

Second Ward May 2014 E-newsletter

News from Cam Gordon

Council Member, Second Ward

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

**Celebrate Older Americans Month this May.** On Monday, May 19th from 11a.m. – 1p.m. the City of Minneapolis' UCare Senior Skyway Center will be holding a celebration in recognition of Older Americans Month. The UCare Senior Skyway center is located at 950 Nicollet Mall Ste. 290. You can call 612-370-3869 or visit: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/seniors/ucare> for more information. To support and learn more about two outstanding organizations providing senior services in the Second Ward area contact the Seward Longfellow Healthy Seniors at <http://www.blocknurse.org/healthyseniors/> , or Southeast Seniors at <http://www.seseniorsmpls.org/>.

**Street Cleaning Alert.** Please be alert to avoid getting your vehicle ticketed and towed because of street cleaning. The street cleaners are now working in the Second Ward and everyone should be paying attention. The sign system is helpful but I recommend that people don't rely on it alone. Over the years we at the City have tried to provide lots of ways to keep track of the cleaning with the goal of getting all the streets clean and no car towed or ticketed. The online "look up Feature" where you can type in your address can be helpful and can be found here [http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/streetsweeping/streetsweep\\_streetsweeplookup](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/streetsweeping/streetsweep_streetsweeplookup)

**Mobile Grocery Store Ordinance Passes.** The mobile grocery store ordinance I authored has unanimously passed the Council. I view this as a significant step towards increasing access to healthy foods in Minneapolis, and look forward to seeing the first mobile grocery stores getting up and running this summer.

**Protected Bikeways Survey.** Please take the time to fill out this survey on where you think protected bikeways are needed by May 15: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SN63856>. A protected bikeway is a bicycle facility that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. Off-street trails are the most common type of protected bikeway; however, protected bikeways may also be located within street corridors and separated from traffic lanes through parked cars, curbs, medians, bollards/flexible traffic posts, planters or other vertical feature.

**Green Deconstruction Pilot.** On May 13 the Community Development and Regulatory Services committee approved a new Green Deconstruction Pilot Project with Better Futures Enterprises to pursue deconstruction on two City-owned properties. I am very supportive of this and see it as a step towards significantly reducing waste in the region. Deconstruction is the planned disassembly of buildings with the purpose of harvesting materials for reuse. A great deal of waste from demolition of building goes to landfills in the metropolitan area. Finding ways to deconstruct, rather than demolish, buildings that cannot be restored could dramatically reduce this. This pilot will help develop safe, cost effective techniques for deconstructing buildings, identify the best practices and procedures to most efficiently deconstruct a building and determine the costs of deconstruction in the Minneapolis. It will help us identify the total costs of deconstruction compared to demolition. The goals of the program are to reduce the amount of construction and demolition waste sent to landfills, provide green jobs for chronically unemployed adults, and help establish local marketplaces for selling reusable materials and new products developed from reclaimed materials. I enthusiastically support this effort and expect it to be approved by the full Council at our next meeting.

**All-Star Game Resolution.** I am glad that the City Council took another look at our resolution and agreement with Major League Baseball about how to manage the All Star game and so called “clean zones” in the city. On May 9th we passed a resolution clarifying out intent to fully honor and protect the basic rights of people in Minneapolis to assemble and engage in free speech and that, while we would confer with the All Star game organizers, we would keep all authority related to approving permits and events. Thanks to the American Civil Liberties Union for helping motivate the City Council to take another look at this. I hope this sets a precedent for future large events across the country to encourage local governments to work harder to protect the basic rights of its residents and to keep local control over its decision making authority. The resolution also shortened from 15 to 6 days when clean zones will be maintained, from July 10 to 16.

**Environmentally Acceptable Packaging Ordinance.** The Health Environment & Community Engagement has unanimously recommended approval of the amended packaging ordinance that Council Member Andrew Johnson has authored. I am a strong supporter of the changes being proposed that will help clarify and expand the definition of packaging to be closer to the intent of the 1989 ordinance. It now identifies recyclable materials (including the recycling number stamped on the packaging), and, for the first time, allows for compostable packaging. If approved by the full Council I expect that this will mean that polystyrene (EPS) containers will no longer be used as a food or beverage at any business serving food and beverages in Minneapolis I hope this is only the first step towards eliminating all food containers that contain chemicals that are harmful to human health and the environment and banning all packaging that is not reusable, returnable, recyclable or compostable.

**Minneapolis Parks Urban Agriculture Plan.** The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) has been working on a plan to support urban agriculture within the park system since last December. The final draft of the plan has now been submitted to the Board of Commissioners for approval. The public hearing is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 21<sup>st</sup>** at 6:30 pm before the Planning Committee of the Board. This plan will guide the MPRB in defining and prioritizing community needs, recommends service delivery goals and strategies, and will guide allocation of resources to support these activities within the neighborhood and regional parks. For more information see <http://www.minneapolisparcs.org/default.asp?PageID=1399>.

**Charter Change for Liquor Licenses.** The Charter Commission will conduct a public hearing on Wednesday, **June 4**, beginning at 4:30 p.m., for the purpose of soliciting comments concerning the proposed elimination of the requirement that 70% of sales are from food for some restaurants with liquor licenses in the Charter. This would leave regulation of these establishments to Ordinance, along with our other laws concerning bars and restaurants. The proposed amendment would also eliminate Charter restrictions on the ability to sell alcohol until after food has been purchased and limitations on the ability to have a bar area and leave these issues to Ordinance. Written comments may be sent to: Charter Commission Coordinator, Room 304 City Hall, 350 S 5th St, Minneapolis, MN 55415; or e-mailed to: [peggy.menshek@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:peggy.menshek@minneapolismn.gov). Written comments will be accepted up until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 3, 2014. The agenda for the June 6, 2014, Charter Commission meeting will be available at the following website one week prior to the meeting: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/charter>.

**City Ballot Filing Fee Increase.** The Charter Commission has proposed that the City Council consider amending the city charter, by unanimous vote, to raise the fee charged to run for office in Minneapolis. The amendment would allow a candidate’s name to appear on the ballot if the candidate files an affidavit of candidacy and either pays the required filing fee or submits a petition in place of the filing fee with the number of signatures for which the Minnesota election law provides, 500 or 5% of the number of people who voted for that office in the last election, whichever is less. The filing fee is currently \$20 for all races and

they are proposing that it be increased as follows: for Mayor, \$250; for Council member, \$100; for Board of Estimate & Taxation member, \$20 (no change); and for Park & Recreation commissioner, \$50. While I opposed a proposed increase that was higher than they sent us in December, I am inclined to support this when it comes to the Council. I expect the Intergovernmental Relations Committee to set a public hearing on this for **June 5**.

**Study of 2013 Storm Damaged Trees.** Last June 21, as many of you will recall, a powerful storm caused severe damage to many of the trees in the Second Ward, especially in the greater Longfellow and Seward areas. Concern for all the boulevard trees that were damaged prompted the City to ask the University of Minnesota, Department of Forest Resources' Urban Forestry Outreach, Research and Extension lab to investigate this to determine what if any pre-existing factors may have contributed to the rate of tree failures during this storm. The University has been documenting and analyzing wind storm damage to trees since 1995 and was well-poised to conduct this study. The major finding is that having sidewalk repair and replacement work done increased the odds of root failure and tipped trees by **2.24 times**. For example, when no replacement work was done, the average Linden had a 10.6% chance of root failure; this increased to 21.0% when replacement work was done. Tree species, when combined with replacement work, was also significant, with Linden most likely to fail, followed by Ash, Maple and Elm. Essentially, when replacement work was done near any one of these trees, the rate of failures more than doubled. Tree size was also related to failure rates, with wider trees more likely to fail. The boulevard width and soil compaction also played roles, especially when sidewalk replacement work was conducted. I expect that this study will be reported to the Transportation and Public Works committee, and will do what I can to use it to change our approach to sidewalk and utility work that might damage tree roots.

**Notable State Legislative Accomplishments.** I am glad to see that the state legislature has passed a number of bills I was supporting. Highlights include a raise in the minimum wage to \$9.50, indexed to inflation; a statutory definition for Farmers Markets that allows sampling with more reasonable sanitation standards; restrictions on gun possession for persons convicted of domestic violence offenses; protections for renters who must break a lease early due to safety reasons; the women's work equity bill; and the establishment of the Housing Opportunities Made Equitable (HOME) program that will provide resources and services to increase homeownership and improve rental housing for communities of color and American Indians. The bill expanding expungement of criminal records was also passed by both chambers and now awaits the Governor's approval. The bill allows expungement of certain records following post-discharge crime-free periods. The legislature has also passed a bill prohibiting soaps and cleaning products from containing triclosan, an action supported by the Minneapolis legislative agenda. I want to thank all of the members of the Minneapolis legislative delegation for their hard work to bring about these impressive accomplishments.

**Open Streets Coming This Summer.** Minneapolis will host six Open Streets events starting in June. During these events, streets will be closed to automobile traffic and opened to walkers, skaters, boarders and bikers. This promotes local businesses and more pedestrian- bike- and environmentally-friendly choices, and encourages more active, healthy lifestyles. Open Streets events this year include: **Saturday, May 31:** North Minneapolis Greenway Experience (Humboldt Avenue North and Girard Avenue North from Broadway Avenue to 42nd Avenue North); **Sunday, June 8:** Lyndale Avenue South (22nd Street to 42nd Street); **Sunday, July 27:** Central Ave Northeast (18½th Avenue to 26th Avenue); **Sunday, August 17:** Franklin Avenue East (Portland Avenue to 28th Avenue); **Sunday, September 14:** Nicollet Avenue (Lake Street to 46th Street); and, **Saturday, September 20:** Lowry Avenue North (Vincent Avenue to Emerson Avenue). In addition to closing the streets to automobile traffic, the day-long events will highlight healthy living and fitness activities through a series of displays and activities. Open Streets Minneapolis is an initiative of the

Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition and is co-sponsored by the City. For more information visit [www.openstreetsmpls.com](http://www.openstreetsmpls.com) and [www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles).

**Do Not Prune Ash Trees.** Conditions are now warm enough for beetles that attack and kill ash trees to be active and residents and property owners with ash trees in their yards should not prune them this time of year or move any part of them. The Minnesota Department of Agriculture has issued a state quarantine on firewood, ash trees, and ash tree products in Hennepin, Ramsey, Houston and Winona counties to slow the spread of emerald ash borers. For more information on emerald ash borers, visit the [Minnesota Department of Agriculture emerald ash borer Web page](#) or the [Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board's emerald ash borer Web page](#).

**Household Hazardous Waste Drop Off Events.** Hennepin County is offering residents options to safely dispose of unwanted garden and household hazardous wastes this spring and summer. All sites will be open to the public from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Thursday through Saturday. The events closest to the second ward will be **May 29-31**, at the Minneapolis Public Works Department-Snelling Avenue building at 3607 E. 44th St.; August 7-9 at South High School, 3131 19th Ave. S.; and on **September 18-20** at the University of Minnesota – Parking Lot C66 at 2904 Fairmount St. SE.. For more information, including directions and a complete list of acceptable and non-acceptable items, call Hennepin County Environmental Services at 612-348-3777 or visit [www.hennepin.us/collectionevents](http://www.hennepin.us/collectionevents).

**The conservation district ordinance** I have been working on for several months is now beginning its (rather lengthy) path through the formal review and public hearing process. In May and June the Heritage Preservation Commission, State Historic Preservation Office, and Planning Commission will have the chance to review the draft and provide feedback before it goes to the Heritage Preservation Commission and City Council for consideration. The final draft includes the following changes made based on feedback gathered at and after the last community meeting: 1. Although interim protection was never proposed to apply to conservation districts, the definition of “interim protection” now makes that explicit, unless the district in question has been nominated as a historic district or landmark, of course; 2. Conservation district studies have been renamed conservation district plans; 3. To increase the specificity and legal defensibility of the establishment criteria, the definition of “Notability” has been expanded to more closely align it with the landmark and historic district significance criteria (numbers 4 and 5) that it is derived from (embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an architectural or engineering type or style, or method of construction; or its exemplification of a landscape design or development pattern distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or quality of design or detail). The establishment criteria have been updated to reflect this change; and, 4. To better manage staff time and public expectations, the ordinance commits staff to working upon complete applications in the order that they are received, with no more than one application per city sector processed simultaneously. Along those same lines, the ordinance has been adjusted to indicate that the one year time limit for application processing begins with the time the planning director initiates work upon a complete application, rather than the date the application is received.

**Saint Anthony Lock to Close.** Senator Amy Klobuchar and the Minnesota congressional delegation have won passage of a bipartisan provision to keep invasive carp out of Minnesota's waterways by closing the Upper Saint Anthony Lock. This action was included in final water infrastructure conference bill, which will now go to the full Senate and House of Representatives for final approval. It is expected to pass. This is a huge victory for Minnesota. It will protect the Mississippi and all of its tributaries north of Minneapolis from this invasive species that has done such damage to ecosystems downstream. I want to thank Senator Klobuchar and the delegation for their work to achieve this tremendous success.

**Farmers Market Finder.** The City has an online [interactive map](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/action/local/sustainability_mplsfarmersmarkets) ([http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/action/local/sustainability\\_mplsfarmersmarkets](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/action/local/sustainability_mplsfarmersmarkets)) that makes it easy to find farmers markets all over the city. The map lists 15 farmers markets now; more will be added as information becomes available. Eight of the markets accept “electronic benefits transfer” cards as payment. Recent state law updates regulating farmers markets will have shoppers likely seeing more food samples and cooking demonstrations at markets this year. Vendors may also now operate more days of the year. With the Minnesota Farmers Market Association, the City of Minneapolis advocated for these changes to allow more flexibility for health educators doing sampling and cooking demonstrations and to lift unneeded restrictions.

**New Electric Vehicle Charging Stalls.** This month the City finished installing 36 new charging stalls, making a total of 39 charging stalls available at City ramps. The work was made possible by a grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) awarded to the City and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT). The new charging stations are part of the ChargePoint network, which includes an interactive map to find available charging stalls across the country, either by going online or with a smart phone app. Drivers of electric vehicles who subscribe to the network can just pull up and plug into any of the open charging stalls. The stalls are available first-come, first-served. Drivers will pay the parking rates for the ramps and for the electricity they use – about \$3.20 for a “full tank.” The electricity rates are just \$0.80 an hour, and a full vehicle charge takes approximately four hours. To guarantee a sustainable energy source, the City and MnDOT have purchased wind credits from Xcel Energy for these charging stations. Proceeds will cover these electricity costs and will also be used to pay for upkeep and fund future charging stalls. Charging stations are now available at the following City of Minneapolis parking ramps: Ramp A – 20 charging stalls; Ramp B – Eight charging stalls; Leamington ramp – Eight charging stalls; Haaf ramp, 424 Fourth St. S. With more than a third of Minnesota’s air pollution coming from cars and trucks, electric vehicles can be part of solving some of our air pollution problems.

**Digital Survey Results.** The analysis of results of a City survey conducted in January to understand how Minneapolis residents use computers, mobile devices and the Internet to better their daily lives has been completed. While 85 percent of residents surveyed have computers with Internet access at home (an increase from 82 percent in 2012), residents who identified as lower-income, African-American, older and retired, unemployed or disabled were less likely to own a device with Internet access. In response the City has scheduled community meetings with residents, businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders to share the survey results and recommendations about how to overcome the digital divide in Minneapolis. The meetings will be on Thursday, May 29, 6 – 7 p.m. at the East Phillips Park-Cultural and Community Center at 2307 17th Ave. S.; and Tuesday, June 17, 5:30 – 7 p.m. at the North Regional Library at 1315 Lowry Ave. N. To request a presentation and discussion about digital equity in Minneapolis and the Community Technology Survey results, contact the City’s IT Department at 612-673-2026. For more information visit the City’s Digital Inclusion website at [www.minneapolismn.gov/it/inclusion](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/it/inclusion).

**Animal Adoption Improvements.** Minneapolis Animal Care and Control is moving forward with a plan to adopt more animals to the general public. Since December, staff at Minneapolis Animal Care & Control have worked to create a program to adopt all animals to the public, held 17 focus group sessions and talked with 152 stakeholders and/or interested parties to gather opinions on the new Adoption Initiative. They have developed a program where all adoptable animals would be available to the general public, and the health and well-being of animals in our care would be improved. A standardized evaluation will facilitate timely and successful placements. Minneapolis Animal Care & Control plans to launch the new program on June 5. To learn more see item 7 at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/hece/WCMS1P-124363>

**Public Health Advisory Committee Annual Report.** This week the Health Committee heard our annual report from The Public Health Advisory Committee. The Committee began the year under a new structure, rotating meetings between a full committee and sub-committees. The role of the Public Health Advisory Committee is to advise the City Council and the Health Department on policy matters affecting the health of Minneapolis residents and to serve as liaisons between the City and the community in addressing health concerns. Especially noteworthy for our area is the work the committee did supporting the new tobacco-free policy for U of MN Twin Cities campuses and supporting the Healthy Food policy proposed by Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board. This year they are focusing on giving children healthy starts to life & learning; work on Healthy Food Policies the Staple Foods Ordinance; healthy food policies with the Metropolitan Sports Facility Association; e-cigarette regulation; transportation alternatives (street cars, walking, biking, greenways, "complete streets", homelessness, senior support services, youth violence prevention and Substance abuse / mental health.

**New Second Ward Public Health Committee Member.** I am delighted to report that I have appointed **Sahra Noor** as the new Second Ward representative to the Public Health Advisory Committee. Sahra is a public health nurse with over 15 years of experience working in hospitals, and community health centers. She is a director at Fairview Health Services working in Ward 2 at Fairview University Medical Center on Riverside Avenue where she is also administrator for the Health Commons project in Cedar Riverside.

**Reducing Youth Tobacco Use.** On Monday May 12 the Health Environment and Community Engagement Committee heard an interesting report from The Health Department's Healthy Living staff will on youth tobacco use in Minneapolis, including a description of tobacco use, factors that influence use, and strategies for reducing use. Representatives from the Youth Coordinating Board's Youth Congress also shared information about tobacco use among youth, and shared their findings from surveys, corner stores visited and community listening sessions. It was very useful to hear their about their process for developing policy recommendations for reducing youth tobacco use. I hope to implement some of these in the weeks ahead.

**Bicycle Traffic Safety Program.** The Transportation and Public Works committee has received a very informative report from Public Works staff about the ongoing Bicycle Traffic Safety Program. It's great to see the City continuing to work on the engineering, education, enforcement, and evaluation that will make our city an even safer place to get around by bike. You can view the report here:  
<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-124725.pdf>.

**Racial Equity Action Plan Framework and Timeline.** The City Coordinator reported to Committee of the Whole in May on a proposed process for developing a new Racial Equity Action Plan and how this complements work on the Racial Equity Toolkit already underway. The Racial Equity Action Plan work (see <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-124318.pdf> and <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-124485.pdf>) should be coordinated well with the Study Session for the City Council by the end of June that will include discussions of key policy decisions and a community stakeholder engagement plan related to the Racial Equity Framework. The Coordinator's timeline indicated that a Racial Equity Action might be completed by the end of this year. Both parts of our racial equity work will be guided by the workgroup approved on May 10 by the Council. On that group I will be joined by the Mayor, who will serve as chair, as well as Council Members Glidden, Yang and Cano to assist in ongoing oversight of the development of the Racial Equity Framework, the Racial Equity Action Plan and additional related initiatives, as well as to develop tools appropriate for use by the City Council and Mayor to view policy decisions through a racial equity lens. The workgroup will also include department heads and other staff.

**Federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) Funds.** The Council has approved accepting NSP funds received from Minnesota Housing Finance Agency and Program Income generated by the City of Minneapolis: increasing the Federal Grants appropriation by \$4,799,645.30 and CDBG and UDAG Fund by \$37,148.29 The NSP funding is a key component of our Foreclosure Recovery Plan and has been used to help get foreclosed, often abandoned and boarded homes, returned to usefulness to the extent necessary to “tip” the market toward restoring a healthy housing market. The Minneapolis NSP Action Plans are posted on the City’s NSP website: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/foreclosure/nsp.asp> .

**Great Streets Small Business Support Grants.** The city has approved several grants to support efforts of small business associations. The Second Ward grantees include the Lake Street Council who will be awarded \$39,200 to build on their window merchandizing efforts, adding a Light Up Lake Street element for helping Lake Street’s night-time image and presence; expand their Growing Green and Bike-Friendly campaign; and focus on outreach and relationship building with Somali-owned. The Longfellow Business Association has been awarded \$3,000 to explore an emerging cluster of secondhand/vintage/antique shops on Minnehaha Avenue. The Seward Civic and Commerce Association will have \$8,260 to develop a new web portal/online forum for business skill sharing, mentorship, and business-to-business connections and an energy initiative to utilize the peer relationships of business successes with green retrofits to initiative more green projects moving forward. Seward Redesign will receive \$38,800 to support their work revitalizing East Lake Street, and expand the East Lake Street campaign they began last year in partnership with the Longfellow Business Association. The Stadium Village Commercial Association will have \$15,000 to fund marketing efforts associated with the opening of the Green Line. The West Bank Business Association has been awarded \$38,000 to increase the diversity of their membership by hiring a part-time East African staff member to engage the business owners, support networking, educational and start a district-wide branding effort with the opening of the Green Line.

**Riverside Park Restoration.** On **Saturday, June 7** — 9:30-11:30 a.m. volunteers will be working with the Friends of the Mississippi River staff to improve local wildlife habitat and watershed health by removing invasive species and assisting with watering and other ecological restoration tasks. The range of activities will be suitable for adults and youth. People are welcome to volunteer but capacity is limited and preregistration required. Learn more at <http://www.fmr.org/participate/events/riversidepark-2014-06-07>, [volunteer@fmr.org](mailto:volunteer@fmr.org) or 651-222-2193 x24.

**Rezoning on Essex for Hotel.** The City Council has approved the rezoning petition filed by Scott Nelson of DJR Architecture to rezone the properties located at 1014, 1018, and 1022 Essex Ave SE and 506 Huron Blvd SE from the R5/Multiple Family District to the C3A/Community Activity Center District, to allow for the construction of a five-story, 122-room hotel. Before this project is approved, however, it will need a Conditional Use Permit to go up to 5 stories, four variances and a site plan approved.

**Proposed Bike Safety Improvements in Seward.** Congratulations to Seward Montessori School’s success in securing a state Safe Routes to School grant. The grant funding will focus on making 29th Avenue and 24th Street Bike Boulevards and safety improvements along 29th Avenue and the Midtown Greenway, which could be implemented this year. The Seward Neighborhood Group’s Community Development Committee has also approved a plan to improve biking in multiple locations in Seward, by: 1) testing a closure of 29<sup>th</sup> Ave S at the Greenway to motor vehicles, 2) flipping the stop sign at 26<sup>th</sup> St E and 29<sup>th</sup> Ave S, to make 29<sup>th</sup> more bikeable and slow traffic on 26<sup>th</sup>, 3) flipping the stop sign at 30<sup>th</sup> Ave S and the Greenway to give bicyclists and pedestrians priority, 4) flipping the stop signs at 27<sup>th</sup> Ave S and the Greenway to give bicyclists and pedestrians priority, 5) installing bollards to narrow the roadway at 26<sup>th</sup> Ave S and the Greenway to slow traffic on 26<sup>th</sup> and prevent potential “double threat” accidents, and 6) installing a center median where the

Greenway crosses Minnehaha Avenue, similar to what the City installed where the Greenway crosses 28<sup>th</sup> St E, to prevent “double threat” accidents and give priority to Greenway users. I am very supportive of all of these ideas, and will do what I can to get Public Works to work on them this year.

**Rezoning Proposed for 3330 East 25th Street.** The owner of the building at 3330 East 25th Street is exploring getting a rezoning of this property from the current R1-A to C-1 to clarify the uses allowed in the building and help attract a new long term tenant in the space next to the current laundry facility. Since its construction in 1929, the building has been used for commercial purposes. This idea was supported by the Seward Neighborhood Group Community Development Committee.

**West Bank 4<sup>th</sup> St & 15<sup>th</sup> Ave Construction Update.** The City is reconstructing 15th Av S between 6th St S and 4th St S from 15th Av S to Cedar Av this year. The project will include full removal of the existing street, subgrade correction, new pavement, curb and gutter, driveways, sidewalk as needed, streetscape elements as needed, and utility work as needed. The reconstruction will impact local parking, bike lanes, and pedestrian paths. The City Department of Public Works will hold a meeting on the project on Wednesday, May 21 at 3:30PM at the Brian Coyle Center at 420 15th Ave S. Minneapolis, MN 55454. For more information contact [Chris.Engelmann@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Chris.Engelmann@minneapolismn.gov) or visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cip/all/WCMS1P-095401>.

**Five15 on the Park.** After years of discussion and process, construction is now underway on the Fine Associates development Five15 on the Park, on 15<sup>th</sup> Ave S near Currie Park, on the West Bank.

**311 Adds Weekend Hours.** 311 recently passed the milestone of having answered 3 million calls since the service began in January 2006. Starting this Saturday, 311 will now be available on weekends from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The new weekend hours are in addition to their weekday hours, which are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. Minneapolis 311 is intended to make it easier for residents, business owners and visitors to contact the city to report problems, check the status of issues, or get information. It also provides a way to policy makers, like City Council Members, and the public at large to track, assess and plan ways to improve the work of the city. From asking about street sweeping, to finding out where to vote, to reporting a stray dog and much more, 311 agents can help or provide answers on anything City-related.

**Ordinance Amendment for Sidewalk Sales.** The Community Development and Regulatory Services Committee of the City Council will consider amending the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances to allow retailers to display and sell merchandise on a limited portion of the sidewalk directly in front of their business. The proposed ordinance amendment is available at [www.minneapolismn.gov/licensing](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/licensing). You are invited to attend, express your opinions, and/or submit such in writing by contacting Linda Roberts at [linda.roberts@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:linda.roberts@minneapolismn.gov) or 612-673-3908.

**Fossil Fuel Divestment Campaign.** Please join me on Saturday, May 31 for the kickoff of the fossil fuel divestment campaign in Minneapolis. There will be a screening of the documentary Do The Math at 11am, and a picnic & kickoff from noon-2pm. The event will take place at the MN350 office, 2104 Stevens Ave. I am interested in moving forward a resolution committing the City of Minneapolis to not invest in fossil fuel extractive industries, and calling on all of our partners and the major institutions in Minneapolis – from the University of Minnesota to our employee pension programs – to divest from fossil fuel industries as well. The idea is simple: humans can only release about 565 gigatons of carbon into the atmosphere by midcentury if we want to avoid catastrophic climate change, but the amount of known, proven, extractable fossil fuel in the ground will release 2,795 gigatons of carbon if burned. That’s five times the amount that we can risk burning. We need to force the fossil fuel extraction industries to leave this carbon in the ground.

The federal government is not up to that fight yet, so it's up to us. Most of us, through our retirement plans and other investments, are providing capital to these industries to keep mining coal, drilling oil, and fracking natural gas. Our major institutions have endowments that invest in these same companies. We need to divest from these industries, to cut off their access to capital, if we are to have a hope of avoiding catastrophic global climate change.

**Environmentally Acceptable Packaging Ordinance Passes.** The Council has unanimously adopted the environmentally acceptable packaging ordinance authored by Council Member Andrew Johnson. This ordinance requires that packaging used in restaurants, food trucks and other food establishments to be either recyclable or compostable. I strongly supported it, and view this as one small step towards making Minneapolis a Zero Waste city.

**Pedestrian Safety.** In a recent national report on pedestrian safety the Twin Cities area ranked as the sixth safest metropolitan area. Still, there were an alarming 249 pedestrian deaths from motor vehicle recorded from 2003 to 2012. Boston, Pittsburgh, Seattle, New York and San Francisco we all ranked safer for pedestrians than the Minneapolis area. You can learn more and find a link to the dull report here. <http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/research/dangerous-by-design/dbd2014/national-overview>. The report offers a number of insights into design and practices that could make our roads safer in Minneapolis and should be incorporated in the Complete Streets Policy we are currently working on. It also emphasizes the danger of speed, "At 20 mph, the risk of death to a person on foot struck by the driver of a vehicle is 6 percent. At 30 mph, that risk of death is three times greater. And at 45 mph, the risk of death is 65 percent—11 times greater than at 20 mph. When struck by a car going 50 mph, pedestrian fatality rates are 75 percent and injury rates are more than 90 percent." I believe our goal in Minneapolis should be 0 pedestrian traffic fatalities and that with a modest degree of effort we can accomplish this.

**Grants to Green Your Business.** Minneapolis and the State of Minnesota have matching grants for small businesses to reduce the harmful chemicals their processes release into the air. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency notes that these chemicals – volatile organic compounds – can cause health problems from eye, nose and throat irritation to headaches, nausea and dizziness. Exposure over long periods can increase cancer risk and damage the liver, kidneys and central nervous system. Applications for City programs are accepted through 4 p.m., June 20. Apply or learn more about the City programs at [www.minneapolismn.gov/greenbusiness](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/greenbusiness). Applications for State programs are accepted through August 13. Apply or learn more about the State programs at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/voc>.

**Rulemaking for the Mississippi River Corridor.** The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently engaged in rulemaking for the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA). The MRCCA covers the land within a few blocks of the Mississippi River for all 72 miles of riverfront in the metro area and it impacts 30 local government units, including Minneapolis. The intent of the MRCCA rules is to regulate land development within the corridor, with a focus on natural resource protection, water and habitat quality, and scenic elements. More information on this process is available here: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/rules/mrcca/index.html>. City staff, along with rest of the 30 local governments and some interested agencies, have been involved in reviewing and providing feedback on the DNR's working draft of the rules update. The resulting revised version is now being made available for general public review, which will include notification of all property owners within the MRCCA boundary. The draft rules are available on the project website: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/rules/mrcca/index.html>

**Bee Keeping Ordinance Amendment.** Council Member Lisa Bender's proposed ordinance to make it easier to keep honeybees in Minneapolis will come before the Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee on Monday, June 16th, at 1:30pm. Her proposal is to no longer require neighboring property owners to sign off on a resident's beehive

**Door-to-door Peddlers and Solicitors.** With the warm weather I have noticed a growing number of questions and concerns about door-to-door solicitors in our neighborhoods. Peddlers, who are actually selling something they have with them, are required to have a city license. A solicitor is not required to have a "license", but they so need to "registered" with the city and both should still have an a clear identification card they wear or display at all times. Residents can restrict Solicitors from approaching their property if they display a small "No Soliciting" placard or sign. They cannot sell food, obstruct traffic, conduct business before 8 am or after 9 pm, remain on property when asked to leave or use false or misleading statements about the product or service being sold. You can find more information here:  
<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@regservices/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-110484.pdf>

**Report Points to Unfair Lending Practices.** I am working to organize a time when Myron Orfield and his team from the Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity from the University of Minnesota Law School can formally present the findings of the report "Twin Cities in Crisis: Unequal Treatment of Communities of Color in Mortgage Lending to the Public Safety, Civil Rights and Emergency Management Committee. The report indicates that "financial institutions continue to fail to provide a fair share of mortgage loans for communities of color," and that, "Between 2009 and 2012, diverse and majority non-white neighborhoods received 23% fewer home purchase loans and 66% fewer refinance loans than the number implied by the number of homeowners in those areas and their incomes. The large shortfall of refinance loans was particularly damaging, preventing homeowners from refinancing the more costly subprime loans so prevalent in these neighborhoods into fair and sustainable home mortgages. Even middle and high income households were much more likely to be denied loans in predominantly nonwhite areas. Denial rates were one and a half times as high for middle/high income white households and twice as high for middle/high income people of color in predominantly nonwhite neighborhoods as in predominantly white areas." Getting this before the committee will give members the opportunity to learn more, ask questions, discuss the information and consider what, if any, further action is appropriate. You can find the report here:  
<http://www.law.umn.edu/metro/index.html>

**Congratulations to Haila Maze,** Principal Planner for the East Sector, on being honored at the 2014 Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Awards with the "Good Luck and Good Fortune" award for Growth and Preservation: Planning and Advocating for Dinkytown. This is an annual awards program coordinated jointly between Preserve Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission. I can speak personally to Haila's capable planning, diligent engagement with stakeholders, and commitment to excellence in her consistently thoughtful work on preservation considerations in Dinkytown. Appreciation for Haila's work has been communicated to me regularly in many forums by stakeholders and leaders who have been a part of the planning process Haila continues to lead; it's wonderful to see her recognized.

**Our Parks Rated #1.** Congratulations to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and staff for once again having our park system ranked first by Trust for Public Land. Our park system got a perfect 5.0 score, the highest in the nation for the second straight year among the 60 largest U.S. cities. Learn more here  
<http://parkscore.tpl.org/>

**Nicollet Mall Reconstruction Moving Forward.** A plan to redesign Nicollet Mall is moving forward, now that state bonding dollars have been secured for the project. The legislature has approved a capital investment package that dedicates \$21.5 million to the project. Plans call for a \$50 million redesign of the mall from building face to building face, from Washington Avenue to Grant Street. The concept design includes features such as areas for new and healthier trees, enhanced sidewalk spaces, improved lighting, fire pits and a pedestrian “island” that connects foot traffic on the mall to the skyways. You can see artist renderings of the designs at [nicolletmallproject.com](http://nicolletmallproject.com).

**Major Successes at the Legislature.** In addition to bonding for Nicollet Mall, the legislature has passed many important pieces of law that were supported by the City, including: Funding for projects in Minneapolis, including: The Sculpture Garden (\$8.5 million); YWCA early learning facilities (\$3 million); Hennepin Center for the Arts (\$550,000); Brian Coyle Community Center (\$330,000); the University of Minnesota’s Tate Laboratory renovation (\$56.7 million); Franklin Avenue Bridge renovations (\$11.75 million). Additionally the state legislature passed a \$9.50 minimum wage beginning in 2016. And starting in 2018, the minimum wage will be indexed to inflation; a medical marijuana bill, which will begin providing medicine to qualifying patients in July of 2015. The program allows cannabis only in pill, liquid, or vapor form, which may be obtained from eight distribution centers around the state. A Local Government Aid increase for the City of roughly \$986,000 in 2015 included a one-time increase in direct property tax relief for renters and homeowners. I was delighted to see the Women’s Economic Security Act pass, which is aimed at closing the gender pay gap, offering protections for pregnant and nursing women, and ending sex discrimination. The legislature also granted greater authority to the City in revoking liquor licenses at problem establishments, as well as licensing for cocktail rooms at micro distilleries. A ban on gun possession for persons convicted of domestic violence offenses and protections for renters who must break a lease early due to safety reasons, and the establishment of the Housing Opportunities Made Equitable program were also passed. Last but not least, I note the Safe and Supportive Schools Act, which is a policy to reduce bullying on school premises and online, with local control over program specifics to meet policy requirements.

**\$100 million for Housing.** The state and Governor also approved an unprecedented 100 million dollar state investment in housing to help address the homelessness and rental affordability crisis. The bill provides \$80 million for affordable& supportive housing; \$20 million for public housing rehabilitation and \$6 million for Dorothy Day.

**Healthy Bees Healthy Lives Legislation.** The legislature also passed a bill stipulating that plants may not be labeled as beneficial to pollinators if they have been treated with detectible levels of systemic insecticides. Specifically, “A person may not label or advertise an annual plant, bedding plant, or other plant, plant material, or nursery stock as beneficial to pollinators if the annual plant, bedding plant, plant material, or nursery stock has been treated with and has a detectable level of systemic insecticide that: (1) has a pollinator protection box on the label; or (2) has a pollinator, bee, or honey bee precautionary statement in the environmental hazards section of the insecticide product label.” The bill is effective as of July 1, 2014. Additionally they passed beekeeper compensation legislation, that creates an emergency response team to respond to honey bee losses that are suspected to be pesticide-related, and beekeepers will receive compensation for bee-kills caused by pesticide exposure. Unfortunately, we made little progress this session in our efforts to get the legislature to grant Minneapolis and other cities of the first class limited authority to impose reasonable restrictions on the use of pesticides for non-agricultural uses and require non-agricultural pesticides sold in Minnesota to indicate if they are pollinator friendly.

**Reminder: Filing Fee Hearing.** The Charter Commission has proposed that the City Council consider amending the city charter, by unanimous vote, to raise the fee charged to run for office in Minneapolis. The

amendment would allow a candidate's name to appear on the ballot if the candidate files an affidavit of candidacy and either pays the required filing fee or submits a petition in place of the filing fee with the number of signatures for which the Minnesota election law provides, 500 or 5% of the number of people who voted for that office in the last election, whichever is less. The filing fee is currently \$20 for all races and they are proposing that it be increased as follows: for Mayor, \$250; for Council member, \$100; for Board of Estimate & Taxation member, \$20 (no change); and for Park & Recreation commissioner, \$50. While I opposed a proposed increase that was higher that they sent us in December, I am inclined to support this when it comes to the Council. The Intergovernmental Relations Committee will hold a public hearing on this June 5 at, or shortly after, 1:30pm.

**Additional Contamination Sources Suspected in Como Area.** The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency has identified the possibility of another source of TCE (trichloroethylene) contamination besides the former General Mills facility that is potentially affecting homes in that area. MPCA will take underground vapor samples at up to 20 additional homes in the area; review files and data on the area north of Hennepin Avenue (commercial facilities) to see if it can identify a possible source. According to the MPCA, the potential for multiple sources to contribute to an area of contamination is not an uncommon situation. The building vapor sampling work done by MPCA will begin primarily near the area north of Talmage Avenue SE around 23rd Avenue SE and 22nd Avenue SE, but also in a smaller area near the intersection of 19th Avenue SE and SE Elm Street.

**Reminder: Riverside Park Restoration.** On Saturday, June 7 — 9:30-11:30 a.m. volunteers will be working with the Friends of the Mississippi River staff to improve local wildlife habitat and watershed health by removing invasive species and assisting with watering and other ecological restoration tasks. The range of activities will be suitable for adults and youth. People are welcome to volunteer but capacity is limited and preregistration required. Learn more at <http://www.fmr.org/participate/events/riversidepark-2014-06-07>, [volunteer@fmr.org](mailto:volunteer@fmr.org) or 651-222-2193 x24.

**Liquor License Upgrades Proposed in Longfellow.** There will be a hearing on June 2, starting at 6:15 p.m. Brackets Recreation Center, 2728 S 39th Ave, to consider the applications of Merlin's Rest and Zeke's Unchained animals to upgrade their On-Sale Liquor with Sunday Sales license to a Class C-1. . If approved, Merlin license would clarify that they are allowed to have amplified or non-amplified music by five (5) or fewer musicians, and Zeke's would be permitted to serve all alcohol beverages (rather than the current beer and wine only license) and have amplified or non-amplified music by five (5) or fewer musicians. For more information or to submit written comments contact inspector Julie Casey at [julie.casey@minneapolisismn.gov](mailto:julie.casey@minneapolisismn.gov) or 612-673-3905.

**Nomad Temporary Outdoor Expansion.** There will be a public hearing in City Hall room 317 at 1:30 on June 3, to present information and solicit comments about the application from the Nomad World Pub to expand seating and service outdoors at 501 Cedar Ave S from June 12 to July 13, 2014, to include the city-owned, outdoor, vacant property located at 427 Cedar Ave S. The Nomad plans to televise World Cup soccer games outdoors and have dancers and non-amplified drummers performing prior to and after games on the city-owned Dania Hall lot. You are invited to attend the public hearing express your opinions, and/or submit such in writing by contacting Inspector Leanne Selander at [leanne.selander@minneapolisismn.gov](mailto:leanne.selander@minneapolisismn.gov) or 612-673-3910.

**Openings on Boards and Commissions.** Visit the City's website for a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions for City boards and commissions. Appointments to boards and commissions are made twice a year — in the spring and fall. This streamlined appointment process makes it easier for folks to

learn about volunteer opportunities, ensures a more open and understandable process for residents and staff, and increases the diversity of the applicant pool.