>.

**Building Blocks Awards.** Congratulations to the Cedars Project Lookout Group in Cedar Riverside and the 1000 Blocks of 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Aves SE in Southeast Como on winning 2006 Building Blocks Awards for their outstanding efforts to build community and increase public safety in their neighborhoods.

**Block Leader Training.** 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.

**Downtown Transportation Action Plan.** 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. Among the changes proposed in the draft: concentrating bus lines on key north-south and east-west corridors, opening some one-way streets to two-way traffic, and expanding bike and pedestrian paths. The first 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.

**Lake Street Construction.** Construction on the east segment of Lake Street (roughly 36<sup>th</sup> to W River Pkwy) began this week. The contractor is starting with the modifications near the parkway that need to be in place prior to the buses going on detour. The bus detour began this morning at 9 am; pavement removals along Lake Street will begin shortly (depending on the weather). Please go here for more information: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cip/lakeEast/>, and be sure to patronize local Lake Street businesses during construction.

**Franklin LRT Station Rezoning.** The Franklin LRT Station rezoning plan was unanimously passed by the Planning Commission this week, as recommended by staff. It will come before the Zoning and Planning committee and through the full Council. If you would like to see the map, please go here: [http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/agendas/planning-commission/2007/20070326cpc\\_agenda.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/agendas/planning-commission/2007/20070326cpc_agenda.asp)

**Future of NRP.** I am generally supportive of HF822, a bill in the Legislature introduced by Reps Clark, Kahn and Mullery, to require the NRP Policy Board to evaluate the need for continued NRP funding and prepare recommendations to continue funding the program. While I was not able to convince my Council colleagues to approve supporting the ideas behind this bill in our Legislative Agenda, it has provided an occasion for me to start a fuller discussion about the future of NRP in the weeks ahead.

**Library Merger.** I was one of two Council Members who voted against the proposed merger of the Minneapolis and Hennepin County library systems. I am not convinced that this is absolutely the wrong idea. However, I do believe that the community has not been adequately consulted, given the immensity of the idea. 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.

**Community Engagement Report.** The NRP Policy Board has released its report on the Minneapolis Community Engagement [report and subsequent community meetings](#). You can download the report here: <http://www.nrp.org/R2/AboutNRP/PB/PBAgenda2007/PBA20070326.html>. I expect the City Coordinator to complete his report soon and that it will be presented to the Council in April.

**Maximum Occupancy Work Group.** The group of residents with diverse perspectives (homeowners, renters and landlords) that 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.

**Spray Paint Ordinance.** 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. It is my hope that these tightened regulations will help decrease vandalism by reducing young people's access to graffiti materials.

**Wind Turbines.** 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.

**Rain Barrels.** 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. My office has heard that over 700 of the 2,000 have already been claimed, so be sure to preorder yours soon.

**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.

**Paint-A-Thon.** 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).

**Window Replacement Loan Fund.** 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.

**Tree Grates.** My office is setting up a meeting with City and Park Board staff to ensure that the adopted policy on not using tree grates (also known as “tree coffins”) is being adequately followed.

**1717 Franklin Ave SE.** The Zoning Board of Adjustment and Department of Public Works have both granted Robert Sykora’s appeal, giving variances that will allow for a substantial addition and remodel.

**Morningstar 2% Loan.** Morningstar Coffee has applied for a Minneapolis 2% loan for \$100,000, to pay for installing a new coffee roaster and afterburner, to better mitigate their offensive odors.

**Bedlam Theater.** Inspections staff worked hard last week to increase the occupancy of Bedlam Theater from 85 to 200, for their ongoing show Inflammato.

**Historic Preservation Awards.** Nominations are due by Friday, April 20 for the 2007 Minneapolis Historic Preservation Awards. If you know someone who has contributed to a historic rehabilitation, an adaptive reuse, a new addition to an historic building, a new construction in an historic district, historic preservation within NRP, or other historic preservation project, please email [rosemarie.campbell@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:rosemarie.campbell@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) for more information.

**Openings on City Boards and Commissions.** 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 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).

Yours, in peace and cooperation,

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