

Second Ward August 2017 E-newsletter

News from Cam Gordon

Council Member, Second Ward

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

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Mayor's Proposed Budget. Mayor Hodges delivered her 2018 recommended budget to the City Council on August 15 in the form of an 8 page statement that you can read here:

<https://www.scribd.com/document/356388000/2018-Budget-Message>. The Mayor's budget proposes a 5.5 percent increase in the property-tax levy for 2018, which includes the 20-year parks and streets improvements property-tax increases approved last year. She will deliver her formal 2018 budget address at noon on September 12th in the Council Chamber and present a more detailed budget then. Departments will be presenting their proposed budgets to the Council through September and October, with formal public hearings at 6:05pm on November 29th and December 6th. Prior to the hearing and final budget adoption on December 6th, the Council has reserved December 1st as budget "markup" day when Council Member amendments are presented and considered. Amendments may also be made after the hearing on the 6th as well.

Franchise Fee Increase to Fight Climate Change. The Mayor's proposed budget includes an additional source of revenue through a 0.5 % increase in the City's natural gas and electricity franchise fees. This could bring in an estimated \$2 million and is consistent with the Clean Energy Partnership's call to raise additional resources aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions, implementing more of our Climate Action Plan and paying for renewable energy efforts undertaken by the City, its residents and businesses. I have been a long time advocate of this strategy and plan to support the budget proposal and the needed amendments to our city code of ordinances to make it possible.

Zero Waste Plan. The City has drafted a citywide zero waste plan to help reduce waste and reach our goals to recycle and compost 50% of our overall waste stream by 2020 and 80% by 2030. To share the plan and gather feedback, I am cohosting a community meeting with my colleague Abdi Warsame on **Thursday, September 14th** from 6-8pm at Matthews Park, 2318 29th Ave S. The City is also hosting engagement sessions on **Monday, September 11th**, from 6-8pm at the Minneapolis Urban League, 2100 Plymouth Avenue North and **Wednesday, September 13th**, from 6-8pm at Sabathani Community Center, 310 East 38th Street. Additionally, the city will have a website platform and survey dedicated to gathering feedback online. The launch of the site will be on September 7th, 2017. You can find out more here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/mayor/ZWM/index.htm>.

Your City, Your Vote. The ballot for the 2017 municipal election has been set. The lists for all candidates who filed for municipal offices can be seen at vote.minneapolismn.gov/candidate/FILING. This year we will again use ranked-choice voting to elect a Mayor and members of the City Council, Board of Estimate and Taxation, and Park and

Recreation Board. See vote.minneapolismn.gov for accurate, timely information about this year's election and ranked-choice voting, including information on voter registration, absentee ballots, finding your voting locations, getting a sample ballots and more.

Early Voting. Election Day is **November 7**, but for the first time in a local election, people can choose to vote before Election Day by absentee ballot without providing a reason starting on **September 22**. This includes voting by mail and early voting in person by absentee ballot. In-person early voting takes place at the Downtown Early Vote Center, at 217 S. Third St., at the corner of Third Ave S and Third St S. Standard voting hours will be Monday-Friday from 8am until 4:30pm, with extended hours including weekends in the final days before Election Day.

New Online Voter Resource. A new website called MSPVotes, put together by a group called Wedge LIVE, has compiled a large amount of potentially helpful information regarding the upcoming local elections. This includes information gathered by researching all the 2016-2017 campaign finance reports and pulling out noteworthy contributions to highlight patterns of donations from specific individuals, business sectors, Political Action Committees and organizations. While not an exhaustive analysis of all donations you might find it very informative and I encourage you to review it before voting. After reviewing it myself, my commitment to campaign finance reform and exploring a system of publically financed campaigns for Minneapolis has been strengthened. So far, for example, developers alone account for over \$108,000 in campaign contributions to Minneapolis candidates. Find more information at <https://elections.wedgelive.com/>

New Police Chief Appointed. The City Council has unanimously approved Mayor Hodges' nomination of Medaria "Rondo" Arradondo as our new Chief of Police, our first African American police chief. Arradondo joined Minneapolis Police Department in 1989 as a patrol officer in the 3rd Precinct. He has served as a school resource officer, a northside beat officer, internal affairs investigator and has property-crime investigation experience. More recently he has served as 1st Precinct inspector, deputy chief and chief of staff. The public swearing-in for Chief Arradondo will take place on **Friday, September 8th** at 2pm at Sabathani Community Center, 310 E 38th Street, with a reception to follow in the gymnasium.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory. A report coming forward in September confirms that greenhouse gas emissions from citywide activities decreased 17.8% in 2015 compared to a 2006 baseline. That exceeds the reduction goal of 15% by 2015. Emissions decreased over 10% from 4,758,487 metric tons in 2014 to 4,250,783 in 2015, most likely due to warmer winter weather and less natural gas consumption. As we get more of our electricity from cleaner sources, reaching our goals of a 30% reduction by 2025 and 80% by 2050 will be very challenging if we do not find alternatives to natural gas to heat our buildings and the intense use of fossil fuels for transportation.

Clean Energy Partnership 2016 Report. The Clean Energy Partnership 2016 Annual Report will be presented to the Health Environment and Community Engagement Committee on **September 11**. The report includes data on 8 metrics and offers a tool to help determine the

value of the partnership. You can find the report at <https://mplscleanenergypartnership.org/documents/>.

Renewable Electricity Options for Municipal Operations. On August 21 the Council was presented with a report outlining steps the City enterprise could take to obtain 100% of its electricity from renewable sources within five years. Staff determined that by 2022 the City can significantly increase the amount of renewably sourced electricity from the current 17.9% to slightly above 90% with a mix of Xcel Energy Wind Source and Renewable Connect programs and solar installations on City owned buildings and land. The remaining approximately 10% would be from community solar gardens where the Renewable Energy Credits are owned by Xcel Energy. Using today's available technology, the City should be able to reduce its total electricity usage from 102 million kWh by 15% to 86 million kWh by the year 2022. One recommendation for consideration, that I will be perusing in the upcoming months, includes utilizing city-owned land at the Water Treatment Facilities to install a City-owned solar array totaling 6 million kWh annually (6% of current annual usage). The payback on these arrays would be take roughly 13 years and would require a \$10 to \$12 million investment. The second recommendation would be to increase the City's Renewable Connect contract from 17.8 million kWh by another 50 million kWh. This would increase the City's Xcel charges by \$250,000 - \$500,000 annually, equaling a 2.4% - 4.8% increase in annual charges. A 50 million kWh contract would bring the City to 67% renewable electricity for its municipal operations. As a next step, with my support, the Council approved moving forward with the last recommendation and authorized obtaining the additional 50 million to 65 million kWh of annual electricity the program. You can read the full report at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-203474>

Lower Speed Limits. The Council has added language to its Legislative Policy Positions to include specific support for "enabling local municipalities to set underlying speed limits, and supporting additional design features on local roadways" to reduce crashes, and support neighborhood livability. Currently the state, not local units of government, set speed limits on local streets, with few exceptions. This summer the National Transportation and Safety Board (NTSB) concluded that "excessive speed is one of the most significant causes of both crashes and fatalities on U.S. roadways." In 2011 one study (<https://www.aaafoundation.org/impact-speed-and-pedestrians-risk-severe-injury-or-death>) found that nine out of 10 pedestrians survive a crash with a car going 20 mph, but only five out of 10 survive when hit by a car going 30 mph, and just one in 10 when the car is going 40 mph. In 2016 Minnesota pedestrian deaths from automobiles reached a 25 year high at 60. More flexibility from the state could be key to our goal of having zero bike or pedestrian fatalities from vehicle crashes in Minneapolis. For more information see <http://usa.streetsblog.org/2017/07/27/ntsb-speed-kills-and-were-not-doing-enough-to-stop-it/> and <http://usa.streetsblog.org/2017/08/08/the-state-with-the-deadliest-traffic-in-america-admits-its-high-speed-streets-have-to-change/>

Vision Zero. In September the Transportation Public Works committee will consider a resolution that would, 1) commit the City to a goal of zero deaths and serious injuries as a result of crashes on City Streets by 2027; 2) establish a Vision Zero Task Force; and, 3) develop a

Vision Zero action plan. I am very supportive of this effort. For more on the vision Zero network see <http://visionzeronetwork.org/>

Annual Ethics Report. The Council received our Ethical Practices Board annual report in August. Last year the City Attorney's Office handled 259 ethics inquires and 73 formal complaints. You can review the full report at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-204295>.

Northern Metals Consent Decree Advisory Committee. In September the Council will consider formally establishing an advisory committee to help plan how to spend the \$600,000 to be used for pollution and health mitigation efforts in the vicinity of the metal recycling facility awarded to the City as part of a court settlement between the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and Northern Metals.

Minneapolis Television Network (MTN). I did not vote to support the Council action approving ending the long term relationship and oversight of the City Council with MTN. As a result the City Council will no longer appoint board members or serve as members of the cooperation. This was apparently required because MTN no longer qualifies as a public nonprofit under M.S §465.719. It can be a nonprofit organization and continue to serve as the City's public access provider through the annual contract agreement, already in place. Because of community concerns raised the day before the vote and the fact that no new bylaws or legal structure had yet been approved by the MTN Board, I wanted to delay Council action. You can learn more at http://news.minneapolismn.gov/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/FAQs_MTN.pdf and <http://mailchi.mp/16297f40dbc3/betsy-hodges-mpls-is-trying-to-silence-publics-voice-and-make-private?e=d2462a90bb> Going forward, MTN may continue to operate as a Minnesota nonprofit corporation for the same or similar purposes without official City involvement at the corporate organizational level. Public access services provided to the City by MTN are currently managed through a performance agreement, and this same contractual relationship may continue into the future.

Transgender Equity Conference. The fourth annual Minneapolis Trans* Equity Summit will take place from 9:00am – 4:00pm, **Thursday, September 28** at the Minneapolis Convention Center at 1301 Second Ave. S. All those interested in learning about and furthering transgender equity are encouraged to attend. You can register and find more information at www.minneapolismn.gov/TransEquity.

Welcoming Cities Network. The City of Minneapolis has joined Welcoming America's network of Welcoming Cities and Counties—a designation recognizing its commitment to inclusiveness toward immigrants and all its residents. Nearly 100 local governments across the country belong to the network. The Council passed a resolution affirming the City's values as a welcoming city. It said, in part, "Fostering a welcoming environment for all individuals, regardless of race, ethnicity or place of origin, gender identity or religious affiliation enhances Minneapolis' cultural fabric, economic growth, global competitiveness and overall prosperity for current and future generations." This is one of many activities the City is engaged in to strengthen policies, programs and resources to support immigrant and refugee families. Other

initiatives include providing funding for legal advocates working directly with residents involved with immigration proceedings, providing a hotline to report hate crimes and a new public awareness campaign called **#WeAreMpls**, which will highlight the rich diversity of the city through interviews and photography of residents. The campaign will launch in September and be promoted through social media and other communication channels.

Convention Center LEED certified. The Minneapolis Convention Center is now a LEED-certified building. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is an internationally recognized certification system that measures how well a building or community performs in areas including energy savings, water efficiency, carbon dioxide emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources. Ongoing sustainability initiatives at the convention center include offsetting energy usage by 100 percent with solar and wind power, recycling 60 percent of waste in 2016, collecting 160 tons of organics for hog feed and composting, donating four tons of food per year and creating a pollinator-friendly garden. To learn more about sustainability efforts at the Minneapolis Convention Center, visit <http://www.minneapolis.org/minneapolis-convention-center/overview/sustainability/>.

Nicollet Mall. Slowly but surely, as planned, the Nicollet Mall reconstruction is progressing. Most of the intersections are now fully open and construction has started on the “Light Walk” in front of the IDS Center. Nearly 100 trees have been planted on the southern five blocks as crews continue planting the remaining 140 plus trees. Nearly 50 of the artist-designed decorative manhole covers featuring Minnesota icons such as loons, walleye, lady slippers and more have returned to Nicollet. To learn more about additional art installments go to <http://nicolletmallart.org/> or for weekly construction updates, visit <http://www.nicolletmallproject.com/>.

Public Art Tours. The City and Park and Recreation Board are offering six self-guided, interactive tours exploring public art. There are approximately 300 individual pieces of public art to visit in Minneapolis. The interactive maps feature detailed information about each artwork and directions to the pieces. The maps also provide information on how long each tour will take for those who choose to bike, walk or drive. To find out the number of artworks, featured artists and more, visit the Minneapolis Public Art Tour interactive website at http://www.minneapolismn.gov/dca/dca_map

Southside Green Zone. In August the Council formally approved the structure and membership of the Southern Green Zone Task Force, which includes Ventura Village, Little Earth, and East Phillips. Over the next 6-8 months, the Task Force will develop a Southside Green Zone Work Plan to be presented to the Council for approval. It will include a community outreach plan, identification of targeted strategies, expected outcomes, evaluation of programs that fit within the Southside Green Zone’s geography, and identification of resources needed for implementation.

Flavored Tobacco Ordinance. The City Council has approved the amendment I coauthored that removes the exemption for menthol, mint and wintergreen to our flavored tobacco ordinance that restricts the sale of flavored tobacco products to adult only tobacco shops.

Before it was passed, amendments were added to allow liquor stores to continue to sell the product (if they do not allow people under 21 years old into the store without a parent or guardian) and stipulate that the law will not go into effect until August 1, 2018, reducing availability of these products from 318 tobacco outlets to 23 tobacco products shops and 24 liquor stores. I supported both of these amendments and think that they help address some of the concerns that were raised. Sales of other flavored tobacco products have already been restricted to tobacco shops since 2016. Preventing underage tobacco use is a key public health strategy for preventing tobacco-related illness and death because 87 percent of current smokers started using tobacco products before they were age 18. This means that if youth smoking can be prevented, adult smoking and related tobacco illness and death will continue to decline. The nicotine in tobacco products can also harm adolescent brain development. For more information about what Minneapolis is doing to protect young people from tobacco see <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/living/free/WCMS1P-125564>

MPCA Public Hearings. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency is planning on installing a network of air sensors in Minneapolis and St. Paul to monitor air quality. To share the plan and seek the public's input on where to locate the sensors they are holding open houses on **September 7**, 6:30-7:30pm at the Audubon Park Rec Center, 1320 29 Ave NE, and on **September 11**, 6:30-7:30pm, at Farview Park Rec Center, 621 29th Ave N. The MPCA plans to begin placing the sensors in January 2018. For more information, visit <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air/assessing-urban-air-quality-project>.

Bring Your Own Bag. I was disappointed with the outcome on the Bring Your Own Bag ordinance amendment I expected to see passed in August. The Council majority voted 10-2 for to delay the vote and send it back to staff. I believe that this was an anti-environment vote. We had a chance to clean up an ordinance, broken by the state legislature, and take a modest step that many of our residents have been asking us to take for years and that over 160 cities and 20 countries around the world have already taken to help address the serious and growing problem of plastic waste. (<http://www.onegreenplanet.org/animalsandnature/whats-so-bad-about-plastic-bags/>) I plan to bring this amendment after the election later this year or early in 2018 and am hopeful that it will pass then. In the meantime, I encourage us all to bring our own bags when shopping and for stores to phase out the use plastic bags voluntarily and charge 5 cents for paper bags, like some stores are already doing. For now we still have an ordinance on the books that we are not enforcing but part of it (the \$.05 fee on paper bags) is still in effect.

Park Dedication Fee. Despite my vote in opposition, the Council has approved using certain accumulated and future park dedication fees to fund capital improvements to the Downtown East Commons by the football stadium. Based on past discussion and decisions, and without a more complete community process and assessment of need, I believe that we should be using revenue from the new stadium parking lot we paid to construct and funds provided from the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority to support this park. I am especially concerned because this action also restricts future potential investments without any community input. While the accumulated park dedication fees from the designated area totals approximately \$964,000 today, the action we approved will be in effect for ten years or until it generates an \$8.0 million in park dedication fees, whichever comes first.

Tree Advisory Annual Report. In August the Council received the annual report from the Minneapolis Tree Advisory Committee. The report highlights much of the great work the Park Board has been doing to protect and grow the tree canopy as well as address the risk to our tree canopy from Emerald Ash Bore. It is worth noting that Emerald Ash Borer has now infested all areas of Minneapolis and that the vast majority of infested trees are on private property.

National Preparedness Month. September is National Preparedness Month. Throughout the month the city will highlight some of the actions people can take to prepare for weather emergencies and other disasters. Ideas include: making an emergency plan for yourself, family and friends; signing up for alerts and warnings; planning to help your neighbors and community; take an emergency drill and learn how to get resources such as shelters and food banks. Find information on these and more at www.ready.gov. The City of Minneapolis partnered with ECHO Minnesota to produce a series of multi-language videos (found at <http://www.echominnesota.org/library/stay-alert-using-weather-radios>) about how to use NOAA weather radios and other precautions to take during tornados, thunderstorms, flash floods and snowstorms. More information is available http://www.minneapolismn.gov/emergency/emergency_personal_preparation .

STEP-UP. The City's youth employment program, STEP-UP, wrapped up another successful summer with nearly 1,700 Minneapolis young people ages 14-21 completing internships in the Twin Cities. This year 230 participating government agencies, nonprofits and corporations hosted the youths. Created in 2004, STEP-UP has provided more than 24,000 internship opportunities. In 2017, 85 percent of the interns are of color and 48 percent are from immigrant families. Learn more about STEP-UP at http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/metp/step-up_home.

Everybody In. The Council has approved a contract amendment with Everybody In for \$20,000, through Dec. 31, 2017, to provide support and facilitation services in our effort to address and close the persistent racial employment disparities in Minnesota.

Minnehaha Townhomes Project. I was glad to see unanimous support when the Council approved the sale of 5348, 5364, and 5368 Riverview Road and 5118 E 54th St to the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority for \$1 to support construction of a 16-unit townhouse style development targeted to provide quality, medium density housing for very low income families experiencing homelessness (in Ward 12). This, combined with funds from MN Housing, Hennepin County, the Met Council, Federal Home Loan Bank and the 2016 Affordable Housing Trust Funds under its Family Housing Initiative Fund (\$800,000), is making this much needed new public housing possible. I hope we can see more of these partnerships in the future to help preserve existing public housing, like the Glendale Townhomes, as well as build new.

10th Ave Bridge. In August the Council approved issuing a Request for Proposal for design services for the 10th Ave SE River Bridge. Thanks to the State funding of \$31,870,000, approved in June, the bridge rehabilitation project is now fully funded. At this point, after studying various alternatives, including full bridge replacement, staff have determined that

the highest benefit to cost ratio includes a rehabilitation of the bridge with full deck replacement. The project will return to Council in November for authorization to award the contract. Full design is anticipated to be completed by December 2018; with the project being bid and construction starting later in 2019.

Minnehaha Academy Tragic Explosion. On August 2, there was a tragic explosion at the Minnehaha Academy Upper School north campus in Ward 2 where two of the school's staff, Ruth Berg and John Carlson were killed. My heart goes out to Ruth and John's families and friends, the Minnehaha Academy community, and everyone else directly impacted by this tragedy. I can only imagine the shock and pain that these families have suffered. I acknowledge that this event has been frightening and traumatic for the surrounding neighborhood, and am grateful to the Minneapolis Police and Fire Departments for their quick, professional, and in some cases heroic response to this tragedy. From what I have heard, at least one victim of this event owes his life to the courageous actions of our first responders, alongside a few community members who also rushed in to help. I also want to thank the many other state, University, county and federal agencies who helped with our response. And I appreciate the hours of personal attention that Mayor Betsy Hodges and Council Member Andrew Johnson gave to this event. I understand that the Upper School is now operating at the former Sanford-Brown Institute in Inver Grove Heights. I look forward to learning more as the investigation goes forward, with an eye to preventing this sort of thing from happening again. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is investigating the explosion and has issued report that you can find at <https://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/DCA17MP007-prelim-report.pdf>

Gas Leak on 4th SE. At approximately 4:30pm on August 7, a City Contractor broke a gas line while working on the 4th Street SE reconstruction project just east of 29th Ave. The Minneapolis Fire Department was onsite immediately; light rail train traffic was suspended, and nearby properties were evacuated. Fortunately, the natural gas company, Centerpoint, was able to isolate the leak at approximately 6:30pm before there was any explosion or fire resulting from the leak. The trains were running again by 7:30pm, CenterPoint was able to repair the damage and all activities were back to normal within the neighborhood the following morning.

West Bank Creative Placemaking Grant. The City Council has voted to be the local government partner in the West Bank Business Association's application to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town program for a \$200,000 grant. They are proposing to do "Creative Placemaking on Cedar Avenue" by creating a visual pathway along. This is the same basic project that was submitted to the NEA last year, but has been updated based on notes from the NEA following an application panel review. Good Luck WBBA!

Coop Market at 2600 Minnehaha. In August the Council voted to move forward with a feasibility assessment for soliciting proposals to develop a cooperative public market on the vacant City-owned development property at 2600 Minnehaha Ave.

Midwest Climbing. The Council has accepted a grant from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) for the Midwest Climbing Redevelopment project in the Towerside area at 518 Malcolm Ave SE and 504 29th Ave SE where Midwest Climbing LLC plans to construct an approximately 20,000 square foot climbing facility. The total project cost is estimated to be \$7,000,000.

Maya Commons/Bunge Apartments. Formerly called Bunge Apartments and Namaste Apartments, the project located near Van Cleve Park in Southeast Como was approved to get a loan of up to \$1,250,000 from the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Maya Commons sought the same AHTF award it originally applied for in 2016, \$1,250,000. This award is being renewed due to the structure of the project changing. This project originally consisted of two buildings with a total of 150 units being developed simultaneously. The project has since been broken out into two phases with two separate developers, Project for Pride in Living (PPL) and Riverton Cooperative. The end project will result in two buildings with a total of 145 units. This AHTF award is for the first phase consisting of one building constructed by PPL with 50 units, 42 of which will be considered affordable for families making 50% or less of the metropolitan area medium income.

Green on 4th. The proposed Green on Fourth apartment building, to be located at 2901 4th St SE, has been approved to receive a loan of up to \$1,225,000 from the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Green on Fourth Apartments was approved in 2014 for a \$1,025,000 loan. The project then sought an additional \$200,000 in trust funds this year as the number of units for this project increased allowing it to qualify for additional funds. This project will result in new construction of 243 units with 49 of them being considered affordable for a family making 50% of area median income.

Aeon Prospect Park. The city has approved the Hennepin County Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Affordable Housing Incentive Fund (AHIF) financial assistance award to Aeon Prospect Park, at 3001 4th St SE, for \$250,000 to assist with construction of a five story new apartment building with 70 units, including permanent supportive housing to seven households with dependent children who have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness.

Essex Sewer. The city has approved building a new sewer main on Essex St SE from 26th Av SE to 27th Av SE. This was in response to a petition for the sewer from Wells and Company who are building a 25-micro-unit apartment building at 2618 Essex. Currently that parcel and two adjacent parcels share an aging private sewer lateral and the construction of a public sewer in this location, operated and maintained in perpetuity by the City, will provide a public benefit to all nearby property owners. The cost estimate for the public sanitary sewer in Essex St SE is \$264,360. A special assessment to nearby property owners will cover \$155,659 of that cost.

Rainbow Site Meeting. On August 28, Wellington presented the status of their redevelopment plans for project, called the "Minnehaha Crossing," at the old Rainbow grocery store site at 27th Ave and 29th Street. Currently a portion of the building has been renovated and is housing Universal Academy charter school. Next year the school will be relocated in the eastern portion of the old grocery store and there will be a new front door to

the school on 29th. They have an agreement with Aldi Grocery Store to lease a portion of the old Rainbow store, and are looking for another commercial tenant or tenants to rent the space where the charter school is now. At the meeting they also shared plans, yet to be submitted to the City for approval, for a 5 story apartment building along 29th, where the parking lot is now, that would include retail uses on the first floor. For more information visit <https://www.minnehahacrossing.com/>.

Prospect Park Senior Living Project. The Oppidan Investment Company has submitted Land Use and Re-Zoning Applications for the proposed Prospect Park Senior Living Project that will be joining three existing lots into one; 3033 University Avenue SE, 3000 4th St SE and 3024 4th St SE. The proposed project consists of 103 assisted living units, 136 independent senior living units, 44 memory care units, a 6,600 sq. foot childcare center, and 2,100 square feet of leasable retail space. The application is scheduled to come to the October 2, 2017 Planning Commission meeting.

“Missing Middle” Housing Approved in Longfellow. The Planning Commission has approved three very similar six-unit buildings in the Longfellow neighborhood, at 2921 29th Ave S, 2829 27th Ave S, and 2912 30th Ave S. These buildings are on infill lots zoned R4, and represent the sort of new market rate housing that can be affordable to many residents, even when relatively new. I am supportive of this model of housing, and hope to see more of it built in areas like this, with good access to jobs, services, transit and other amenities.

Samatar Crossing. Construction has begun on the connection between the Cedar Riverside neighborhood and downtown Minneapolis, called Samatar Crossing, named in honor of the late Hussein Samatar, a former Minneapolis School Board member and the first Somali-American elected to public office in Minneapolis. The crossing is located at the former 5th Street I-94 ramp and is being redesigned to be a safe and convenient pathway for pedestrians and bicyclists. It is scheduled to be completed in 2018 and will feature separate paths for pedestrians and bicyclists with new pedestrian-scale lighting and public art between 11th Avenue South and 15th Avenue South. For more details visit <http://www.minneapolisismn.gov/cip/2016/WCMSP-173830>.

Openings on Boards and Commissions. A number of board and commission positions are open for City Council and mayor appointments this fall. Visit <http://www.minneapolisismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for more information and to apply.

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 reserve some time when I will be there or just stop by.

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 T Rex Cookie Café, 3338 University Ave SE;

Fourth Thursdays at Blue Moon Coffee Café, 3822 E Lake St.

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