



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

Cam Gordon
City Council Member
Second Ward

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Every Tuesday morning Cam holds "Ward Office Hours" from 9:30-11:00AM.

Locations:

1st Tuesdays, Hard Times Café (West Bank/University);

2nd Tuesdays, SECIA Office (SE Como);

3rd Tuesdays, Pratt School (Prospect Park);

4th Tuesdays, Birchwood Café (Seward/Longfellow).

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Seward Neighborhood Group 2008 Annual Meeting 11-5-08

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

Items:

- 1) Election Results
- 2) West River Parkway Bike/Ped Path Reconstruction
- 3) Historic Resource Survey
- 4) Ranked Choice Voting 2009 Implementation
- 5) Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy
- 6) Progress on Sustainability Targets
- 7) Proposed Noise Ordinance
- 8) Community Engagement and NRP
- 9) Met Council 2030 Transportation Plan
- 10) Bike Sharing Program Model
- 11) Armistice Day Resolution and Event
- 12) Resolution on Torture
- 13) Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee
- 14) Emerald Ash Borer
- 15) No Heat / Low Heat in Effect
- 16) New Waste Hauling Contract Plastics Recycling
- 17) Planetarium
- 18) Restorative Justice RFP
- 19) Waste Hauling Contract
- 20) Cleanup Grant Requests
- 21) Seward Arts
- 22) STEP-UP program seeks youth for 2009 summer jobs
- 23) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

1) I wanted to note three very important referenda that I am glad passed yesterday in the historic 2008 election. **The ABC/Establishment of School Board Election Districts Referendum** will create, over the next two school board election cycles, a board with 3 members elected at large and 6 from districts. I believe that this referendum (that was endorsed by both the Green and DFL parties) will improve the School Board and make it more responsive and accountable to the people of Minneapolis. The **Land, Water and Legacy Amendment** 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. The **Strong Schools, Strong City** 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.

- 2) Next year, the Park Board will reconstruct the West River Parkway bicycle and pedestrian paths. They have asked interested Seward residents to join a working group that will help them make determinations about design elements.

- 3) This fall, City Heritage Preservation staff is starting a Historic Resource Survey that includes the Seward neighborhood. 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. I will be working with Molly McCartney, from the Planning Department and SNG to keep the community informed about the survey and convene community meetings this winter and spring. I think this is a great opportunity for the neighborhood, a way to capitalize on the resounding success of the SNG History Walks and other History Committee activities.
- 4) The Minneapolis Elections Director has recommended that the City implement ranked choice voting in the 2009 municipal election, by using a combination of our existing machines and a hand count. This recommendation came at the same time she rejected both proposals to machine-count the vote next year. I'm thrilled by this historic opportunity, and I believe that the hand count will be an open, transparent celebration of democracy. There will likely be a delay on reporting final results for some close races, but in my opinion this is more than offset by the benefits of not paying for new equipment, not holding the costly, low-turnout nonpartisan primary, and implementing ranked choice voting in a timely manner – responding to the more than 65% of Minneapolis residents who voted for the IRV charter amendment in 2006.
- 5) The Council has established the City's first-ever Environmentally Preferable Purchasing Policy. I was very supportive of this action, which has gained the support of City departments through the Environmental Coordinating Team, and from the Citizen's Environmental Advisory Committee. The policy represents a serious step forward on many different fronts. For example, the City will begin purchasing 100% post-consumer copier paper for all of our regular copying needs. I attempted to strengthen the policy in two important ways – by covering products not specifically called out in the policy and by adding an annual report back to Council – but lost both votes on narrow margins. I will continue to work to make this policy as strong and measurable as possible.
- 6) Minneapolis has been ranked the **seventh** most sustainable large city in the US by SustainLane.com, up from #10 last year. Additionally, according to the census, we are within .1% of being the US city with the highest bicycle mode share – we're up to **3.8%**, just behind Portland's 3.9%.
- 7) 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.
- 8) The Council has voted to establish a new Department of Neighborhood and Community Relations, and a new City commission, the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission. These lay the foundation for what will likely be a similar, but significantly different, neighborhood revitalization program and a potentially much more effective City community engagement system.

The department will function under the supervision of the City Coordinator and is intended to both serve residents directly and support all other City departments to engage the community. It will be charged with strengthening our City's quality of life through vigorous community participation, promoting resident involvement in neighborhood and community organizations, and supporting clearly defined links between the City and these organizations.

The Commission will provide overall direction to a next phase of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, and be responsible for the review of neighborhood plans and recommendation of their approval to the City Council. It will also make recommendations on, and monitor the distribution and use of the basic Citizen Participation Services funds and the new Neighborhood Investment Fund. It will also help guide and improve all aspects of community involvement and civic participation in the City and carry forward the work Community Engagement Task Force's recommendations started last year. The Commission will be made up of at least 16 city residents. Eight of these will be selected by the City's officially recognized neighborhood

organizations through a process that is yet to be defined by those officially recognized neighborhood organizations. Seven will be appointed by the City and one by the Park Board.

We were unable to convince a majority of Council Members to support giving the Commission the power to appoint (with Council approval) the Director of the new department, the authority to set neighborhood boundaries and hear neighborhood grievances.

Even with this setback, however, I think this is an important step forward for the City. Through these actions and the identification of a funding source for a new Neighborhood Investment Fund that will be used by neighborhoods to implement their plans, the Council has made clear that support for neighborhood groups, both in terms of administrative funding and project-based dollars, is an essential City responsibility.

- 9) 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; identifying real targets for bicycle and pedestrian mode share, greenhouse gas emission reductions and a shift from single-occupancy auto use to transit; and setting firm goals for the percentage of hybrid buses. 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.
- 10) 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).
- 11) 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.
- 12) 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.
- 13) 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.
- 14) 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.

- 15) Starting October 1, landlords in Minneapolis are required to keep interior temperatures at 68 degrees or above. If you're a renter, and your unit is cooler than 68 degrees, you can call 311 and make a complaint to housing inspections. My office spearheaded the effort to get this new ordinance passed, replacing the old, complicated external-temperature formula that was so difficult for our staff to effectively enforce.
- 16) 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.
- 17) 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.
- 18) 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.
- 19) Last month, 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.
- 20) The Council has voted to contract with Minneapolis Refuse, Inc, and Aspen Waste System for trash hauling for that section of City that is not served by City employees. 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. Seward is served by the City.
- 21) 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. We will also be requesting Hennepin County Environmental Response Fund grants for 2600 Minnehaha.
- 22) 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@tcg.net
- 23) Minneapolis youth, ages 14 -21, who would like to participate in the 2009 STEP-UP summer jobs program should submit an application now through Jan. 30, 2009. STEP-UP is a paid, summer jobs program that teaches students age 14-16 good work habits and provides them their first job experience with wages and an opportunity to contribute to a local community based organization. STEP-UP for 16- to 21-year-olds is operated by [AchieveMpls](#) and provides youth with paid positions with local employers, government, and educational institutions and teaches them the skills they need to succeed on the job. Youth interested in the STEP-UP program will need to complete a competitive application process and attend a work readiness training session to be considered for a summer position. More information and applications are available on the Web at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/stepup.asp> or by calling (612) 673-5041.
- 24) Fall street sweeping began on Tuesday, October 21, 2008. Please watch for temporary 'No Parking' signs that will be posted at least 24 hours before a street is swept. For a schedule and more information see: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/streetsweep/>
- 25) There are openings on the Arts Commission (11/14/2008), Citizen Environmental Advisory Committee (11/7/08), Civilian Police Review Authority (10/17/08), Housing Board of Appeals (11/21/2008), Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (11/19/08), Public Health Advisory Committee (11/21/08), Truth In Sale of Housing Appeals Board (10/31/08) and Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee (10/31/08). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.