

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Southeast Como, 12-2-08

Cam's next Southeast Como Office Hours:
Tuesday, December 9, 9:30-11:00am
SECIA Office, 837 15th Ave SE

Items:

- 1) National Night Out – Minneapolis #1 Again!
- 2) Joe Baker Public Hearing
- 3) Binge Drinking Work Group
- 4) Homegrown Minneapolis
- 5) Noise Ordinance Public Hearing
- 6) Neighborhood Stabilization Funds
- 7) Target Center Green-Green Roof
- 8) Working Capital Guaranty Program
- 9) December Budget Hearings
- 10) Hennepin Two-Way Meeting
- 11) New Rental License Ordinance
- 12) Newspaper Box Ordinance
- 13) Animal Care and Control Advisory Board
- 14) NRP Phase II – Better than we thought
- 15) New MPD Officers
- 16) CPED Community Teams
- 17) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) For the sixth time in the past eight years, Minneapolis had more people come together at National Night Out parties than any other large city. We continue to be a role model for how NNO events are planned and ways to increase community involvement, and I thank Southeast Como residents for visiting with your neighbors this August.
- 2) My office has heard that Joe Baker is attempting to repurchase his property at the corner of 18th and Como from the County. At the point that Mr. Baker pays all back taxes owed on the property, the County will hold a public hearing before agreeing to allow him to take possession again. My office is working to compile a staff report to present at this hearing, to outline the City resources spent over the years attempting to bring Mr. Baker's business into compliance. I encourage SECIA to prepare a similar report on the negative impacts of this business on the surrounding community.
- 3) At yesterday's Health, Energy and Environment committee I supported the Public Health Advisory Committee's (PHAC) recommendation that the City create a work group to examine the problem of binge drinking. Possible topics the group would address include current zoning and licensing standards, resources for and impact of current enforcement efforts, possible collaborative efforts between the City, neighborhood groups and schools, and possible legislative initiatives that would reduce binge drinking. This proposal was delayed until January, for the PHAC to meet with representatives of the hospitality industry to discuss common ground issues. I opposed this delay. It was unnecessary – liquor industry representatives would have been included on the group. I look forward to when this group will be formed, and be able to start meeting.
- 4) I am strongly supportive of a new initiative we're calling Homegrown Minneapolis. Its purpose is to increase the amount of locally produced food being eaten and grown in our city. A large stakeholder group will hold its first meeting on December 10th, and will then break into subcommittees in which most of the work will be done. These smaller groups will focus on 1) increasing the number and successfulness of farmer's markets in Minneapolis, especially in underserved communities; 2) helping more people garden in community spaces, school properties, and their own backyards; 3) increasing the use of locally-grown foods in Minneapolis restaurants and grocery stores and; 4) fostering small business urban agriculture. I am thrilled that this is moving forward, and I have dedicated my Aide, Robin, to staff one of the subcommittees.
 - 5) We have learned that due to the downturn in the investment market, the City will likely need to pay an additional \$38 million on pension obligations. Payment of these obligations must be balanced with the need to maintain essential city services, such as public safety, continued investment in small businesses and commercial corridors, and the need to maintain streets and infrastructure that will only be more expensive to repair as time passes. Please consider attending the following meetings:
 - December 5 (9am – 5pm) – Budget Mark-up
 - December 11 (5pm) – Budget Adoption

- 6) The new noise ordinance I've sponsored will come before the Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee tomorrow, **December 3rd** at 1pm for a public hearing. As proposed, it will give us the capacity to regulate indoor noise (which we can't currently do), and use a "C weighting" that will enable us to much better regulate bass-heavy noise from bars.
- 7) The Council has approved using \$5.6 million in federal Neighborhood Stabilization funds to acquire and redevelop foreclosed properties in neighborhoods hardest hit by foreclosures. I am hopeful that this effort will help us weather the foreclosure crisis and stabilize the neighborhoods that have most affected.
- 8) The Community Development committee has voted to contract with Stock Roofing Company to install a green roof on the Target Center. The roof type is called "Green-Green," because it will be 2.75 inches deep over the whole area of the roof, with a deeper 3.5 inch deep green roof perimeter, which dramatically increases stormwater retention. This contract will cost \$5,322,922, including installation and a 20-year warranty and maintenance agreement. I made the motion in a previous committee meeting to require that the new Target Center roof have a green roof, and I am extremely excited to see this moving forward.
- 9) The City is also offering a new finance tool, the Working Capital Guaranty Program, designed to help assist businesses secure financing through private banking institutions by providing a guaranty on financing. For more information, contact Jessica Green at 673-5232, or Becky Shaw at 673-5066.
- 10) Public Works staff has set up a meeting to get public input on their proposed layout of Hennepin Avenue as a two-way street tomorrow, **December 3rd**, 4-5pm in the Central Library's Doty Room. I am concerned about the impact that staff's proposed shared bike/bus lanes will have on cyclists, and encourage you to attend.
- 11) By next Friday, the Council will have to come to consensus on our 2009 round of solicitations for Non-motorized Transportation Project funding. The three competing interests at this point are citywide pedestrian improvements, more bicycle infrastructure projects, and the Mayor's proposed bike sharing system. There is not enough funding to cover all three needs, so we'll have to make some tough choices. Ultimately, however, the funding decision is in the hands of Transit for Livable Communities.
- 12) I support a proposed ordinance strengthening the City's capacity to revoke or not renew rental licenses when landlords fail to take appropriate actions to ensure that their tenants do not commit crimes and disrupt their neighbors' lives.
- 13) Council Member Remington has introduced an ordinance that would regulate outdoor newspaper boxes. I share his concerns about the poor upkeep of these boxes, and especially about the fact that in many locations, sidewalks are cluttered to the extent that they do not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. A public hearing on this ordinance was held at the Transportation and Public Works committee today, and the proposal was sent forward to Council.
- 14) I supported a new ordinance creating an Animal Care and Control Advisory Board, which will help advise and assist our Animal Care and Control department in developing animal-related policies and processes, and do public education and outreach on such issues.
- 15) Phase II of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program is in significantly better financial shape than we expected. Total 2007 income was more than \$2 million over last year's estimate, and the total Phase II funding is more than \$8 million above last year's estimate. This is a result of a small increase in 2007 tax increment collections, significant interest savings related to 2006 refinancing of Common Project general obligation debt, and unexpected one-time revenues from a number of projects located in the Common Project. This puts NRP on track to fund more than 90% of the amount approved for all neighborhood Phase II plans.
- 16) 17 police recruits have graduated from the Police Academy. With the addition of these new officers, the Minneapolis Police Department now has 893 sworn officers. I am also pleased to report that the MPD is at its highest overall diversity level in its history, with people of color making up 18.5% of its workforce and women making up 15.8%.
- 17) The Community Planning and Economic Development Department has created five new geographic sector teams to enhance project coordination and make it simpler to solve problems and deliver services. Your team is made up of Haila Maze in Planning (673-2098), Jerry LePage in Housing (673-5240) and Kevin Carroll in Economic Development (673-5181).
- 18) There are openings on the Animal Care & Control Advisory Board (closes 12/12/08), Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission (12/05), Minneapolis Telecommunications Network (12/19), Public Health Advisory Committee (12/19), and Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee (12/12). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.