

**News from Cam Gordon
Council Member, Second Ward
November 2008**

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

Vote Yes. Please join me in voting YES on three very important referenda that you will find on your ballot on November 4th.

1) The ABC Referendum (Accountable, Balanced across the City, and Connected to the Community). The ballot question reads "SCHOOL DISTRICT BALLOT QUESTION 2 – ESTABLISHMENT OF ELECTION DISTRICTS FOR SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1. Shall the Board of Special School District No. 1, Minneapolis Public Schools consist of six members elected by district and three members elected at-large for a total of nine members? Board of education members elected on or prior to November 4, 2008 shall complete their terms. The six districts shall be of equal population and shall initially coincide with the six park board districts for the Minneapolis Park Board. Three districts shall be given even numbers and three districts shall be given odd numbers."

This would create a board with some members elected at large and some from districts assuring that more families and all areas of the City are represented on the Board. Currently, 48% of school districts nationally elect some or all of the Members from districts. Over the last three years the majority of school boards that received awards for their quality of governance, relations with their communities, and progress on closing the achievement gap from the Council of Urban Boards of Education were boards that were elected by districts. Eleven School Boards in Minnesota currently elect their schools board by some sort of District including the state's largest-Anoka-Hennepin.

I believe that this amendment will improve the School Board's representation of, and responsiveness to the people of Minneapolis. It will ensure that every part of the city has a representative, which the current at-large election cannot do, and that there would be at least one board member able to develop a deeper understanding about each area of the City that they would also be accountable to. Equality of geographic representation will help the public trust that tough decisions that can sometimes pit neighborhoods against each other - like the decision to close schools - are being made with equal concern about the fate of all Minneapolis neighborhoods. This new election method will provide more opportunities for diverse cultural and political voices to gain a seat at the table. At-large plurality elections are known for being the very hardest for minor party and grassroots candidates to win.

2) Land, Water and Legacy Amendment. This statewide constitutional amendment will provide secure and predictable funding to the things that make Minnesota great: our water, natural space, and culture. Environmental and arts funding are often the first things cut back when the state goes through tough financial times, so this amendment is even more necessary than ever to protect the Minnesota we all love. For more information, go here: <http://www.yesformn.org>.

3) Strong Schools, Strong City. This ballot initiative will provide a necessary funding increase to help us close the academic achievement gap, improve early reading skills, enhance math and science programs, provide up-to-date technology and textbooks, and keep class sizes small. For more information, go here: <http://www.mpls.k12.mn.us/Referendum.html>.

For more information on elections, including help on finding your polling place, go to www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/elections or call 311.

2030 Transportation Plan. I am working to strengthen the Metropolitan Council's 2030 Transportation Policy Plan through comments both as a City Council Member and as member of the Red Rock Corridor Commission. Working with Council Members Lilligren and Glidden, I am attempting to incorporate many of the great comments from other transportation groups such as

Transit for Livable Communities into the City's comments. I would like the City to push for some specific changes to make the plan significantly more aggressive, including: raising the 2030 ridership goal from 145 riders; identifying real targets for bicycle and pedestrian mode share, greenhouse gas emission reductions and shift from single-occupancy auto use to transit; and setting firm goals for the percentage of bus fleets that are hybrid vehicles. In my role as the City's representative to the Red Rock transit corridor planning group, I have successfully urged them to add several of these items to their comments to the Met Council's plan, helping to build a regional consensus that we need to more aggressively push for more environmentally friendly transportation.

Proposed New Noise Ordinance. Environmental Management staff is working on a new noise ordinance. The old City ordinance was found unconstitutionally vague, and staff has been enforcing the state noise statute, which significantly reduces our capacity to respond to complaints. The proposed new code would use a "C weighting" rather than an "A weighting," allowing us to more effectively control bass-heavy noise from bars. I plan to introduce these ordinances at the next Council meeting on November 7th.

Emerald Ash Borer. If you're planning to get some wood for your fireplace this winter, please be aware that there could be a destructive stowaway in your logs. The emerald ash borer is an invasive pest that attacks ash trees, has already killed more than 40 million ash trees nationwide, and has spread as far east as Wisconsin. You can help slow the spread by:

- **Buying or harvesting your wood near the area where you are going to burn the wood.** Avoid moving firewood from its area of origination; especially avoid bringing wood into Minnesota from out of state.
- **Watching your ash trees carefully.** The earlier the emerald ash borer is found, the sooner it can be addressed. Residents should examine ash trees in their neighborhood for tree canopy thinning or small D-shaped exit holes left in the bark by the borer. If there is any suspicion that a tree is infested, residents can contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's "Arrest the Pest" hotline at (651) 201-6684 for the metro area or 1-888-545-6684 for greater Minnesota.

Waste Hauling Contract. The Council has voted to contract with Minneapolis Refuse, Inc, and Aspen Waste System for trash hauling. This contract is the result of the first open, competitive bidding process for the City's garbage service in decades, and will result in cost savings of around \$45,000 over the next five years.

Plastics Recycling Pilot. The City has extended the "All Plastics Pilot Program" in Northeast, which accepts plastic for recycling that is not accepted in standard pickup. I am very excited about this program, and I look forward to broadening it to more locations citywide.

Planetarium. The City has pledged \$5 million in Urban Development Action Grant funds to endowment fund for the Minnesota Planetarium and Space Discovery Center, which we hope will be built on the top of the Central Library in downtown.

Restorative Justice. The Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee voted to release a request for proposals for restorative justice services. The total amount the City is dedicating towards restorative justice through this process is \$77,100.

Bike Sharing. The City of is working to bring bike sharing to Minneapolis. On Thursday, November 6 at noon and at 6 pm Stationnement de Montreal and 8D Technologies will bring the Public Bicycle System that they recently launched in Montreal to Minneapolis. This system is based on European bike share programs with new solutions for northern climates. Each session will start with an informal, on-street demonstration with an opportunity for people to try out the system on the plaza outside of the Crown Roller Mill Building, 105 5th Ave S. For those interested in more information, a short slide show and opportunity for more questions will follow in the CPED offices inside (room 200).

Armistice Day Resolution and Event. I am sponsoring a resolution honoring our veterans and accepting a gift of a POW-MIA flag from a Second Ward resident to the City of Minneapolis/. I invite you to the 'Partners in Peace' Celebration of the 90th Anniversary of Armistice Day, **Tuesday, November 11** at 7pm at Brit's Pub, 1110 Nicollet Mall.

Resolution on Torture. With Council Member Glidden and the Center for Victims of Torture (which has been based in Minneapolis since 1985) I am cosponsoring a resolution calling for a Declaration of Principles for an Executive Order clearly outlawing torture, inhumane treatment and cruelty towards prisoners of the United States.

There are vacancies on the **Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee**, which will oversee the implementation of the Youth Violence Prevention Blueprint for Action, serve as a decision-making body on recommendations for preventing youth violence, develop strategic partnerships to achieve the goals of the Blueprint for Action, and promote and engage a cross section of community stakeholders in the implementation of the plan. Please consider applying, or encourage others to do so by calling (612) 673-3358 or emailing cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Party Patrol Grant. The Council is poised to vote in favor of accepting a grant from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety for \$5,000 for enforcing underage drinking laws in the 2nd Precinct and addressing party house issues in the University-area neighborhoods.

West River Parkway. Next year, the Park Board will reconstruct the West River Parkway bicycle and pedestrian paths. They have asked interested residents to join a working group that will help them make determinations about design elements. If you're interested, please contact Nick Eoloff at neoloff@minneapolisparks.org.

Historic Resource Survey. This fall, City Heritage Preservation staff is starting a Historic Resource Survey that includes the Seward and Cooper neighborhoods. The City was first surveyed for historic resources in the 1970s and many of the designated landmarks and historic districts we have today are a result of this original survey. Since 2001, CPED-Planning staff has conducted a re-survey of historic resources in Minneapolis. A reassessment of historic resources is needed because of the aging of many types of historic resources as well as changing attitudes about which types of historic resources need to be identified, e.g. historic landscapes, cultural and ethnic group resources, high-style homes versus vernacular styles. City staff will be meeting with neighborhood groups to update residents on the survey and talk about community meetings this winter and spring. I think this is a great opportunity for our neighborhoods.

Campus Crossroads. The Council has voted unanimously to rezone to allow the Campus Crossroads project to move forward, in accordance with the Prospect Park / East River Road Improvement Association's formal position. There were some concerns from Motley residents about this project, so I applaud the formation of a PPERIA committee focused on the Motley area to better address the unique concerns and perspectives of this community.

Grandma's Site Redevelopment. Alatus Partners is seeking City approval of a 23-25 story, approximately 360-unit housing project, with first-floor retail, at the corner of 19th Ave S and Washington Ave. The developers are currently planning for the project to be LEED certified. This project is enabled by the City's sale of the underutilized Seven Corners parking ramp, which will provide all necessary parking for this development. The developers have met with the West Bank Community Coalition and committed to work with the community on issues relating to design, parking use by surrounding businesses and residential complexes, and possible participation by Alatus in the creation of Bluff Street Park.

Cleanup Grant Requests. The Council is poised to apply to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development grant money to clean up contamination at 2600 Minnehaha Ave S and the Dinkydone/Sydney Hall site. We will also be requesting Hennepin County Environmental Response Fund grants for 2600 Minnehaha, the Dinkydome site, and Huron Flats.

Seward Neighborhood Group Annual Gathering. Wednesday, November 5, 6:30-9:00, Matthews Community Center 2318 29th Avenue South. This annual event begins at 6:30 with a pot luck supper followed by updates from SNG committees about what's happening in the neighborhood follow at 7:15. The formal SNG Annual Meeting to elect new board members takes place at 8:15. A silent auction will be running throughout the evening until the election begins. If you or someone you know are interested in running for the Board, you may nominate yourself/friend from the floor at the Annual Meeting. But to be included on the printed ballot, please contact the Nominating Committee at 612 338 6205 or email: admin@sng.org.

The Seward Arts Festival. Over 100 artists, businesses, and performers are participating in this year's event on Friday and Saturday November 7th and 8th. The program includes an Art Car Parade (Sat. 11 am, Caption Max 25th St and 27th Ave). a Seward Art Crawl, poetry reading at the Ivy Building. and Live music at the Eagles Club. Look for the Festival Program Guide in the November copy of The Bridge, or contact Erik Riese at erik@tcq.net

The Southeast Como Improvement Association's Annual Meeting will be on November 10th, 7 pm, at Van Cleve Park. This is an excellent opportunity to run for the SECIA Board of Directors, join a SECIA Committee, or vote on neighborhood issues. SECIA will be holding elections for 5 separate seats on the SECIA Board. Anyone who lives or owns property in Como is eligible to be on the Board. SECIA will vote on a proposed allocation of NRP funding, from returned home improvement loans, to keep the SECIA office open and staffed. Again, anyone who lives or owns property in the neighborhood is eligible to vote for both the allocation of funds and for the SECIA Board.

The West Bank Community Coalition Annual Meeting & Board of Directors Election will be on Wednesday, November 19, 6:30 pm at the Chase House Community Room Riverside Plaza, 1530 South 6th Street, Plaza Level At the meeting the WBCC membership will vote to fill the following director seats: 2 Business / Commercial Property Owner Seats, 2 Homeowner Resident Seats, and 4 Renter Resident Seats.

Openings on Boards and Commissions. There are openings on the Civilian Police Review Authority (closes 10/17/08), Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities (closes 10/17/08), Public Health Advisory Committee (closes 10/17/08), Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Vacancy (closes 10/17/08), and Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Please feel free to contact me and my office anytime if you have any questions or concerns. We welcome your thoughts and feedback on any of these issues and my positions.

Yours, in peace and cooperation,

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