



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

Cam Gordon
City Council Member
Second Ward

350 South 5th Street - Room
301M
Minneapolis MN 55415

Office 612-673-2202
Fax 612-673-3250
Cell 612-296-0579

cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ward2>

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Longfellow, 10-16-13

Cam's next Cooper/Seward Office Hours:
Tuesday, October 22nd, 9:30-11:00am
Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St

Items:

- 1) Minnehaha Avenue Reconstruction
- 2) Trap-Neuter-Return Ordinance
- 3) Municipal election – Vote November 5th
- 4) Help Water Trees
- 5) More Minneapolis Residents Biking and Walking
- 6) Community Solar Filing
- 7) Power Breed Policy
- 8) One Minneapolis One Read
- 9) Responsible Banking Ordinance
- 10) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Hennepin County has decided to move forward with a bike lane design for Minnehaha Avenue. At this point, I am not prepared to vote for municipal consent for this project, because the County has not done an even-handed comparison between the bike lane layout and a protected bikeway layout. The last protected bikeway layout presented to the public includes the unnecessary removal of around fifty trees and fifty parking spaces. Given the reactions at all three public meetings that have occurred so far – all of which I or my staff have attended – and the petitions that have been signed by almost a thousand Minnehaha road users, it is clear to me that there is strong public desire for a cycletrack and strong public concern about tree and parking loss. It is clear to me that County staff decided early in this process that they would not support a protected bikeway, and nothing that has happened since has had any appreciable effect on that position. You can read more on the second ward blog.
- 2) The Trap-Neuter-Return ordinance I authored unanimously passed the Council. 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.
- 3) I have been asked by many constituents for more information about the upcoming municipal election. There are some good resources for people looking to do more research about candidates, especially for mayor. Minneapolis E-Democracy has compiled a list of all of the candidates running for office in Minneapolis, along with links to their contact information, their websites and other information about them, which you can find here: http://pages.e-democracy.org/Minneapolis_elections. Our local Second Ward community radio station, KFAI, has recorded interviews with many, if not all, of the 35 candidates available at their website, <http://kfai.org/news/62>. Additionally there are several mayoral forums coming up including:
 - Oct. 17 – 7-8:30pm – Minneapolis American Indian Mayoral Forum - NACDI, 1414 East Franklin Ave.
 - Oct. 23 – 7-8:30pm – Urban Ag Forum – Sabathani Community Center, 310 E 38th St # 200,
 - Oct. 24 – 10am-Noon – Public Housing Forum – Details TBD
 - Oct. 29 – 7:30-9pm – WCCO Radio Forum – Details TBD
 - Oct. 30 – Time TBD - Theater of Public Policy Forum - Bryant Lake Bowl, 810 W. Lake St.
 - Nov. 1 – Noon - MPR Forum - Westminster Presbyterian Church on Nicollet Mall in downtown

For more information you can also check out: www.southwestjournal.com/elections/calendar

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

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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.

- 4) 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.
- 5) 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.
- 6) Xcel Energy has complied with the state law that requires them to put in place a community solar program by filing their proposed plan with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission just before the September 30 deadline. Community solar is a program that allows people to invest in and benefit from solar panels that are not on their own property. The idea is to allow, for example, homeowners with shady yards to partner with nearby commercial property owners on solar installations, and pay off that investment over time. Unfortunately, Xcel's community solar plan leaves much to be desired. I plan on working on a response to this unimpressive filing by Xcel with City sustainability staff, solar industry experts and my colleagues.
- 7) The Council has unanimously adopted a new policy on adopting large, and so called "power breed," dogs. This represents a large number of dogs that we take in like pit bulls and Rottweilers. When implemented later next year, it will allow Animal Care and Control to adopt out more of these dogs to good homes if they pass a behavioral assessment. This policy is likely to substantially reduce the number of dogs euthanized by the City, as 45% of dogs euthanized last year belonged to power breeds. The Council will have to increase the funding for Animal Care and Control by about \$50,000 per year to pay for the behavioral assessments, but we may also save money in the long term by not having to house as many dogs for as long a time. I was very supportive of this policy change, and appreciate the focus by Animal Care and Control on reducing the number of animals they put down each year.
- 8) This year's One Minneapolis One Read book is "A Choice of Weapons" by Gordon Parks. Parks, a photographer for Life magazine, writer, composer, artist, and filmmaker, was 16 when he moved from Kansas to Saint Paul, Minnesota in 1928. See www.oneminneapolisonearead.com for more One Minneapolis One Read information and events.
- 9) The Council has approved Member Glidden's changes to the City's responsible banking ordinance that require financial institutions that provide banking services to the City to publicly disclose an expanded set of information about their lending practices and policies each year. The newly expanded ordinance will create greater transparency and allow the public a clearer view of how banks that handle public dollars operate in our community. The Council can also use the information when selecting financial service providers. The ordinance requires financial institutions to publicly share information by July 1 of each year on loan modifications and foreclosures on residential mortgages on properties located within the city, as well as numbers and amounts of loans given to small businesses, among other data. Commercial banks that provide banking services will also be required to file a Community Reinvestment Plan every two years that describes current and proposed initiatives to address the financial needs of the city and its residents and businesses. Minneapolis is the tenth city in the country to adopt a responsible banking ordinance. I supported this and will be very interested in seeing how we will use it to help us do a better job of holding financial institutions accountable.
- 10) 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.