



**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 612-673-3940  
Cell 612-296-0579  
TTY 612-673-2157

[cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov)

[www.minneapolismn.gov/ward2](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ward2)

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](mailto:Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)

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;

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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, 4-1-14

Cam's next Como Office Hours: Thursday, 4-10-14  
Muddsuckers Coffee, 1500 Como Ave SE

### Items:

- 1) Livability Forum April 17<sup>th</sup>
- 2) Environmental Contamination Notification Ordinance
- 3) Como FairShare Garden
- 4) TCE Press and Partnerships
- 5) U to Get More Involved in Development
- 6) More Funding for Potholes
- 7) Zero Waste Forum
- 8) City Moves Closer to Organics Collection
- 9) City Goals
- 10) HomeLine
- 11) Ash Tree Replacement Public Meetings
- 12) Rain Garden Workshops
- 13) Boulevard Planting Ordinance
- 14) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) I invite you to join me on Thursday, April 17, at 5pm at Van Cleve Park, for a conversation hosted by the University District Alliance Livability Committee with the new Minneapolis Regulatory Services Director, Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde and colleagues, to learn about new directions in the department and discuss partnerships to improve the quality of life in the U-area neighborhoods.
- 2) The Council has unanimously approved my ordinance revision that will require landlords notify their tenants of known environmental contamination. This was originally drafted to deal with the arsenic contamination site in south Minneapolis, but will now be a citywide requirement, due to the ongoing trichloroethylene contamination problem in Southeast Como.
- 3) I was excited to learn this month that the FairShare Como garden program is looking to expand in southeast Minneapolis. They have applied for a Community-Driven Healthy Living grant from the Minneapolis Health Department. Three grant recipients will be announced in April. FairShare is unique because of its communal plot organization.
- 4) I was glad to join with the U of M's Minnesota Student Association and Southeast Como Improvement Association at a press conference last month calling for more research and more efforts to address the concerns of the toxic vapor intrusion in the neighborhood. I am also delighted to report that the University has created an option within its Master of Public Health program to help research this issue. Special thanks to the University District Alliance, Jan Morlock and faculty advisors Elizabeth (Betsy) Wattenberg and Peter Raynor, both in Environmental Health Sciences in the School of Public Health, for making this possible.
- 5) I have both hopes and concerns about comments in the University of Minnesota President's state of the University speech. You can find the speech here <http://www1.umn.edu/president/speeches-and-writing/state-of-university-2014/>. In it he outlined a "City Strategy" and stated that there is a "compelling need to be a more engaged institutional citizen and partner with the City of Minneapolis and our neighborhoods. For too long, we at the University have seemed not to care about development surrounding our Minneapolis campus..." and revealed plans to draft a set of guiding principles for working with the City and area neighborhoods. I am hopeful that the table we have worked so hard to set for these discussion at the University District Alliance will be seen as the place through which to develop these principles and the more engaged partnership the president and I believe the community is seeking.
- 6) In response to the intense weather this winter and damage to our streets the Council is poised to vote to reallocate \$1,000,000 from the Contingency Fund for the purpose of providing additional resources to perform an accelerated level of pothole patching in 2014.

- 7) Along with the Mayor, several of my Council colleagues and Congressman Keith Ellison, I co-hosted a Zero Waste forum on March 20<sup>th</sup>, at Walker Church. There we learned more about San Francisco's program, waste reduction legislative efforts of Representative Frank Hornstein, the connection between Zero Waste and Climate Change from Ward 2's own Shalani Gupta and about the role of composting from Russ Henry, co-chair of the Minneapolis Homegrown Food Council. Following the forum the Mayor unveiled her plan to hire a special Zero Waste coordinator to work out of her office. I support this and I am excited to see this conversation getting started. I look forward to focusing more on this effort in the months ahead.
- 8) The Council has received a report from our Solid Waste and Recycling staff on the processes and policy decisions the Council will have to make in order to move forward with citywide collection of source-separated organics. You can read the report here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-122108.pdf>. Staff's recommendation is that if we move forward with a citywide program, that would be paid for by all utility ratepayers (at a cost of \$2.38- \$3.25 per dwelling unit per month), should be opt-in for participants (meaning that residents would have to contact the City to get an organics cart), and that we should collect organics *not* commingled with yard waste. The upfront cost of the program will be at least \$5 million to pay for additional trucks, support facilities, and carts. The ongoing cost will be at least \$3.5 million per year, less the \$80,000 in annual savings from tip fees at the garbage burner. I looking to ensure that we will build a more robust education and outreach program into this effort, because I think that's what it will take to be successful. I'm also interested in exploring whether the City should give an organics cart to all customers from the start. The Council will hold a Study Session on this issue in the next month or so. I am enthusiastically supportive of putting this new program in place, and will push for the City to build the best program we can and roll it out as soon as possible.
- 9) On March 29th the City Council formally adopted a vision and a set of values, goals and strategic directions to guide our work for the next four years. The vision statement is "Minneapolis is a growing and vibrant world-class city with a flourishing economy and a pristine environment, where all people are safe, healthy and have equitable opportunities for success and happiness." The values state that we will be a city of Equity, Safety, Health, Vitality, Connectedness and Growth; and that we work by Innovating and being creative; Driving toward results; Engaging the community; Showing employees they are valued; Building public trust; and Collaborating. The five new goals are: Living well: Minneapolis is safe and livable and has an active and connected way of life; One Minneapolis: Disparities are eliminated so all Minneapolis residents can participate and prosper; A hub of economic activity and innovation: Businesses, big and small, start, move, stay and grow here; Great places: Natural and built spaces work together and our environment is protected; and, A City that works: City government runs well and connects to the community it serves. The Council also voted to develop measures for theses and directed staff to report at least annually on progress and seek stakeholder and community perspective on measures, progress and implementation. You can find more at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/citygoals/index.htm>
- 10) A widely respected nonprofit organization providing free legal, organizing, educational and advocacy services to tenants throughout Minnesota is finally expanding their service to Minneapolis residents. Beginning in April, renters in Minneapolis can use Home Line's free service to get help with any rental issue, learn more about renters' rights, or receive free legal advice by emailing Home Line attorneys at [homelinemn.org](http://homelinemn.org) or by calling their free Tenant Hotline at 612.728.5767. Learn more at [homelinemn.org](http://homelinemn.org).
- 11) The Park Board is holding meetings to share its Ash Canopy Replacement Plan. The Board has partnered with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to safely detect and remove EAB-infested trees and has plans in place to aggressively plant trees to help offset the significant loss of the roughly 40,000 public ash trees that will be lost over the next 8 years. This year they plan to remove 5,000 ash trees from parks and boulevards. There is one more meeting, on Thursday, April 3rd – 6:30-8pm – Nokomis Community Center.
- 12) Metro Blooms is offering workshops about maintaining a healthy yard with expert help to put "rain gardening" in the hands of gardeners and non-gardeners alike. For more information and to register, go to [www.myraingarden.org](http://www.myraingarden.org) or call 651-699-2426.
- 13) The city Council has approved an ordinance amendment that allows more types of plants to be grown within boulevards, including fruits and vegetables, that were previously prohibited, provided they fall within certain safety parameters. It also clarifies that Department of Regulatory Services has the authority to enforce violations pursuant to established administrative processes.
- 14) Applications are now being accepted for a number of open board and commission positions that the City Council and mayor will appoint this spring. There are more than 40 open positions on the following six City boards and commissions: Civil Rights Commission; Bicycle Advisory Committee; Workforce Council; Public Health Advisory Committee; Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission; Pedestrian Advisory Committee; Applications will be reviewed beginning April 25, but the positions are open until filled. Visit the City's website for a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions.