

# Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Southeast Como, 1-8-08

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

## Items:

- 1) Youth Violence Prevention Roundtable
- 2) Grand Rounds Meetings
- 3) University Neighborhood Alliance
- 4) Comprehensive Plan
- 5) NRP and Civic Participation
- 6) Community Engagement Report
- 7) Major Solar Installation
- 8) Library Merger
- 9) Pthalates
- 10) Civil Rights Disparity Study
- 11) Administrative Review
- 12) Legislative Agenda
- 13) City Budget
- 14) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The **Minneapolis Plan to Prevent Youth Violence** will be before the City Council for consideration on January 18. To learn more and share your views please join me, our Minneapolis Commissioner of Health and Family Support, Gretchen Musicant, and others **Tuesday January 22, 7-9pm at Matthews Center**, 24th St. E and 28th Ave. S for a presentation and discussion about this important new initiative. This is a major step forward for work that started with the resolution I introduced last year recognizing youth violence as a public health problem. The plan was approved by the Health, Energy and Environment Committee on January 7th. I am hopeful that they will also be approved by the full Council approval on January 18<sup>th</sup>. For more information :  
[http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/YouthViolencePrevention\\_home.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/YouthViolencePrevention_home.asp)
- 2) I continue to support efforts to find a path for the Grand Round "missing link" that will improve the quality of life and bring amenities, parks and green space into Southeast Minneapolis without destroying homes and dislocating residents. I am following the work of the Park Board's Community Advisory Committee and listening carefully to concerns of community members. All information I have so far suggests that an easterly route is the only one that will accomplish these goals. Please let me know your opinions and concerns about this and try to attend the a Grand Rounds Missing link Open House, Thurs January 17th 6:30 - 8:00pm (presentation at 7:00) at Van Cleve Park.
- 3) On December 19 the University Area Neighborhood Alliance met and elected two co-chairs: Dick Poppele, Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association President, and Karen Himle, Vice President for University Relations. We also established four work teams. I will be leading up, and convening meetings for, the Demonstration Project(s) work team. Here is a list of the teams and members:
  - Demonstration Project(s) Work Team: Cam Gordon, Marilyn Burns, Doris Wickstrom, Kris Nelson, Mike Christenson, Melissa Bean, Jan Morlock.
  - Early Start Initiatives Work Team: Wendy Menken, Kendre Turonie, Jan Morlock
  - Resources and Partnerships Work Team: Arvonne Fraser, Karen Himle, Jan Morlock.
  - Vision and Long Term Plan Work Team: Wendy Menken, Dick Gilyard, Richard (Fitz) Pfitzenreuter, Alex Fink, Jan Morlock.This group has enormous potential to transform the relationships between the neighborhoods, the University and the City in more effective, positive, collaborative ways. I am look forward to the next steering committee meeting Thursday, January 24, and all the work ahead on this in 2008.
- 4) I encourage residents to review the new draft of the Comprehensive Plan that is available in public libraries and at [www.minneapolisplan.info](http://www.minneapolisplan.info). You can submit comments at [www.minneapolisplan.info](http://www.minneapolisplan.info), or send an email to [lanupdate@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:lanupdate@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) or written comments to: Haila Maze, Senior City Planner, CPED, 350 South 5<sup>th</sup> St., Rm 210, Minneapolis, MN 55415. The closest meeting to Southeast Como is at Eastside Neighborhood Services, 1700 2nd Street NE, January 29, 4-6pm.
- 5) Last month the Council took some promising steps forward for the future of Minneapolis neighborhoods. A new report, called Framework for the Future, recommends, among other things, that 2 million dollars a year be set aside to assist neighborhood organizations cover basic administrative costs, that a Neighborhood Investment Fund be

established to fund discretionary spending; that a resident-controlled, neighborhood organization-elected governance board be created to oversee the funds, and that the City create a division of Community Involvement to better support community participation efforts. I successfully amended the action to require that all neighborhood group presidents and all City advisory boards and commissions receive a copy of the report, as well as the Community Engagement Task Force's recommendations for review and input. See <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/communityengagement.asp> for more.

- 6) On December 7, 2007, the City Council adopted the [Core Principles of Community Engagement](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/CorePrinciples_CE.asp) ([http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/CorePrinciples\\_CE.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/communications/CorePrinciples_CE.asp)) as recommended by the Community Engagement Task Force. This was one of 36 recommendations. It also recommended that each neighborhood organizations also adopt them. It will be important that neighborhood organizations and others review and comment on the recommendations of the Community Engagement Task Force as well as the future NRP framework group in the first quarter of 2008.
- 7) The City has been selected to receive a \$2 million grant to build a 600 kilowatt solar installation on top of our Currie Maintenance Facility This is bigger than any solar project any existing solar project in the upper Midwest. Xcel Energy's Renewable Development Fund, which they were required by the Prairie Island agreement to create, will provide \$2 million towards this project. The City will lease space on top of our facility to a third-party solar developer. The City will enter into a power purchase agreement with the solar developer, paying a little more than we do per kilowatt-hour off of the normal Xcel grid. This will generate the equivalent of about 80 single-family.
- 8) I was the only Council Member to vote against the merger of the Minneapolis Public Library System with the Hennepin County library system. I have serious concerns about transferring the jobs, land, buildings and other assets that belong to Minneapolis residents without a better governance structure for the a new library board and without better protections for recapturing assets should they be sold by the county in the future. More importantly, I believe that major changes to our charter and decisions like this about the structure of government should go before the voters. On the positive side the Southeast, Roosevelt and Webber libraries have reopened for limited hours and plans for a renovated (and likely relocated) Southeast Library will move forward. There will be a celebration of the reopening of the Southeast Library January 12 starting at 10:00 AM at the library (1222 Southeast 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue Street)
- 9) I am looking into a City ban of children's products containing Bisphenol-A and certain phthalates, as San Francisco has done, in order to build momentum for possible future statewide and nationwide bans. I have asked the Citizen's Environmental Advisory Committee and Public Health Advisory Committee to provide us with input on these options and the broader issues surrounding these chemicals.
- 10) I am pleased that the City is moving ahead with a Disparity Study. The City of Minneapolis' Small and Underutilized Business (SUB) Program promotes opportunities for businesses owned by women and minority citizens. The disparity study will give us the information we need to know if there are disparities in the marketplace and if our affirmative efforts to hire and contract with underutilized businesses are warranted. Twelve years have passed since the last City of Minneapolis disparity study was completed.
- 11) I have introduced subject matter of an ordinance to change the City's administrative review process for new housing developments under four units. I will be working with staff to raise the standards and provide more opportunity for neighborhood comment on these small developments that can have such a significant effect on their neighbors.
- 12) The Council's 2008 legislative agenda includes a request for \$6.85 million for the Southeast Minneapolis Industrial area, and the following proposals I put forward: support for measures to stop the flow of handguns to youth, legislative action to eliminate tax incentives that encourage the conversion of single family housing to rental property, allowing organic waste to be mixed with yard waste for municipal collection, legislation adopting rules for ranked choice voting, and consideration of an elected Metropolitan Council.
- 13) On December 12<sup>th</sup> the City Council approved a budget for 2008 The City Council voted 12-1 in favor of a \$1.4 billion city budget that includes \$200 million in public safety programs, funds the largest police force in more than five years and addresses root causes of crime with funding to prevent youth violence and build economic opportunity. It includes a 1.8 million decrease in LGA (Local Government Aid), an increase of 8% to the property tax levy, the removal of the 2% wage cap for employees and cuts to the Public Works and Regulatory Services department. Other highlights include: \$300,000 to hire 4 new 911 operators, \$150,000 for community micro-grants to prevent gang graffiti, \$100,000 to fund the Youth Violence Prevention Committee Implementation plan, \$100,000 to fund the next round of climate change micro grants
- 14) There are openings on the Minneapolis Capital Long-range Improvement Committee (closes 2/1/2008), Civilian Police Review Authority (closes 1/18/2008) Heritage Preservation Commission (closes 1/4/2008), Minneapolis Telecommunications Network (MTN) (Closes 1-25-08), and the Zoning Board of Adjustment (closes 2/1/2008). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)