



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

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## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Seward Neighborhood 8-24-11

**Cam's next Seward Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11:00am**  
**Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St**

### Items:

- 1) New City Domain Name
- 2) Riverside Construction
- 3) Bike Lanes on 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup>
- 4) Minneapolis "One Read"
- 5) We Want You Back
- 6) Bicycle Master Plan
- 7) Tree Canopy Data
- 8) State Budget Deal
- 9) 2011 Budget Cuts
- 10) Managed Natural Landscape Ordinance
- 11) Farmers Market Ordinance
- 12) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) The City has switched to an easier, shorter domain name: [www.minneapolismn.gov](http://www.minneapolismn.gov). City emails have changed accordingly. My email is [cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov), my Policy Aide's is [robin.garwood@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:robin.garwood@minneapolismn.gov), and my Associate's is [nancy.olsen@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:nancy.olsen@minneapolismn.gov).
- 2) Riverside Avenue construction continues. If you would like to sign up for a regular email update on City construction activities in the neighborhood, please email [Chris.Engelmann@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Chris.Engelmann@minneapolismn.gov) with Riverside Email Update in the subject line.
- 3) The Seward Neighborhood Group has succeeded in convincing Public Works staff to consider bike lanes on the "S-curve" formed by 26<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Aves S north of Franklin Ave. The proposed facility would connect Franklin to Riverside. It is on the City's new Bicycle Master Plan, and is being considered at this time as part of a repaving project paid for by the federal government in response to the extra wear on Minneapolis streets after the I-35W bridge fell. Adding bike lanes to the section between Butler Place and Riverside will require the removal of 8 parking spaces, 7 from the west side of the street and 1 from the east side. I will be working with various West Bank stakeholder groups on a community engagement process regarding this proposal.
- 4) This summer and fall the City is sponsoring a "One Read" effort that I hope will unite people by having us all read the same books and help start deeper conversations about race, family and the history of our City. The book, ***The Grace of Silence*** by Minneapolis native and National Public Radio host Michele Norris, is a memoir of Norris' describes the experience as a child of the first black family on their block in a south Minneapolis neighborhood. For more info visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/oneminneapolisoneread.asp>. You may also email [oneread@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:oneread@minneapolismn.gov) or Call: Cheyenne Erickson: (612) 673-2052 or Jenny Chayabutr: (612) 673-2509.
- 5) Once again this year, The Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board and City of Minneapolis are coordinating a campaign to get un-enrolled students back in school. "We Want You Back" invites un-enrolled young people to come back to school, complete their credits and get their diploma. The campaign's strategy includes outreach at parks, libraries, and community events to generate awareness, culminating in a citywide door-knocking event on **Saturday, Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>**. Minneapolis Public Schools staff will be available that day to help students with the re-enrollment process. Volunteers are needed for the Sept. 10 Day of Action to help reach young people who did not finish high school. To sign up to volunteer, or if you know a young person who would like to re-enroll, contact Jo Haberman with the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board at 612-673-2720.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email [Ahmed.Muhumud@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Ahmed.Muhumud@minneapolismn.gov)

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Attention: If you want help translating this information in language other than Hmong, Spanish or Somali, call 311

Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800;

Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llame 612-673-2700;

Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

- 6) The Council has passed the City's first ever Bicycle Master Plan. It was considerably improved by input from the new Bicycle Advisory Committee (or BAC), with four bike facility corridors throughout the city being added as a result of their advocacy. This outcome has also significantly strengthened the BAC itself. As we passed the plan, the Council also directed staff to work with the BAC on finalizing the recommendations they've made for an implementation plan, and return to the Council in November. For more information, please see my blog.
- 7) Earlier this year, the University and the City worked together on a study of the tree canopy in Minneapolis. The data from this study have now been made available via an intuitive and easy-to-use application on the City's website: [www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/mplsurbantreecanopymap.asp](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/mplsurbantreecanopymap.asp). This application allows users to find the tree canopy coverage for individual properties or whole neighborhoods. The tree cover percentage in Seward is **35%** - better than the citywide average, but with room for improvement. The Minneapolis Tree Advisory Committee made five key recommendations for what the City can do with this data: study the effects of the recent north side tornado; make the data readily available; analyze it with other information to find the best places to plant trees for energy efficiency, storm water management and other City goals; do outreach to residents, neighborhood groups, businesses and others to encourage tree plantings in the most advantageous locations; and repeat the study at least every five years. I am very supportive of all of these recommendations, and pleased to report that progress has already been made on several of them. I strongly encourage neighborhood associations and others to use the results of this study to encourage property owners to plant trees.
- 8) The budget deal between Governor Dayton and Republicans in control of the legislature is not as bad as it could have been for the people of Minneapolis, but it wasn't very good, either. The City was hit hard with a decrease in Local Government Aid and will be getting \$64 million instead of the \$87.5 million we are due under the state's own LGA formula. More importantly, due to the Republicans' unwillingness to raise taxes on the wealthiest Minnesotans, the budget that will be adopted essentially borrows the whole difference between the two sides' positions, approximately \$1.4 billion. This structurally unbalanced approach virtually assures that the state will continue to face major deficits in future years, with significant consequences for state services and for municipalities across the state.
- 9) Earlier this year, the Council passed a "plan B" budget for 2011, to prepare for the possibility that the State legislature would not follow its own Local Government Aid formula. Sadly, this preparation was prescient. Among other things, the plan B budget required cuts to the Police and Fire departments, which together account for 46% of the discretionary General Fund, the part of the City budget supported by LGA. The total cut to the Fire Department was \$1.45 million. Had we been forced to make that cut in the beginning of this year, it would have equaled 17 firefighter positions; however, in order to achieve this level of savings when implemented in August, it would have equaled 44 firefighter positions. The Mayor proposed transferring \$1.1 million from the Contingency Account to the Fire Department. But because this plan would still have eliminated 13 firefighter positions, including 10 layoffs, I supported an alternative proposal that moved funds from unfilled positions in other City departments. The Mayor has vetoed this action. Unless there is an alternative put forward, I plan to vote to override his veto. You can read more on my blog.
- 10) The Managed Natural Landscape ordinance I authored passed the Regulatory Energy and Environment committee on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. I expect it to pass the full Council as well. Once passed, it will allow our ordinances to catch up with the environmentally friendly practices being used by residents, including native prairie plantings and other purposeful, well-maintained yards that use something other than turf grass. For the first time, there will be the legal authority for inspections staff to allow grasses in yards over 8 inches in height. The ordinance will also help clarify the difference between turf grass lawns that are not being maintained and purposeful plantings. I directed staff to bring forward some related process improvements by March of next year. I see this as a major step forward in allowing and encouraging residents to use more ecologically sustainable plantings in their yards, with all the attendant improvements to storm water management, biodiversity, air quality and more.
- 11) Since fall of last year, my staff has been working with farmers market managers and City staff on a comprehensive revision of the City's farmers market ordinances. I have introduced this ordinance change, and expect it to come forward for a public hearing in September. This ordinance would make many overdue changes to the farmers market regulatory system, including:
  - Creating our first-ever "Farmers Market" license type, which would require that at least 60% of market vendors would be selling food they had grown themselves.
  - Codifying the existing "Mini Markets" in ordinance.
  - Creating a new "Art and Produce" market type, which would include both self-made arts and crafts and fresh food.I'm excited to be bringing these changes forward, and I'm optimistic that, given the support of both City staff and the community, my colleagues will support them as well.
- 12) There are openings on the Latino Advisory Committee, and Planning Commission. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov).