

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Southeast Como, 10-10-07

Cam's next Southeast Como Office Hours:
Tuesday, November 13, 9:30-11:00am
SECIA Office, 837 15th Ave SE

Items:

- 1) October Roundtable: Community Engagement
- 2) Grand Rounds
- 3) I-35W Bridge
- 4) Van Cleve Project
- 5) Critical Mass
- 6) 10-Year Transportation Plan meetings
- 7) Library Merger meeting
- 8) Street Lighting Policy and Plan
- 9) 2008 Budget
- 10) Requiring Produce in Grocery Stores
- 11) Local Produce Markets
- 12) Organics Composting
- 13) Bike/Ped Infrastructure
- 14) Bait Bicycle Pilot beginning
- 15) Animal Protection Ordinance
- 16) Facsimile Firearms
- 17) New City Logo
- 18) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Please join me for the October Roundtable Discussion on **Community Engagement: 10/15, 7-9pm Augsburg College Christensen Center Minneapolis Room, 2nd Floor, 22nd Ave S & 7 ½ Street**. After three months of work, the Community Engagement Task Force that I worked to form has approved a preliminary report that will go to the City Council for possible action later this fall. Now we need your input and ideas. The draft includes principles, recommendations, and characteristics of organizations that are eligible to receive city resources for activities related to engaging the public. Call or email my office to get a copy of the report. There will be additional meetings throughout the city as follows:
 - Tuesday, Oct. 9, 6:30-8:30pm, Windom Park Recreation Center, 2251 Hayes St NE
 - Wednesday, Oct. 10, 6-8pm at North Commons Park, 1801 James Ave N
 - Tuesday, Oct. 16, 11am-1pm at Central Library board room, 300 Nicollet Mall
 - Wednesday; Oct. 17, 5:30-7:30pm at Nokomis Park, 2401 E Minnehaha Pkwy
 - Thursday, Oct. 18, 5:30-7:30pm at MLK Park Recreation Center, 4055 Nicollet Ave S
- 2) I continue to oppose any route for the Grand Rounds Missing Link that would take out housing in Southeast Como, and have urged the Park Board to concentrate on the east options for connecting the Grand Rounds.
- 3) The Council has passed a resolution approving the Highway Project Review Package submitted by MnDOT for the reconstruction of the I-35W Bridge. The Council also passed a resolution urging MnDOT to arrange for the presence of an Independent Construction Safety Officer on-site at all times during the reconstruction of the bridge.
- 4) Habitat for Humanity has received \$60,000 gap funding for the affordable home ownership townhomes included in Project for Pride in Living's Van Cleve project, and the City has given the project \$758,763 in Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits to support the affordable housing components of the development.
 - 5) The City is hosting public meetings to discuss the City's draft Ten-Year Transportation Plan and its Streetcar Feasibility Study. The public will have an opportunity to provide feedback on plan recommendations and to discuss key transportation issues facing Minneapolis. There is a meeting on October 24, 6:30-8:30 pm, at the Van Cleve Recreation Center. For more information, go to the City website:
www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us.
 - 6) The Council and Library Board will meet jointly on November 7 and 6pm at the Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall, to discuss the merger of the Minneapolis Public Library and the Hennepin County Library systems.

- 7) The meetings about the new proposed City street lighting policy are over, but I would still like input from residents about the proposal, especially about the proposed fee. I am committed to fighting for Dark Sky Compliant lighting fixtures, which will help save energy and reduce glare and light pollution.
- 8) The Mayor has presented his proposed 2008 budget to the Council. It includes a tax levy increase of 8% and calls for funding 18 additional police officers and spending more on public safety technology, community prosecutors, Restorative Justice programs, ex-offender re-entry support, gang graffiti prevention, a Juvenile Curfew-Truancy Resource Center in City Hall, the new "You(th) Are Here" circulator buses and four more 911 operators. The budget also supports targeted funding to help implement the (soon to finished) youth violence prevention plan, and promote renewable energy, improved commercial corridors, more stable housing, job training, bridge repair and rehab, improved water and the implementation of several transportation initiatives. For more details visit: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2008recommended/>
- 9) At my urging, the PS&RS committee voted to send proposed amendments to our grocery store licensing ordinance back to Regulatory Services staff. The committee directed them to work with staff from Health and Family Support and outside food policy experts like the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, to ensure that all licensed grocery stores have an adequate stock of fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods.
- 10) Responding to a staff directive I championed, City staff have come up with a new, cheaper and easier permitting process for small Local Produce Markets like the one that the City and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy helped establish at Brian Coyle Center and elsewhere. These Local Produce Markets must have five vendors or fewer, all of whom grow their own produce. Their permitting fees will go from over \$400 to \$154, and the application will go from a large packet to one double-sided piece of paper. I consider this a major step forward on supporting local, sustainable agriculture and increasing access in poor communities to high-quality, nutritious foods.
- 11) In reaction to the August 31 incident at Critical Mass at which 19 people were arrested, I organized a meeting between Minneapolis Police (MPD) Administration officials and Critical Mass participants to discuss ways to make future rides more peaceful and less confrontational. I'm pleased to report that the meeting, and the subsequent good work of both the MPD and Critical Mass riders, had an extremely positive result: the 9/28 Critical Mass was peaceful. You can read about the ride in the Star Tribune here: <http://www.startribune.com/462/story/1452940.html>, and on my blog.
- 12) The Council has authorized the Solid Waste & Recycling department to develop a pilot program to collect source-separated organic materials from Linden Hills residents and, hopefully, schools. The City will be applying for Hennepin County grants to support this pilot program. The goal is to learn lessons that could help the City build a citywide organics composting program, to divert a large portion of our waste away from the garbage burner and into reuse.
- 13) The City has received a grant for more than \$5.7 Million to work on pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements, and a \$900,000 grant to fund three years of a bicycle and pedestrian Ambassador program, to help connect more experienced rides and walkers with people who are not currently walking or biking but want to start. The City has also hired a consultant to complete the Citywide Pedestrian Master Plan.
- 14) I'm happy to report that the MPD has begun working with Abbott Northwestern hospital's security staff on a pilot "bait bicycle" program.
- 15) As you've likely heard, the Animal Protection ordinance I co-sponsored with Ralph Remington was defeated 7-6 in favor of an ill-conceived "regulation" ordinance that I believe will have little impact on the welfare of circus animals or the public safety risks animal circuses pose. This ordinance was referred back to committee for more work, to reduce the expense to City staff and increase its effectiveness, and has been postponed until November 28th for staff to make it workable.
- 16) The Council has passed an ordinance defining, and regulating the carrying and possession of "facsimile firearms."
- 17) The Council has approved a process to research and develop a new brand identity for the City, including a new logo. This plan must come back to Council for approval, will require no additional money, and should be finished to coincide with the Minneapolis Sesquicentennial.
- 18) There are openings on the Minneapolis Ethical Practices Board (closes 9/7/2007). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.