

Second Ward August 2014 E-newsletter

News from Cam Gordon

Council Member, Second Ward

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

Mayor's 2015 Budget Address. Mayor Hodges will deliver the 2015 budget speech in the City Council Chamber (Room 317 in City Hall) at 11 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 14. This will be the first step in reviewing, amending and approving the budget for next year. Budget approval is one of the most significant decisions the Council makes each year. In the coming months we will be reviewing each departments budget requests and holding budget hearings in preparation for adopting a final 2015 budget this December. I suspect that, unlike last year, there will be an increase in the overall property levied but that the impact on individual property owners will be minimal because of the significant growth in tax base. I will be working to balance increasing demands on infrastructure and services, and desires for better services and infrastructure with the potential burden this may place on tax payers, businesses and residents. As always, I welcome your ideas and concerns to assist me in my deliberations.

City Council Approves New Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) Director. The City Council has unanimously approved the nomination of Craig Taylor as the new Director of the CPED Department. Taylor served as the Executive Director of the Office for Business & Community Economic Development and the Business & Technology Center at the University of Minnesota for the past 12 years. He is set to begin work at the City on Friday, Aug. 29.

Rules for River Corridor Development. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) currently is soliciting public comments on potential new rules for the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA). To help understand what this means for our area I am convening a community meeting on **Thursday, August 14, 7-9 p.m. in the Oren Gateway Center, 2211 Riverside Avenue, Room 100**, on the Augsburg Campus. City planning staff will be present to provide and discuss a draft of the city comments. Someone from the DNR will also be present to answer questions and hear comments. The DNR will continue to accept comments through September 30, 2014. More information about this process is available on the DNR website at: <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/rules/mrcca/index.html>.

New City Coordinator Nominated. There will be a Public Hearing this Wednesday, August 13 at Committee of Whole on the Mayor's nomination of Spencer Cronk to be our next City Coordinator. I have met with Mr. Cronk, reviewed his resume and am generally supportive of his appointment. He has experience running complex organizations in the public and nonprofit sectors, most recently as commissioner of the State of Minnesota Department of Administration. He also worked as executive director of Organizational Development and senior advisor for the Department of Small Business Services for the City of New York, under former Mayor Michael Bloomberg. I believe that he has the skills and experience to lead this critically important department and help move the City forward on some of my highest priority issues including our work to develop new energy partnerships with our utility providers and to undo the institutional and historical racism that still plagues our city.

Hearings on Southwest Light Rail. There are two public hearings coming up for people to comment on the revised Southwest Light Rail Transit project. Following these hearings, the Minneapolis City Council will vote on municipal consent for the project. Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority/Metropolitan Council will hold a Public Hearing at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 13, at the Minneapolis Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall. The City Council will hold a Public Hearing at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 19, City Hall, Room 317, 350 South

5th Street. The hearings are opportunities for the public to comment on the Southwest light-rail line, as recommended by the Metropolitan Council, including plans that were revised as a result of a tentative agreement between the City of Minneapolis and the Metropolitan Council. Details on the tentative agreement and be found here

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@mayor/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-127882.pdf> Written comments will be accepted through Tuesday, August 19 and can be submitted to councilcomment@minneapolismn.gov or mailed to T&PW Committee Coordinator, Room 304 City Hall, 350 S 5th St, Minneapolis, 55415.

New Open Data Policy Approved. The Minneapolis City Council has approved the City's first open data policy. This will lead to the creation of an open data portal so that much more City data can be accessed on line. By doing this people will be able to access entire sets of data in accessible formats that previously were not available without a formal request. I commend Council Member Elizabeth Glidden who initiated this idea in 2013 and Council Member Andrew Johnson for leading the effort this year. Minneapolis now joins 38 states and 46 cities and counties that have open data portals. With an Open Data portal, Minneapolis continues a trend of transparency and public accountability. I am hopeful that this will lead to many creative uses of data, helping identify new solutions for government and new uses and applications for residents. Common uses of open data across the country include the development of web and smartphone applications that can show when busses arrive, where crime is happening, and results of city inspections. You can find the full policy here

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-128865.pdf>

Disparities and Opportunities Workgroup. I am delighted to report that the Intergovernmental Relations Committee has authorized the establishment of a working group of city council members, staff of the Mayor's office, and city departments including Civil Rights, Human Resources, Community Planning and Economic Development and Finance to develop, as part of the city's 2015 legislative agenda, proposals that focus on policies that are intended to reduce racial disparities and provide opportunities in employment and economic development. The work group should complete its work by the end of 2014.

Proposed Conservation District Ordinance. My proposed amendment to create the legal framework establishing conservation districts in Minneapolis was amended and approved by the Heritage Preservation Commission in July. The amendment, which I intend to support, adds a provision that all complete applications would be reviewed by the HPC as well as by staff. I expect this matter to come before the Zoning and Planning Committee in September (most likely on the 11th) and am considering additional minor amendments based on some of the comments.

Food Requirement for Wine Licenses. The Charter Commission has authorized putting an amendment to the City Charter on the November ballot relating to the sale of wine and beer in certain establishments. The proposed ballot language and title is as follows: "Remove Mandatory Food Requirements for Wine Licenses Shall the Minneapolis City Charter be amended to remove the requirement that businesses holding on-sale wine licenses in the City must serve food with every order of wine or beer and to remove mandatory food to wine and beer sales ratios?"

Filing Fee Ballot Language Approved. In July the Council approved the following ballot language for the Charter Commissions ballot initiative to increase filing fees to run for city offices. "Shall the Minneapolis City Harter be amended to increase the filing fees for candidates seeking City elected offices from the current fee of \$20 for each office to \$500 for the office of Mayor, \$250 for the office of Council Member, \$100 for the office Board of Estimate and Taxation and \$100 for the office of Park and Recreation Commission and, as an

alternative to payment of a filing fee, allow a candidate to submit a petition of voter signatures as provided in state law.”

Arts Commission Appointee. I am pleased to welcome Second Ward resident Ashley Fairbanks to the Minneapolis Arts Commission this month. A graphic designer and former 9th Ward Council office Aide, I think she will be an asset to the committee and expect her appointment to be easily approved this week. She will serve a term to expire December 31, 2015;

Compostable Material Drop-off Sites. Residents can drop off compostable material at two sites in Minneapolis starting this month. Food scraps, eggshells, coffee grounds and pizza boxes – even meats, bones, dairy and some other items that backyard composting can’t manage – can be brought to Pearl Park (accepting now from registered participants) or the South Transfer Station (bring your ID showing a Minneapolis address). More locations may become available this summer and fall to make dropping off organics more convenient. Materials you can drop off include all food waste, food-soiled and non-recyclable paper (paper plates, napkins, pizza boxes), and other compostable organic materials such as coffee grounds and filters, cotton swabs, dryer lint and wooden freezer pop sticks. Drop off your organic materials in a compostable bag (either paper or certified compostable plastic). Larger items such as pizza boxes and wax coated boxes don’t need to be bagged. For locations, hours, frequently asked questions, and a list of what is and isn’t accepted, see www.minneapolismn.gov/organics or call 612-673-2917.

Accessory Dwelling Units. In June Council Member Lisa Bender introduced a Zoning Code Text Amendments that would allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) in residential areas. ADUs are smaller dwellings that are attached to or on the same property as existing homes. ADUs are currently allowed with a conditional use permit in the North Phillips Overlay District, but they are not allowed in the rest of Minneapolis. Many cities across the country allow ADUs, including Seattle, Portland, and Austin. To explore the idea of allowing ADUs in Minneapolis, Planning (CPED) staff will host four open houses in August and September. Open houses will be held: **Saturday, August 23**, from 10:30am-12:30pm at the Hosmer Community Library, 347 E 36th Street; **Wednesday, August 27**, 5:00– 7:00pm at Eastside Neighborhood Services, 1700 2nd St NE; **Tuesday, September 16**, from 5:00 – 7:00pm at the North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave N; and **Wednesday, September 17**, 5:00 – 7:00pm at Kenwood Community Center, 2101 W Franklin Ave.

Trees for Businesses. Minneapolis businesses that pay pollution control fees and have enough space may be eligible for free trees. Our urban forest has been hard hit with storms, pests and diseases. Because of the emerald ash borer pest alone we will likely lose nearly 200,000 ash trees in Minneapolis, so we need to plant as many new trees as we can. One of the best options to replant trees is on private land and the City is planting trees on commercial properties for free. Qualifying businesses must maintain and water the tree. Learn more here <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/environment/green/index.htm>

Farmstand Proposal. This week my proposed amendments to reduce regulations on farmstands operating at community gardens, market gardens, and urban farms got a hearing at the Planning Commission. The Commission recommended that the City Council approve the amendment as proposed, with one additional change that would allow farmstands to keep one sign up through the entire growing season, rather than requiring operators to take the signs down whenever they were not in operation. The amendment already proposes eliminating the current requirement to obtain a Temporary Use Permit; increasing from 15 to 75 the number of days they can operate per year, and allowing the sale of products from other farms and gardens which are run by the same producer. You can read the staff report here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-129260.pdf>

On-Premise Signage Zoning Code Text Amendment. I am working to amend requirements related to signage being placed on the primary building wall. Current law restricts the signage to one primary entrance. I am interested in allowing some flexibility that will allow for more than one main entrance, particularly for buildings that face bikeways and transit lines.

Audit Committee. I am glad to see the city's Audit Committee is getting up and running again after an extensive period of review and restructuring. This month the Committee of the Whole approved the appointment of Scott Neal to the committee. Scott is a Minneapolis resident who is the former City Manager for Eden Prairie and current City Manager of Edina. I am hopeful that he can help realize the potential of this committee and a reliable and effective internal auditing system for Minneapolis.

Election Judge Pay Raise. This month I expect the Council to authorize an increase in the base pay rate for all election judges by \$2.45 per hour, reflecting the statewide increase in minimum wage, to be effective August 1, 2014, for the 2014 Primary & Gubernatorial Election. This means that the base Judge pay will go from \$8.75 to \$11.20 per hour. Head Judges will be paid \$12.95, and the highest paid precinct support and health care judges will make \$17.45.

Police Services Enhanced for Vikings Games. The Council has approved a 3-Year Agreement with the Minnesota Vikings Football for Law Enforcement Services in the neighborhoods adjacent the TCF Bank Stadium. The Police Department will provide extra law enforcement services to the neighborhoods during the 2 pre- and 8 regular season Minnesota Vikings football games for the 2014 football season. The Minnesota Vikings will reimburse expenses incurred by the Police Department for providing these services. The costs may be up to a total of \$100,000 and \$20,500 per game in the TCF Stadium if the Vikings are in the playoffs. This is a 3-year contract agreement and for 2015 and 2016 Football season, if the Vikings are still at the TCF Stadium, the annual contract cost will increase by 3%.

Open Streets on Franklin Ave. On **August 17th** the largest Open Streets event of the year will take place along 22 blocks of Franklin Avenue will be transformed into a safe, car-free area for people to bike, walk, play and hang with local organizations, businesses, artists and each other. Everyone is welcome to participate and volunteers are still needed to help. To volunteer with everything from facilitating chalk art activities at intersections to helping us keep the street clean and car free see openstreetsmpls.com/get-involved/. To learn more, visit openstreetsmpls.com or contact Beth Wagner at volunteer@mplsbike.org.

Yard Waste Processing Contract Goes to Ward 2 Business. The Council has approved contracting with Specialized Environmental Technologies, Inc.(SEC, located at the Bolander/SKB site at 630 Malcolm Avenue SE) for processing 100% of the city's yard waste for 3 years with the option of adding Source Separated Organics (SSO) processing in the future. The contract was awarded after a careful review and it was clear to the review group that this was the company with the best capacity and experience to provide these essential services to the city. Such an operation, however, does come with potential impacts to communities and, while this business has handled all the city's yard waste in from 1996-2003 and has been processing half of it for the past two years, I share concerns about how traffic and odors might potentially hinder or inconvenience current and future plans for significant development in this Prospect Park North area. To help address this I will be working with the Public Works director, our Planning and Economic Development staff, St. Paul officials and local stakeholders on a traffic study. I will also be carefully monitoring the operation to help minimize and mitigate potential odor complaints and make sure that these are addressed before the operation is expanded further.

Solar Suitability. The City of Minneapolis has developed a “Find my solar suitability” map application to help property owners in the City understand the potential for solar photovoltaic systems on their roof. The map contains estimates of a realistic maximum size and output of a solar PV system for individual structures. The website also contains information about solar incentives and more. For more information visit http://minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/action/renewable/sustainability_re_solar

Air Quality Test Sponsors Sought. We are in the midst of an extensive air quality study in Minneapolis. Some residents have asked for more air sampling canisters and they are now available for the air sample collection event Aug. 25-28 at an extra cost. Neighborhood and business organizations or residents are being asked to sponsor a canister for the City’s contract rate of \$165.50 per event. The August air collection event is the fourth air sampling of eight that will provide data for the City’s two-year neighborhood air quality study. For each air collection event, approximately 120 air collection canisters are placed citywide on commercial, residential, City and Park Board properties for 72 hours. Any sponsored canisters would add to the total of samples. Samples are being analyzed for 72 air pollutants that can potentially affect health. Results of the study will help the City understand and improve air quality in Minneapolis. For more information or to request a canister, email EnvironmentalServicesInfo@minneapolismn.gov or call 612-673-3023.

West River Parkway Closure. I am sorry to report that it looks like we will have to tolerate the closure of West River Parkway near the site of the mudslide that occurred in June for several more months. Park Board staff have reported that soil continues to move despite current efforts to prevent it and that another slide could occur. They are convinced that a more permanent and expensive solution is needed. They are working with University/Fairview and the Met Council (which owns a tunnel under the slope) to find a construction plan that will work for all groups. We might see construction this fall but it looks like roadway and trail will not reopen until next spring or summer.

Hazardous Waste Drop Off. Hennepin County will be providing hazardous waste collection services near the Second Ward area from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Thursday-Saturday, on August 21-23 at 340 27th Ave. NE and on October 9-11 at the Minneapolis Public Works Snelling facility, 3607 E. 44th St. For a list of materials accepted and not accepted, see www.hennepin.us/collectionevents or call Hennepin County Public Works Environmental Services at 612-348-3777.

Welcoming New Neighbors this Fall. As a new academic year begins soon and many new neighbors will be moving into the ward, especially in those areas on or close to the U of M and Augsburg campuses. To help ease the transitions of students moving into off campus housing, I will once again be joining other neighborhood, university and City volunteers on September 4 to help distribute welcome packets to student renters. Coordinated by the U of M’s Student and Community Relations department, the door-knocking and distribution will occur in the Marcy Holmes, SE Como, and Prospect Park neighborhoods. For more information, please email neighbor@umn.edu or call 612-626-5301 by Aug. 26.

Pack & Give Back. I am very glad to see that the student and resident free store and Pack and Give Back program is returning again this year. It will be held at the University of Minnesota ReUse Program warehouse. If you live in Marcy-Holmes, Como, Prospect Park, and Cedar-Riverside you can drop off donations at the warehouse from June 1st to August 24th, Monday to Friday, 8 am to 4 pm. Then, on August 25th, the free store will be open for all U of M students to shop at before the start of the semester. Neighborhood residents may use the free store from August 31st to September 6th, having made a donation prior. You can learn more at <http://www.facm.umn.edu/about/central-services/reuse/packandgiveback/>

Neighborhood Liaison Survey. The University of Minnesota's Office for Student and Community Relations is asking area residents to complete a survey to help them evaluate the impact of the Neighborhood Liaison Program and improve their programs. They are hoping to get response by August 18. You can find the survey at <http://z.umn.edu/scrnlp>

People's Center Health Services. Congratulations to the People's Center on the completion of their new pediatric wing at their Cedar Riverside Clinic at 425 20th Ave on the West Bank.

Minnehaha Ave (24th - 26th St E) Reconstruction. The City is planning a total street reconstruction of this small stretch of Minnehaha Avenue that will include new pavement, curbs and gutters, driveways, storm drains, sidewalks and signal modifications. This project is located on Minnehaha Ave between 24th St E and 26th St E. and construction is scheduled for 2015. There will be an informational meeting about this on **August 19, at 1 pm** in the community room at Gandhi Mahal, 3009 27th Ave. So. For more information see <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cip/all/WCMS1P-129264>

8th St SE Reconstruction and Street Lighting. The Council has taken the next steps to complete the much needed improvements to 8th St SE from 15th Av SE to approximately 1,100 feet east where the street will end in a cul-de-sac. The proposed improvements are street reconstruction and street lighting. 8th St SE from 15th Av SE to former 16th Av SE was paved with asphalt in 1973. The remainder of the street to the east is dirt. The University will be covering most of the costs of the construction, with other property owners on the street being assessed the standard assessments for road reconstruction and lighting. The layout was approved in December of 2013 and will consist of two-way traffic with parking lanes. A public hearing on the project approval and assessments will be held at the Transportation and Public Works Committee on September 9 at 9:30 am. It is possible that reconstruction could begin late this construction season, but it will more likely occur next year.

Openings on Boards and Commissions. Applications are now being accepted for the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee, Police Conduct Oversight Commission and Police Conduct Review Panel. Visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for more information.

Open Office Hours in the Ward. I hold open "Office Hours" in the ward every Thursday morning from 9:30 to 11:00 am. Please feel free to call the office at 673-2202 to reserve some time or just stop by for a visit.

- First Thursdays at the Nabo Café, 2211 Riverside Avenue;
- Second Thursdays at Black: Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE;
- Third Thursdays at Pratt School, 66 Malcolm Avenue SE ;
- Fourth Thursdays at Blue Moon Coffee Café, 3822 E Lake St.