



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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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, llame 612-673-2700;

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

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Southeast Como, 10-1-13

Cam's next Southeast Como Office Hours:
Tuesday, October 8th, 9:30-11:00am
Muddsuckers Coffee, 1500 Como Avenue SE

Items:

- 1) Vote November 5th
- 2) Roundtable Discussion on Trees
- 3) University District Parking Overlay
- 4) Council Adopts Energy Vision
- 5) City Comments on Sherco Coal Plant
- 6) Streetcar Locally Preferred Alternative Chosen
- 7) Responsible Lending Ordinance
- 8) Help Water Trees
- 9) Bicycling Rate Increases
- 10) Residential Density Amendment Passes
- 11) Trap-Neuter-Return Passes
- 12) Police Oversight Report
- 13) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) The City has launched website, www.vote.minneapolismn.gov, where voters can register, find their polling place, apply for an absentee ballot and mark a ranked-choice ballot and see how the ballot-counting works. Voting absentee can be done in person at City Hall, or entirely by mail. It can be done in person (as of September 20) in City Hall during regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or on the final two Saturdays before Election Day, Oct. 26 and Nov. 2, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. To vote absentee by mail, voters may request a ballot now. Additionally the city is in need of more election judges. We especially need judges who are fluent in a second language to provide additional language support in the polling place, including in Spanish, Somali, and Hmong. To find out more about becoming an election Judge, visit <http://vote.minneapolismn.gov/volunteer> or call 612-673-2296.
- 2) I have organized a Roundtable Discussion about the threats and opportunities facing our urban tree canopy, for **Monday, October 7**, 7-8:30pm, at Longfellow Park, 3435 36th Ave S. We will discuss the tree loss from this summer's storm, Emerald Ash Borer, the importance of watering trees, and the Longfellow Trees program.
- 3) The University District Alliance has set up a task force to look at changing the parking requirements for residential development in the University Area Overlay. I have introduced this due to concerns I have heard from folks from the U area about some of the ordinance's unintended consequences. John Kari, from Prospect Park, has agreed to chair the task force. The current regulation requires at least one off street parking stall for every 2 bedrooms, or one per dwelling unit (whichever is greater) in any new development. We are considering loosening up on this requirement in some cases and I want to make sure the issue gets fully vetted and influenced by all the views of our University partners who helped create the overlay district.
- 4) The Council has adopted a strong, future-focused Energy Vision, which you can read here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-113830.pdf>. This document makes clear the sort of energy system the City would like to see in 2040: clean, reliable, affordable and with lots of local energy production and local economic benefit. This is a great start, and I look forward to using the opportunity we have next year – both at the State Legislature and through our energy franchise negotiations – to put us on a path to making this vision a reality.

- 5) The City has made comments on Xcel Energy's Sherco coal-fired power plant. We are asking the PUC to compel Xcel to begin the planning process for replacing Sherco with cleaner, less polluting sources.
- 6) The Council's Transportation and Public works committee has voted to recommend the Locally Preferred Alternative for the Nicollet-Central Transit Corridor be modern streetcar running between Lake Street and at least 5th Street NE on Nicollet Avenue, Nicollet Mall and Hennepin/1st Avenues, using the Hennepin Avenue bridge to cross the Mississippi River.
- 7) Council Member Glidden has introduced an ordinance regarding financial institutions and disclosure of information to encourage and ensure that banks and other lending institutions operating in our city, and other lending institutions are socially responsible. I will be very interested in seeing the specifics of this and in finding ways to hold financial institutions accountable if they are not investing in our communities.
- 8) Minneapolis yard and boulevard trees still need an inch of water every week throughout the fall. Extremely dry conditions followed the spring and early summer rainfall that drenched the city and caused significant damage, and the lack of precipitation now is causing stress on the City's urban forest. Lack of water can make trees vulnerable to insects and disease and cause permanent damage to young and old trees alike. Trees up to five years old are especially susceptible. In any week that it rains less than one inch, yard and boulevard trees need to be watered. An effective way for residents to water a tree is to turn on a slow stream of water (just so the hose is weeping) for a few hours. Watering in the evening after dinner time is most effective since it minimizes evaporation, and trees tend to take most of their water during the night. For people who lose track of when they last watered a tree, a good way to remember is to water trees on the same day trash is picked up. Watering should continue until trees have dropped their leaves and reached full dormancy. Normally this occurs in early to mid-October.
- 9) The Census has released 2012 data on bicycling and walking in Minneapolis, and there's great news. In 2012, **6.9%** of Minneapolis residents walked to work, up from 5.8% in 2011. And **4.5%** of Minneapolis residents biked to work. This is up from 3.4% in 2011 and marks the largest percentage of Minneapolis residents biking to work since records have been kept. We have regained our place as the second-highest city in the nation – after Portland, OR – in terms of the percentage of trips made by bike. But while this is welcome news, this new mode share is still less than a third of the 15% biking goal the Council recently adopted as part of the Climate Action Plan. We have to do more, and one of the best ideas out there for increasing bike ridership is to build protected, separated bikeways that are safer and more comfortable for all types of people.
- 10) The proposed amendment to change the way residential density is regulated where higher density multi-family uses are allowed has passed the Zoning and Planning committee, and I expect it to pass the full Council. Standards requiring a minimum lot area per dwelling unit would be eliminated in all districts except for the low- and medium-density residence districts: R1, R2, R3, and R4. This amendment would add flexibility and would eliminate a built-in disincentive to incorporate smaller dwelling units into multi-family developments. Nothing in this amendment will allow additional building height or bulk in any zoning district.
- 11) The Trap-Neuter-Return ordinance I authored has passed the Council unanimously. The purpose of this ordinance is to humanely and effectively reduce the populations of feral cats in Minneapolis by partnering with nonprofits that spay or neuter feral cats and return them to their environments.
- 12) On August 21 the Council's Public Safety Civil Rights and Health committee received its first report on the newly formed Office of Police Conduct Review that has replaced the Police Civilian Review Authority that used to review citizen complaints about Police conduct. I was troubled to learn that of the over 400 complaints, and 71 dealing with excessive force, only 17 were found to have merit and not one resulted in the discipline of a police officer.
- 13) There are openings on the Arts Commission, Animal Care and Control Advisory Board, Disability Advisory Committee, Public Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, Workforce Council, Neighborhood & Community Engagement Commission, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Police Conduct Oversight Commission, Police Conduct Review Panel, Seniors Advisory Committee and Telecommunications Network. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov