

## Second Ward June 2014 E-newsletter

News from Cam Gordon

Council Member, Second Ward

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

**Green Line Opening.** Please join me for the celebration of the METRO Green Line opening on **Saturday, June 14**. There will be community celebrations at nine stations along the Green Line throughout the day on June 14, and you can ride any Metro Transit service – buses, METRO lines and Northstar commuter trains – for free on Saturday and Sunday, June 14 & 15. I will be attending the West Bank celebration: <http://www.metrotransit.org/west-bank-celebration>. There will also be celebrations in Stadium Village (<http://www.metrotransit.org/stadium-village-celebration>) and at Target Field station. You can find out more about all of the events here: <http://www.metrotransit.org/opening-day>. This celebration is the culmination of years of hard work by many people – the Met Council, Ramsey and Hennepin Counties, the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the neighborhoods and many other stakeholders. I'm honored to have been able to play a small part in helping to support this major transit investment, and look forward to riding the first official Green Line train on Saturday.

**Northern Spark**, Minneapolis' all-night arts festival will, light up the city on **Saturday, June 14** with dusk-to-dawn events including giant video projections, temporary sculptures, dance presentations, concerts and experimental performances. The opening ceremony begins at 8:30 p.m. at the Minneapolis Convention Center Plaza, 1301 S. Second Ave., where attendees can witness the unveiling of Balancing Ground – the winner of the Creative City Challenge – and enjoy music by Mu Daiko and GRRRL PRY. At 9:01 p.m. activities begin at 35 venues throughout Minneapolis, including Northrop Auditorium, Midtown Greenway, the Weisman Art Museum, Coffman Union, the Katherine Nash Gallery, the Regis Art Center and the Bell Museum, all located in Ward 2. Many Northern Spark events are free. Last year, approximately 45,000 people attended Northern Spark events and more than 300 artists and performers participated. Visit <http://2014.northernspark.org/> for all the details.

**Police Conduct Listening Session.** People will have an opportunity discuss police procedure and concerns about police/community interactions at the Police Conduct Oversight Commission community listening session on **Saturday, June 14**. During this session, members of the community will have the opportunity to learn about the oversight commission and its mission, meet the appointed commissioners, and participate actively in the conversation by sharing their interactions with the Minneapolis Police. It will occur on at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Minneapolis Urban League, 2100 Plymouth Avenue North, Minneapolis.

**Community Meetings on Engagement.** The Health, Energy and Community Engagement Committee that I chair and the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission are holding two community meetings on community engagement on **Thursday, July 31**, 6-9pm at East Phillips Park, 2307 17th Avenue South, and **Saturday, August 2**, 9:30am-noon at Folwell Park, 1615 Dowling Avenue North, in the gymnasium. We will be exploring way to improve our community engagement system in Minneapolis to help make this a better, more engaged, more equitable city. We will be asking residents and community members: How can city leaders better support, engage and work with neighborhood and community leaders and organizations to help make Minneapolis more racially and economically equitable? What can city and neighborhood leaders do to help ensure that neighborhood organizations and all city boards and committees reflect our communities? What would get you more involved in your neighborhood organization and in the civic life of our city?

**Blueprint for Equitable Engagement.** The Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) Department, and the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) presented a proposal to improve community engagement in the city to a Council Committee in May. Called the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement it will focus on three areas. First, it will aim to help neighborhood organizations assess whether or not their outreach efforts, board decision making processes and distribution of resources is being conducted with a lens of equity and inclusion. The City intends to include the 70 neighborhood organizations as partners in addressing racial disparities in our community. With access to local political, social and financial resources, neighborhoods are able to utilize millions of dollars annually and become central places of empowerment for marginalized community members. Second, it will look at the City's boards and commissions with the goal of having the advisory and planning boards and commissions reflect the diversity in the community. The City Council charged both the NCR department and the NCEC with making recommendations on the best way to achieve this goal. Recommendations have been developed and are in either being considered or implemented. Third, it will look at the City enterprise's outreach and engagement efforts and the community engagement efforts of City departments and how they connect and involve residents. The committee approved a motion directing NCR staff and the NCEC to report back by December 1<sup>st</sup> with a summary of the findings, draft recommendations and performance measures regarding the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement.

**Green Business Awards.** The Health Department and the Health Environment and Community Engagement committee recognized four businesses on June 2 as the 2014 Minneapolis Green Business Awards for Pollution Reduction. The businesses were: Martinizing Dry Cleaners, Mulroy's Body Shop, Paramount Collision Center and University Service. We awarded these businesses for their investments in the health of their workers, customers and neighbors by converting to cleaner technology. Martinizing Dry Cleaners, Paramount Collision Center and University Service made their investments with help from the City's Green Business Matching Grant Program. The City of Minneapolis offers grants of up to \$30,000 each to help dry cleaners reduce pollution by switching their processes from perchloroethylene to clean solvents. Perchloroethylene is the main chemical solvent used in dry cleaning and is a neurotoxin that causes kidney damage and is listed by the Environmental Protection Agency as a likely carcinogen. The City of Minneapolis offers grants of up to \$20,000 each to help vehicle repair, service and maintenance businesses switch to painting, cleaning and repair processes that reduce harmful air emissions and hazardous waste. More information and grant applications are available at [www.minneapolismn.gov/greenbusiness](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/greenbusiness).

**Sidewalk Sales Ordinance.** The Council has approved Council Member Glidden's ordinance amendment related to sidewalks that will allow retailers to display and sell merchandise on a limited portion of the sidewalk directly in front of their business. I supported this item and believe it strikes a good balance between allowing greater flexibility for businesses and continuing to provide good pedestrian access along our commercial corridors. I want to thank Council Member Glidden for her work on this.

**Hennepin County Will No Longer Honor ICE Detainers.** The Hennepin County Sheriff and Attorney announced that as of midnight June 11, the Hennepin County Jail will no longer honor US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) detainers, absent judicial authority. Recent directives by Immigrations & Customs Enforcement that detainers are now considered discretionary along with subsequent Federal Court decisions articulating the same, are strong indicators that the legal landscape is changing on this matter. I want to thank Sheriff Rich Stanek and County Attorney Mike Freeman for taking this great step in the right direction.

**Property Accessed Clean Energy (PACE) Projects.** The Council has approved our first PACE projects that will allow property owners to make clean energy investments and pay them back on their property taxes. They

include: Elliot Park Lifesciences (700 10th Ave S), that will take a special assessment in the amount of \$219,450; Miller Investments (2726 Washington) with a special assessment of \$56,425; and the Second Ward's own Longfellow Market (3815 E Lake St), with special assessment against the Longfellow Market LLC property of \$282,150. Longfellow Market plans to install lighting system upgrades as well as new refrigeration systems exceeding current requirements for energy efficiency. I am very excited to finally see projects moving forward using this tool that I have been working for years to make available to Minneapolis property owners. While it is focused on commercial property at this time I hope to see it made available to homeowners in the future.

**Youth Homicide.** After 23 months without a child being murdered in Minneapolis, on June 2<sup>nd</sup> a 17 year old was shot and killed in our city. The fact that this is the longest period of period in recent memory that we have gone without a juvenile homicide does not lessen the sadness and concern we should all feel at this tragic loss. In Minneapolis the summer always brings added concern about the safety of our youth and clearly we must stay focused and our Youth Violence Prevention efforts need to be strengthened.

**Pop-up Parks.** A Pop up Park initiative will be launched on **Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup>** at the intersection of Golden Valley Road and Penn Ave at 4pm. The Pop-Up Park tent will include music, art, games, crafts, dance and more especially targeted to youth age 12 – 17. It will be moved through the summer and located in neighborhoods that are particularly challenged with street safety and transportation issues for teens, as well as at festivals and events to encourage teens to join in their community's gatherings, and to learn about resources. This is a new partnership between the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and the City of Minneapolis' Blueprint for Youth Violence Prevention. The Pop-Up Park will be operating six days a week typically from 4-9pm, for eight weeks this summer.

**Youth Development Workers Downtown.** For the 3rd summer in a row we will have the Youth Coordinating Board's Downtown Youth Worker Teams engaging in positive outreach to many of our youth who frequent and live downtown. The Youth Worker Teams will be working most evenings and are focused on recognizing positive behavior by youth that are downtown but also to help mentor and guide those youth who may be exhibiting problematic behavior. They are trained to interrupt the behavior cycle for youth who are disruptive or disengaged downtown by connecting them to meaningful activities or resources. The Youth Worker Teams work closely with the Downtown Council and the Police to coordinate efforts to make downtown welcoming and safe to all people. I believe they played an important role in crime reduction downtown last summer where we saw a 42% decrease in juvenile crime.

**Lessons in Gun Control from other Countries.** A recent book outlines other countries' approaches to gun control that have significantly reduced violence. Australia and Brazil have both adopted policies that seem to have significantly reduced gun violence and I believed should be explored for Minnesota. You can find more on this here <http://www.governing.com/topics/public-justice-safety/gov-gun-control-lessons.html>

**Saint Anthony Lock to Close.** Congress has passed, and President Obama has signed, a law that will close the Upper Saint Anthony Lock, to prevent the spread of invasive carp to the north of Minneapolis. This is a great outcome.

**Domestic Abuse Prevention Hero Retires.** I was delighted to see that Carol Arthur was honored at 1st Annual DAP Awards Benefit dinner, RESTORING SANCTUARY. The dinner celebrated those who champion human rights in the home and Carol was one of three very special people who have helped the community understand that the work to ensure basic human rights and work to end domestic violence are inextricably linked. I greatly appreciate working with Carol these past 8 years as a city Council Member. She has served

as the Domestic Abuse Project's (DAP) Executive Director for over 27 years and I sincerely thank her for her years of service and accomplishment ending domestic abuse in Minneapolis. She has made our city a safer place. For more information on DAP <http://www.domesticabuseproject.com/>.

**Minneapolis Energy Benchmarking Ordinance.** The energy benchmarking ordinance the Council passed in February of 2013 requiring commercial buildings to annual determine and report energy consumption went into effect June 1.

**The Yard.** I am concerned about the future of this new Downtown East park, and fear that we are giving away too much control and too much time to private, commercial interests. If we don't change course this park could fall far short of its potential to be a real public jewel that serves all Minneapolitans and will instead just serve the few who will use it as an extension of stadium events. You can read more of my concerns and solutions on the Second Ward blog.

**2nd Precinct Advisory Council Report.** The 2nd Precinct, which includes all portions of the Ward that are east of the river, saw crime reports go down 3.96% from 2012-2013 and 7.01% over the last two year period, 2011-2013. Violent crime reports were down slightly over these same periods in 2nd Precinct as well. Citywide violent crime was up slightly. For 2013-2011 comparisons, see <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@mpd/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-119008.pdf> Robberies and violent crimes were up overall, but 2013 figures were near a 30-year low. <http://www.startribune.com/local/minneapolis/239183571.html>.

**Public Hearing on Temporary expansion of Bars and Restaurants in Stadium Village.** On **June 17**, at 1:30pm, the Community Development and Regulatory Services Committee will consider the ordinance amendment to allow bars and restaurants to increase the times they can offer services outdoors on adjacent property as a temporary expansion of their premises. If this amendment is approved, the annual limit of 12 days may be waived by the license official for special events. This is specifically intended to allow local businesses to be able to benefit from the increase in games and events going on at the University Stadium while the Vikings will be playing home football games there. The proposed ordinance amendment is available on our website at [www.minneapolismn.gov/licensing](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/licensing).

**Modified Commercial Parking Lot Rules.** Also because of the coming Vikings games at the University area, I am working to modify the rules so local businesses will be able to allow game-day parking on nonresidential parking lots. This is already allowed for Gopher games and I would like to extend the option to Vikings games as well. The hearing for this will also be held on **June 17** at the Community Development and Regulatory Services Committee meeting.

**Bicycle Advisory Committee Appointment.** I expect our new Ward 2 appointee to Bicycle Advisory Committee to be approved for two-year term this month. I am appointing Hayat Ahmed. Hayat lives in the Riverside Park area of the West Bank. She is a member of the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition board, and recently re-learned how to ride a bicycle through programs at SPOKES Bike-Walk Connect. I am thrilled to be appointing someone who can share this unique perspective. It is also great to see that the new BAC will be significantly more diverse than the existing BAC, including six women and five people of color.

**Graffiti.** People can get free graffiti cleanup supplies at Minneapolis fire stations. Last year graffiti cost the City just over \$1 million, and 8,180 cases of graffiti were reported. The City is getting the anti-graffiti message out in June with an informational video in English, Spanish, Somali and Hmong; a public service announcement (PSA) airing on Comcast Cable channels in Minneapolis; and digital billboards displayed by

Clear Channel Outdoor. The public service announcement time is donated by Comcast, and the billboards are donated by Clear Channel Outdoor. If you see someone vandalizing property or committing any other crime, call 911. Anyone who sees graffiti in their neighborhoods should report it to the City by calling 311. Using the City's 311 smartphone app, you can also snap a picture of the graffiti and send it with your report along with the location provided by the GPS on your phone. You can also report it at [www.minneapolismn.gov/graffiti](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/graffiti). It is the property owner's responsibility to clean up graffiti on their property. All Minneapolis fire stations offer free graffiti removal solvent to Minneapolis property owners, and the City website has instructions for graffiti removal. For more tips on fighting graffiti, check out [www.minneapolismn.gov/graffiti](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/graffiti). For questions, contact: Susan Webb, Crime Prevention Specialist Minneapolis Police Department, 2nd Precinct, (612) 673-2874, [susan.webb@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:susan.webb@minneapolismn.gov)

**U of M Community Engagement.** At the Friday, June 13 meeting of the Board of Regents, Vice President for University Services and Vice President and Chief Financial Officer presented new principles of community engagement for the University. I appreciate that these build on efforts, like the Alliance, already underway and see it as a positive step making is clear that the institution recognizes the importance of having healthy, vital and safe neighborhoods near the campus area. The principles were more general in nature affirming that having safe, livable neighborhoods adjacent to campus supports the University's core mission, and that the University's active engagement with public, private, and community partners in Minneapolis is important. I am very supportive of this move by the U, and believe that it will help to continue the improvement in the U's relationship to its surrounding communities and strengthen the University Alliance.

**837 15th Ave SE.** The Planning Commission has approved an application by Craig Janssen for a change of non-conforming use from office to retail sales and services for the property located at 837 15th Ave SE. This is to allow retail use that is in keeping with the historical use of the building.

**I-35W Transit/Access Project Open House on June 19.** You are invited to attend the next public open house for the I-35W transit/access project to provide comments on current design concepts and learn about next steps in the design process. Topics that will be covered are: Freeway and bridges between 42nd Street and I-94; Orange Line BRT transit station at Lake Street; 'Green Crescent' bicycle/pedestrian connection between Midtown Greenway and 31st Street; 24th Street pedestrian/bicycle bridge; Public art framework **Thursday, June 19, 5:30-7:30 p.m.** at the Whittier Community Center, 425 26th Street West. More information is available on the project website: [www.35lake.com/](http://www.35lake.com/).

**City Receives Award for Advocacy on the Minnesota Dream Act.** The Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota gave the City a legislative advocacy award for its work helping get the Minnesota Dream Act passed last year. The Minnesota Dream Act guarantees in-state tuition rates to undocumented students who for at least three years attended and graduated from a Minnesota high school. It also commits financial aid to qualified, aspiring undocumented college students in the state. A coalition including government, higher education, business, nonprofits, students and labor banded together to work on passage of the law. The Intergovernmental Relations and Neighborhood and Community Relations departments deserve special recognition for their work at the Capitol and collaborating in the community to advocate for this important piece of legislation.

**50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Civil Rights Act.** July 2 makes the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Civil Rights Department staff have identified several ways people can celebrate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 this summer. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a landmark piece of civil rights legislation that outlawed discrimination in the United States based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. It also provided voter registration protections and ended racial

segregation in schools, workplaces and facilities that serve the general public. Minnesota's Summer of Civil Rights events include: the Police Conduct Oversight Commission listening session, 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, June 14, Minneapolis Urban League, 2100 Plymouth Ave. N., Minneapolis; the Voting Rights Act: Act to Remember, Act to Restore, 2 p.m.-4 p.m., Sunday, June 22, Interfaith event at Shiloh Temple, 2647 Bloomington Ave., Minneapolis; the 50th Anniversary Opening Ceremony, 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Tuesday, June 24 Minnesota State Capitol, 75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Saint Paul; a CAIR-MN Ramadan dinner 7 p.m.-11 p.m. Saturday, July 12, University of Minnesota Coffman Memorial Union, 300 16th Ave. SE, Minneapolis; Key Reflections on the Civil Rights Act from Minnesota judges, 5 p.m.-7 p.m. Wednesday, July 23, William Mitchell College of Law, 875 Summit Ave., Saint Paul and the 50th Anniversary Closing Ceremony, 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Thursday, July 31, with the location yet to be determined. For more information see <https://m2.facebook.com/summerofCivilRightsMN>

**Out of School Activities Project Director Hired.** The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board has hired a new project director, Fatima Muhammen, to help implement goals and priorities for promoting healthy and positive out of school youth activities for Minneapolis youth. Fatima will work closely with the Youth Coordinating Board and with input from the Minneapolis Youth Congress to implement the new "What's Up 612" online tool now being developed to help parents, caregivers and youth get access to high quality after-school and summer programming.

**City Pages Ranks Seward 'Best Food Neighborhood.'** The City Pages has ranked the Seward Neighborhood the "Best Food Neighborhood" in the Twin Cities. See more here: <http://www.citypages.com/bestof/2014/award/best-food-neighborhood-3324087/>. Individual Seward businesses also received awards: "Best International Grocery" for United Noodles and "Best Kept Secret" for their Uni Deli, "Best Ice Cream" for Sweet Science Ice Cream at Verdant Tea, and "Best Restaurant in Seward" for Chef Shack Ranch. Congratulations to Seward – and let's keep working to make it an even better neighborhood to get a meal.

**Work on Bridge No. 9.** Federally funded repairs to Bridge 9 are scheduled to begin in the fall of 2014.

**Filing Fee.** On a vote of 11 to 2, the Council did not have the 13 – 0 votes needed to approve amending the City Charter to raise the filing fee for candidates to file for office and get on the municipal ballot as suggested by the Charter Commission. I had been working with the Charter Commission Chair on the potential increase that was less than what the Council rejected last December. I was willing to support it if it looked like it would earn the unanimous consent required. It did not and so I joined Council Member Yang voting in opposition. Although I was prepared to vote for it, I generally believe that Charter Amendments about the voting system and ballot should be brought to the voters. This matter now returns to the Charter Commission where I expect they will approve putting an increase on the ballot. Such a decision does not require Council approval, although we must approve the ballot language if the amendment itself is too long (over 100 words) to print on the ballot itself.

**Civil Rights Director.** On Wednesday, June 18 the Executive Committee will get a status update on the staff direction I moved this March, related to concerns raised about the management of the Civil Rights Department. The motion required that the City Coordinator consult with AFSCME representatives to consider reinstatement or creation of a new labor management committee in the Civil Rights Department; and work with the Mayor's office and Civil Rights Director, and if deemed appropriate, hire outside management consulting services for the purpose of evaluating and improving management practices in the Civil Rights Department related to employee satisfaction and maintenance of a healthy workplace environment. The recent release of the text of a speech that Director gave to her staff in June of 2013 has

only magnified my serious concerns about the management of the department, and I look forward to hearing more and discussing the matter on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

**RENEW Minneapolis Job Fair.** There will be a RENEW Minneapolis job fair on **Thursday, June 19**, at the Ababukar As-Saddique Islamic Center at 2824 13th Ave S. from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. People can meet with employers who are ready to hire for healthcare, manufacturing, and other positions; connect with representatives from community and college training programs; and, attend information sessions to learn about training and certification opportunities. RENEW Minneapolis is a program of Minneapolis Employment and Training that prepares Minneapolis jobseekers for in-demand careers, aligning training and employment services with sustainable economic development. Visit [www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/RENEW](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/RENEW) to learn more.

**All Together Now: Neighborhood Inspections for Clean and Safe Communities.** The Department of Regulatory Services has a new initiative, called "All Together Now," which is aimed at partnering with community associations and Minneapolis businesses to help residents maintain their properties and avoid fines. This new initiative is in targeted specific neighborhoods this year, but, if it is successful, I hope to see it expanded this throughout the city in the future. Southeast Como is the one Ward 2 neighborhood who is part of the new program this year. As part of the program city inspectors meet with neighborhood associations and every resident in the area receives a letter informing them about the community clean up effort and the upcoming inspections and about special discounts on things that will help them improve their property as part of the cleanup. Oak TW Hardware on Como Avenue is participating in the Second ward and you kind find list full list of businesses who have agreed to provide a 10-15% discount on home improvement supplies if you show them a letter or citation/order you received from the City here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/regservices/WCMS1P-115260>. You can also call 311 for this information.

**Temporary Polling Place Change in Prospect Park.** Due to construction occurring at Pratt School this fall, the Council has changed the polling place for Ward 2, Precinct 5, from Pratt School to Prospect Park United Methodist Church (22 Orlin Ave SE). Notice will be sent to all households in the precinct with at least one registered voter.

**Cedar Riverside Townhomes Under Construction.** I am delighted to see that the Cedar Riverside Townhomes are now under construction on the West Bank at the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Being built are 4 single family homes with up to 4 bedrooms, 3 ½ bathrooms, and 2-car tuck under garages. This Project was initiated by the Housing Economic Development and Infrastructure (HEDI) committee Cedar Riverside Neighborhood Revitalization Program (CRNRP). The funds used for the construction and development of the project were allocated during the Phase I process which mandated that 70 % of NRP funds had to be used for housing. Because owner occupied housing is scarce on the West Bank, the idea was formulated that CRNRP would purchase two city owned side by side lots, and develop a 4 unit townhome project for sale to owner occupied homeowners. Once the townhomes are sold, the funds will return to the community without the restriction that the funds must be used for housing. This plan was drafted in 2008 – and after years of obstacles, setbacks, legal negotiations over easements, and increased costs, the project is finally underway. The units are expected to be completed by fall of 2014. The sale prices for the units will range between \$225,000 and \$269,000. A groundbreaking ceremony is planned for **Wednesday, June 18**, at 4:30pm at the site, 620-624 20<sup>th</sup> Ave S, followed by a celebration at the Brian Coyle Center.

**Openings on Boards and Commissions.** Applications are now being accepted for the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee and Public Health Advisory Committee. Visit the City's website at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for more information.

