

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Southeast Como, 6-5-07

Cam's next Southeast Como Office Hours:
Tuesday, June 12, 9:30-11:00am
SECIA Office, 837 15th Ave SE

Items:

- 1) Roundtable: Increasing Safety by Building Community
- 2) Second Ward Interns
- 3) Panhandling Ordinance
- 4) Infill Housing Ordinance
- 5) Mobilizing Citizens for Grassroots Climate Change grants
- 6) TIF for Van Cleve – success!
- 7) Minneapolis *Living Well*
- 8) EPA Air Quality Award
- 9) Unpaid Judgments Ordinance
- 10) Lead Safe Work Practices Ordinance
- 11) Bike/Ped Grants
- 12) 311 in Rental Dwellings
- 13) Police Department Plans
- 14) Youth Opportunities this summer
- 15) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Please join me and the new Second Ward Community Outreach Interns for a Roundtable Discussion on Community Policing, Block Clubs and Walking Groups, **June 19th, 7-9 PM at Luxton Park.**
- 2) I'm pleased to announce that my office is in the process of hiring three talented young people to serve as Community Outreach Interns this summer and into the fall: Annie Welch, Mustafa Adam and Paul Kristanovich.
- 3) Council Members Ostrow and Remington have introduced an ordinance seeking to make it illegal to ask for money within 10 feet of a crosswalk, convenience and liquor stores, within 50 feet of entrances and exits to a park or sporting arena, within 80 feet of an ATM, and at night. The ordinance will be up for a public hearing tomorrow, **Wednesday, June 6 at 1:00pm.** I will find it very difficult to support such an ordinance. While I agree with Mayor Rybak and others that giving to panhandlers does not contribute to a real solution to the problem of homelessness, I am also convinced that attempts like these to further criminalize homelessness, poverty, chemical dependency and mental illness will never solve the problem either. We should be spending our limited resources on the 24-7 Homelessness Outreach workers called for in the unanimously-passed "Heading Home Hennepin" plan, not wasting them on the band-aid, arrest-and-release methods that have clearly not worked in the past.
- 4) Betsy Hodges' Infill Housing Ordinance is coming to the Zoning and Planning committee this **Thursday, June 7.** It has been amended by staff to make it easier for existing buildings that are larger than the 50% Floor Area Ratio to be made 500 feet larger. I plan to oppose this amendment, which would make some of the large houses we've seen go up in the last few years in Como even larger. I am also looking into reducing the exemptions for basements and attics, which as we all know are often used as bedrooms near the University.
- 5) The City of Minneapolis is taking applications for micro grants to help people in Minneapolis take steps to reduce global warming. **Mobilizing Citizens for Grassroots Climate Change** micro grants of up to \$1,000 each will be awarded. The application is short and easy to fill out. Applicants are asked to submit their plans to use the money for a project that results in meaningful, measurable steps to reduce climate change. To learn more about the micro grants, to get an application, and to see project ideas, visit the City's sustainability Web site at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sustainability/. Applications for the grants must be received by 4 p.m. June 20, 2007. All projects funded through the grants need to be finished by Dec. 1, 2007. I encourage SECIA to apply.

- 6) Thanks in part to the support of SECIA, the Tax Increment Financing plan for PPL's Van Cleve project was supported unanimously by the full Council on May 25. I continue to support this mixed-income development, and believe that the TIF district will make it possible.
- 7) The full Minneapolis Sustainability Report, entitled *Minneapolis: Living Well* has been released: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007-meetings/20070525/docs/Living-well-Report.pdf>. This document includes the already-released *Greenprint*, but covers all 24 Sustainability Indicators. It shows that we have made some good progress on many of our indicators, but also shows where we have room for improvement.
- 8) The US Environmental Protection Agency has recognized Minneapolis (as one of only two winners nationwide) with a Clean Air Excellence Award and Minneapolis in the "Regulatory/Policy Innovation" category. Air quality in Minneapolis is among the best of major metropolitan areas in the United States, and the City is working to make it even better.
- 9) At the next Council meeting on June 15, I will be introducing an ordinance making it possible for the City to revoke or not renew a rental license for any landlord who has unpaid legal judgments against him/her. The City has this authority with all of the other licenses we give (restaurants, etc), so this ordinance will bring our regulation of landlords up to par with our regulation of other sorts of businesses.
- 10) On June 15, I will be introducing an ordinance requiring that anyone repairing chipped or peeling paint on a pre-1978 housing unit, as required by a City violation order, must have attended a Lead Safe Work Practices training. This is a small step towards reducing and, in time, eliminating lead poisoning among children.
- 11) Minneapolis has been granted \$350,000 by MNDOT and \$75,000 from Blue Cross/Blue Shield for developing a citywide Pedestrian and Bicycle plan. We have also submitted an application for NTP funds to develop a "Bicycle Ambassador Program," which will help us match experienced bike commuters with first-time riders. The goal of all of these programs is to increase the bicycling mode share.
- 12) I supported CM Schiff's ordinance requiring city-prepared information on 311 to be posted in all rental dwellings in the City. This is a small step that can help better connect renters to City services, especially regarding Snow Emergencies and rental housing inspections.
- 13) The Minneapolis Police Department has released their 2007-2011 Business Plan. You can read it here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007-meetings/20070511/docs/MPD-5-Year-Plan.pdf>. It references the "Safe City Resolution" that I coauthored during last year's budget cycle, and includes measures of Department performance other than crime and arrest rates, such as complaints against officers, City liability and crime prevention. It refers to the ongoing work of the Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee. The Internal Affairs Unit is going out for an external audit, and has released their yearly report, which you can read here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007-meetings/20070511/docs/IAU-Annual-Report-final.pdf>. I believe that we are making slow progress in making the MPD more accountable and prevention based.
- 14) Minneapolis has plenty of opportunities for youth this summer. There are more than 750 activities and programs covering a wide array of topics available for children and teens. For students old enough to work, the **Step-Up** summer jobs program recruits, trains, and places Minneapolis teens in jobs that provide them with solid work experience, puts them on career paths, and lets them earn some money in the process. There are around 2,000 summer jobs available through Step-Up this summer, 600 more than last year. Find out about many of these programs by going to the Minneapolis' new youth Web page at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/residents/youth.asp. Also, call the "What's Up?" youth information line at (612) 399-999 or search the organization's database at www.whatsup.org.
- 15) There are openings on the Advisory Committee on People With Disabilities, the Empowerment Zone Governance Board, the Heritage Preservation Commission, the Housing Board of Appeals, the Private Industry/Workforce Council, the Public Health Advisory Committee, the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee and the Zoning Board of Adjustment (closes 6/15/2007). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.