

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 10-28-09

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

Items:

- 1) Election Day is November 3
- 2) Charter Amendment – Please Vote No
- 3) Bike Sharing System Coming
- 4) Public Health Advisory Committee Appointee Needed
- 5) Street Sweeping Starts This Week
- 6) Pedestrian Master Plan
- 7) Buy American Resolution
- 8) Potential Hydrothermal Project
- 9) Local Food Vendor Coming to City Hall
- 10) Affordable Housing Goals
- 11) New Police Contract
- 12) Sustainability Indicators
- 13) Pervious Driveway Ordinance Introduced
- 14) 2010 Census
- 15) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) Please remember to vote in the municipal election on Tuesday, November 3. If you need to find your polling place, go here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/elections/precinct-finder.asp>. And if you'd like to see a sample ballot, go here: <http://voteminneapolis.org/>. Remember to rank your candidates in order of your preference.
- 2) I encourage you to join me in voting NO on the proposed amendment to abolish the Board of Estimate and Taxation. This board plays a vital role in balancing the financial relationship between the City and the independent Park Board. In addition, it can function as an external auditor of the City's finances, which I support. As we begin the constructive discussion next year about how to improve the way that the City works with the Park Board, we should do so with the BET in place.
- 3) Minneapolis is on track to launch *Nice Ride MN*, the first large-scale bike sharing system in the United States, next May. Right now, the program is planning kiosk locations, and there are several proposed to be installed in Seward, at Franklin and 21st, 26th, and 29th, as well as near the Cabooze. *Nice Ride* will put approximately 1,000 bicycles onto Minneapolis streets, locked in self-service kiosks. In addition to Seward, kiosks will be located in downtown, uptown, Eat Street, Midtown, the U area, Dinkytown, Cedar Riverside, and the Warehouse district. The input/comment period lasts through October 30th, so get your responses in before then to help determine the final location of these bicycle rental kiosks. If you'd like more information on the upcoming *Nice Ride MN* program, please visit www.niceridemn.com or call Bill Dossett at 612-926-9218.
- 4) My office has begun receiving applications and letters of interest from potential Public Health Advisory Committee appointees. If you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering on this important City advisory body, please apply by November 30th. I will make an appointment in December.
- 5) The fall comprehensive street sweep and leaf collection program starts tomorrow, October 27. Please don't park your car on the street the day it is cleaned or your car may be towed. You can find out more, including when your street is scheduled to be swept, on the city's website: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/streetsweep/.
- 6) The Council has adopted the City's first-ever Pedestrian Master Plan. It is, for the most part, a very good plan, and will help us dramatically improve the pedestrian experience. My office, working with Public Works staff and others, successfully strengthened the plan in a few important ways, by ensuring that mid-block crossings will be addressed in the planned review of our crosswalk marking policy, that we'll explore better ways to clear snow from city-owned sidewalks, and that the crosswalk review will look at allowing interested areas to pursue high-visibility crosswalk patterns. For more please visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/pedestrian/pedestrian-masterplan.asp>.

- 7) Working with the Steelworkers union, I have drafted a resolution committing the City of Minneapolis to spend our Recovery Act dollars on American-made goods and services whenever possible. It also commits the City to document the cases in which it is not possible to buy American, and explain why. I believe it's important to keep our dollars circulating in the local economy as much as we can, especially in this time of economic turmoil.
- 8) The Health, Energy and Environment committee has heard a report on a new hydrothermal energy facility to be located at the East Bank Mills project that could, if successful, heat and cool up to four million square feet of residential and commercial buildings with little or no carbon emissions. The technology would use water from the Mississippi as a heat exchange, similar to how geothermal projects use the ambient temperature of the ground. It is also proposed to use the existing drop shafts to generate enough electricity to power the heat pumps. City staff has recommended that the Council devote a \$30,000 planning loan to this project, and I was proud to move their recommendation in committee.
- 9) The coffee and food vendor in City Hall (the "Clock Tower Café") has decided to end its contract. I strongly advocated for the Metropolitan Building Commission, which operates City Hall, to find a new vendor that will serve healthy, local, sustainably produced food. They appear to have done just exactly that, and are poised to offer the contract to a small business called "Local D'Lish," which specializes in local, healthy, sustainable food. I don't believe that this would have been possible without the progress we've made through the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative.
- 10) The Council has decided to significantly decrease our affordable housing goals, from the 1,970 units we've aimed to create over the past three years to 1,555 units over the next three years. The rationales staff used to bring this forward mostly relate to our lack of success in meeting our goals. I voted against this downward move in committee because I believe it's important to keep our goals high, and because from what I hear, affordable housing is actually one of the only types of housing being built in the current economy.
- 11) With my support, the Council has approved a new 3 year contract with the Police Federation. It does a much better job than past police contracts of holding the line on pay increases, holding officers to 0% increase for the first 10 months of the contract, 2.5% for the next 7, 2% from August 2010 to June 2011 and 1.5% from July 1 to December 31, 2011.
- 12) The Council has passed some revisions of our twenty-six sustainability indicators. I'm impressed with the changes we're making, which make some of our indicator targets much more sophisticated and sets the first-ever targets for other indicators. Some of the highlights include a new Solid Waste indicator (which commits us to broadening our composting program and improve recycling rates), improved targets for Healthy Lakes and River, and more. My office has been especially involved in strengthening the bicycling indicator, to aim for a 7% bicycling mode share by 2014, and in drafting a new target for measuring the percentage of Minneapolis workers living in poverty. I am hoping to come forward with a new target to address racial disparities in poverty soon.
- 13) I have introduced subject matter of an ordinance that will allow homeowners to install certain kinds of pervious pavers on their driveways that are not currently allowed under the zoning code. I'm hoping that this can be part of a larger business process improvement around issues of stormwater management and erosion control.
- 14) Work to conduct a successful census next year is being done by the Minneapolis Complete Count Committee, a volunteer team of city residents appointed by the Mayor and City Council, and a staff team led by CPED with help from the University's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, which has been hired to assist with outreach. An accurate census count is critical in ensuring that Minnesota retains its full congressional representation and obtaining federal funding. Some people fear that their census answers could be shared with immigration, welfare or housing agencies but by law, the U.S. Census Bureau cannot share individual information with anyone, including landlords and other government agencies and officials. While some areas of Minneapolis responded in strong numbers to the 2000 census, lower responses were reported in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood, and areas around the University of Minnesota. For more information about the City's 2010 Census efforts, please visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/2010census/>. Information is available in the City's six Low English Proficiency languages.
- 15) There are openings on the Civilian Police Review Authority (closes 12/31), Public Health Advisory Committee (open until filled), Public Housing Authority Board of Commissioners (Closes 10/16), and Zoning Board of Adjustment (closes 10/16). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.