



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 7-24-13

Cam's next Seward Office Hours:
Tuesday, August 27th, 9:30-11:00am
Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St

Items:

- 1) Energy Options Public Hearing
- 2) Franklin Avenue Bridge Rehabilitation
- 3) Climate Action Plan
- 4) Energy Pathways Study
- 5) CenterPoint Agrees to Clean Energy MOU
- 6) Development in Downtown East
- 7) Voter Ambassadors Needed
- 8) CenterPoint Work in Seward
- 9) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) On The City Council will hold a public hearing on **August 1** to discuss placing a question on this fall's general election ballot regarding the City's energy future. If passed by the voters of Minneapolis, this question will authorize the City to form a municipal power utility. I view this as a necessary step to meeting the City's aggressive climate change mitigation goals. Approximately two-thirds of the greenhouse gas emissions in Minneapolis come through our existing electricity and natural gas utilities. A vote to authorize the creation of a municipal utility will not require the City to form one, but will give us that option – which I think will help in the ongoing electrical and natural gas franchise negotiations with Xcel.
- 2) Hennepin County is planning to substantially renovate the Franklin Avenue Bridge. The design process has begun, and designs have been presented to the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees. There are currently two layouts, one with buffered bike lanes and one with a physically-protected bikeway, which is favored by the Bicycle Advisory Committee. The protected bikeway option will include a new way for westbound bicyclists to turn south onto Seabury and West River Pkwy, something that has been needed for a long time. In both designs, the bridge will have one auto lane in each direction except at the east end, where it will widen to two lanes in each direction for the intersection with East River Pkwy and 27th Ave SE. The bridge is on the National Historic Register, and this project will have to protect and even enhance the historic character of the bridge (for instance, by putting in railings more similar to the originals than the ones installed in the 1970s). The County will be reaching out to the Prospect Park and Seward neighborhoods for an introductory community meeting in the next few months, and I encourage you to stay informed.
- 3) The Council has unanimously passed the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan (www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/climate). The Plan, subtitled "a roadmap to reducing citywide greenhouse gas emissions," offers goals and potential strategies to help achieve a 15 percent reduction in emissions by 2015 and a 30 percent reduction by 2025 from 2006 levels. The strategies are grouped into four categories: improving the energy efficiency; increasing our use of local, renewable energy; reducing vehicle miles traveled in Minneapolis and reducing waste. This plan is a great step in the right direction and I look forward to helping implement many of its ideas and strategies.
- 4) The City Council has approved hiring the Center for Energy and Environment to draft a report that explores the various paths the City could take to achieve its energy goals, including examination of potential utility partnerships, changes to how the City uses energy utility franchise fees, and municipalization of one or both energy utilities. The Center for Energy and Environment is charged with drafting "energy vision" goals and an overview of the various paths the City could take to achieve them. More information can be found at www.minneapolismn.gov/energyfranchise.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email

Ahmed.Muhumud@minneapolismn.gov

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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.

- 5) Yesterday, as a result of the great work of the Minneapolis Energy Options campaign, the Council's decision to hold a public hearing on creating municipal energy utilities, and CenterPoint Energy's willingness to come to the table, CenterPoint and MEO revealed a list of very significant commitments from the utility that will help Minneapolis meet our energy goals. These include:
- CenterPoint Energy has committed to pursue the City's goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2025 and to assist all of its customers in reducing their energy consumption and the associated greenhouse gas emissions,
 - On-bill financing for residential energy efficiency investments,
 - A pilot comprehensive residential retrofit program featuring "hand holding" to identify potential energy-saving measures, assist customers with decision-making regarding implementation and contractor selection, and quality assurance inspections, possibly including a bulk contracting component,
 - A comprehensive multifamily retrofit program,
 - A study of energy savings potential and energy program participation specifically within the City of Minneapolis,
 - CenterPoint Energy's support for state data privacy and disclosure policies that facilitate the use of customer energy usage data for purposes of tracking consumption against goals and encouraging greater conservation,
 - Combined Heat and Power, which offers significant energy savings at a system level where there are both electric and thermal requirements but which is not currently well-incorporated into state policy,
 - Renewable energy technologies such as solar thermal and biogas,
 - Reporting to the City about the amount of natural gas leakage in the CenterPoint distribution system and the steps taken to address methane leakage on an annual basis, and information from CenterPoint's natural gas suppliers. (This is important because methane is more than 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas.)
 - CenterPoint will work to meet the City's goals for hiring a more diverse workforce that better reflects the communities in Minneapolis.

I view this as a major achievement. Essentially, through its great organizing, the Minneapolis Energy Options campaign has convinced CenterPoint to start negotiations with the City over our franchise agreement next year with this list of very important commitments to clean energy and a fair economy. I thank both the campaign and the utility for their willingness to work together for a cleaner energy future for our city.

- 6) The City Council is poised to approve a framework and direct staff to negotiate terms based on it (here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-110756.pdf>) for participation in a large 5 block, development project near the Stadium in Downtown East. The blocks, currently owned by the Stair Tribune, currently consist of surface parking lots and three buildings. Ryan Companies is proposing to buy the land and construct one million square feet of office space in two 20-story office towers, a parking ramp of approximately 1,300 stalls approximately 320 housing units, approximately 40,000 square feet of retail space and a one –two block public park. City participation would include assuming a \$65 million dollar debt to help Ryan pay for the parking ramp and to purchase the park land from them. The debt would be paid back from parking fees. My amendment to force the developer to pay fair market value for the third of the land that they wanted to lock in at current prices passed the Council unanimously.
- 7) The City is looking for volunteers to work in the community to raise awareness and engage voters about the election in November. Voter ambassadors will create a network of community volunteers who will provide resources and information about this year's election directly to their neighborhoods and civic circles. Ambassadors will be trained in election law fundamentals, voting procedures, and how ranked-choice voting works. Anyone interested in volunteering for this program should contact the program coordinator, Anissa Hollingshead by at anissa.hollingshead@minneapolismn.gov.
- 8) This summer, Centerpoint Energy is replacing a natural gas main on the West Bank and in Seward. They are installing 1.4 miles of new steel pipe under 19th Ave S from the 10th Ave Bridge to I-94, and 20th Ave S down to Franklin. Work is planned to occur until August. After construction, streets, sidewalks, boulevards and lawns will be restored to their original condition, typically within five to seven business days after construction is completed. You can find out more on the Second Ward Blog or at Centerpoint's construction website: www.centerpointenergy.com/community/inthecommunity/constructionzone/MN/. If you have particular questions or concerns, you can contact Centerpoint's Construction Activity Information Hotline at 612-321-5329. For restoration inquires, call 612-321-5042. Area Manager Kevin Joyce is available at 612-861-8572.
- 9) Applications are now being accepted for open positions on the following City boards and commissions: Animal Care and Control Advisory Board, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Minneapolis Workforce Council, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Police Conduct Oversight Commission, Police Conduct Review Panel, Seniors Advisory Committee and Telecommunications Network. For a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions, go to www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings.