

## Second Ward November 2013 E-newsletter

### News from Cam Gordon Council Member, Second Ward

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/council/ward2>

**Thank You.** I am grateful and humbled to have been reelected to a third term as Second Ward Council Member. I thank the voters of Ward 2 for your continued confidence. As I have over the last eight years, I will do my best to represent all the people of the Ward on the City Council, and work to make Minneapolis a more just, democratic, sustainable and peaceful city where everyone can enjoy their lives and thrive. I consider it a great honor and a great joy to be able to continue to serve you and all of Minneapolis as a City Council Member. We can more effectively improve our community and support one another if we work together. So, please feel free to share your hopes, concerns and ideas with me anytime. I also encourage you to get involved with your neighborhood and business associations and with the work you see in the community that you support. If you think of any way that I, or Robin or Nancy from our office, can be of assistance to you, please don't hesitate to contact us anytime.

**Election Results.** As you likely know by now, Betsy Hodges has been elected mayor. Seven new Council Members have been elected. In addition to me, the Council Members representing wards 1 (Kevin Reich), 4 (Barb Johnson), 7 (Lisa Goodman), 8 (Elizabeth Glidden), and 11 (John Quincy) have been reelected. Challengers have won races in wards 3 (Jacob Frey), 6 (Abdi Warsame) and 10 (Lisa Bender). New Council Members have been elected to open seats in wards 5 (Blong Yang), 9 (Alondra Cano) 12 (Andrew Johnson) and 13 (Linea Palmisano). The new Council will be younger and more diverse, including the first Hmong, Somali, and Latina Council Members in Minneapolis history. I have already started meeting with the new Council Members and am excited about getting to work with them in the years ahead. Park Commissioners Liz Wielinski and Scott Vreeland have also been reelected from Park Districts 1 and 2. John Erwin and Annie Young were reelected as at-large Park Board members, and Meg Forney was elected as an at-large Park Commissioner for the first time. David Wheeler and Carol Becker were reelected to the Board of Estimate and Taxation. I look forward to continue working with all of the returning and new elected officials.

**Plain Language Charter.** Both Plain Language Charter amendments passed by wide margins. This is a good thing, in my view, as it will make our city's most fundamental document easier for the public to understand, use and improve. It will not go into effect until January of 2015 so this gives us time to continue to address concerns and pass ordinances where it might be appropriate to replace provisions removed from the charter as it was amended and approved with new ordinances.

**Ranked Choice Voting.** From all reports, Ranked Choice Voting was a success during this election. Turnout increased from both 2009 and 2005, the last municipal general election that used the old voting system. Turnout was 31% in 2005, and **34%** this year. More than **9,000** more people voted this year than in 2005. In the mayor's race, a supermajority of voters - **87.7%** - used their second ranking. From what I have heard, most voters entered their polling places with a firm grasp on how to use RCV. I want to thank Minneapolis Elections staff for a fantastic job educating the public about RCV and the election in general. I am especially thankful to them for the great Voter Education Guide that was mailed to every household in Minneapolis, and believe that this is a precedent we should follow for all future municipal elections. I also thank FairVote Minnesota for their work educating voters all through the year and on Election Day. Everyone's work certainly paid off.

**2014 Budget.** On December 11 the City Council is scheduled to approve the City's 2014 budget. Due primarily to the increase in local government aid the Board of Estimate and Taxation has approved a 1% decrease in the total property taxes the city will collect. As a result, we are expecting about 2/3 of residential property tax payers to see the city portion of their taxes drop in 2014. The mayor's proposed budget is about \$1.12 billion, a \$24 million increase from 2013. There are no significant layoffs anticipated and service levels should be maintained or enhanced. Among the changes proposed for next year there could be additional funds to: 1) hire new police officers and fire fighters in preparation of many expected retirements; 2) enhance our STEP-UP and Urban Scholars programs to help address racial employment

gaps and enhance our workforce diversity; 3) invest in needed equipment and 4) invest in infrastructure like street and bridge reconstruction and repair. Some areas where I think funding increases would be helpful include our Affordable Housing Trust Fund to keep it fully funded, for Animal Care and Control to implement more low- or no-kill practices and in our Minneapolis Television Network (MTN) to make sure the community has access to modern equipment as part of this important public communication tool. To see the complete Mayor's recommended budget go to [www.minneapolismn.gov/finance](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/finance) and click on "2014 Mayor Recommended Budget." You can also go to [www.minneapolismn.gov/finance/budget](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/finance/budget).

**Budget Hearings.** There will be a full City Council meeting that you can attend to share your thoughts about the proposed budget on **Wednesday, December 11** at 6:05pm, in Room 317 of City Hall. You can also watch rebroadcasts of the City's budget hearings on Minneapolis 79 every weekend until a few days before the budget is approved on Dec. 11. A schedule of the weekend of televised budget hearings is available at [www.minneapolismn.gov/tv/79schedule](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/tv/79schedule). You can also watch any of the budget hearings online at [www.minneapolismn.gov/tv/79](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/tv/79). More information on the 2014 budget process is available on the City's website.

**Snow Tow Prevention.** Let's all work to prevent anyone from getting towed this winter because of Snow Emergencies. Snow Emergencies are declared when there is enough snowfall to warrant a complete plowing of City streets. If people follow the parking rules and move their vehicles so crews can plow it helps all users of the street. Vehicles parked on the street in violation of Snow Emergency rules can be ticketed or towed and that can be very upsetting and expensive for car owners and costs the city money. To learn when Snow Emergencies are declared people can use these options: the **Hotline** - 612-348-SNOW, for information regarding parking rules in English, Spanish, Somali and Hmong; the **Website** [www.minneapolismn.gov/snow](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/snow); with a [street lookup](#) feature that lets you put in an address or a neighborhood to see where you can park during a Snow Emergency; **Phone alerts** - via a high speed, voice messaging system to alert residents when Snow Emergencies are declared. You can now add cellphone numbers or any other phone number to this call list by [signing up](#) on the City's website; **Email alerts** - people can [sign up](#) for; **Cable TV** - channels 14 and 79; **Facebook** - by "liking" Minneapolis Snow Emergency on [Facebook](#); **Twitter** - by following Minneapolis Snow Emergency on [Twitter](#); **Videos** - in English, Spanish, Somali and Hmong are also available online; and we now have an improved **Mobile Application** that will provide current parking restrictions and information via smart phones. The app tells you where you can and can't park on Day 1, Day 2, and Day 3 of a Minneapolis Snow Emergency to help you avoid a ticket and a tow. It also allows you to sign up for email and text alerts and features a quick call button that connects you to the Minneapolis Snow Emergency hotline. The updated app does not send push notifications, so you will need to open the app to find out if a Snow Emergency has been declared. Those who downloaded last year's version of the app should update it to the current version. Please help tell your family, friends and neighbors about these tools and about the rules where snow season is here. Let's hope everyone has a No Snow Tow winter this year.

**Vikings Stadium Deal Justification Undermined.** A recent court ruling has rejected an effort by Doug Mann to have the court require voter approval of city funding for the Vikings stadium. But the judge in this case also made clear that one of the key rationales used by stadium deal backers - that the sales taxes imposed for the Vikings stadium are not "local resources" subject to the referendum requirement of the City Charter - was not true. This rationale was used by stadium backers in the legislature and on the City Council to justify approving the deal without the referendum that is required by our Charter. The failure of the City and the legislature to abide by our Charter was one of the key reasons I opposed the deal. The court case lost primarily because the state legislature exercised its power under the state constitution to override the city charter. You can read more, and find the full decision here: <http://blogs.mprnews.org/stadium-watch/2013/11/13/judge-rejects-legal-challenge-to-vikings-stadium-funding-in-minneapolis/>.

**Target Center.** With my opposition, in November the Council approved the terms of a new proposal that has been in the works for months to renovate the city-owned downtown sports and entertainment arena. The proposal will make extensive renovations to the arena and fitness center that will cost a total \$97-99 million. The costs will be divided 50/50 with Public/Private investment. All of the public investment of approximately \$48.5 million will come from the City of Minneapolis. The Timberwolves team owners will

pay \$43M (44.3%) and the company (AEG) contracted to operate the facility will pay \$5.5M (5.7%). The deal also calls for extended lease agreements for the team and AEG from 2025 to 2032 and an additional commitment from the city to cover \$50 million in ongoing building improvements over that same time period. All of the City's debt for the proposed renovation and for the ongoing capital improvements is projected to be paid for through local sales taxes – the same source of revenue to be used to pay off our football stadium debt beginning in 2021. We will also have to continue using separate revenues from some tax increment financing districts, and other funds to pay off the existing debt we took on when we bought the arena and to cover ongoing capital and operating expenses. This totals roughly \$8-\$10 million a year and will likely not be paid off in 2025. I opposed this plan primarily because I believe that the use of these funds should be subject to the charter provision that calls for a referendum before more than \$10,000,000 is approved to be spent on a professional sports facility and because I believe that the costs associated with improving and maintaining this statewide, regional asset should be either (and preferably) privatized or (if that is not possible) shared by the state and region and not just the City. I am convinced that this agreement is premature and that we should only enter into an agreement about the Target Center as part of a more global solution that will address the larger problem we have because we have too many publicly, but separately, owned and competing sports/entertainment venues. If we are going to have so many publicly owned sports/entertainment venues in the region I am convinced that we need one coordinating regional entity to oversee them or they will continue to compete with one another, continue to lose money, and continue to unnecessarily subsidize economic endeavors that can and should be able pay for themselves. This plan, when paired with the Vikings deal, will force our sales taxes to remain too high for too long and prevent any of the otherwise flexible sales tax revenue from being used for other more important public purposes, including neighborhood revitalization like preserving and replacing housing stock in areas hard hit by foreclosures and demolitions, or updating park and recreation facilities to accommodate our growing populations, or hiring more community oriented beat police offices to insure safety in crime troubled areas of our city.

**Hennepin County Bike Plan.** Hennepin County is redoing their Bicycle Master Plan. You can find out more here: <http://www.hennepin.us/bikeplan>. You still have a few days to participate in a survey on what types of facilities you would like to see the County install, and use a very sophisticated web-based mapping system to share what you think are good and not-so-good places to bike in our area. I see this plan as a great step towards meeting the City's goals for building a network of protected bike facilities and increasing the number of people who use bicycles to get around, and I hope you will get engaged.

**Energy Pathways Study.** The Council has received a report from our Energy Pathways consultants (the Center for Energy and the Environment) on potential energy-related items to raise in the 2014 legislative session, and an update on the Pathways Study as a whole. You can read the power point presentation here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-116821.pdf>. The report lays out four options for the City to take a greater role in our energy system. In order of difficulty and expense, they are: enhance our Franchise Agreement with our utilities, form a new set of formal City-Utility Partnerships, pursue Community Choice Aggregation, or form a municipal utility. I am especially intrigued about the second option, to form a new formal set of partnerships with our utilities, as it seems to be in keeping with the language that both Xcel and Center Point used this summer to describe their willingness to work with the City to meet our climate goals. All of the pathway options will likely require legislative changes and I hope that Xcel and Center Point will be effective partners with the City at the state legislature to make these options possible.

**Property Accessed Clean Energy Program (PACE).** The Community Development Committee has approved entering in to an agreement that would designate the Port Authority of St. Paul to implement and administer a PACE program on behalf of Minneapolis. PACE is a system for allowing property owners to make investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades that assess the cost of those investments to their property taxes. I have been very supportive of this concept for years and am excited to see it moving forward. Along with the Community Solar program that the legislature mandated the electric utilities create, I see this as another tangible way to increase access to capital for the types of energy improvements we need to make in order to fight climate change on the local level.

**Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Priorities Update.** The Council has received an update from Sustainability staff on the prioritization of our Climate Action Plan for the next two years. The Community Environmental Advisory Commission is currently working on their recommendations for these priorities, and I expect the Council to adopt a formal two-year set of priorities in January or February of next year. To read the current set of staff recommendations, go here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-117189.pdf>.

**Community Solar.** The City Council has submitted formal comments expressing serious concerns to the Public Utilities Commission regarding Xcel's proposed rules for implementing the Community Solar legislation that passed earlier this year. These include concerns about the proposed bill rate compensation that is inadequate, the unjustifiable 10 megawatt annual cap and the 2.5 megawatt per quarter cap for the first 24 months of implementation that will only constrain the market and should be completely removed. Additionally, the 5-7 different fees paid in advance – no matter the size of the system – are neither fair nor reasonable. The City Council does commend Xcel for stating in their filing that they plan to upgrade and provide adequate resources and staffing to manage the community solar garden program. This was not the case for their previous management of solar programs.

**Energy Use in Public Building Disclosed.** Minneapolis has released the first annual report (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/%40citycoordinator/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-117371.pdf>) on energy use in public buildings. The City will use this information to prioritize investments in its buildings to save energy and money. The City sought voluntary agreements with Hennepin County, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and Minneapolis Public Schools to include selected buildings from those entities in the report. The report includes benchmarking information from 102 public buildings, including over 21 million square feet. It is wonderful to see this kind of information available to the public and I look forward to next year's report when information about larger privately owned buildings will also be available.

**Massage and Bodywork Establishments.** The Regulatory, Energy and Environment committee has sent forward with recommendation a new license type for Massage and Bodywork Establishments. You can read the ordinance here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-116817.pdf>.

This ordinance ensures that therapeutic bodywork establishments will continue to thrive in Minneapolis, and help residents live healthier, more pain-free lives. It also draws the right distinction between bona fide therapeutic massage and sexually-oriented businesses that also use "massage" to describe their activities. I want to commend Council Member Glidden for her leadership on this and helping licensing staff and the community of therapeutic bodywork practitioners come forward with a consensus proposal that was supported by nearly every person who testified at the public hearing. I look forward to voting in favor of this ordinance when it comes to the full Council.

**Business Health and Safety Improvement Loan Program.** A city council committee has approved moving forward with a Health Department proposal to establish a new Business Health and Safety Improvement Loan Program, and contracting with the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers to manage program using \$139,750 in unspent Health Department funds. I am very supportive of this. Now, when our inspectors find that, for example, a restaurant's kitchen is not up to code, in addition to the violation notice they will be able to connect the owner to the resources that they need to address the problem. This is a good example of the City becoming more friendly to small businesses, and I want to thank the Health Department for taking the initiative to create this program. For more information, go here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-117143.pdf>.

**Healthy Corner Store Program Expands.** The city's Healthy Corner Store Program, designed to help small licensed grocery stores increase the amount of healthy foods available to customers is expanding. So far staff have worked with nearly 40 stores across the city and many have experienced an increase in fresh produce sales and customer satisfaction as a result. Over the next two years, with support from the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), staff will work closely with an additional 10 stores to provide technical assistance, training, and resources so that they can stock a greater amount of healthier

food options including fresh produce, whole grains, and healthy beverages. Licensed grocery stores including corner stores, gas stations, dollar stores, pharmacies (essentially, any business selling a significant amount of food items meant to be bought and prepared at home) are eligible to apply. For more information see <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/living/cornerstores> or contact Nora Hoeft, Public Health Specialist, Minneapolis Health Department, [Nora.Hoeft@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Nora.Hoeft@minneapolismn.gov), 612-673-3798. The application deadline is December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Council To Vote on President and Organization.** On January 6, the new Council is schedule to vote on who will be Council president and vice preident as well as the committee leadership and membership for the next two years. While Council President Johnson has served the Council well for the past 8 years and I am grateful for her consistent, steady style, I believe a change in leadership at this important transition time in our city's history is the healthiest thing for the Council and in the best interest of the future of Minneapolis. **I am supporting Council Member Glidden for Council President**, and urging my colleagues – both returning incumbents and the seven new members – to join me in doing so. I support Elizabeth because I believe she offers both valuable stability, as a proven Council leader, and needed change, as someone who more closely embraces the progressive vision for our City shared by a growing majority of Minneapolis residents. This vision will help us tackle the biggest issues facing our city, issues that many, if not all, of the newly elected Council Members and our new Mayor campaigned on: closing the racial gaps in employment, education and health; fighting climate change and improving our environment; preventing foreclosures and ensuring decent, affordable housing for all residents; moving away from huge subsidies to the wealthiest people and corporations; improving police and community relations and creating a fairer justice system; and investing in infrastructure to make walking, biking and transit a bigger part of how people get around in our city. I have had the opportunity to work with Elizabeth for eight years and am confident that she also has the vision, experience and skills we need to for the future. She offers a leadership that will be inclusive of all viewpoints, transparent both within the Council and to the outside, and empowering of individual Council Members, community stakeholders, professional staff and everyone in our city.

**Filing Fee Increase.** On December 5<sup>th</sup> the Council will consider the Charter Commission's unanimous recommendation to raise the filing fees from **\$20** to file to be on the ballot for all city offices to **\$500** for Mayor, **\$250** for City Council, and **\$100** for Park Board and the Board of Estimate and Taxation. The filing fee is set in the city charter and has not changed since the 1960s. At that time, \$20 was worth over \$120 in today's dollars. There are two ways to change the charter: a unanimous vote of the Council and a majority votes of the voters at a city election. It is important to note that, no matter the fee, state law provides an alternative way for candidates to get on the ballot without paying any filing fee at all, by collecting signatures. The signature option is 500 or 5% of the most recent election for that office, whichever is less. So for Mayor, 500 signatures would be required, but in Ward 2 in 2017, only 258 signatures would be required. The primary justification for raising the fee I am hearing is that we had so many candidates on the mayoral ballot this year. Of the 35 candidates who filed for mayor, 27 got fewer than one thousand votes (compare this to the winner's nearly 29,000 first-choice votes). Ten candidates got fewer votes than there were write-ins. This is one reason why the election took longer to count than most people would have liked. We nearly had to go to a second ballot card (which would have significantly increased the cost of this year's election), and many voters expressed frustration at having to find their preferred candidates on a long list of non-viable candidates. I am hearing from many people who believe that a filing fee closer to what is required to run for state office – and the option to collect signatures in lieu of paying a filing fee – might be a better alternative the current \$20 fee. In the days ahead I will be working with my colleagues and the city attorney's office to explore the best alternative for formally considering it. Things are more complicated because a new charter takes effect in January of 2015 and the Charter Commission's proposal does not specify an effective date and would mean that we could be amending a charter that will no longer be in effect. . While there are good reasons to let the current "lame-duck" council consider this as the charter commission suggests, it appears that more details need to be worked out and it may be better to let the new council take it up, or perhaps, let the voters decide the matter as part of next year's 2014 election.

**Star Tribune Building.** The Heritage Preservation Commission has voted to deny Ryan Companies application to demolish the Star Tribune building at 425 Portland Ave. because they believe it should be

studied for its historic significance. I expect this to be appealed to the City Council and will be reluctant to override the commission on this matter. There is much more information here, under item number eight: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/meetings/hpc/WCMS1P-116859>.

**Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council Appointments.** Pending final Council approval in December, the 2014 appointments to the Minneapolis Food Council include Sammie Rivera, Omari Chatman, Hashep Seka, Pakou Hang, Beth Dooley, Rhys Williams, Mustafa Sundiata, DeVon Nolan, Andrew Dahl, Zoe Holloman, Alison Rotel, Russ Henry, Kris Igo and Aaron Reser. My thanks go to Ward 2 residents Sarah Nelson-Pallmeyer and Tracy Singleton, who will be leaving the food Council, for their service.

**Public Health Survey.** The city, through our Health Department, is joining with the Counties of Ramsey, Washington, Hennepin, Dakota, Scott, Carver and Anoka, and the cities of Bloomington, Richfield and Edina to collaborate on a comprehensive and metro-wide public health survey that I am hopeful will help us better understand the health status of residents.

**Washington Team Name Open Letter.** I was proud to initiate and co-author an open letter from six Minneapolis City Council Members to National Football League Commissioner Roger Goodell and *Washington Redskins* team owner Dan Snyder expressing our disapproval of the team's racist name in advance of the November 7<sup>th</sup> game against the Minnesota Vikings in Minneapolis and the march and rally sponsored by the national Coalition on Racism in Sports and Media <http://www.aimovement.org/ncrsm/>. You can find the full text of the letter on the Second Ward blog.

**Resolution on Combating Sex Trafficking.** This month the Council will consider adopting a pledge to combat commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of juveniles, and creating a City work group – the Minneapolis Coordinating Committee to Prevent Juvenile Sex Trafficking – to further the goals of the pledge. Sexual exploitation of youth continues to be a very serious problem in Minneapolis where we have over 18,000 runaway youth in the city each year. Approximately 50% of juvenile victims are homeless runaways. The average age of first becoming a victim is 12 – 14. Still Minneapolis has made some progress recently with 2 fulltime investigators using a victim-centered model. In recent months police have investigated 60 juvenile trafficking cases, rescued 30 juvenile victims and arrested 20 suspects. I am very hopeful that this effort will help us more in the future addressing this too often hidden and ignored, but horrendous problem in our city. You can find more information and read the resolution here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/psch/WCMS1P-102607>

**Health Department Accreditation.** The Council has authorized an agreement with the State of Minnesota to accept a \$2,000 grant for preparation to apply for national public health accreditation. This will be very helpful confirming that our Health department meets or exceeds national standards and in securing future grants, which support most of the Health Department's budget.

**Crime Concerns Rise Near Campus.** A recent surge in serious crimes has raised concerns in and around the U of M campus. Crimes have included robbery, sexual assault and attempted kidnapping. One incident apparently involved someone impersonating a security or police officer. As a result the University and City police departments, the Southeast Como neighborhood association and others are increasing safety efforts in the area. The Minneapolis Police Department's (MPD) Second Precinct is providing additional marked and unmarked squad cars to patrol in the SE community and other additional officers to ensure directed patrol through violent crime suppression details. Portable cameras have been placed in a variety of locations since September. Collaboration efforts with the U of M and MPD investigative units are more focused and Transit Police and Minneapolis K9 (police dog) teams continue to support the neighborhoods surrounding the U of M. Educational efforts throughout the community are also underway including door knocking, e-mailing, flyering the area (include at bar close time) and presenting at a variety of meetings. Weekly meetings with the U of M and city police as well as with U of M staff have also been helpful. University resources, including the [Campus Escort Service](#) (612-624-WALK) and the [Gopher Chauffeur](#) (612-388-6911) are in place specifically to help keep students safe. There will be a **safety walk on Friday, December 6 starting at Van Cleve Park at 7 pm**. Please feel free to join us. Also see below for a gathering focused on safety in Cedar Riverside on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Community Happy Hours.** The Student Community Relations department of the University of Minnesota has started hosting informal, bi-weekly social hours for focused on topics of interest to university are neighborhoods. University Neighborhood Liaisons and members of University of Minnesota student groups will gather with areas residents and others share ideas. These are intended to be casual gatherings to help address community needs while enjoying free food. The next two in Ward 2 will be: **December 2 on Intergenerational Connections** at Pratt Community Education Center, 66 SE Malcolm Ave; and **December 16: Safety and Crime Prevention** Afro Deli, 1939 S 5th Street.

**Minnehaha Ave Reconstruction.** Council Member Colvin Roy moved to postpone the City's Municipal Consent of Hennepin County's plan for reconstructing Minnehaha Avenue. She was moved to do so by the Longfellow Community Council (LCC) and Bicycle Advisory Committee's positions relating to the bicycle facility. She is trying to ensure that Hennepin County will build the new Minnehaha Avenue in such a way that they can incorporate a protected bike facility into the avenue at some future date. I am very supportive of her stance on this. I had already decided, and communicated both to the County and the community, that I would not support the current version of the County's plan, which includes bike lanes rather than a protected bikeway, because I believe – in agreement with LCC – that the County has not yet designed a good protected bikeway layout. Instead, County engineers presented a good bike lane design beside a fundamentally and unnecessarily flawed protected bikeway design that would have unnecessarily removed many street trees and that used virtually none of the established best practices for improving intersection safety. This did not allow the community to do a true, apples-to-apples comparison of the two facilities. I also believe that a network of protected bikeways – which is included as a major strategy in the City's Climate Action Plan – is necessary to make our roads safer and more comfortable for all types of people to get around on bicycles. Reconstructing Minnehaha without a protected bikeway, and without the potential for a future protected bikeway as the County's engineers grow more comfortable with the idea, would be a huge missed opportunity.

**Public Meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> Ave Bridge.** The City will be rehabilitating the 10th Avenue Bridge starting in 2014. Public Works has scheduled an Open House for **Wednesday, December 4**, from 6pm-8pm with a presentation at 6:30, at the University Lutheran Church, Fellowship Hall, 601 13th Ave SE. The 10th Avenue Bridge over the Mississippi River is in need of repairs. This historic bridge provides an important link across the Mississippi River for vehicles as well as bicyclists and pedestrians. A rehabilitation study is underway now to identify the work needed to preserve the bridge, with construction expected to start in 2014. Come find out more about the bridge, and share your input on the study. Information regarding historic properties will also be presented, and the public will have the opportunity to comment on historic properties and the project's potential effects to them.

**TCE Contamination in Southeast Como.** The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and General Mills have begun public outreach on testing for and mitigating potential Trichloroethylene (TCE) vapor intrusion in Southeast Como. This problem was created by General Mills dumping TCE into the ground at their site near Talmage and 21<sup>st</sup> Ave SE. A plume of TCE groundwater contamination spreads beneath a portion of the neighborhood to the southwest of this site. The groundwater contamination leads to TCE vapor in the soil. Where TCE vapor levels exceed 20 micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) near a building's foundation, the vapor can come through cracks in the foundation and accumulate in the home in concentrations above 2  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , the amount that the MPCA and MDH have identified as the safe level. General Mills has hired a contractor to test all homes within the area that has been identified as having TCE vapor levels above 20  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ . This test involves drilling a hole through the slab and collecting a vapor sample from the area below the slab. If the test finds levels of TCE above 20  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , General Mills will pay for a mitigation system that vents sub-slab vapor outside the home, just like a radon mitigation system. If you have a home in the priority testing area, please contact Fred Campbell at the MPCA and sign an access agreement to get your home tested: [fred.campbell@state.mn.us](mailto:fred.campbell@state.mn.us), 651-757-2260, 800-657-3864. The project partners have met with City staff and policymakers, and the City will be helping in any way we can.

**Apply to Serve on a Board or Commission.** There are openings on the Board of Appeal and Equalization, Ethical Practices Board and Minneapolis Telecommunications Network. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov).

**Ward Office Hours.** Every Tuesday morning I hold “Office Hours” in the Ward from 9:30-11:00am. Please feel free to call for an appointment or just stop by.

1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays, Hard Times Café (West Bank/University)

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays, Muddsuckers Coffee, 1500 Como (SE Como)

3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, Pratt School (Prospect Park)

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, the Birchwood Cafe (Seward/Longfellow)

Because of redistricting, the Hard Times (along with a significant segment of the West Bank and Seward areas) will no longer be in Ward 2 and a significant portion of the Longfellow neighborhood has been added. I will be changing at least one of my office hour locations starting in January. I welcome your suggestions.

**Cam Gordon**

**Minneapolis City Council Member, Second Ward**

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<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ward2>