

Second Ward April 2016 E-newsletter

News from Cam Gordon

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Park Funding. The Minneapolis Park Board, City Council and Mayor have reached what may well be an historic agreement that will provide over \$10 million for neighborhood parks every year for the next 20 years to invest in neighborhood parks. On April 29th the Council unanimously approved a plan that obligates it to spend \$800,000,000 over the next 20 years to close the unmet needs for our neighborhood parks, as well as our city streets. I supported this proposal and believe that it offers a realistic way to address the current and future needs with acceptable revenue sources. It was also very encouraging to see racial equity incorporated clearly into the latest proposal in such a way to ensure that the historically underserved areas of racially concentrated poverty are given priority consideration. The agreement includes language requiring both Public Works and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to use this additional funding in accordance with economic equity criteria, reporting back to the City Council annually on progress. The basic proposal will increase total city spending by roughly 31 – 66 million dollars a year over the next 20 years. This will include bonding for (borrowing) \$239 million dollars that would be paid back within the 20 years with a potential total interest of up to \$37 million. The plan will provide an additional \$8 million in annual capital funds for neighborhood parks and a \$3 million increase the park's operating levy, as well as \$21.2 million annually for street capital improvements and an increase of \$800,000 per year for ongoing street maintenance. Most of it (82%) will be paid for through increases in the property tax levy, 7% from sales taxes and an increase in storm water fees, 5% from some clearly identified cash reserves in the first few years, and 5% from reductions in the special pension and tree levies. The proposal also stipulates that a large portion of the Consolidated Tax Increment Financing district, which currently supports the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department and helps fund neighborhood revitalization and organization work, will be decertified in 2020 to provide more property taxes to be used to support streets and parks. This (and the poor decision we made to use so much of our future sales tax revenue to fund the downtown professional football stadium) means that we will need to be open minded and thoughtful in finding alternative funding sources to support critical neighborhood, community engagement and revitalization work in our city. I thank everyone who contacted me and offered input about this issue. It is always helpful to hear from you. Many more details can be accessed at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-176478>. I do regret that we are grappling with these kinds of decisions outside our normal budget process, but know that these decisions will now be a part of this year's and future budget deliberations and understand that it was important to many people to resolve the park funding issue now if we were to avoid putting it on the ballot. I am glad now that we have an agreed upon path to provide needed funding, in a responsible way, over the next 20 years to maintain and improve our neighborhood parks and city streets. Both are worthwhile public investments that are sure to benefit the residents of Minneapolis for years to come.

Equity & Next Steps for Park Plan. The Park and Recreation Board will now have to pass their own similar park funding ordinance in May in order for the Council approved plan to move forward. I am confident they will do so and am also impressed that they will also be considering a second park ordinance in June that will help define and ensure how the funds will be equitably spent in neighborhood parks. The ordinance specific to neighborhood park funding is scheduled to come before the Park Board at their May 4 and 18 Board meetings, and will include a public hearing on May 18 at

5:45pm at 2117 West River Road. Additionally, they have developed a “Criteria Matrix” and a “Criteria Based System for MPRB Capital and Rehabilitation Project Scheduling” that explains what criteria will be used to determine where future funding is allocated. The criteria fall in two categories: community characteristics and park characteristics. Community characteristics include neighborhood demographic data such as identified racially concentrated areas of poverty, population density, youth population and crime statistics. The “Criteria Matrix” shows how each park was rated based on the racial and economic equity criteria. These tools could serve as models for helping us make better spending decisions in other areas as well, including in when and how we spend on street improvements. For more information about the parks criteria visit www.minneapolisparcs.org/closingthegap

Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance. Early this month, on a 10 to 3 vote, the City Council approved the Bring Your Own Bag ordinance that I co-authored with Council Member Warsame. The ordinance is intended to help us reduce litter, waste, environmental degradation and green house gas emissions through the thoughtful regulation of the distribution of carryout bags in retail establishments. It is based on similar ordinances already being implemented in a variety of cities throughout the United State including Seattle, WA and Cambridge, MA. The ordinance will take effect on June 1, 2017, which will provide time for stores and customers to adapt to the change if needed and for city staff to develop recommendations for a study, and plans for implementing and enforcing the ordinance. When it goes into effect, it will mean that retail establishments may not provide plastic carryout bags to any customer; retail establishments providing bags to customers may only use recyclable paper bags, compostable plastic bags or bags designed to be reusable multiple times and establishments providing bags must charge customers at least 5 cents per bag (customers who receive food assistance are exempted from paying for a bag) or they may choose to pay a 5 cents per bag distributed to a litter cleanup nonprofit in lieu of charging this fee. Certain types of plastic bags will be exempt from the prohibition, including produce bags that come into direct contact with food, takeout food bags, bags for newspapers and dry cleaning bags. This ordinance helps us take one more step towards being a more sustainable and “zero waste” city.

Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee. The Minneapolis Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC) is beginning work on the 2016 Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee Report. The CLIC Report recommends to the Mayor and City Council a portion of the capital improvement projects requested by departments, boards and commissions for the five-year period 2017 - 2021. For this period, Capital Budget Requests totaling over \$789 million have been requested. In advance of CLIC making their final recommendations, the public is invited to attend two Public Comment sessions and a Joint Public Hearing sponsored by the Planning Commission and the CLIC Executive Committee. Capital Budget Requests for consideration for the 2017 – 2021 timeframe can be accessed at: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/reports/WCMS1Q-068780>. Public comments on these proposals may be addressed to the CLIC Committee at three upcoming meetings: **Tuesday, May 3rd** from 6:30 – 8:00p, at Eastside Neighborhood Services, 1700 Second Street NE; **Thursday, May 5th** from 6:30 – 8:00 PM at Sabathani Center, Room J-3rd Floor, 310 East 38th Street; and at a Joint public hearing by the CLIC Committee and Planning Commission on Thursday **May 12th** at 6:00 pm in room 319 in City Hall.

Clean Energy Partnership wins EPA’s 2016 Climate Leadership Award. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has named the Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership a 2016 Climate Leadership Award winner in the Innovative Partnerships category for addressing climate change. This City-utility partnership has the City and utilities collaborating better meet the goals in our Climate Action Plan and realize our Energy Vision for 2040. The EPA, the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, and The Climate Registry honored 13 organizations, three partnerships and one individual in the fifth annual Climate Leadership Awards. Find more information about the 2016 Climate Leadership Award here.

Pollution Control Annual Billing (PCAB). Earlier this month, the Council passed an ordinance amendment, authored by Council Member Frey, that significantly reformed our program that allows the city to charge fees to offset impacts from polluting businesses, called the Pollution Control Annual Billing system. Now, for the first time, we will charge polluters based on their actual emissions, rather than by the air pollution remediation efforts taken. There are two main pollutant types, PM 2.5 (fine particulates) and Volatile Organic Compounds. Additionally we will be removing a sanitary connection fee for small businesses. Also, businesses who submit voluntary emission reduction projects will be allowed to be temporarily exempt from the fee for a period of 2-5 years based on the amount of pollution they are able to reduce and there will be an increased fee for dry cleaning businesses that still use perc and for auto body shops that do not use water borne paint. Special thanks for the good work of our Health Department's Environmental Services staff, led by Patrick Hanlon and Dan Huff.

Organics Cart Delivery Map. If you've already signed up for a new organics cart and expect it in the spring rollout, you can check here <http://minneapolismn.gov/solid-waste/organics/WCMS1P-140615> to see which week your cart will arrive. Find more information at www.minneapolismn.gov/organics.

Starting a Cooperative? I am delighted to report that the city's support for using cooperatives for economic development continues to grow. We are now offering a class for groups interested in creating a cooperative. Participants will learn how to evaluate or refine their co-op idea. The class will take place at the City of Minneapolis Innovation Center in the Crown Roller Mill Building, 105 5th Ave S, #150, every Wednesday from **May 11 to June 29**, from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. The Course is intended for groups of 2 or more interested in locating a co-op in Minneapolis. There is no cost to participate. More details can be found at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/business/C-TAP>

State of Co-ops. The city's new Co-op Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) hosted a State of Co-ops in Minneapolis presentation in April. There the City presented a co-op inventory showing that there are 118 total co-ops in Minneapolis and that of those 46 are active business co-ops, and 35 are housing co-ops. Information was also shared about co-op characteristics, opportunities and barriers they experienced during their creation. To learn more you can find the presentation here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmsp-178485.pdf>

Jamar Clark Decision. I was disappointed by County Attorney Mike Freeman's presentation late last month justifying his decision not to charge the two Minneapolis police officers involved in the killing of Jamar Clark. It is unfortunate that we still do not have definitive evidence that gives us a common understanding of what actually happened that evening; or a court proceeding where competing arguments, cross examination of witnesses and clear lines between defense and prosecution would be presented. Maybe we will learn more if there is a federal or civil trial and more sides can be presented. The County Attorney may be correct when he says that in our legal system the bar is so high he was unable to press charges and still be doing his job and that in our system the officers were justified in doing what they did. If so, maybe it is the system that is the problem. What happened to Jamar Clark is exactly what so many of us work to prevent. In this case we failed. I believe that we must do better and to that end, I will continue to work to help reform our criminal justice system in Minneapolis. To get started I offer the following nine ideas, drawn from a variety of sources including Campaign Zero (<http://www.joincampaignzero.org>), that should be (and some cases are already being) implemented in hopes of preventing this kind of thing from ever happening again:

1. Require more thorough and ongoing officer training on implicit bias, crisis intervention and de-escalation.

2. Eliminate standard police practices like the “ask, tell, make” model that encourages the rapid escalation of situations.
3. Require current and prospective police officers to undergo mandatory implicit racial bias testing, including testing for bias in shoot/don't shoot decision-making.
4. Develop a clear policy for considering an officer's level of racial bias in the hiring process, performance evaluations and decisions about whether an officer should be deployed to work in and with certain communities.
5. Establish and fund Mental Health Co-responder Teams to respond to crisis situations. These should include a mental health professionals and/or crisis counselors as well as specially trained police officers.
6. Remove barriers to effective investigations including provisions that allow officers to wait 48 hours or more before being questioned after an incident, and time for officers to talk and meet privately after an incident before being questioned.
7. Fully implement the police body camera program so that it is standard police practice in Minneapolis, and establish sound policies governing their use.
8. Require independent investigations of all cases where police kill or seriously injure civilians and in-custody deaths.
9. Establish a permanent Special Prosecutor's Office at the state or federal level for cases of police violence. The Special Prosecutor's Office should be required and authorized to prosecute all cases where police kill or seriously injure a civilian, in-custody deaths and cases where a civilian alleges criminal misconduct against a police officer.

Police Body Worn Camera Policy. I expect the final policy governing police worn camera's to be completed in May, before the first officers will begin wearing the cameras, beginning in the First Precinct, by the end of the month. After listening to the community concerns at meetings about the draft policy, I have concluded that it should be improved to include the following provisions: police should record interactions with all people who have not requested to be kept anonymous; police should notify subjects that, in certain instances, they have the option to remain anonymous and stop recording if they choose this option; police should allow civilians to review footage of themselves or their relatives and to request this be released to the public and stored for at least two years; and, the policy should prevent officers from reviewing footage of an incident before completing initial reports, statements or interviews about the incident. I will be working with Police Department administration to try to make these parts of the policy if possible.

Comprehensive Criminal Justice Reform Task Force. In April, I was very happy that the Police Conduct Oversight Commission voted to endorse my proposal to create a city task force to help develop recommendations for how the Council, Mayor and City departments can eliminate racial disparities within the areas of the criminal justice system that the city of Minneapolis controls or influences. I have met with key department leadership staff and a representative from the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice (<https://trustandjustice.org/pilot-sites/info/minneapolis-minnesota>) and, based on some concerns they raised, am now evaluating next steps and possibly delaying the timeline in order to allow the National Initiative to complete its next phase of work before bringing the proposal forward for City Council approval, which could be late summer or early fall. This is disappointing and, despite a number of reform efforts underway, I continue to have concerns about a lack of focus and coordination in this critically important area of criminal justice reform. For your reference, here is a little news story about it that appeared the day I presented it to the Police Conduct Oversight Commission, <http://kstp.com/news/criminal-justice-reform-task-force-minneapolis-racial-disparities/4069632/>

Blueprint for Equitable Engagement. The Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee discussed the Neighborhood and Community Relations plan for equitable engagement in April. At that meeting we determined to hold it in committee in order to allow committee members to be briefed more fully, and bring it back to the committee on May 16th for possible amendments, before recommending approval to the full Council. I believe that this plan, developed over the course of more than a year with input from community and neighborhood groups, offers great potential to improve our community engagement efforts in the city, to strengthen the capacity of neighborhood organizations, and the city's our partnership with them, and also to improve the functioning and effectiveness of our boards and commissions. To learn more visit

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-176586>

Emergency Shelters Ordinance Public Hearing. The ordinance finishing the work of reforming our rules and regulations governing Overnight and Emergency Shelters the my colleague Lisa Bender and I passed last year will be coming forward for a public hearing on **May 16**. This ordinance amendment would add a new chapter to our Health and Sanitation section to provide for the licensing and regulation of Emergency Shelters.

80% by 2050. The Council's Health, Environment and Community Engagement committee has received an exciting report on a carbon reduction modeling project that the City's Sustainability staff have worked on with the company Siemens. The modeling system is called the City Performance Tool (CyPT), and allowed us to study a series of more than 70 technologies from building, transport and energy technologies. The great news: it is possible to reach the City's very aggressive goal to cut our carbon emissions by 80% by 2050. It is achievable, but only with a lot of work. This tool lays out how we can tackle that work, through a combination of interventions like greening the electricity grid, investing in a number of different building energy efficiency improvements, and reducing the percentage of trips made by car and substantially electrifying the car fleet. I encourage everyone who is interested to check out the presentation, here:

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/agenda/wcmSP-178225.pdf>. I

want to thank our current and former Sustainability office staff for their work on this: Gayle Prest, Brendon Slotterback, Siri Simons, and Kelly Muellman. I also want to note that much of this has been made possible by policies I have championed, like adopting this aggressive 80% by 2050 goal, passing a strong Climate Action Plan, and pushing to create the Clean Energy Partnership.

Evaluation of City's Food, Lodging and Pools Licensing Program. The City's Health Department has received a good result in a recent audit by the State Health Department. This is important because back in 2010, the department received an "unacceptable" rating from the State. We need to keep an acceptable rating in order to continue having our own health department inspect restaurants, grocery stores and all of the other types of businesses that we have a delegation agreement with the state to inspect. I want to thank Dan Huff, Ryan Krick and their highly capable staff for making this impressive turnaround, and Health Commissioner Gretchen Musicant for having such an effective and, yes, *healthy* department. It is worth noting that the food, lodging and pools inspectors were in the Regulatory Services department when the program received the "unacceptable" rating, and that it's clear that not only are our inspectors delivering better work product today, their job satisfaction is significantly higher. For more information, please see:

<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/agenda/wcmSP-177818.pdf>.

3rd Avenue Design. The Council missed a significant opportunity to make Minneapolis a more walkable, bikeable city with our decision on the 3rd Ave S layout. On a vote of 7-6, the Council voted to scrap the original three-lane staff recommendation for 3rd Ave S, south of 8th St, and replace it with a worse four-

lane layout. Unfortunately the majority voted to sacrifice all of those potential benefits and lock in a less-safe 3rd Ave, to satisfy what appear to be unfounded concerns of a few building managers or owners. I believed that all of the facts pointed to the superiority of a 3-lane layout. It would be safer, it would move traffic equally well, it would increase greening, and it would make for a more vibrant street. That said, it is very good that we approved a high-quality protected bikeway on 3rd Avenue South this morning. That's a big win, and it matters. I look forward to seeing the bikeway installed, and riding on it. Still, it was disappointing that a slimmest of possible Council majority voted for a layout with nothing to recommend it but the feelings of a few building managers, ignoring facts, our professional staff's analysis, and the voices of all of the other stakeholders, including our own Council appointed advisory groups.

Hennepin Avenue. Public Works staff have presented a conceptual layout for the reconstruction of Hennepin Avenue in downtown from 12th St S to Washington Ave S. I am very supportive of the general direction of this layout, which provides for a curb-protected bike lane in both directions and four travel lanes (down from five most blocks today). There is more work yet to be done to design what this will look like. I am especially interested in ensuring that the travel lane widths are reduced to the maximum extent possible, so that we can keep as much pedestrian space as possible. I'm intrigued by the way that this layout deals with the conflict between bus stops and bike lanes by curving the bike lane around the 'inside' of the bus stop, away from traffic. I think that this layout, with the additional design work that will happen between now and when the project is actually constructed in 2020, will be better for all users: people on foot, people on bikes, transit riders, adjacent businesses and drivers. The Council will have the opportunity to vote on this proposed layout in June, as part of an application for federal funding for this project.

2015 Young Male Sexual Health Assessment. In April the Health, Environment and Community Engagement committee heard an interesting research report on youth sexual health. While teen pregnancy rates continue to decline, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) rates have increased or remained stagnant across the City. 15-24 year olds across the City have the highest rates of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea, with significant disparities for young men of color. To better understand the social determinants of health that have created this public health issue, the Adolescent Health and Youth Development Division of the Health Department invested in a qualitative participatory youth-led project, conducted in 2015 in partnership with Youthprise. Youth researchers defined the issues present in communities for young men of color, and made recommendations that could further the impact of potential programs, practices, and policies. Twelve youth research consultants were trained in social justice research, youth participatory action research processes including data collection and analysis, and sexual health data interpretation. Over the summer and fall of 2015, over 100 young men from the African American, American Indian, and Latino communities participated in focus groups and interviews. The youth research consultants made the following recommendations for how we can better connect with young men to provide access to high quality sexual health education, access to clinics for testing and health care with male and adolescent friendly services that will support youth male sexual health, ultimately benefitting their partners, and reducing disparities across the City. To see them and learn more visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-177851>

New Head of Finance. Mark Ruff has been hired as the City's new chief financial officer and director of the Finance and Property Services Department, overseeing more than 250 employees in five divisions: controller, enterprise financial management, property services, procurement and treasury. Ruff joins the City after more than 25 years in public finance in Minnesota working as a consultant with Ehlers Companies for large and small cities and counties. In that capacity he helped the City with financing for the Nicollet Mall renovations and worked on funding for the Northstar Commuter Rail project, the City

of Duluth's waterfront revitalization, the State of Minnesota's 911 emergency radio system and Ramsey County's purchase of the former Army ammunition plant in Arden Hills.

New Communications Director. Greta Bergstrom has been hired as Director of the Communications Department. For the past 7 years, Greta has led all facets of strategic communications, earned media and marketing work for TakeAction Minnesota. She has also worked in advertising and marketing at North Woods Advertising and Best Buy. As Director of Communications, Greta will oversee and support the City's communications efforts to share City government news and information to the public.

Leading by Example on Equity. I am delighted to report that the City's office of Equity and Inclusion is taking several initiatives to help our city government better address racial disparities within the city enterprise. Starting this spring it will offer all city employees "Foundations of Equity" certification training. This series of five classes will provide tools and strategies to help City workplaces value, respect and leverage diversity more. Managers and supervisors will also be offered training to manage unconscious bias in the hiring process in a "Cultural Intelligence in Hiring," course. Additionally, the Office of Equity and Inclusion is launching a new employee book club focused on equity and inclusion. The first book we will read is "A Good Time for the Truth: Race in Minnesota," a collection of essays, edited by Sun Yung Shin, that features 16 Minnesota writers sharing their experiences living as people of color in Minnesota.

MPS Superintendent Search. I was pleased to learn that the Minneapolis Public Schools search for a new superintendent will include several public listening sessions even before any candidates have been identified to seek community input on several key questions. These include questions like, "What leadership qualities should the selection committee look for in the new superintendent? And, "What do you consider to be the greatest challenges facing Minneapolis Public Schools?" The meeting closest to Ward 2 was held on April 29 at the Brian Coyle Center and there will be one final meeting on **May 5th** from 6-7:30 pm at the Urban League at 2100 Plymouth Ave N. Childcare, Interpreters, and Refreshments will be provided. You can learn more about all the listening sessions and the larger search process here: <http://board.mpls.k12.mn.us/super-search>.

Intentional Community Ordinance. I am working in conjunction with the Minneapolis Coalition for Intentional Communities on an ordinance amendment that would allow Intentional Communities to share housing up to the maximum safe occupancy of the dwelling they are sharing. Intentional communities will be defined as self-identified groups of two or more people living together, who share in the management and governance of their household, and who share in the work to maintain their residence. Some intentional communities are cooperatives; others have a less-formal set of agreements. The ordinance will create a registration process that will be run by the Regulatory Services department. To register, an Intentional Community will have to provide its name and address, a single point of contact, the property owner's name, address and a signed statement of approval; a notarized statement that the Intentional Community meets the City's standards; a floor plan, so that the City can determine the maximum safe occupancy; and legal documentation establishing the existence of the Intentional Community as a cooperative or other legal entity, if any such documentation exists, along with any applicable lease. There will be significant safeguards in place to ensure that unscrupulous landlords and problematic tenants will not be able to take advantage of this ordinance. A landlord will only be allowed to have an ownership interest in **one** dwelling occupied as an Intentional Community (though cooperatives whose members live in the dwellings they own will not be subject to this limitation). **No** landlords with any problem properties (defined as Tier II or Tier III) may have an Intentional Community register in one of their properties. And if a household registered as an Intentional Community does not meet the City's standards at any point, that household may lose its

Intentional Community status and revert to the zoning code's maximum occupancy. Additionally, if registered Intentional Communities violate other laws – hosting noisy and unruly assemblies, breaking the “social hosting” ordinance by having underage drinking on the premises, etc. – that household may lose its Intentional Community status. I have long believed that the way we regulate maximum occupancy in the Zoning Code is problematic, and should change. We need to open our minds – and our laws – to a more flexible definition of ‘family’ that better matches the way many people want to live together in the 21st Century. I view this change as a small, cautious step in that direction, and hope to see it become law in the next few months. My office will be organizing community meetings later this spring and summer to discuss this idea, and I am also open to attending any neighborhood group that would like to receive a presentation on this concept.

Talking is Teaching Citywide Campaign. This spring the city will launch “Talking is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing Minneapolis” to help encourage vocabulary development in young children ages 0-3 by urging parents to do more talking to infants and toddlers, like naming and describing everyday objects, singing songs, or telling stories. In partnership with *Too Small to Fail*, a joint initiative of the Clinton Foundation and The Opportunity Institute, this campaign has developed a framework urging parents and caregivers to engage in early brain and language development. This is one part of the Cradle 2 K initiative hoping to apply early childhood research that has found that vocabulary development in the early years is linked to later success learning to read. The campaign is expected to launch in mid-June with bus and billboard ads. For more information on Talking is Teaching see <http://talkingisteaching.org/>.

City Honors Kirk Washington Jr. The City Council passed a resolution in April honoring Kirk Washington Jr., a well-known and well-loved Minneapolis artist, father and community activist, who was killed in a terrible head on car crash April 4 near highways 280 on I 94. The Mayor also issued a proclamation in Washington's honor and named **Monday, May 9, Kirk Washington Day** in Minneapolis. Washington, a community organizer, spoken-word artist, poet and storyteller, became an embedded artist in the City last summer through the Creative CityMaking initiative. The initiative pairs City staff with experienced community artists to advance the City's goal of eliminating economic and racial disparities. You can learn more here: <http://www.fox9.com/news/117598812-story>.

Prince. The City Council, Mayor, entire city, the state, country and people throughout the world have been deeply engaged in grieving the death and celebrating the life of Prince, who passed away this month. It has been comforting to see our community coming together to honor the passing of one of our own. Prince made a big impression on so many of us, including me, and the response to his passing speaks loudly to the vital role music, art and culture play in our lives and in the life our city. As one small gesture the Council passed a resolution honoring him on April 29th. The City has also received many ideas about how we can celebrate his legacy in other ways, including street re-namings, murals, adding his name to parks and buildings and more. I believe that the Council and Mayor are committed to ensuring that his legacy is honored appropriately but want to do so in a thoughtful way that is also sensitive to Prince's family and allows them time to grieve and be part of the process or considering the best options. If you have suggestions or ideas, please forward them to Gulgun Kayim, our Director of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy at Gulgun.Kayim@minneapolismn.gov.

Franklin Ave Bridge Closes May 8th. Construction activity on the Franklin Avenue Bridge will be continuing this spring and summer. In April, crews began work on the bridge deck itself it will close for the summer at 8:00 pm on Sunday May 8th. It will stay closed to cars, bikes and pedestrians until Labor Day. If you have any questions or concerns, contact franklinbridge@hennepin.us or 888-474-8929. More information is available at www.hennepin.us/franklinbridge. The closing of the Franklin Avenue bridge this year is going to impact businesses in the Seward and Prospect Park neighborhoods that have

customers from the across the river. For some businesses in Seward these customers represent 25% or more of their sales. A significant drop in sales is going to be difficult for many of these businesses. It is going to important for us all to be mindful about the impact of the bridge closing on our neighborhood businesses in the months ahead. Please shop locally.

Great Streets Business District Support Grants. Congratulations to several Ward 2 Business associations who have been approved to receive funds for business district revitalization activities including marketing and branding tactics, education and engagement work, events, business recruitment efforts, and placemaking strategies in one year grant contracts. The Council has authorized funding contracts with the Dinkytown Business Alliance for \$32,000, the Lake Street Council for \$50,000, the Midtown Greenway Coalition for \$8,000, the Native American Community Development Institute for \$14,000, Prospect Park 2020, Inc. for \$10,000, the Seward Civic and Commerce Association for \$5,000, Seward Redesign for \$38,000, and the West Bank Business Association for \$37,000. The Great Streets Program was created to support the city's neighborhood business districts, which provide important goods, services, amenities, and jobs for residents and add character to communities. The program demonstrates the City's commitment to maintaining healthy commercial corridors and strengthening those with room to improve. To learn more about how funds will be used by the organizations see <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcmssp-178137.pdf>

Transit Oriented Development Funding. On Friday April 29th, the council voted to authorize submission of the 2016 Hennepin County Transit Oriented Development Grant applications to Hennepin County. The recommended projects include 3 in Second Ward neighborhoods: the Aeon Prospect Park affordable housing project in the University Avenue Innovation District, the Franklin Gateway project at the old Blue Nile site, and Green 4th Street in Prospect Park. The Aeon project, at 3001 4th Street SE, request of a \$450,000 loan would assist with the construction of 75 new apartment homes that include 30 units for unaccompanied youth with dependent children, 38 affordable apartments for families under 60% of area median income, and seven unrestricted apartments. The Green Fourth Street proposal is an application from University of Minnesota Foundation, Real Estate Advisors for use on 4th Street SE between Malcolm Avenue and 25th Avenue SE and includes a grant request of \$1,400,000. The funds will be used for utilities, public infrastructure, wayfinding, lighting, bicycle infrastructure, site work, landscaping, sidewalks/trails, stormwater management, streetscaping, street furnishings and transit shelters in the University Avenue Innovation District. The street directly links the Prospect Park and Stadium Village LRT stations. The Green Fourth project will provide active social space, bikeways, and walkways and is seen as a catalyst to the redevelopment of this District serving area businesses, residents and the general public. Two projects are in Ward 6 but close to the Franklin LRT station and may be of special interest to some of you. The Franklin Gateway proposal of Seward Redesign includes a grant request of \$700,000 to acquire properties at 2010 and 2101 Minnehaha Avenue and act as Master Developer for their redevelopment as a catalyst gateway to the Franklin LRT Station. The properties are located 1 block from the Franklin LRT. Redesign's intent is to redevelop the site as a higher-density mixed use development with retail on the first floor and at least 3 stories of housing above, residential and retail parking below grade with some surface parking at the rear. Designs are very preliminary at this point. The American Indian Community Development Corporation's request of \$709,600 for the acquisition of land at 2105, 2109, and 2113 Cedar Avenue would assist with the Acquisition of the Ambles Property located immediately adjacent to the Franklin LRT Station for future redevelopment. The site will be a vertical mixed use development which may include a mix of office, housing, hotel and retail uses.

The Como Blueprint. The formal city process for approval of the SE Como Blueprint, the neighborhood's small area plan, will be getting formally underway next week. This planning process was initiated by the neighborhood organization roughly 4 years ago and it has taken a great deal of work from the community and the Southeast Como Improvement Association to reach this important milestone. You can find it at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/projects/ComoBlueprint>. The plan is set to go before the Planning Commission for review on May 12, to the Planning Commission for a public hearing on May 23rd and to the Council's Zoning and Planning Committee on June 23rd. If all goes as planned it should be considered and likely approved by the City Council on July 1.

Bunge Grain Elevators Project. On April 5th the Heritage Preservation Commission approved Project for Pride in Living's application for the demolition of the Bunge Grain Elevators in Southeast Como located at 937 13th Ave SE, 901 12th ½ Ave SE, 901 12th Ave SE, 1200-06 Brook Ave SE, under the conditions that most of the head house shall be preserved to allow for future additions and no more than 80% of the 1935 Annex Elevator will be removed.

Franklin, Minnehaha, Cedar Intersection. The Council has approved a County redesign that will transform the large and problematic intersections of Cedar, Franklin, and Minnehaha. This has been identified as an area in need of improvements for well over 10 years. Seward residents call it "No Man's Land," and it is between them and their only Blue Line LRT stop at Franklin. It's the worst intersection in Minneapolis for bike/car crashes, and one of the worst for crashes of all kinds. A few years ago, the City constructed a new connection between 22nd St E and Cedar, in hopes that it would make just such a transformation of Cedar/Franklin/Minnehaha possible. When this project is complete, Minnehaha will be closed north of Franklin. Cedar will meet Franklin in a squarer, more 'normal' way. The intersection of Minnehaha (to the south) will also meet Franklin in a squarer way. The bike lanes on Franklin that currently disappear west of 21st Ave S will extend all the way through this area. People on foot will be able to walk much more comfortably from Seward to the Franklin light rail station. Space will be created on the north side of Franklin for future development (though this will take some work to move the utilities that are currently under Minnehaha). I want to thank Public Works staff and County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin and Hennepin County staff for their work on this. The County has been a great partner on this, as has been my colleague Abdi Warsame who has been very engaged in pushing for this project since this area was moved from Ward 2 to Ward 6. This was also pushed forward to a huge extent by the Seward Neighborhood Group and the City's Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and this is their win as much as anyone's.

29th Ave S Bike/Walk Street. The City and parents who are active with Seward Montessori recently learned that we will be receiving a \$300,000 grant to transform 29th Ave S into a "Bike/Walk Street," sometimes also known as a bicycle boulevard, from at least Franklin Avenue to Lake Street. Public Works staff are currently working on plans, which may include some traffic diverters that will allow people on bikes and on foot to continue, but prevent cars from using 29th as a through street. There will be additional conversation about the test closure of 29th at the Greenway, and whether to keep that closure or replace it with some other solution that will work well for both the Greenway and 29th. I am also interested in trying to find a way for the facility to reach all the way down to Minnehaha Avenue.

New Augsburg College Science Building. Construction of the Hagfors Center at Augsburg near 6th street and 21st Avenue will be starting in May. Augsburg will be posting regular updates about the project at <http://www.augsburg.edu/hagforscenter/construction-project-updates>. They will also be setting up an e-mail subscription system so that community members can receive notice as new information about the construction project becomes available. Please let Steve Peacock, (at 612-330-1583, peacock@augsborg.edu) know if you have other ideas for how Augsburg can keep neighbors informed.

Prospect Park Trail Update. In April the City Council voted to authorize City staff to negotiate with CP Rail for the possible acquisition of property needed to construct the Prospect Park Trail. This could then allow us to use the segment of the Soo Line railroad right-of-way so that a trail connection can be made between 27th Avenue and Franklin Avenue Southeast, and then to Essex as part of future private development projects. The City Council would need to approve the purchase if an agreeable price can be established.

Franklin Ave. SE Reconfiguration. Franklin Ave in Prospect Park is scheduled to be resurfaced this summer and in April I signed off on the staff recommendation to include bike lane striping as part of the project. This is identified in the City's Bicycle Master Plan and has been the subject of community meetings and parking studies earlier this year. To accommodate the bike lanes and comply with state traffic lane width standards, parking removal is required on both sides of the street. In order to accommodate two exceptional parking needs, alternatives configuration will occur at the two churches, St. Francis Cabrini (1500 Franklin SE) and St. Panteleimon (2210 Franklin SE) during regular church services. At St. Francis Cabrini, parking will be allowed on the South side of Franklin between Thornton, and the railroad crossing and on the bridge over I-94. At St. Panteleimon, where on street parking demand was significantly lower, a handicap transfer zone will be established on Franklin in front of the church. I am also working closely with the one household on Franklin Av SE without off-street parking to find a way to get that provided on their property. It's worth noting that by the end of this year, there will be a seamless bicycle connection on Franklin all the way from Cedar Avenue into St. Paul. I view this as a great step forward for traffic calming on Franklin and for people on bikes in southeast Minneapolis.

Franklin Ave. Protected Bikeway. On the west side of the river on Franklin, the city is planning to install a two way protected bike lane on Franklin between 29th Ave and Seabury later this year. This small 3 block long bike lane will connect to existing bike lanes on Franklin and on Riverside Ave to the west; to the new protected bikeways that will part of the rehabilitated Franklin Bridge; and, to a potential new bike boulevard being proposed for 29th from Franklin to Lake Street. You can find more details at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles/projects/WCMSP-171551>

Open Office Hours in the Ward. I usually 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 confirm that I am holding office hours on the day you want to stop by or reserve some time when I will be there.
First Thursdays at the Oren Gateway Center, Nabo Café, 2211 Riverside Avenue;
Second Thursdays at Black: Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE;
Third Thursdays at Espresso Expose, 600 Washington Ave SE;
Fourth Thursdays at Blue Moon Coffee Café, 3822 E Lake St.

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