



Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Longfellow, 5-21-15

Cam's Next Longfellow/Cooper Office Hours:
Thursday, May 28th, 9:30-11:00am
Blue Moon Coffee Café, 3822 E Lake St

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Items:

- 1) Public Meetings on NRP Fund Balances
- 2) The Farmers Market & Farmstand Map
- 3) Flavored Tobacco Products
- 4) Decriminalizing Spitting and Lurking
- 5) Pepper Spray Used in Protest
- 6) Century Link Cable Franchise.
- 7) Protected Bikeway Plan Released
- 8) Bird Safe Skyways
- 9) Parental Leave for City Employees
- 10) Backyard Fires
- 11) Plastic Bag Ban
- 12) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR) has been directed to engage neighborhood associations in developing guidelines for the use of unspent NRP money and requiring any neighborhood association not meeting those guidelines to develop a plan with specific timelines on how they will use those funds. NCR has asked that interested people and organizations participate in an online survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NRP_Funds.ncr@minneapolismn.gov. There will be a public meeting about this on **Tuesday, June 16** from 6:30-8pm, in the Crown Roller Mill Building, Second Floor Conference Room, 105 Fifth Ave S. For more background, go to <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/programs/WCMS1P-139963>.
- 2) The City has an online interactive map that makes it easy to find farmers markets. New in 2015, farmstand information for local urban farms and market gardens will also be added to our online Farmers Market map as it becomes available. Clicking on the map pins at www.minneapolismn.gov/farmersmarkets will show the address, season dates and opening times for each market. The map lists 30 farmers markets now; more will be added as information becomes available. The first market of the season – the Lyndale market – opens April 25.
- 3) I am co-authoring an ordinance change that would limit the sale of flavored tobacco products and any cigars or cigarettos under a certain price to licensed tobacco shops only. The hearing for this ordinance amendment is scheduled for Monday, June 8 at 1:30.
- 4) After 2 public hearings at The Public Safety, Civil Rights and Emergency Management Committee, the committee has recommended passage of the ordinance amendments I am co-authoring that will, if approved, repeal the City's prohibition on lurking with intent to commit a crime and spitting on the sidewalk and certain other places. I favor repeal of these ordinances because they are outdated, poorly crafted, unnecessary, ineffective and contribute to persistent racial and economic disparities in our city. The full Council will vote on this matter on June 5.

If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact

NCR@minneapolismn.gov or 612- 673-3737 (673-2157 TTY/VOICE)

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Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612- 673-3737;

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Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612- 673-3737.

- 5) I was very disturbed to learn that a young African American boy was pepper-sprayed during a protest earlier this month in downtown Minneapolis. I support the right of people to peacefully protest, and recognize that much of the progress we are making in our discussions about racial disparities in the criminal justice system are due to the power of grassroots organizing and protest. I thank Police Chief Janee Harteau and Mayor Hodges for taking this incident seriously and look forward to learning the results of a more complete investigation. into the concerns brought forth this evening. Our investigation will include gathering surveillance video and interviewing witnesses. I understand and appreciate people's concerns and will gather the full set of facts as quickly as possible. I assure everyone this will be a thorough investigation."
- 6) The Council has approved of a new CenturyLink cable television franchise ordinance that would allow Century Link to provide cable television services in Minneapolis. I supported this and see it as a way of helping provide choice and potentially better services and/or lower costs to cable television and internet service consumers in the city. Initially it appears that service will only be available to 15% of the city with a goal is to build-out the entire city over 5-years, based on market success, with a significant investment targeted to areas below the median income in the city.
- 7) Public Works staff has released a [Draft Protected Bikeway Update to the Bicycle Master Plan](#), I strongly recommend that everyone who cares about bicycling review the plan and email comments to the City via the address protectedbikewaysmpls@minneapolismn.gov. I am very supportive of the plan as presented and believe that strong support for it now will help insure that in future years we will allocate the funding and street space that will be required to implement it.
- 8) I am co-authoring, with Council Member Palmisano, an ordinance amendment that would require, or encourage, bird safe design practices to be used in the design in construction of new or renovated skyways in Minneapolis. I did this with the support of the Minneapolis Audubon chapter and reviewing research that demonstrated the significant contributions of skyways to collision mortalities of birds.
- 9) I was happy to support a motion at the Executive Committee to approve a parental leave policy for city employees that, if approved by the full council, will provide up to 120 hours (3 weeks) of paid leave to the new parents following the birth or adoption of a child. I would like to see this expended longer, but also recognize that there would be additional costs associate with that, and know that this is a great step forward. I am delighted that we are able to provide this as benefit to city employees. The United States is the only "industrialized" nation, and one of only 8 countries in the entire world, that does not mandate paid leave for mothers of newborn children.
- 10) Every spring questions and concerns about recreational fires come up. While recreational fires in your yard are allowed, City law prohibits such fires when wind speeds exceed 10 mph or when Minneapolis is under an air pollution advisory or alert. You can sign up for air quality alerts online at mn.enviroflash.info. You must also burn only untreated, unpainted, dry wood. Never burn cardboard boxes, trash or debris, because the smoke can be toxic. Outdoor fires are allowed between 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. and must be less than three feet in diameter and two feet high. They should be at least 25 feet away from a structure or combustible material and in a fire ring or pit with edges more than six inches high. Any illegal burning can result in a \$200 fine. And please remember for neighbors of asthma or other respiratory disease these fires can pose significant risks and hardship. For more information on recreational fires or to register a complaint about a recreational fire, call 311 or email Minneapolis311@minneapolismn.gov, or to register a complaint about a recreational fire outside 311 hours, call 911. The Fire and Police departments are authorized to extinguish a fire immediately if it is hazardous. To learn more about recreational fires, go to www.minneapolismn.gov/fire and click on "recreational fires Q and A."
- 11) I am looking at a plastic bag ban in Minneapolis. I am working with the Community Environmental Advisory Committee, fellow Council members and trying to coordinate with efforts in other cities like St. Louis Park to come up with a potential solution, and hope to move it forward this summer. One of reasons to do this: plastic bags are a real problem for recycling facilities. They wind around the machines that sort different types of recyclable material, and require the line to be shut down multiple times a day in order to keep everything running. More importantly, however, this is part of our ongoing commitment to moving toward a Zero Waste Minneapolis. Let me know what you think. <http://www.startribune.com/minneapolis-eyes-plastic-bag-ban-after-suburban-proposal/303481491/>
- 12) 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.