



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

**Cam Gordon**  
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Second Ward

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## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 2-22-12

**Cam's next Seward Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11:00am**  
**Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St**

### Items:

- 1) Redistricting
- 2) CLIC Appointee Needed
- 3) Compost Ordinance Hearing February 27
- 4) Urban Agriculture Text Amendments
- 5) Vikings Stadium
- 6) Community Gardening Lots Available
- 7) Council Takes Position on Marriage Amendment
- 8) Taxis Forced to Take Credit Cards
- 9) Met Council Sewer Work on W River Pkwy
- 10) Congratulations Fartun Hassan
- 11) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) As you likely know, the Redistricting Group of the Charter Commission is currently drafting new Ward maps for the City of Minneapolis. Various maps have been drafted both by the Commission and outside groups. The most recent map from the Commission (dated February 15), agrees in principle with a map put forward by the one developed by the "Committee for a Fair Redistricting," a group of primarily East African stakeholders. Both maps would create a minority opportunity ward, a proposed Ward 6 or a significantly altered Ward 2, which would have an African American population of around **40%**, a Hispanic population of around **20%**, a Native American population of between **4%** and **7%** and a White population of **33%**. The key difference between the maps from Seward's perspective is that the Redistricting Group's map would keep all of Seward in Ward 2, whereas the "Fair" map would put the west half of Seward together with Phillips and half of the West Bank, and the east half of Seward in a new Ward 9. You can find the Redistricting Group's February 15 map here: [www.minneapolismn.gov/redistricting2012](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/redistricting2012).
- 2) Seward resident Becca Vargo-Daggett, who was one of my appointees to the Capital Long Range Improvement Committee, has moved out of Minneapolis. I need a new CLIC appointee, and I am looking for someone from the west side of the river – Seward, the West Bank, or Cooper. CLIC makes recommendations to the City Council and Mayor on capital improvement program development and annual capital improvement budgets, and has tremendous influence on the infrastructure investments the City makes. If you are interested, please contact my office, or apply here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/WCMS1P-084544>.
- 3) The ordinance amendments I have authored to the City's composting ordinance come before the Regulatory Energy and Environment committee on Monday, **February 27<sup>th</sup>**, at 1:30pm in Council Chambers. These changes would increase the allowable size for compost areas, clarify the requirements on compost bin construction and the types of materials that can be composted, require that compost areas be covered with a layer of odor-reducing material like dry leaves or straw, and authorize City staff to require people who violate the terms of the ordinance to take a course in composting. These amendments came from recommendations from the urban gardening community, have been vetted by City, County and MPCA staff, and are supported by both the Environmental Advisory Committee and new Food Council.

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.

Attention: If you want help translating this information in language other than Hmong, Spanish or Somali, call 311

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.

- 4) On January 25, the City Planning Commission unanimously voted to approve the zoning code amendments I have authored to help implement the Urban Agriculture Policy Plan the Council adopted last spring. This is an exciting first step in changing the City's land use rules to make urban agriculture possible. You can see the draft text amendments here: [www.minneapolismn.gov /www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-083823.pdf](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-083823.pdf). The commission received 70 written comments and 13 people spoke at the public hearing and all were in favor of the amendments as proposed and recommended by staff. The amendments will now move to the Zoning and Planning Committee for consideration on **March 1**. Read more analysis on the Second Ward blog.
- 5) On January 26, the City Council discussed the Mayor and Council President's proposal for a new Vikings Stadium in Minneapolis. (See <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/cow/WCMS1P-084388> and <http://v.qwikcast.tv/view.aspx?q=PVG6> for more). I was glad to see that the plan includes a way to remove the costs of the Target Center from property taxes and that the preferred location is the current site of the Metrodome. This site has already been assembled at great cost in east Downtown and is currently served by a light rail station that will soon grant access to two light rail corridors. But I was very concerned about the use of public funds, the amount of debt that would be taken on by the City and the use of local taxes as a funding source. Under this plan, the City would take on over \$300,000,000 in debt to be paid back with local hospitality, entertainment and sales tax revenue over 30 years. I am also very concerned about the plan to ignore our Charter. I believe that no city resources over \$10 million dollars should be used without a referendum, in keeping with the Charter. The state legislature should not pass any proposal that undermines our City's most fundamental legal document, essentially our Constitution.
- 6) The City has 10 vacant lots available for qualifying groups to lease for community gardens. These City-owned lots were selected because they are not appropriate for development and will remain available for years of gardening even as the economy changes and redevelopment picks up. Lots are available first-come, first-served to qualifying groups. Experienced community garden groups may be eligible for three- to five-year leases, while groups gardening for the first time will start with one-year leases. A qualifying group will be a not-for-profit or a group with a not-for-profit sponsor. The garden will also need to have liability insurance. For more visit [http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/homegrown/dhfs\\_gardeners](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/homegrown/dhfs_gardeners) or call 612-673-5051.
- 7) The City Council has voted unanimously to publicly oppose a proposed state constitutional amendment that would ban marriage for same-sex couples in Minnesota. This action will be officially approved at the City Council's February 10 meeting. In 2011, the Minnesota legislature voted to place the following question on the November 6, 2012 election ballot: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to provide that only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in Minnesota?" If the measure is approved, the state constitution would be amended to add a new section that reads; "Only a union of one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in Minnesota." I strongly oppose this ballot initiative, and am a proud Steering Committee member of Minnesota United for All Families, a broad coalition of organizations joined to defeat the proposed amendment. To learn more or get involved visit [www.mnunited.org](http://www.mnunited.org).
- 8) Over my objections, the Council has voted to force taxis in Minneapolis to take credit cards. I opposed this action because it became clear that the credit card fees (amounting to 5-7% of each fare) will almost universally come out of the income of drivers, many of whom are low-income new Americans of East African origin living in my Ward. I do not believe it is fair to place the convenience of taxi passengers or profits for Wall Street above the well-being of taxi drivers. You can read more on the Second Ward blog..
- 9) This month the Metropolitan Council is beginning work on a segment of its sanitary sewer that runs along West River Parkway in Cedar Riverside on the bluffs below the University Medical Center Riverside campus near 4th St. Work includes digging access tunnels and repairing damaged pipes. It is expected to be completed by the end of June. For more information contact Met Council staff: Seng Thongvanh at 651-602-4538, [seng.thongvanh@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:seng.thongvanh@metc.state.mn.us).
- 10) Second Ward seventh-grader Fartun Hassan has won third place in the 2012 Martin Luther King Essay Contest. Great work, Fartun! More information is available here: <http://civilrightsminneapolis.wordpress.com/2012/01/25/2012-mlk-essay-contest-and-the-winners-are/>.
- 11) There are openings on the Animal Care & Control Advisory Committee, Capital Long Range Improvement Commission, Family Housing Fund (McKnight), Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Public Health Advisory Committee, Public Housing Authority Board of Commissioners and Senior Citizens Advisory Committee. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov).