

Second Ward April 2014 E-newsletter

News from Cam Gordon

Council Member, Second Ward

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

**American Indian Month.** Please join me in celebrating and honoring American Indian Month this May. A parade on **May 1** will kick off the month of celebrating the American Indian community. The public is invited and encouraged to attend the kick-off day events. The opening ceremony starts at 10am at Cedar Field, Little Earth of United Tribes, Cedar Avenue and 25th Street. For more information about events throughout the month visit <https://www.facebook.com/AmerIndMonthMpls>

**Indigenous Peoples Day Resolution.** I was proud to assist with and coauthor Council Member Alondra Cano's resolution to change Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day in Minneapolis. I see this move as building on the groundwork laid in the Year of the Dakota resolution from 2012 and a small step in the long path of healing that we need to do as a community and as a country.

**Minneapolis Bike Week.** Minneapolis Bike Week is a weeklong series of events and activities from **May 4** through **May 11** promoting all types of bicycling with a focus on encouraging those who do not normally ride to give it a try. Minneapolis Bike Week will showcase the ease, simplicity and enjoyment of going places by bike. Events and activities include group rides with City Council Members, classes, commuter pit stops, free breakfasts, celebration locations and much more. Whether commuting, getting in your workout, or just cruising around the neighborhood, Bike Week is a great opportunity to get out riding. Plus, we'll make it easy with fun events and activities. Check out [mplsbikeweek.org](http://mplsbikeweek.org) for more information. I will be biking from southwest Minneapolis to the downtown celebration on **May 8<sup>th</sup>**, and my Policy Aide Robin Garwood will be joining Council Member Andrew Johnson for a ride from south Minneapolis, leaving Peace Coffee at 3262 Minnehaha Ave at 7:15am. For more details, go to <http://www.mpls bikeweek.org/bike-to-work-day/>.

**Open Houses for Bike Plans.** Join the City and Hennepin County to provide input and get an update on the county-wide bike plan and the City's protected bikeway plan on **Thursday, May 8**, from 4:30-7:30pm, at the Minneapolis Central Library. Find more information about the Hennepin County bike plan at [www.hennepin.us/bikeplan](http://www.hennepin.us/bikeplan). Find more information about the City of Minneapolis projected bikeway plan at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles/projects/WCMS1P-123828>. The Minnesota Department of Transportation is also holding a public meeting about their Statewide Bicycle System Plan on Thursday, **May 15**, at the U of M Urban Research and Outreach Engagement Center (UROC), 2001 Plymouth Ave N. There will be a structured workshop from 4-6pm, and a community open house from 6-7pm.

**Long Term Greenhouse Gas Goal.** The Council has adopted a new long-term carbon emission reduction goal for the City of Minneapolis: we will strive to reduce carbon emissions by **80% or more** by 2050, from a 2006 baseline. This is in line with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommendations and the 2050 goals already adopted by the State of Minnesota and Hennepin County, and was recommended by the City's Sustainability staff and the Community Environmental Advisory Committee. The work to draft this recommendation was in response to a staff direction I made back in February of this year. I enthusiastically support setting this goal, and hope that we can push well past reaching it. However, we need to be clear that this is a very aggressive goal. Reaching it will require a fundamental transformation of the way we use energy in buildings, in our transportation system, and how we deal with waste.

**Energy Pathways at the PUC.** Along with staff from the Center for Energy and the Environment, I presented the City's Energy Pathways Study to the Public Utilities Commission on **Tuesday, April 29th**. This was a good opportunity to share the results of this study with the PUC, to continue laying the groundwork for a partnership between the City and our energy utility partners, Xcel and Centerpoint. These partnerships will enable the City and the utilities to reach the City's Energy Vision laid out in the Pathways Study, which in turn will help us achieve our carbon reduction goals (a 15% reduction by 2015, a 30% reduction by 2025, and now an 80% reduction by 2050). These goals are in keeping with the State and PUC's own goals for energy use.

**Mobile Grocery Store Public Hearing.** The Council's Community Development and Regulatory Services committee will hold a public hearing on my proposed amendments to the Mobile Grocery Store ordinance on **Tuesday, May 13**, at 1:30pm. The intent of this ordinance is to allow mobile grocery stores to operate in more places in Minneapolis. Right now, they can only operate in the parking lots of "senior highrise buildings." If passed, my amendments will allow these businesses to operate in the parking lots of any high-density residential building, and any commercial or industrial building, with the permission of the property owner. The mobile grocery stores will have to exceed the current staple food requirements for fresh fruits and vegetables, and won't be allowed to operate closer than 100 feet to existing brick-and-mortar grocery stores or farmers markets. There are currently four businesses and nonprofits that are interested in operating mobile grocery stores in Minneapolis, including Honeybee Mobile Market (<http://www.honeybeemobilemarket.com/>). This ordinance has the support of the Minneapolis Food Council, because it will help increase access to healthy foods in all parts of the city.

**Racial Equity Policy.** On April 30, the Council's Public Safety, Civil Rights and Emergency Management took the next steps in moving forward the City's work on racial equity. We received a great report from the City's Civil Rights Director, Velma Korbel, on the status of the Racial Equity Toolkit, which is aimed at improving the equity of the City's workforce. We also passed a set of staff directions I authored, for staff to conduct a racial equity Study Session by the end of June, report back to committee on the continued development of the racial equity framework by June 23' and analyze budget impacts for implementation of the Racial Equity Framework, and ensure budget requests for 2015 are forward to the Mayor's and the City Council for inclusion in the 2015 budget process. Most excitingly, the committee created a Racial Equity Policy Workgroup convened and chaired by the Mayor and including me, Council Vice President Elizabeth Glidden, Council Member Blong Yang, and department heads and staff, to assist in ongoing oversight of the development of the Racial Equity Framework, as well as to develop tools appropriate for use by the City Council and Mayor to view policy decisions through a racial equity lens.

**ThriveMSP 2040.** The City has adopted a strong, comprehensive set of comments on the Met Council's ThriveMSP 2040 planning process. This process will result in a plan that the City's Comprehensive Plan and all of the plans from our surrounding communities will be based on. Our comments include a focus on housing, transportation, parks, water resource management, sustainability and climate change, economic development, and growth. You can read the City's comments here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-123431.pdf>. More information on ThriveMSP is available here: <http://www.metrocouncil.org/Planning/Projects/Thrive-2040.aspx>.

**Screening of "Fed Up."** I will be participating in a panel discussion on Monday, May 5, for the new documentary "Fed Up," which tackles food guidelines and the impact of the industrial agriculture system on health. The film screening is from 6:30-8pm, and the discussion is from 8-9pm. Find out more about the film at <http://fedupmovie.com/>. Other panelists include Robert Lustig, Author, Fat Chance and Professor,

Department of Pediatric Endocrinology, University of California, San Francisco; Zoe Finch Totten, Founder and CEO, The Full Yield; and moderator Ricardo Salvador, Director of Food and Environment Program, Union of Concerned Scientists. This is part of larger multi-day forum you can find out about here: <http://www.ucsusa.org/center-for-science-and-democracy/events/science-democracy-and-a-healthy-food-policy.html>. The May 5 screening and panel discussion is a special event associated with the forum that will take place at St. Anthony Main Theater, 115 SE Main, Minneapolis, MN 5541. I hope to see you there.

**Funding for Trees.** When the City Tree Advisory Committee's annual report came to the Health, Environment and Community Engagement committee we learned that the Emerald Ash Borer infestation continue to pose a major threat to our tree canopy with an estimated 38,000 public ash trees and another estimated 175,000 ash trees on private property expected to die in the next 5 years. The committee directed the Tree Advisory Committee to recommend uses for \$443,140.34 in City funds that have previously been allocated to tree planting for public property. The aim is for the TAC to present their recommendations in June.

**Environmentally Acceptable Packaging Ordinance.** On **May 12**, the Health, Environment and Community Engagement committee will hold a public hearing on the proposed changes to the City's Environmentally Acceptable Packaging ordinance introduced by Council Member Andrew Johnson. This ordinance has been on the books since the late 1980s, but was weakened in the early 1990s. The proposal is to return the ordinance to its original strength by prohibiting non-recyclable takeout containers from restaurants. Instead, restaurants can use recyclable plastic containers, or compostable paper or plastic containers. I am very supportive of this ordinance, which my staff helped CM Andrew Johnson's staff and our Health Department to craft. I see this as one action that, along with many others, will allow the city to reach our zero waste goals.

**Organics Collection.** The Council held a study session on organics collection on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Given what I heard at the study session, I am confident that we are moving towards collecting source-separated organics from all 1-4 unit dwellings in Minneapolis. I am enthusiastically supportive of this program, and will push for us to roll it out as soon and as effectively as possible.

**Bikeways for Everyone Kickoff Event.** The Bikeways for Everyone campaign – which aims to help the City reach our goal of building 30 new miles of protected bikeways by 2020 – had a kickoff event on Tuesday, April 29. For more information, go to <http://bikewaysforeveryone.org/recent-developments/posts/bikeways-for-everyone-kick-off-event/>.

**Spring Street Sweeping.** Spring street cleaning is now underway. Please help your friends, neighbors and customers look for the posted signs to avoid a ticket or tow – and help the City get the winter accumulation of sand and debris off of our streets and out of our waterways. Go to [www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/streetsweeping](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/streetsweeping) and click on “street sweeping schedule lookup,” to find out which week a street is scheduled to be swept. Street sweeping is explained in English, Hmong, Somali and Spanish as part of the City's “Did you know...” series of short videos that can be viewed at [www.YouTube.com/cityofminneapolis](http://www.YouTube.com/cityofminneapolis) and on City cable channels 14 and 79. Residents who have friends or neighbors who speak these languages are encouraged to share links to the videos.

**Development Services Open House.** On **Wednesday, April 30th** from 3:30-6:30pm, the City's Development Services Customer Services Center will hold an open house. It will be kicked off by remarks by Mayor Hodges and Development Services Director Doug Kress, and will include free informational seminars on topics like “Building a Deck – What do you need from the City?,” “Zoning 101,” “Healthy Home

Environments,” “Home Business Licensing 101,” “Green Initiatives – green Roofs, rain barrels, managing water runoff, and more,” “Homeowners guide to permitting – which remodeling projects need permits?” Find out more at: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/mdr/Spring%20Open%20House%202014>.

**Yard waste pickup.** Yard waste pickup has now begun for the year. Please remember that all bagged yard waste put out for collection must now be in compostable bags – either paper) bags or compostable plastic bags – or reusable containers. Anyone who prefers not to purchase compostable bags may place unbagged yard waste in a reusable container with sturdy handles. Other options include dropping off yard waste at a compost facility and taking the bag back home, or composting yard waste at home and using the nutrient-rich compost for gardens and lawns. For questions about leaf and brush pickup, call 612-673-2917 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday or visit [www.minneapolismn.gov/solid-waste/yardwaste](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/solid-waste/yardwaste)

**Bicycle safety.** With the weather warming up, more people will start taking to our streets and trails on bicycles. Whether you drive a car, ride a bicycle or do a little of both, safer streets start with each and every one of us. Data shows that bicyclists and drivers are equally responsible for bicycle crashes in Minneapolis. When you bike, remember to follow traffic laws and ride predictably. When you drive, remember to slow down and look for bicyclists, especially when turning. Bicycling in Minneapolis is getting safer. As more people have started riding, bicycle crashes have not increased. For more information on bicycling in Minneapolis, go to [www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles).

**Father Advocates Research Grant.** The City has received a three-year federal grant for more than \$871,000 to study the benefits of Father Advocates who help provide services to expectant and new fathers. The idea is to study the impacts that these sorts of programs have on child and maternal health. I see this as a great opportunity to get good information on something that sounds like a great idea for improving health.

**Pollinator Bills.** The Minnesota House has passed a bill that will help protect pollinators by ensuring that “pollinator safe” labeling is accurate and creating a mechanism to compensate beekeepers for bee deaths that occur as a result of pesticide applications. The City of Minneapolis supported this work through our legislative agenda. If you support protecting pollinators, please contact your state senator to encourage them to vote for this bill. Thanks to Representative Jean Wagenius and Senator Kari Dziedzic for working on this important issue.

**2320 Colfax Ave S.** I voted with a large Council majority (11 to 2) to allow the demolition of the rooming house at 2320 Colfax in Ward 10. This was a difficult decision, so I wanted to take the time to explain my vote. I want to be clear that this was not a case of the City tearing down this structure, but of the City having to decide whether to restrict the private property owner from tearing down the structure he owns. The key question for me in this case was whether this house meets the standards in the ordinance for a historic landmark. The [analysis](#) of our professional Historic Preservation staff was that it does not. It has lost its integrity as a historic resource due to three fires, substantial rebuilding, loss of original windows and siding and more. Given that analysis, I did not see a compelling reason for the City to restrict the property owner’s rights. I also want to add that some of the rhetoric that was used by opponents of demolition of this house – especially towards my colleague Lisa Bender, the Council Member from Ward 10 – was simply unacceptable. I realize that emotions run high on issues of preservation and development, but that is no excuse for the sort of personal attacks and vitriol that were leveled at Council Member Bender. I hope that the very clear majority on this vote will help folks recognize that using this sort of rhetoric is not actually helpful to one’s cause.

**Somali American Day.** The Council has unanimously passed a resolution declaring July 1st “Somali American Day” in Minneapolis. I was delighted to support this resolution introduced by my colleague Council Member Warsame.

**Electronic Ridesharing Public Hearing.** There will be a public hearing on Council Member Frey’s ordinance to license electronic rideshare or “peer-to-peer” services on Tuesday, April 29th, sometime after 1:30pm. I continue to support this ordinance in concept. The City of Minneapolis should regulate electronic ridesharing companies as what they are, not attempt to regulate them as taxicabs. While there are aspects of the taxi ordinance that will not be applied to companies like Uber and Lyft, they are also not afforded some of the benefits the City makes available to taxis, like the use of taxi stands and the ability to accept street hails. From what I have seen so far, Council Member Frey’s ordinance does a good job of establishing a careful regulatory framework – including insurance requirements, background checks for drivers and more – while allowing electronic rideshare companies to exist in our city. Minneapolis is, at this time, the only city in the Twin Cities metro that has not allowed electronic rideshare companies to operate.

**Youth Violence Prevention Week.** As part of National Youth Violence Prevention Week, April 7-13, the City recognized 11 local adults and students who are making a difference to address youth violence and foster community peace in Minneapolis schools. The Peacemaker award recipients are **Khadra Ibrahim, Kyra B. Hood, Larry McKenzie** and **Rebecca Stewart**. I want to thank all of them for their efforts to make our city a more peaceful, safer place. National Youth Violence Prevention Week is part a national public education initiative featuring activities and events to call attention to the issue of youth violence, identify strategies to combat this public health epidemic, and promote the positive role youth and adults can have in making their communities and schools safer.

**Tornado Sirens.** The City has installed 42 tornado sirens to replace 30 sirens that were installed back in the 1950s and ‘60s. The new versions have a battery backup, so that they will function even if the power goes out. You can read more here: <http://www.startribune.com/local/minneapolis/256370111.html>. I want to thank Emergency Management Director Barrett Lane for his work to make this possible.

**Free Training for Building Energy Use Reporting.** Owners and managers of commercial buildings 50,000 square feet and larger are invited to free workshops **April 24** and **May 6**. These workshops will include information about the new energy reporting ordinance, help with reporting energy use through Energy Star Portfolio Manager, and put building owners and managers in touch with resources to make improvements. While managers of buildings between 50,000 and 100,000 square feet are not required to report their buildings’ energy and water use until June 1, 2015, they can learn how to do the reporting now and get a head start on tracking. Measuring energy use helps building owners understand and compare their energy use while finding ways to save energy and money. The free workshops are being offered by the Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) through assistance from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Space is limited. Register now at <http://buildingdisclosure-mpls.mncee.org>. For buildings 50,000-100,000 square feet, a program of retired professionals can help managers gather and input data and walk through the sign-up process for Portfolio Manager. The Minnesota [Retiree Environmental Technical Assistance Program](#) also helps building owners and managers examine energy use and recommends energy efficiency improvements. The City is also launching new [Web resources](#) and a help line.

**Plant an Extra Row.** The City is encouraging gardeners to help fight hunger by planting an extra row of produce at home or in a community garden to donate to neighborhood food shelves. The City of Minneapolis Health Department’s Healthy Food Shelf Network unites gardeners with food shelves to help get healthy food into everyone’s kitchens. In 2013 more than 114 gardeners donated 730 pounds of produce

to 17 Minneapolis food shelves. Health Department staff will attend upcoming events sponsored by the Local Food Resource Hubs (<http://www.gardeningmatters.org/hubs>) to encourage gardeners to plant an extra row for food shelf recipients. Anyone who commits to participating will receive a free pack of seeds and help connecting with his or her closest food shelf. To learn more about donating fresh produce and other healthy foods to food shelves in Minneapolis, visit [www.healthyfoodshelves.org](http://www.healthyfoodshelves.org).

**Health Commissioner Wins Award.** Minneapolis Health Commissioner Gretchen Musicant recently earned the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health's Gaylor W. Anderson Leadership Award. The school gives the annual award to alumni who serve as visionary leaders, teachers, collaborators and public health ambassadors in their communities. Award recipients must demonstrate intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and the ability to inspire others. Musicant has served as the Minneapolis Health Department's commissioner since 2005. I am proud to be able to work with Commissioner Musicant to make our city a healthy place to live, work and play.

**Public Health Heroes.** As part of National Public Health Week, the Minneapolis Health Department honored seven local public health heroes whose work exemplifies the goals of the Health Department and helps to raise awareness of the critical roles that public health and prevention play in making Minneapolis a healthier place to live, learn, work, and play. The recipients are the **24th Street Urban Farm Coalition, Kathleen Schuler** from Healthy Legacy, **Project for Pride in Living, Starnisha McClellan** and **Ron Brown** from Northpoint Health & Wellness Center, **Pillsbury Pedal Power, Will Wallace** from Emerge Community Development, and the **FATHER Project**. I congratulate the winners for receiving this honor, and thank them for making our city a healthier place.

**Stadium Area Group Grants Awarded.** The Stadium Area Advisory Group has approved its annual group of initiatives that will be funded this year. The Ward 2 projects approved include \$25,900 for Southeast Como Improvement Association to support Youth sports at Van Cleve Park, \$35,000 ("in-kind" donation from the Vikings) for the Stadium Village Commercial Association for marketing, \$15,000 for the Student Community Relations U of MN proposal to install outdoor lights on properties in the district, \$24,000 for the West Bank Business Association's community garden project and \$8,000 for the West Bank Community Coalition's youth academic enrichment and engagement project.

**"Complete Communities" in the University District.** Please join me for a forum with Gil Penalosa **Wednesday, May 7**, 8:00-9:30am, at the Weisman Art Museum. From creating open streets in Bogota, Colombia to "Doable Neighborhoods" in four Ontario cities, Gil Penalosa is an implementer and activist for a people-friendly public realm, with sustainable and healthy mobility. Called "the Pied Piper of Sustainable Transportation," Mr. Penalosa has influenced thousands through his TED talks and consultations with cities in North and South America. For registration and further details, go here: <http://www.eventbrite.com/e/complete-communities-in-the-university-district-a-forum-with-gil-penalosa-registration-11392121141>.

**County and Met Council Development Grants.** The city approved grant applications to Hennepin County and/or the Metropolitan Council for the following projects in and around Ward 2: a \$682,294 loan and a \$49,950 grant to support the Seward Commons Phase 3 apartment building development at 22nd Street South & Snelling Avenue South; a \$200,000 grant to support the Boeser Site multifamily housing project at for acquisition and installation of privately owned public infrastructure including plaza, landscaping, bike parking, lighting, and pedestrian improvements; \$300,000 for the Cedar Cultural Center at 416 Cedar Avenue South's acquisition and public space and streetscape improvements; and \$1,450,000 for Aeon's

project at 3001 4th St SE. Aeon is proposing to acquire the old Habitat for Humanity office building for redevelopment into 65 units of affordable rental housing.

**Double Homicide in Longfellow.** Tragically, two people were shot and killed in the greater Longfellow area in Arpil. The medical examiner's office identified the victims as Dahir Ahmed Abdirahman, 29, and Tahany Abdi Omar Erbob, 24. Our hearts go out to their families. They were found in a car parked in an apartment building parking lot near Lake St and 29th Ave S Friday April 12. The police believe that the shooting was not random, but so far there have been no arrests.

**Longfellow Market Opens.** The new, long anticipated, Longfellow Market grocery store has opened for business. Please join me in congratulating Joel Ahlstrom and welcoming this great new store, located at 3815 East Lake, to the area. It will help strengthen the commercial node at Lake and 39th, and by extension the whole Lake Street commercial corridor. I want to thank the community organization and Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development staff for the help they provided in getting this project to completion, and wish Joel and his employees success.

**Future of Downtown Discussion.** The public is invited to a panel discussion with internationally renowned urbanist Gil Penalosa about place-making and the future of downtown on **Wednesday, May 7** from 12:30 – 2 pm at the Brave New Workshop, 824 Hennepin Ave.

**Community Land Trust.** The City of Lakes Community Land Trust is holding a series of meetings on the opportunities they will be offering in the University District for people buying homes for the first time. The CLCLT can help households with incomes at 80% of the Twin Cities median buy homes, and can help keep homes owner-occupied and affordable in the long term. To find out more, come to the meeting on **Thursday, May 15**, from 4:30-5:30pm in room 2-228 of the Carlson School, 321 19<sup>th</sup> Ave S. For more information, see [clclt.org](http://clclt.org).

**New CLIC Appointee.** I have appointed Prospect Park resident **Lindsay Wollschlager** to a place on the City's Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC), which helps the Mayor and City Council prioritize capital and infrastructure investments. I want to thank Lindsay for her willingness to serve.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct Open House.** Please stop by the 3rd Police Precinct Open House on **Friday, May 16th** from 11am-2pm, at the precinct building at Minnehaha and East Lake St. There will be refreshments and information and displays from the bomb squad, canine unit, crime prevention specialists, community response team, fire department, mounted patrol, Sheriff's water patrol and SWAT team. I look forward to seeing you there.

**Inspection and Regulation Meeting with Lake Street.** The City's division of Business Licensing is partnering with the Lake Street Council on a meeting about how we can improve inspections and regulations in the City. The meeting will occur **Wednesday, May 14th**, from 2-4pm at the Sheraton Midtown Hotel at 2901 Chicago Ave S. For more information, call 822-0232, [asharkey@lakestreetcouncil.org](mailto:asharkey@lakestreetcouncil.org).

**1812 Franklin Ave SE.** The City is accepting public comment until May 22<sup>nd</sup> on a proposal to sell the City-owned parcel at 1812 Franklin Ave SE to the adjacent property owners. This is a narrow piece of land on the southeast corner of Franklin and Arthur Ave SE. If you have any comments about this land sale, call Rebecca Law at 673-5064, or email her at [rebecca.law@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:rebecca.law@minneapolismn.gov).

**New Home on 28<sup>th</sup> Ave S.** The property owner of 2508 28<sup>th</sup> Ave S is applying to demolish the existing structure and build a new single family home on the lot. I expect this to be approved by staff.

**Green Line Opening.** The Green Line LRT is opening on **June 14th**, and I'm excited to see that the West Bank has been chosen as one of nine sites for opening celebrations. It sounds like the West Bank Business Association and other stakeholders are doing a good job planning the event, with the support of the Met Council. I look forward to participating in this celebration of the West Bank's second LRT line.

**Cedar Avenue Sidewalks.** The Council has approved the funding and design for the Cedar Avenue sidewalk renovation and reconstruction. It also set a public hearing to be held **June 17, 2014** to consider the project and the abandonment and removal of areaways in conflict with the project. The sidewalks will be reconstructed along Cedar Ave S from approximately 3rd St S to 7th St S. This includes full removal and replacement of the west side curb, sidewalk on the east and west side of Cedar Ave, and striping of the roadway to the new configuration. This area has been identified by the city as a Pedestrian Priority Corridor and serves 1,470 pedestrians per day. So, I am especially glad to see this long awaited project coming forward and appreciate how the additional funding provided by the county and city will help keep assessments low to area property owners. While I recognize that there some concerns remain about the design and loss of some street width, these sidewalks have been in need of repair for decades and are unacceptably narrow in several places. I hope the concerns can be addressed and we can move forward to no more delays. New pedestrian level street lighting will also be included in the project and significant (over \$1.5 million) public funding will help offset the usual assessments to individual property owners. Construction is expected to be completed this summer or in early fall.

**SPOKES Used Bike Drive.** If you have an old bike or two cluttering up your garage, please consider bringing them to the SPOKES Bike/Walk Connect bike drive from **Saturday, May 3 to Saturday, May 10**. SPOKES is a Minneapolis biking community space and resource with a mission of growing a more informed and diverse population of bicyclists. Drop bikes off at 1915 East 22nd Street, and email [info@SpokesConnect.org](mailto:info@SpokesConnect.org) or call 612-787-RIDE for more information.

**Minnehaha Avenue Meeting.** The Longfellow Business Association will host Hennepin County and City of Minneapolis staff on **Thursday, May 8**, 1:30 – 3:00 pm, to present overview, staging and scheduling plans, and streetscaping options for the Minnehaha Avenue reconstruction project slated to begin in spring of 2015. The meeting will be held at Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church, 4101 37th Avenue S. For more information, contact Ruth at [ruth@longfellow.org](mailto:ruth@longfellow.org) or 612.722.4529 x10.

**Openings on Boards and Commissions.** Applications are now being accepted for a number of open board and commission positions that the City Council and mayor will appoint this spring. Board and commission members in the City of Minneapolis provide valuable insights, help shape key policy decisions and provide community-based input into administration of services. The City is seeking applicants with a diversity of backgrounds and experiences to strengthen the work of the City. 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 at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for more information.