



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

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Second Ward

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## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 4-27-11

**Cam's next Seward Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11:00am**  
**Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St**

### Items:

- 1) Dining Out for Life
- 2) Road Resurfacing in 2011
- 3) Bicyclist Fatality
- 4) Second Ward to Shrink
- 5) Meeting on the Future of Neighborhood Programming
- 6) Urban Agriculture Policy Plan
- 7) More Funding for Pothole Repair
- 8) Emerald Ash Borer in Seward
- 9) Domestic Benefits Ordinance Waiver
- 10) Unisys Contract
- 11) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) Please join me at Campus Pizza this **Thursday, April 28<sup>th</sup>** at noon, for Dining Out for Life, an annual fundraiser for the Aliveness Project, a local nonprofit organization that provides on-site meals, food shelf & other supportive services for individuals living with HIV/AIDS and their families. To find other participating restaurants, visit [www.diningoutforlife.com/Minneapolis](http://www.diningoutforlife.com/Minneapolis). Thanks to other participating Ward 2 restaurants: the Birchwood Café, ChinDian Café, the Cupcake, Himalayan Restaurant, Pizza Luce in Seward, the Craftsman Restaurant, and the Weinery.
- 2) A number of roads will be resurfaced in Ward 2 this year. Hennepin County is planning to mill and overlay Franklin Avenue from Lyndale Avenue to the river. They are planning to install bike lanes as part of this project, with no loss of parking, between Minnehaha and Riverside (the section between Riverside and the river will have bike lanes installed by the City). I am hearing from multiple stakeholders, including bicyclists and residents, that they believe the bike lanes should extend beyond Minnehaha, and will be working to make this possible. The City is planning to resurface Butler Place. This is in addition to the construction work beginning on the Central Corridor, and the complete reconstruction of Riverside, from Franklin to 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave S. It will be a busy year, and I ask that everyone remain patient as we take these necessary – and in some cases long overdue – steps to improve our transportation infrastructure.
- 3) As you have likely heard, a young woman was hit and killed on her bicycle at the corner of 15<sup>th</sup> Ave SE and 4<sup>th</sup> St SE last week. There is a very clear pattern emerging: of the last six bicycle fatalities in Minneapolis, four were caused by large trucks making turns. My office is organizing a meeting between members of Public Works, the Police Department, and the Attorney's Office to begin an interagency discussion about how best to address this deadly conflict between bicyclists and trucks. I also plan to hold a community meeting to get ideas from cyclists, truck drivers and others about how to prevent future deaths.
- 4) Demographic shifts over the last decade have left the Second Ward much more populous than the average ward. The Second Ward is going to get significantly smaller after the next redistricting. You can find more information and analysis of the 2010 Census results here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/census/2010.asp>, and on my blog.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email [Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Attention: If you want help translating this information in language other than Hmong, Spanish or Somali, call 311

Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800;

Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2700;

Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

- 5) The Neighborhood and Community Relations department has scheduled four focus groups to gather input from neighborhood organizations around the City during the last two weeks of April. One of these meetings is taking place tonight, from 6:30-8pm at Matthews Center. The purpose of these focus groups is to consult with neighborhood organizations prior to development of recommendations to the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission and the City Council about neighborhood programs in 2012 and 2013. I have communicated to NCR staff that it is very unfortunate that they scheduled this meeting to talk to neighborhood organizations on the same day and time as the Seward Neighborhood Group board meeting.
- 6) The Urban Agriculture Plan has unanimously passed the City Council. I see this plan as a major step towards making Minneapolis a leader in the local food movement. It recommends allowing people to grow food commercially in Minneapolis for the first time, along with a host of recommendations that will make it easier for residents to start community gardens and grow food in their own backyards. I want to thank all of the community members who helped shape this plan, and who got engaged to make sure it made it through the Council process without major alterations. The plan will provide guidance for specific food-related land use, regulatory and zoning ordinance amendments that I hope to see in place by next year's growing season.
- 7) On April 1<sup>st</sup>, the Council allocated an additional \$1 million to accelerate the City's pothole repair work to address the significant pothole problem resulting from this year's winter. Crews have been working all winter to temporarily patch potholes when they could, with the bulk of the work occurring since February. With warmer weather and asphalt plants open for the season, Public Works crews began making more permanent patches April 5. This additional funding means we will double the number of repair crews out patching potholes at the beginning of the summer construction and maintenance season. To report a pothole, please call 311, Monday through Friday, 7am-7pm. Public Works uses reports that come in from the public, as well as their observations in the field, to prioritize work and address street issues as efficiently and effectively as possible with the given resources.
- 8) Five trees in Seward have been confirmed to be infected with Emerald Ash Borer, along the top of the bluff between 33rd Avenue South and East 27<sup>th</sup> Street along West River Parkway, along with an additional 13 ash that are suspected of being infected. All of these trees will also be removed by MPRB Forestry staff. If you have an ash tree in your yard, please only prune it **before May 1** and **after Labor Day**. Only work on your ash tree when the emerald ash borer is dormant, because transporting any part of an ash tree (firewood, branches, etc.) helps spread the pest.
- 9) I voted against granting a waiver of the City's domestic partner ordinance to Life Time Fitness. This ordinance requires City contractors to provide the same benefits to same-sex domestic partners that they provide to married employees. Life Time Fitness does not provide these benefits. The City's current contract with our Police and Fire unions obligates the City to provide health club memberships to these employees, and Life Time is the clear favorite of many. However, I believe that in order for our ordinances offering equal rights to all to have any meaning, we must actually use them. I fear that the Council's decision to grant this waiver will set a precedent that no contractor should worry about losing the City's business for not providing the domestic partnership benefits we've mandated by ordinance. This situation was especially problematic, because it became clear that one of Life Time's competitors – the YMCA – does provide domestic partnership benefits. Joining me in voting to uphold our domestic partner ordinance were Council Members Schiff, Lilligren and Tuthill.
- 10) Early in April, the Council, with my strong support, rejected a list of "change orders" that would have increased the City's contract with Unisys Corporation by \$750,000. This is in addition to the \$34 million contract for 2010 through 2012 and the over \$3 million in "change orders" the Council has agreed to over the life of this contract. I joined Council President Johnson in speaking against moving forward with these change orders, in large part because I continue to believe that the City would be better served by going out for public bids for our information technology contract, and exploring how we could a) do without some IT services, b) bring some of these services in-house, rather than continuing to pay Unisys to do them, and c) utilize open-source software. In a time when the City is reneging on the commitments we've made to neighborhoods and considering laying off vital City staff, I believe that we simply cannot continue to give more and more money to Unisys. Unfortunately, two weeks later, the Council voted to reverse this decision and to allow this additional \$750,000 expense. I again voted no.
- 11) There are openings on the Animal Care & Control Advisory Board, Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Latino Advisory Committee, Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Planning Commission, Public Health Advisory Committee, Advisory Group for Redistricting 2011-2012, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, Minneapolis Telecommunications Network, Thinc.GreenMSP Steering Committee, Workforce Council and Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).