

News from Cam Gordon
Council Member, Second Ward

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward2/>

Office Hours. I continue to hold office hours in the Ward every Tuesday morning from 9:30-11AM. There is a new location for the Seward/Cooper office hours: Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St. Call to set up an appointment, or just drop in. 1st Tuesdays, Hard Times Café, 2nd Tuesdays, SECIA Office, 3rd Tuesdays, Pratt School, 4th Tuesdays, Birchwood Café

Second Ward Update. If you live in Ward 2, you should have received, or should soon receive, a copy of the Fall 2006 Second Ward. This is being distributed ward-wide and offers me a chance to reflect back and report on the progress made during my first year in office. It has been a great year and I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of Minneapolis as City Council Member.

Take the Minneapolis Energy Challenge! <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/energychallenge/>.

Youth Violence Prevention. Crime, especially violent crime, is an enormous concern for our city. Homicide is the leading cause of death for males in Minneapolis between 15 and 24 years of age. Working with Council Member Samuels, Health Commissioner Musicant and Police Chief Dolan, I co-authored a resolution that recognizes youth violence as a public health problem and creates a steering committee to coordinate City, County, private and nonprofit initiatives to prevent youth violence. The resolution unanimously passed the Council. I believe that this is an important step towards building a more holistic model of youth violence prevention. The Steering Committee will oversee efforts to significantly reduce youth violence in Minneapolis and:

- Develop a multi-year implementation plan that includes components addressing outreach, education, communications and infrastructure to oversee implementation plans and outcomes. Special emphasis will be placed on strategies to engage and support parents and opportunities for youth to connect trusted adults and with their culture.
- Develop a timeline and assign responsibility for implementation of various plan components;
- Define and measure community-wide outcomes;
- Coordinate City and County efforts to prevent youth violence;
- Facilitate cross-community partnerships and communication among various groups with a stake in project outcomes;
- Identify gaps in services, policy and funding; advise the City Council, Mayor and other policy makers and funders on needs for resources, programs and policies.

IRV Passes. By a margin of 65%, Minneapolis voters have chosen to use Instant Runoff Voting in future elections. I consider this an important step forward for our local democracy. I will be working with my colleagues over the next several years to make sure the City's implementation of IRV is as successful as possible.

Library Funding. Working with other Council Members, staff and community activists, I am fighting to find funding to prevent the permanent closure of the three neighborhood libraries, Southeast, Roosevelt and Webber Park, and address the long term funding needs of the library system. If the libraries do close, we need to be ready to fight to keep the option of reopening these libraries later viable and we must find explore creative ways to keep library services in the communities that lose their libraries. Please contact your representatives on the Library Board and ask them to keep neighborhood libraries open.

Community Engagement Report. A new Community Engagement Report, which reviews and summarizes a variety of reports and recommendations on the City's current community engagement system and activities, is now available for public review and comment. The City

Council plans to discuss the Community Engagement report early in 2007. I would like to learn your thoughts on this report and you can also submit comments to Clara Perrin, Community Engagement Coordinator, 301M City Hall, 350 S. 5th Street, Minneapolis, MN 55415; or by e-mail to: clara.perrin@ci.minneapolis.mn.us. You can read the report on line at http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/20061121CE_Report.asp. If you need a paper copy of the report, or if you need this information in a different format, please contact Ms. Perrin at (612) 673-3163 or at the e-mail address above.

2007 Budget. On December 11, the Council will make major budget decisions based on the Mayor's recommendations. I welcome any and all comments on the Mayor's proposed budget, which you can view here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2007recommended/>.

Claim It! The Greater Twin Cities United Way is working with the City on a campaign to help increase by 10,000 the number of qualified individuals claiming the earned income tax credit (EITC), by offering free tax preparation services. They are looking for volunteers to help provide these services, and asking that we all encourage those of our neighbors who might qualify to apply for the tax credit. To volunteer or get more information, contact Laura Gutierrez at 612-340-7616 or gutierrezl@unitedwaytwincities.org.

Arsenic study volunteers needed. The Environmental Protection Agency is looking for volunteers who live in the South Minneapolis Arsenic Contamination Site to have their indoor dust tested for arsenic, in order to come up with the most accurate possible risk assessment model. Please contact my office if you're interested in volunteering.

Air pollution. My office has been involved in two efforts to reduce air pollution over the last month. One is in Seward, where continuing neighbor concerns about nuisance odors coming from Morningstar Coffee prompted my office to help organize a meeting at the SNG Environment Committee between neighbors, Morningstar's owners and City Staff. The result of this meeting is that a violation order will be written, requiring Morningstar to come up with a better plan for dealing with their odor. I also wrote a letter to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency asking that they not give a permit to Globe Tool in Southeast Como until there has been an opportunity for public comment. By some estimations, the facility puts out 15% of the statewide trichloroethylene emissions (26,000 lbs worth), and the MPCA is considering renewing their permit without public comment. You can read more about both of these on my blog: <http://secondward.blogspot.com>.

Chief Bleskachek. The Executive Committee has unanimously rejected the current terms of the proposed lawsuit settlement presented by Fire Chief Bleskachek's attorney and taken the next steps in her removal as Chief. Our primary concern is keeping the excellent level of Fire Department service in Minneapolis, while also working to rebuild public trust and maintain the morale of Fire Department employees. For more information, check out my blog.

Youth Roundtable. I am working with the Youth Coordinating Board on a Ward 2 conversation about the "out of school" youth opportunities in our community, and how to coordinate and utilize them better. The conversation is scheduled for December 11, from 9:30–11:30 am at Brian Coyle Center. Improving after school options for our youth is critical.

New Southeast Como Safety Committee. Southeast Como Improvement Association (SECIA) is setting up a new Safety Committee, which will kick off January 22nd, 7 pm, at Van Cleve Park.

City Rainbarrel Grant. The City has received a \$100,000 grant from the EPA for a 2007 Rainbarrel Project. I will send out information about how to register for your rainbarrel in next month's newsletter.

University Neighborhood Impact Report. Ward 2 residents, University of Minnesota staff, the Stadium Area Advisory Group and City staff have been working on a University Neighborhood Impact Report. The report will likely be coming before the City Council in January and go the

legislature early next year. The goal is to have a consensus report that will include recommendations about how to improve the neighborhoods adjacent to the U of MN campus. This is a great opportunity for the neighborhoods that border the University and I have been very impressed with the results so far. I want to make sure that we have as much participation in this as possible and that every neighborhood organization reviews and approves the final draft.

Southeast Industrial Area plan amendments. A number of initiatives are underway to help bring future development and good jobs to the Southeast (SEMI) industrial area. On December 12, at 1:30 the Community Development Committee of the City Council will hold a public hearing for the purpose of considering a modification to the SEMI Redevelopment and Tax Increment (TI) plans to allow “pooling” of tax increment for infrastructure expenses for use anywhere in the Bio-Science area of SEMI (including the planned realignment of Kasota, 25th Ave., Malcolm Ave, and planned stormwater management ponds) for roads and other infrastructure. The Community Development Committee will also be asked to approve industrial development funds (MILES) to match a State grant to acquire land needed for reconstruction of Malcolm Ave. and Granary Road.

Traffic Calming on West River Parkway. My office is collaborating with area neighbors, the Longfellow Community Council, the Seward Neighborhood Group and the Park Board on traffic calming and pedestrian/bicyclist awareness for West River Parkway. We hope to develop a plan for making it a safer area for pedestrians by next Spring

Openings on City Boards and Commissions. There are openings on the Empowerment Zone Governance Board, the Heritage Preservation Commission, the Latino Advisory Council, the Housing Board of Appeals, the Minneapolis Arts Commission and the Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee. For more information and for applications, please go here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/open/> or call 673-3358.

Block Club “Building Block” Awards. Do your neighbors deserve recognition for the work that they do with your block club or a block club in your neighborhood? Every year, the Minneapolis Police Department presents Building Blocks Awards to block clubs that effectively connect neighbors.

Each honored block club will receive:

- Building Blocks Award* signs to post on the block(s)
- A \$100 gift card
- An award of appreciation for each block leader
- Recognition at a public ceremony on Tuesday, March 20, 2007

To nominate: Provide this information:

- How has life on the block improved through the block club's efforts?
- How does the block club build connections between people?
- In what ways does the block club work with the Minneapolis Police Department?
- Describe the events, activities and meetings of the block club.
- When did the block club start?
- What are the boundaries of the block club?
- Nominated block club: name, address, phone number(s) and e-mail address for each block leader.
- Nominator's name, address, phone number(s) and e-mail address.

Nominations due: Wednesday, January 31, 2007

Return nominations:

By e-mail: ccpsafe@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

By fax: 612-673-2512

By U.S. mail:

Carol Oosterhuis

c/o Building Blocks Awards
1911 Central Ave. NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

Yours, in peace and cooperation,

Cam Gordon
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