

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 6-25-08

**Cam's next Seward Office Hours:
Tuesday, July 22nd, 9:30-11:00am
Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St**

Items:

- 1) Police Diversity Plan
- 2) Tragic Homicide in area
- 3) Biomass Project
- 4) Booting and Towing
- 5) Good Jobs, Green Jobs Resolution
- 6) NRP Funding
- 7) Framework for the Future
- 8) Truck Size Resolution
- 9) Hiawatha Maintenance Facility
- 10) Alley Behind Seward Coop
- 11) 4am Bar Close During RNC
- 12) Lurking
- 13) Free Speech
- 14) Dogs in Sidewalk Cafes
- 15) Pre-employment Drug Testing
- 16) Anti-Idling Ordinance
- 17) National Night Out
- 18) City seeks bilingual election judges
- 19) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Minneapolis Police Department has drafted a plan for diversifying the force. I believe that this is an incredibly important goal for our city, especially for the public's trust in the department. The plan establishes a recruitment coordinator and multicultural team and offers other recommendations to follow up on. It also shows that we have a long way to go before the diversity of the police force is an accurate reflection of the diversity of the city.
- 2) As you've likely heard, a young man named Joe Sodd III was fatally stabbed at 2am on the West Bank last week. Joe's family lives in the Cooper neighborhood. There are no suspects in custody at this time and investigators with the Minneapolis Police Department Homicide Unit are following leads. Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call the Minneapolis Police Department tip line at 612-692-8477. The Inspector of the First Precinct has committed to me that the Sector 2 (which includes the West Bank) will receive four additional officers from the 32 recently hired.
- 3) The Midtown Eco Energy power plant will not be built in East Phillips, thanks in large part to growing neighborhood opposition. Kandiyohi Development Partners formally withdrew the air quality permit filed with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in early June and the City attorney's office also confirmed that the development contract expired on June 10th
- 4) I supported a ban on "booting" vehicles in private lots, except in instances in which towing is not an option for the private property owner. I also supported a move to cap towing fees at 150% of what the City pays towing companies for public tows. Both of these actions have passed the Council.
- 5) Monday, the Health, Energy and Environment committee passed a resolution I coauthored supporting the Good Jobs, Green Jobs initiative started in Mayor RT Rybak's office, and directing City staff to work towards establishing Minneapolis as a national leader in green manufacturing.
 - 6) The state legislature approved allowing the City to continue to use tax increment funds to pay for the Target Center debt and for neighborhood revitalization purposes. The legislation leaves it in the City Council's hands to determine what percentage goes to Target debt relief and what to neighborhood revitalization and we have yet to see how the City Council will respond to this, but clearly it makes an extension or continuation of NRP (reformed or not) possible.

- 7) A report from the NRP Framework for the Future Task Force on June 19th calls for the creation of a new Neighborhood and Community Relations Department that would be housed in department of the City Coordinator. It will both serve residents directly and support other City departments to improve neighborhood and community relationships. It also calls for the creation of a new 18 member Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board to provide direction to the NRP program; approve neighborhood action plans; advise the City Council on community participation policies; provide feedback to City Departments; oversee use of administrative funds and implementation of a community participation program; and advise the Mayor, City Council and City Departments on community issues and needs related to community participation. The report builds on several recommendations of last year's community engagement task force and suggests significant changes to the current structure of the NRP program. It is schedule to return to the Council for approval in September.
- 8) On Friday, the Council passed a resolution I have been working on for some time, calling on the Legislature not to increase the allowable size and weight of freight trucks on our roads and bridges, unless and until we do what it takes to rebuild our infrastructure.
- 9) On June 30 the City will take the first step towards building our new public works facility at 26th and Hiawatha. We will close the current fueling site so the underground fuel tanks can be removed because they're located where the new 70,000 sq. ft. building will stand. Construction of the Public Works facility will begin this fall. When completed, the Hiawatha Maintenance Facility will be LEED certified and house the people and equipment who build and maintain our sewers, bridges and streets. A new fueling station will also be constructed at the site.
- 10) The work of the subcontractor hired to build the new alley behind the Seward Coop, serving residences on 28th and 29th Avenues between Franklin and 22nd St, and the 2800 block of 22nd St, seems not to be up to the Public Works Department's standards. Specifically, it seems not to be deep enough to withstand the weight of garbage trucks and other heavy vehicles. Until this issue is resolved, no vehicular traffic is allowed on the alley. I realize that this is a significant hardship to the residents on this block, and my office has made clear to Public Works that I want this taken care of as soon as possible.
- 11) I voted against the proposal to allow liquor establishments to stay open until 4am during the Republican National Convention, responding to the concerns of residents and the lack of compelling reasons for taking this action. Unfortunately, the proposal passed.
- 12) My proposal to repeal the Lurking ordinance failed on a 6-6 vote on Friday. I will continue to work to take bad, discriminatory laws off the books, and hope that in the future the Council will be more open to this.
- 13) A mandatory protest registration process passed the Council earlier this month. We were able to win a victory, however, by creating a "sunset" clause that means it will only be in place for the week of the Republican National Convention. I still voted against the proposed process, and I am continuing to work to strengthen a resolution setting forth clear MPD policies for the convention this summer, and other political demonstrations.
- 14) The Council, with my support, has created a system for allowing restaurants to get permits to allow dogs to accompany patrons using sidewalk cafes, subject to certain minimum requirements.
- 15) The pre-employment drug testing policy that I voted against in Executive committee has also failed in Ways and Means on a 4-2 vote. The policy has been sent back to Executive, where I will continue to oppose it.
- 16) The Council has unanimously passed the anti-idling ordinance I wrote about last month, with my strong support.
- 17) If you have NNO questions, visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno or call 311. NNO event registration and street closure application is free! There is no charge to request a street closure for an NNO event before July 22, and you'll be eligible for a door prize drawing. From July 23-July 31, there is a \$100 late fee. Applications for street closure will not be accepted after July 31.
- 18) The City of Minneapolis is seeking bilingual election judges. If you are eligible to vote and are fluent in English and a second language, please call Minneapolis 311 or apply on-line to be an election judge at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/elections.
- 19) There are openings on the Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights (closes 5/30/08), Latino Advisory Committee (5/30/2008), Minneapolis Workforce Council (5/30/2008), and Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities (5/30/08). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.