



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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**Council Member Cam Gordon's
Report to Southeast Como, 11-16-11**

Cam's next Southeast Como Office Hours:
Tuesday, December 13th, 9:30-11:00am
Muddsuckers Coffee, 1500 Como Avenue SE

Items:

- 1) Alcohol Spacing Requirements
- 2) Vikings Stadium
- 3) 2012 Budget
- 4) Changes to City Staffing
- 5) Recreational Fires
- 6) Farmers Market Ordinance
- 7) Proposed Changes to CUP Process
- 8) Improvements to Bike Lanes on 15th Ave SE
- 9) Supplier Diversity
- 10) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) On Friday the City Council will be voting on the staff and Committee recommendation to remove the 300 foot distance requirement that prohibits the main entrance of a bar, night club or restaurant that makes more than 30% of its revenue from the sale of alcohol to be located within 300 feet of a temple, church, mosque, synagogue or other religious place of assembly. Currently, the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances restricts several activities, such as adult entertainment businesses and alcohol establishments, in close proximity to religious institution places of assembly, and schools. Generally, alcohol establishments are currently restricted from locating within 300 feet from a religious place of assembly or school, but the City does allow exceptions for restaurants that have food sales of at least 70% of their gross sales annually, do not have a bar area, and do not have signs that advertise alcoholic beverages on the exterior of the building. There are also other ordinances and regulations that relate to opening a bar or other establishment that serves alcohol. Most notably: it generally needs to be surrounded by seven acres of appropriate commercial zoning and must make at least 60 percent of its revenue from food if it is within 500 feet of a residential property.
- 2) I do not support the public funding proposal put forward by the Mayor and Council President. If given the opportunity to vote against any component of this deal, I will vote against it. At this time of shrinking budgets and staff layoffs, if we can afford to tax our residents more, there are higher and better purposes for those revenues than a stadium for a privately-owned football team. For more of my arguments against public funding for this stadium, please see my blog.
- 3) The 2012 budget approval process is well underway. Final approval of the budget is scheduled for **December 14th**. Two public hearings will be held before the budget's approval, one on Wednesday, **Nov. 30**, 6:05 p.m. and one on Wednesday, **Dec. 14**, 6:05 p.m., both in City Hall, 350 South 5th Street, room 317. For more information on the Mayor's proposed 2012 budget, see www.minneapolismn.gov/mayor and <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/city-budget/2012recc/index.asp>.
- 4) There have been a number of changes to the City's staff. Community Planning and Economic Development department head **Mike Christenson** is leaving to work with the Minnesota Business Partnership on taking the Minneapolis Promise – an effort to help kids succeed in school and move on to college – to a regional scale. Planning Director **Barb Sporlein** has been named the Deputy Commissioner of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA). And budget director **Heather Johnston** is moving to the City of Burnsville to be their Chief Financial Officer/Director of Administrative Services. I will truly miss these great City employees, and wish them well in all of their future endeavors. I am supporting the Mayor's selection for director of the Regulatory Services department: **Greg Stubbs**.
- 5) On October 12th the Public Safety, Health and Civil Rights Committee heard a report on

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Somali – Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' an wac 612-673-2188.

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outdoor recreational fires. After a discussion among Council Members I successfully moved to refer the topic to two advisory committees for review. In the coming months the Public Health Advisory Committee and the Citizens Environmental Advisory Committee will review the recreational fire ordinance and consider possible recommendations for how to improve it.

- 6) The amendments to the farmers market ordinance I authored have passed the Council. Special credit goes to my Policy Aide, Robin Garwood, for his months of work with market managers and city staff to develop these ordinance amendments. I was very disappointed that my colleagues stripped away a requirement – requested and strongly supported by the farmers market community – that farmers markets be nonprofits. For more on this, please see my blog. Other pieces of the ordinance, as put forward by the farmers market community, that did pass include:
 - At least 60% of vendors at farmers markets will have to be food growers
 - The “mini markets” that were created by policy several years ago will be included in the ordinance, and will be allowed to have a more flexible vendor mix, with one distributor (selling fresh fruits and vegetables that don’t grow in Minnesota) and one home processor (selling baked goods, jams, jellies, pickles, etc)
 - Creation of a new “produce and craft” market type that can be up to 70% vendors of self-made arts and crafts, with the other 30% being food items
 - Sampling by market vendors will be easier, and vendors other than those selling food for immediate consumption will be able to operate from unpaved surfaces.

- 7) Council member Schiff has introduced a zoning code amendment related to the regulation and approval of new apartment buildings, condominiums, and mixed use development with a residential component. The amendment would remove the need for a Conditional Use Permit and public hearing for residential developments of five or more dwelling units. A public hearing on the amendment was scheduled for the September 19th City Planning Commission meeting but after getting requests for additional information and time for analysis the City Planning Commission postponed the public hearing until **December 12th**. Following the hearing the Planning Commission will forward its recommendation to the City Council for consideration. More information is linked on item #12 here: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/agendas/planning-commission/2011/CPC_Actions_09-19-112.asp. If the amendment passes, projects with five or more units would still be required to file an application for Site Plan Review. Site plan review is done by staff and does not require a public hearing. It typically addresses issues such as building placement on a lot, exterior materials and windows, vehicle and pedestrian access, and landscaping and screening. As proposed, any project with 10 or more units would be required to go through the public hearing process for their site plan review application, which would preserve the existing public process and neighborhood notification. Buildings with between five and nine units—typically fewer than five projects per year, citywide—would become eligible for administrative approval as long as they are submitting no other applications such as variances, a rezoning, CUP to increase allowed height, etc.

- 8) The City has unveiled innovative new bike lane treatments on 15th Avenue southeast. They include green bike lanes in the “conflict zones” approaching and in the intersections of 5th St SE, 4th St SE and University Ave. This is an important improvement, in part because the intersection of 15th and 4th is where University student Audrey Hull was hit and killed by a truck this April. This new lane striping will help raise awareness of bicyclists and let drivers know that they are legally required to yield to bikes, which I believe will help prevent future tragedies. 15th Ave SE carries more bicyclists on an average day than any other street in Minneapolis, at 3,500. That’s a higher than 12% mode share, meaning that one in eight people on 15th are on bikes. I want to specifically thank Steve Mosing in the Minneapolis Public Works Department for making this happen, and the Hull family for their continuing, constructive engagement in making Minneapolis a safer place for bicyclists.

- 9) Following up on recommendations from the Disparity Study conducted last year, the Council has put in place our first-ever goal for the percentage of minority- and woman-owned businesses city government purchases products and services from. The goal is **25%**. This means that each department will review, track and report on its purchasing practices and that Civil Rights staff will assist them in finding certified minority or woman owned companies available to provide the products and services. According to the staff report, in 2010 some \$95 million could have been opened up to all small businesses and so, at a 25% inclusion goal, almost \$24 million could have been gone to woman- and minority owned businesses. I am a longtime supporter of this initiative and see it as an important step towards spending our public dollars in a more socially responsible way and being a leader in addressing the racial and gender inequities that we know exist in our city and region.

- 10) In an effort to make it easier to learn about volunteer opportunities, ensure a more open process, and increase the diversity of the applicant pool, we now focus our appointments to boards and commissions once in the spring and once in the fall. **Applications are now being accepted for the over 80 open positions** on 16 boards and commissions that the City Council and Mayor will appoint this fall. Applications will be reviewed beginning September 30; however the positions are open until filled. For a full list of position descriptions see www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov.