

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood, 7-25-07

Cam's next Seward Office Hours:
Tuesday, August 28, 9:30-11:00am
Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St

Items:

- 1) National Night Out
- 2) Climate Change Innovations Fund – Congratulations!
- 3) Riverside Market Project Grants
- 4) Farm Stands
- 5) Unpaid Judgments Ordinance
- 6) Lead Safe Work Practices Ordinance
- 7) Infill Housing Ordinance
- 8) Public Safety for Public Housing
- 9) Downtown Transportation Action Plan
- 10) Bike Mode Share – We're Number Two
- 11) "Bait Bicycle" Program
- 12) New CPED Director
- 13) Wind Turbines Ordinance Passes
- 14) Compensation Philosophy
- 15) Free Speech Work Group Guiding Principles
- 16) Internal Affairs Audit
- 17) Contract Compliance Unit
- 18) Air Quality Study
- 19) Sale of City-Owned Parking Ramps
- 20) Green Party 2008 Convention
- 21) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) National Night Out is on **August 7th** this year. If you would like help organizing your block party, please contact Second Ward Intern **Annie Welch**, welc0194@umn.edu.
- 2) Congratulations to SNG and LCC staff and volunteers for your successful application for one of 5 "**Climate Change Innovation Funds**" \$10,000 grants. My Aide Robin informed me that the SNG/LCC was the best grant of the 16 submitted, in his opinion. I look forward to working with you to implement the aggressive goals you've laid out.
- 3) The Seward Coop has received \$102,600 in Metropolitan Tax Base Revitalization Account funding, and Seward Redesign has received \$169,338 in Hennepin County Environmental Response funds, both for the redevelopment of the Riverside Market Site into the Seward Coop expansion.
- 4) My office is continuing to work to make it easier and cheaper for small farm stands selling local produce to navigate the City's bureaucratic processes, to increase access to healthy foods in communities with little access at this time.
- 5) The ordinance I introduced giving the City the authority to revoke or not renew rental licenses to landlords who have unpaid legal judgments against them has been referred to the City's Rental Property Advisory Committee for review. I believe we may need strong support from the community to offset the power of the landlord lobby to get this proposal passed.
- 6) The ordinance I introduced requiring that anyone repairing chipped or peeling paint on a pre-1978 housing unit, as required by a City violation order, must have attended a Lead Safe Work Practices training, unanimously passed the Health Energy and Environment Committee last week. It passed the Council unanimously last week.
 - 7) Council Member Betsy Hodges' Infill Housing (or "McMansions") ordinance passed the Council unanimously last month, with my strong support.
 - 8) The PS&RS Committee voted to put \$350,000 in additional funding into the Public Housing Authority and Police Department partnership for keeping public housing residents and the surrounding communities safe. I strongly support this measure and will advocate for it at tomorrow's Council meeting.

- 9) The Council has passed a 10-year Transportation Action Plan for Downtown. It includes plans for increasing transit capacity on Marquette and 2nd, turning a number of one-way streets into two-way streets (including Hennepin and First Avenues), as well as various bicycle and pedestrian improvements. I moved an amendment that passed unanimously, requiring staff to explore what I am calling the "Copenhagen Model" in downtown – including curbed bike lanes between sidewalks and parking lanes and bicycle signalization. The Plan is posted at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/> under the project documents section.
- 10) According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics released this month on the 50 cities with the most workers, Minneapolis has the second highest percentage of people who bike to work: 2.4%, second only to Portland, OR, and several times higher than the national average of 0.4 percent. It is my hope that the infrastructure projects above can help us move towards our goal of doubling bicycle commuting mode share in Minneapolis. We still have a long way to go, however. I believe we need to implement creative ideas like the ones employed by Copenhagen, whose bicycle mode share is a stunning thirty-plus percent, and build a reliable, high-quality bike grid in the whole metro area.
- 11) Today, the PS&RS Committee passed a motion I wrote, directing the Police Department to explore creating a "**Bait Bicycle**" program, similar to the "Bait Vehicle" programs we currently have in place. It also directs them to pursue Non-Motorized Transportation grants to fund a pilot project. Bike theft is a serious concern in the Ward, and few bike thieves are caught. This program could potentially help increase bike mode share by deterring thieves and making potential riders feel comfortable riding and parking bikes in our city.
- 12) Mike Christenson has been unanimously confirmed by the Council as the new Director of the Community Planning and Economic Development department.
- 13) My proposed zoning code amendments that broaden and expand the allowable and conditional uses of wind turbines in the City passed the Council unanimously June 29. This is a small step towards increasing renewable energy in our city.
- 14) The Council rescinded the 2% wage increase cap for City employees last week, and replaced it with a more comprehensive employee compensation philosophy.
- 15) The Free Speech Work Group that I helped form has drafted our guiding principles for protecting free speech during the RNC Convention next year. The Council unanimously approved these principles last week.
- 16) The Police Department has released a Request For Proposals to find a contractor do conduct an audit of the Internal Affairs department, as a step towards the greater goal of increasing police officer accountability. I am hopeful that the Council will approve and fund this tomorrow.
- 17) The Civil Rights Department has reported that there is a major discrepancy between the goals for our Contract Compliance Unit and the implementation of these goals. The report states that Governmental and non-governmental entities governed by the Civil Rights Ordinance are **not** in full compliance with the hiring, contracting, reporting, monitoring, and enforcement mandates described in the contract compliance provisions of the Ordinance. It goes on to state that the City is not holding firms that are not in compliance accountable. I take this report very seriously, and supported a motion directing the Civil Rights Director to report back to the HE&E Committee in October with further analysis as to the scope of non-compliance, and with recommendations to improve the contract compliance in small and underutilized business program processes and for other potential Council actions.
- 18) The Environmental Management Department has released an Air Quality Study, designed to look at air quality across the entire city in areas where citizens live, work and play. Samples were collected in each season and analyzed for volatile organic compounds. Fifty monitors were deployed four times throughout the year to collect information on 31 different chemicals. To see the report, please go here: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/airquality/docs/AirQualityReport_July2007.pdf.
- 19) The Council has decided to sell eight City-owned parking ramps, including the Seven Corners ramp in the Second Ward. For more information, please go here: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007-meetings/20070629/Docs/08_Parking_Ramp_Set_PH.pdf
- 20) I have been deeply involved in the effort to bring the Green Party 2008 Convention to Minneapolis, to further increase the visibility of our wonderful City and help offset the Republican Convention later this year.
- 21) There are openings on the Minneapolis Empowerment Zone Governance Board (closes 7/27/2007), Minneapolis Ethical Practices Board (closes 8/10/2007), Housing Board of Appeals (closes 8/3/2007), Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC) (closes 8/3/2007), Senior Citizen Advisory Committee (closes 8/3/2007), and the Zoning Board of Adjustment (closes 8/3/2007). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.