



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

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## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 11-2-11

**Cam's next Seward Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9:30-11:00am**  
**Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St**

### Items:

- 1) Vikings Stadium
- 2) Low Income Housing Tax Credits for Seward Commons
- 3) Funding Applications for Seward Commons
- 4) 2012 Budget Informational Meeting
- 5) Twin Cities Urban Sustainability Forum
- 6) Co-op Book Club & *The Grace of Silence*
- 7) Changes to City Staffing
- 8) Recreational Fires
- 9) Facing Race
- 10) Farmers Markets
- 11) Pedicabs
- 12) Asian Carp
- 13) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) 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.
- 2) 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.
- 3) 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.
- 4) I am co-hosting an informational meeting on the 2012 budget on **Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>**, from 6:30-8:30pm at Van Cleve Park, with Council Member Reich. City Finance staff will give a short presentation on the budget, and we will answer questions and take input on the budget. I hope you can join us.
- 5) I delivered the keynote address of the Twin Cities Urban Sustainability Forum earlier today. The Forum highlights emerging outcomes of sustainability research and cutting edge trends in sustainability practice and policy. 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/>.
- 6) 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).

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email [Ahmed.Muhumud@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Ahmed.Muhumud@minneapolismn.gov)

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

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Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800;

Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2700;

Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

- 7) 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.
- 8) 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.
- 9) I am delighted to know that Longfellow is hosting a series of Facing Race meetings. I hope to attend some of them and encourage others to attend all they can. 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/>.
- 10) 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
- 11) 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.
- 12) 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.
- 13) **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 <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> . To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov).