



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 8-25-10

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

Items:

- 1) 2011 Budget
- 2) Small Business Energy Efficiency Event
- 3) Bicycle Master Plan Meetings
- 4) Seward Solid Waste Pilots
- 5) Unisys Contract
- 6) Digital Inclusion Grants
- 7) Solar on Convention Center
- 8) Solar on other City Buildings
- 9) *We Want You Back*
- 10) Variance Decision Appeal at 3008 26th
- 11) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Mayor has presented his 2011 budget proposal to the City Council. It increases expenses for all City funds to \$1.36 billion, an \$81 million dollar increase from 2010. The General Fund, which includes funding for the operations of nearly all city departments, increases from \$371.6 to \$393.6 million. The budget includes an increase of 6.5% to the total property tax levy. This will bring in \$17 million more to cover City expenses, including a \$17.7 million jump in pension obligations. The mayor said that without these pension costs he would have proposed to lower property taxes by 0.1%. There will also be an additional \$15 million in revenue coming from a recertification of a tax increment district dedicated to neighborhood revitalization purposes and paying off the Target Center debt. Additional increased revenue will come from an increase from the 2010 Local Government Aid to the 2011 certified level. The budget calls for over 80 positions to be eliminated. Many of these will likely be accomplished through attrition and not filling current vacant positions, but there will be some lay-offs. One new position, "a high-level coordinator of transit-oriented development" would be added. The proposed budget increases spending on street and other infrastructure improvements, including a new program aimed at more residential street improvements. The budget does count on the state following through with its \$87.5 million Local Government Aid commitment. Contingency plans may be needed if the State Government reduces this, as has happened in the past two years. You can see the Mayor's proposed budget at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2011recc/index.asp>. The Council will have the opportunity to amend it before final approval in December. There will be public comments taken on the levy and budget on November 18 and also at the formal Public Hearing on the budget on December 13. I welcome your comments.
- 2) The City, the Lake Street Council, Longfellow Business Association, the Seward Civic and Commerce Association and Xcel Energy are partnering on an energy efficiency event on **Thursday, September 2nd**, from 1-2:30PM at the Communication Workers of America Union Hall, 3521 E. Lake St. This symposium will provide no-cost, low-cost solutions to save business owners and commercial property owners money on their energy bill.
- 3) The City is seeking comments on our draft Bicycle Master Plan, which establishes goals, objectives, and benchmarks to improve safety and mobility for bicyclists and also increase the number of trips taken by bicycle. The plan details policies and practices around bicycling in Minneapolis, and includes an update to the 2001 Bicycle Master Plan Map. Five public meetings will be held to gather input: **Monday, August 30**, Edison High School Auditorium, 700 22nd Ave NE, 6:30-8:30pm; **Wednesday, September 1**, Roosevelt High School Auditorium, 4029 28th Ave S, 6:30-8:30pm; **Wednesday, September 8**, Washburn High School

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

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Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800;

Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2700;

Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

Auditorium 201 W 49th St, 6:30-8:30pm; **Monday, September 13**, Minneapolis Central Library, Pohlad Hall Auditorium, 300 Nicollet Mall, 6:30-8:30pm and **Wednesday, September 15**, University of Minnesota Urban Research and Outreach/ Engagement Center, 2001 Plymouth Ave N, 6-8pm. The comment period for the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan will last for 45 days and be open until October 1, 2010. For more information and to comment on the draft plan online, go to www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles.

- 4) The Seward pilot programs for both curbside organic collection and dual-stream recycling collection have been approved by Hennepin County. I look forward to seeing how these go, and hope that Seward's success can pave the way for more composting and recycling citywide.
- 5) The City's Business Information Services staff brought forward a proposal to extend the City's contract for information services with Unisys Corporation for four years, for a total cost to the City of over \$45 million. I had concerns about not conducting an analysis of alternatives, including potentially going out for open bids on this contract, exploring moving some of this work back in-house, and investigating whether open-source software can meet some of the City's needs. I was able to get my colleagues to agree to a two-week delay on this action, but unfortunately the Council majority voted to move forward with a three year contract extension on an 8-5 vote.
- 6) The Minneapolis Foundations' Digital Inclusion Fund is seeking proposals from organizations working to promote technology access and literacy. The maximum grant size is \$10,000. Requests for funding should demonstrate how the proposed activities will accomplish long-term change in the city in at least one of the following areas: Affordable internet access; Technology literacy; Local, relevant and accessible content; and Adequate, affordable hardware and software tools. For information on the RFP process and instructions on how to apply for a grant visit the Digital Inclusion Fund website at digitalinclusionfund.tmfportal.org. Proposals must be received by 4:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 10. Grant recipients will be notified in December 2010.
- 7) The Public Utilities Commission has approved the City's petition to be the sole recipient of the \$2 million Renewable Development Fund Grant for a major solar installation on the Convention Center. We had shared this grant with EyeOn Energy until the Council voted to move forward on our own because the company did not have the capacity to do the project. We anticipate beginning the installation in this month or next. This will be one of the largest solar installations in the Midwest.
- 8) The City is poised to make significant investments in solar energy thanks to a \$1.35 million grant from the Minnesota Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security (OES) for solar power installations on public buildings from along and near the Central LRT line Corridor within what is being called "the Energy Innovation Corridor." The locations for the Solar installations include: Fire Station #1, Fire Station #19, the Haaf Parking Ramp, Royalston Maintenance Facility, 2 Solar Electric Vehicle Charging Stations on the Parking Ramp across from the Guthrie, and the Brian Coyle Center. Once the projects are completed in the fall of 2011 the City will get 63.5 kW of solar electric power for just \$108,000. At our current electricity cost, this is a payback of less than 8 years.
- 9) The Minneapolis Public Schools and the Youth Coordinating Board have joined forces to raise public awareness about the dropout crisis in Minneapolis and help to resolve it. *We Want You Back* is a grass-roots effort to identify, connect with and ultimately invite un-enrolled young people to complete their credits and get their diploma. The programs ambitious first year goal is to attract back 200 youth. Saturday, September 11 is our citywide door-knocking event. Visit www.wewantyoubackmpls.org to learn more, sign up and help out. Teams of community and school district volunteers will fan out across the city to connect young people with resources, support and information. Minneapolis Public Schools staff will re-enroll students on the spot. For more contact Jo Haberman, Youth Coordinating Board, 673-2720 or wwwyb@ycb.org.
- 10) The developer of the proposed house at 3008 26th applied for two variances to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Board granted a variance to allow a narrower house, but did not grant the variance to build the home without the required garage. That decision was appealed to the Zoning and Planning Committee. Despite my opposition, the Committee voted (3 – 2) to grant it. At the following Council meeting, however, my motion to deny the appeal passed and the house cannot be built without a garage. I have offered to help the developer set up a meeting with neighborhood stakeholders.
- 11) There are openings on the Arts Commission, Citizens Environmental Advisory Committee (CEAC), Commission on Civil Rights, Civilian Police Review Authority, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC), Latino Advisory Committee, Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC), Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission, Telecommunications Network (MTN), Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee and Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.