

**News from Cam Gordon**  
**Council Member, Second Ward**  
**October 2011**

<http://www.minneapolis.gov/council/ward2>

**2012 Budget Town Hall Meeting.** For a chance to learn more about the 2012 proposed budget and share your perspective, join me for a special Ward 1 and 2 **Budget Town Hall** meeting and listening session **Wednesday November 9, 7:00 – 8:30pm at Van Cleve Park**, 915 15th Avenue Southeast. Come see a brief presentation on the Mayor's proposed budget, get your questions answered and share your concerns and views. The Mayor's proposal includes substantial cuts to staff and programs and will likely be amended significantly by the City Council before it is adopted. I need your input and advice to make the smartest decisions I can. I will be joined by our Finance Department Director, Kevin Carpenter, Budget Director LaTonia Green, and Ward 1 Council Member, Kevin Reich.

**Vikings Stadium.** 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.

**Farmers Market Ordinance.** The amendments to the farmers market ordinance I authored have passed the Regulatory, Energy and Environment committee unanimously. 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 expect them to pass the Council as well. These changes are driven in large part by the requests of farmers market stakeholders, and include several important pieces:

- 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
- All markets other than mini markets will have to be nonprofits
- 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.

**Street Sweeping.** Fall is here, and that means City street sweeping crews have begun sweeping streets across the city. To make sure the sweepers can do the best job possible, temporary "No Parking" signs will be posted at least 24 hours in advance so streets will be clear of cars when they're swept. Anyone who parks on the street will need to follow street sweep parking rules or their cars may be ticketed and towed. The City will use Facebook and Twitter to post periodic street sweeping updates and information. In addition, you can use an interactive feature on the City's website to find out when the sweepers are coming through your neighborhoods:  
[www.minneapolis.gov/streetsweep](http://www.minneapolis.gov/streetsweep).

**Supplier Diversity.** Following up on recommendations from the Disparity Study conducted last year, the Council is considering putting 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%**. A committee approved this recommendation in October and the Council will consider it on November 4<sup>th</sup>. If passed, this will mean 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. There are a wide variety of private businesses we use for goods and services including food and beverages, law

firms, equipment repair, printing services and more. Also, for the first time, goals will also be placed on grant recipients who may be nonprofit service providers to also purchase goods and services from minority and woman owned businesses. 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.

**Fire Department Staffing.** In a staff report

(<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@council/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-081618.pdf>) presented to the Public Safety Committee in October we learned that \$821,305.91 has been spent in overtime pay this year to firefighters. We reviewed data about the staffing levels and sick days that may help us as we struggle to maintain high enough staff levels at all times to maintain safety and short response time for all out residents and businesses.

**Occupy MN Resolution.** I was proud to co-author a resolution drafted by Council Member Betsy Hodges and passed by the Council on October 21 supporting "Peaceable Calls for Reforms to the Income Tax, Financial, and Electoral Systems." This puts the Council on record standing with the Occupy MN protests, the local outgrowth of the Occupy Wall Street protest. You can read more at my blog.

**Twin Cities Urban Sustainability Forum.** I will be delivering the keynote address of the Twin Cities Urban Sustainability Forum on **November 2<sup>nd</sup>**. The Forum will highlight emerging outcomes of sustainability research and cutting edge trends in sustainability practice and policy. Presentations by leading national and international speakers will address connecting urban ecosystem science with social and economic sustainability, federal and state-level sustainability policy, and overcoming disconnects between sustainability research and practice. My remarks will focus on the strides Minneapolis has made on sustainability policy over the last five years, including the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative, our green purchasing policy, commercial recycling, natural landscapes, active transportation and more. For more information, go here: <http://www.tcusforum.umn.edu/>.

**Recreational Fires.** On October 12<sup>th</sup> the Public Safety, Health and Civil Rights Committee heard a report on 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. Over the years I have received a number of emails and phone calls about this issue, especially from some residents who consider outdoor burning to be detrimental to their health and their quality of life.

**Community Energy Services Awards.** On Tuesday, October 25th, the Center for Energy and Environment and the McKnight Foundation awarded over \$40,000 in grants to partnering neighborhood organizations and volunteers for their efforts supporting Community Energy Services. I was given an award to honor the participation by all Second Ward neighborhoods. In addition, Southeast Como resident **Katie Fournier** received an Outstanding Neighborhood Coordination award, and **Seward Neighborhood Group** won third place in the implementation challenge, because more than 31% of Seward participants made energy efficiency investments in their homes. Community Energy Services is a one-stop, full-service residential energy efficiency program currently available to Minneapolis homeowners, and is provided in partnership with the City of Minneapolis, CenterPoint Energy and Xcel Energy.

**Peavey Plaza.** On October 25 a joint committee meeting of the Community Development Committee and Transportation and Public Works Committee approved of a new design plan for the Peavey Plaza located on the Orchestra Hall block in Downtown. The City and the Minnesota

Orchestral Association (MOA) are collaborating in the revitalization of Peavey Plaza and Orchestra Hall. The 2010 legislature authorized a grant of \$16 million to pre-design, design, construct, furnish and equip the renovation of Orchestra Hall, including \$2 million for Peavey Plaza. The City owns and maintains Peavey Plaza. For more see <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/council/2011-meetings/20111104/Docs/PeaveyPlazaRCA.pdf> or <http://finance-commerce.com/2011/10/slide-show-peavey-plaza-design-unveiled/>

**Pedicabs.** Significant changes to the City's pedicab ordinance have passed the Council. Though I'm supportive of much in these amendments – especially opening downtown to pedicabs during rush hour – I voted against the package, because it contained an unnecessary overstep into the decisions made by certain small operators. You can read more at my blog.

**Workshop Proposals.** Proposals are being accepted, until November 14, for workshops for the 1st annual **Neighborhood & Community Connections Conference** – Better Communities through Neighborhoods. The February 11, 2012 conference is designed to showcase and build successful community collaborations between neighborhoods, cultural communities, residents, and the City. For more information, please go to: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/docs/10611CallforWorkshops.pdf>

**Facing Race.** The Longfellow Community Council has partnered with the Saint Paul Foundation to offer Facing Race, a series of participatory, discussion-based events that offer residents the opportunity to learn about race and racism and the impact it has on our community. Talking about race and racism is a good first step toward creating a community where everyone feels safe, valued and respected. The events are free and open to everyone but attendees must register. You can RSVP through facebook or send an email to [joanna@longfellow.org](mailto:joanna@longfellow.org). The first of three, "**New Conversations about Race and Racism**," was Saturday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1:00 - 4:30pm at Becketwood Cooperative Home, 4300 West River Parkway. The next one is on **Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>**, about White Privilege, 6:00 - 8:00 pm at Minnehaha Academy, 3100 West River Parkway and the last is on **Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>**, about Understanding the Myths that Keep Racism in Place, 6:30 - 8:30pm at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. For more see <http://www.longfellow.org/>.

**Food Day.** I was honored to mark the first National Food Day, October 24, at the University of Minnesota by conducting a workshop, speaking at a rally and presenting a proclamation from the Mayors of Minneapolis and St. Paul. I commend the U of M and the Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute for coordinating this inspiring event to commemorate this nationwide initiative to promote healthy, sustainable food for all. For more information visit <http://foodday.org/>

**Free Lead Testing for Toys.** The City is offering three free opportunities to get your kids' toys tested for lead: **October 27**, 5:30-6:30pm, at the Minnehaha Academy north campus, 3100 W. River Parkway; **October 28**, 1-3pm, at Room 300, Public Service Center, 250 S 4th St; and **November 19**, 10am-5pm, at the Midtown Global Market, 920 E Lake St. The Longfellow session will have sign-up information for home lead checks. Although the number of Minneapolis children with elevated lead levels in their blood has been dropping in recent years, 79 more children were identified by testing last year.

**Central Corridor Housing.** The **Big Picture Project**, lead by the Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), is finalizing recommendations about preserving and building affordable housing along the Central Corridor. Two community meetings have been planned to help inform our final decisions. The first, hosted by, the District Councils Collaborative of Minneapolis and St. Paul, is a for the Minneapolis portion of the project and will be held on **Tuesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 6-8pm** at Prospect Park United Methodist Church, 22 Orlin Ave SE. The second, hosted by LISC, will be on **Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm**, at Ewald Consulting, 1000 Westgate Drive, Suite 252, St. Paul.

**Asian Carp.** Asian Carp DNA has now been found in Minneapolis, near the Ford dam. Governor Dayton is calling for quick action to prevent invasive Asian Carp from moving up the Mississippi River into Minnesota. There seem to be two options for blocking the natural spread of this invasive species: closing the lock at the Ford dam, and closing the Upper Lock at St. Anthony Falls? Both options will have an impact on Minneapolis businesses and residents.

**Changes in City Staffing.** There have been a number of high- and mid-level 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. The Mayor has announced his selection for director of the Regulatory Services department: **Greg Stubbs**. I'm very interested in this choice, as Mr. Stubb's background is in planning.

**New City Electric Vehicle.** The City will unveil our first next-generation all-electric vehicle on **November 2<sup>nd</sup>**. In partnership with the Drive Electric Minnesota Coalition and with financial support from Xcel Energy, the Public Works Fleet Services Division has purchased one of the nation's first all-electric Ford Transit Connect vans. This van will replace a Ford F250 as the parts runner truck for Fleet Services. At 20,000 miles a year, this is one of the City's most heavily used light duty vehicles. Anticipated fuel savings for this zero emissions vehicle over the F250 is in excess of \$40,000 over the next 8 years. I'm excited to see the City taking the first step towards the electrification of our road transportation system.

**Armistice Day 11/11/11.** Armistice Day (also known as Remembrance Day) commemorates the armistice signed between the Allies of World War I and Germany at Compiègne, France, for the cessation of hostilities on the Western Front, which took effect at eleven o'clock in the morning—the "eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month" of 1918, when bells rung from churches and elsewhere throughout Europe. Everyone is welcome to join me at an Armistice Day Celebration on Friday, **November 11**, 2011 from 7–10pm at Britt's Pub (1110 Nicollet Mall Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403). Called "Partners in Peace," there will be speakers representing Canada, England, France and Germany. The event will include music, speakers and a bell ringing by Veterans for Peace members.

**Project Homeless Connect.** Volunteers are needed for a **December 12<sup>th</sup>** event to assist Project Homeless Connect, a one-stop shop to help our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness connect with services they need. Volunteer training will be held in November and December. Please help if you can. Learn more at: [www.homelessconnectminneapolis.org/volunteer.htm](http://www.homelessconnectminneapolis.org/volunteer.htm).

**Minneapolis Tap Water Goes Platinum.** Minneapolis' tap water service has received the **Platinum Award** for Utility Excellence from the organization for the nation's largest publicly owned drinking water utilities. The Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), gave us the award for making dramatic improvements in tap water and the way we manage an operation that delivers an average of 57 million gallons of drinking water to around a half million people every day. Minneapolis was one of only nine municipalities to receive the platinum ranking from AMWA.

**Community Participation Program.** The Neighborhood and Community Relations department is pleased to provide for review and comment a first draft of the revised Community Participation Program Guidelines (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/docs/Draft2011CPPGuidelines.pdf>). The draft guidelines outline how Community Participation Program funding will be provided to neighborhood organizations in Minneapolis to assist with community engagement and to act on neighborhood priorities. The approved Guidelines will go into effect starting July, 2012.

Written comments on this draft will be accepted until **Monday, November 21**. You may email your comments to [ncr@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:ncr@minneapolismn.gov) (email preferred) or send them to Neighborhood and Community Relations Department, Tri-Tech Center, Room 220, 331 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55401.

**Domestic Violence – the Minneapolis Model.** A new way of responding to and prosecuting domestic violence cases in Minneapolis has led to a 50% increase in the misdemeanor domestic violence conviction rate in the city between 2005 and 2010. The increase in conviction rates and improved response are due in significant part to the “Minneapolis Model” – a collaborative effort between the Minneapolis City Attorney’s Office, the Minneapolis Police Department, the Domestic Abuse Project, Casa de Esperanza and Asian Women United of Minnesota that launched in 2008. Part of this effort involved a new investigative protocol by the City Attorney’s Office and the Police Department to gather more and better evidence when officers are responding to domestic violence calls. With the assistance of grant funds, the City has also developed a domestic abuse repeat offender initiative, with a pilot program at Little Earth of United Tribes, and provided additional police enforcement of Domestic Abuse No Contact Orders, also improving the City’s response to domestic violence. In January 2008, the City Attorney’s Office and the Police Department implemented a pilot program for police officers responding to domestic violence cases in the 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct. Conviction rates in the 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct increased tremendously after the implementation of the new protocol, and the total number of convictions went up. Following this success, the City Attorney’s Office and the Police Department expanded the program to the other precincts in the city over the next two years and saw an increase in conviction rate in each precinct as the protocol was rolled out. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct (which includes Seward and Longfellow), the increase was from 66% to **74%**, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct (which includes Southeast Como and Prospect Park) increased from 72% to **85%**, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Precinct (which includes the West Bank) increased from 71% to **78%**.

**Transportation Infrastructure Study.** Public Works staff has conducted a Transportation Infrastructure Study. You can find it here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/council/2011-meetings/20111104/Docs/20-Infrastructure-Study-PPP.pdf>. Although the City continuously monitors the condition of its streets, bridges, and other infrastructure, this study takes a thorough look at what the future of our infrastructure will be, based on different funding scenarios over the next two decades. Minneapolis is the first city in the state to do an infrastructure study of this magnitude and complexity, and Council Members and managers will use the results to help make informed decisions about investment in our transportation infrastructure.

**In the Doghouse Event.** On Saturday, October 22, Animal Care and Control hosted a special fundraising event at the animal shelter, 212 17th Ave N. Freewill donations to the shelter are always welcome. If you could not attend the event, you can still donate to MACC at: [givemn.razoo.com/story/Macc-I-M-In-The-Dog-House](http://givemn.razoo.com/story/Macc-I-M-In-The-Dog-House).

**Seward Book Club and “One Read.”** I am delighted to see that the Seward Co-op Book Club is hosting a community discussion on The Grace of Silence on **Wednesday, November 9, 7-8:30pm** at the Co-op. It is free and everyone is welcome, but pre-registration at their customer service desk is required. You can find more about the the One Minneapolis, One Read event schedule, information and resources at [www.OneMinneapolisOneRead.com](http://www.OneMinneapolisOneRead.com).

**Touchstone Supportive Housing.** The Council’s Community Development committee has voted to dedicate \$733,587 in Low Income Housing Tax Credits for next year to the Touchstone project at 2304 Snelling Ave S, part of the larger Seward Commons (or Bystrom Brothers) redevelopment. This likely means that long-term housing with 24-hour supportive services to adult men and women living with serious mental illness will be constructed next spring and summer. To learn more visit [www.touchstonemh.org/programs-and-services/assisted-living](http://www.touchstonemh.org/programs-and-services/assisted-living).

**Funds for Seward Commons.** The Council’s Community Development committee has authorized staff to apply for a number of outside grant funds for the second phase of the Seward

Commons redevelopment site, including \$200,000 from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, \$102,542 from the Metropolitan Council's Tax Base Revitalization Account, and \$112,500 in Hennepin County Environmental Remediation Funds.

**2929 University Ave SE.** I understand from staff that all of the automobile repair businesses in 2929 University Ave SE have now been licensed. Many of the businesses had not renewed their licenses, and a significant number had never been licensed. In addition, there have been significant concerns – and considerable use of staff time – about the use of 4th Street SE as a storage area for vehicles related to this business, in violation of City codes. Staff took the time to work with the property owner and the business operators to address the licensing issues, and are proposing to install signage prohibiting overnight parking, to make enforcement easier. I know this was a difficult time for both the property owner and the businesses, but I hope that it will lead to better compliance with City regulations in the future.

**New U Emergency Loudspeaker System.** The University is adding a new emergency loudspeaker system on campus that will allow for both alert tones and/or voice instructions in the event of major emergencies. The loudspeakers, mounted on University buildings, are designed to be audible in outdoor spaces on the University campus and may also be audible at residences and businesses that are very close to campus. For more info, visit [www.umn.edu/prepared/](http://www.umn.edu/prepared/).

**Council Support for Peace Activists.** I was delighted to work with Council President Johnson to draft a letter, signed by 12 Council Members, to Senators Klobuchar and Franken and Representative Ellison, showing support for the peace activists subpoenaed or raided by the FBI last fall. In the letter we expressed our concerns about the chilling effects these activities may have on free speech and the strain these ongoing investigations pose to these residents and their families.

**Please Consider Serving on a City Board or Commission.** 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.minneapolismn.gov/boards-and-commissions](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards-and-commissions). There are openings on the following: Board of Appeal & Equalization, Civilian Police Review Authority, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Ethical Practices Board, Family Housing Fund (McKnight), Public Health Advisory Committee, Public Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, and Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov).

**Ward Office Hours.** Every Tuesday morning I hold "Office Hours" in the Ward from 9:30-11:00am. Please feel free to call for an appointment or just stop by.  
1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays, Hard Times Café (West Bank/University);  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesdays, Muddsuckers Coffee, 1500 Como (SE Como);  
3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays, Pratt School (Prospect Park);  
4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays, the Birchwood Cafe (Seward/Longfellow).

Yours, in peace and cooperation,

Cam Gordon  
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