



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Second Ward

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 4-28-10

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

Items:

- 1) Free Wi-Fi Nodes
- 2) Spalling Sidewalks in Seward
- 3) Hiawatha Transmission Line
- 4) S-Curve Being Resurfaced
- 5) 2010 Supplemental Budget
- 6) Minneapolis is #1 Bike City
- 7) Civil Rights Director
- 8) Transit Oriented Development Grants
- 9) Solid Waste Pilot Projects
- 10) Greenway Rezoning
- 11) Community Garden Model Lease
- 12) Campus Beyond Coal
- 13) Mobile Food Vending
- 14) Streetcars
- 15) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) As part of the City's contract with US Internet, they are installing free wireless nodes throughout the City. Two are proposed for Seward. One will serve Matthews Park, from the intersection of 27th Ave S and 24th St E. The second will serve Triangle Park. Thanks to the Seward residents who weighed in on the Seward Issues List to help my office make the right recommendations.
- 2) There are a number of sidewalk panels in Seward that were installed improperly and have begun spalling, flaking, and falling apart. I have confirmed that our Public Works department is fully aware of this issue. They have a comprehensive survey of problem areas and are finishing a plan to address the issue that they hope to communicate more details about soon. Some of the problems were under warranty and most of those have been resolved. The remainder are not under warranty, and how to address those is what they are working on. If there are particular addresses that anyone wants to make sure are part of the inventory, please forward them to my office.
- 3) On April 5th I testified before Judge Heydinger who will be making a recommendation to the Public Utilities Commission on the location of Xcel's proposed midtown-area power line and sub stations. I emphasized the real and perceived risks to health, the destruction of a treasured park and transportation amenity, the potential lose of good jobs and the detrimental effects the substations and above ground power lines would have on future development and property values. I am very impressed with the quality of all the groups and residents speaking out and organizing around this issue and I strongly support the bill at the Legislature that would require Xcel to do a full Needs Assessment on the line, which will allow a better discussion of the alternatives to new transmission lines, such as increased energy efficiency and renewable energy. If the line must be built, I oppose any above-ground route, and favor burying the line on 28th St E. I am also opposed to Xcel's preferred site for a substation on the east end of the line, right where the Greenway Bridge meets the LRT trail. I will continue to speak out on this project.
- 4) The S-curve between 26th Ave S and 25th Ave S is being resurfaced this year, using federal funds made available because it served as a detour after the collapse of the Interstate 35W Bridge over the Mississippi River.

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.

Attention: If you want help translating this information in language other than Hmong, Spanish or Somali, call 311

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.

- 5) In response to the projected \$10.9 million state cut to City's Local Government Aid for this year the Mayor presented a supplemental budget proposal to the Council in April. Fortunately, the City is in a reasonably good position to absorb these cuts. Due to good fiscal management we ended up with a positive fund balance at the end of last year. The Mayor's proposal includes department cuts totaling \$5.59 million, the use of \$4.5 million in contingency funds, and one time resources of \$6.46 million. He has also proposed a one time increase to the Public Works budget to provide funding for street maintenance. The proposed supplemental budget will be acted on by the Council on April 30th.
- 6) According to Bicycling Magazine, Minneapolis is the nation's best city for bicyclists. They specifically called out the hardiness of those cyclists who bike through the winter, our 120 miles of on- and off-street bicycle facilities and other cycling-friendly facilities. You can read the article here: <http://www.bicycling.com/topbikefriendlycities/slide2.html>. I'm proud that we've come so far, but we can and should do even better.
- 7) The Mayor has appointed Velma Korbel as the City's new Civil Rights Director. I look forward to getting to know Ms. Korbel better in the weeks ahead.
- 8) The City has applied for several Transit Oriented Development grants from the Met Council for projects in Ward 2, including \$168,000 for pedestrian and street lighting near the Franklin Ave LRT Station.
- 9) Thanks to new Seward Neighborhood Group Environment Committee Co-Chair Mike Trdan, the City has applied for County funds to start two exciting solid waste pilot projects in Seward. One part of the neighborhood will participate in a curbside organic collection pilot, and another part of the neighborhood will try out a "dual-stream" recycling program. Dual-stream programs are easier for residents to participate in, which has been shown in some communities to increase the total amount of material being recycled rather than landfilled or incinerated.
- 10) The larger rezoning and new Greenway plan has been approved and I believe I was able to help find a good compromise on the appropriate zoning for the Empire Glass and Star Tribune sites on the Greenway, near 34th Ave S. Rather than the staff's proposed light industrial zoning with the Industrial Living Overlay District, I moved to zone the parcels R3, a medium-density residential district.
- 11) As part of the ongoing Homegrown Minneapolis process, the City has adopted a model lease for Community Gardens, taking the confusion and guesswork out of the process of establishing a new garden. We have also established a list of potential garden sites on City-owned non-buildable parcels. As the co-chair of the Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force, I was very supportive of this action, and hope that it leads to a substantial increase in gardening.
- 12) I am working on a resolution in support of the growing efforts to stop the burning of coal at campuses throughout the country including at University of Minnesota twin cities campuses. Since Xcel Energy's Highbridge Plant in St. Paul and Riverside Plant in Minneapolis were both recently converted from coal to natural gas, the Central University Steam Plant on the Mississippi River in Southeast Minneapolis is the only remaining coal burning energy plant in the Twin Cities. The resolution commends the U for working to establish a campus sustainability committee and supports the Minnesota Student Association in their efforts to become climate neutral, transition away from burning coal, and fully implement the Regents policy on Sustainability and Energy Efficiency and the President's Climate Commitment.
- 13) The Council has approved a new ordinance allowing more types of food to be sold by street vendors in downtown. I view this ordinance as a good first step and a "pilot," and look forward to broadening it next year. I'm interested in allowing vendors to operate outside of downtown in certain commercial areas of the Second Ward, including Stadium Village and University Avenue. I'm also interested in addressing the health and sustainability issues that were not adequately considered as part of this first step.
- 14) The Council has received a Streetcar Funding Study, which makes clear which routes in Minneapolis are most appropriate for streetcars, and how the City should go about attempting to fund this new nonmotorized infrastructure. We've learned that the Obama Administration is radically improving the federal systems for funding streetcars, and that makes it much easier for us to pursue building them. The Council has adopted a list of seven long-term streetcar corridors that complement the Light Rail being built in the City, including the Midtown Greenway from Southwest LRT to Hiawatha LRT.
- 15) There are openings on the Latino Advisory Committee (open until filled), Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Open until filled – Priority given to applications received by May 28, 2010) and Public Health Advisory Committee (open until filled). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.