



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

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# Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Longfellow, 6-20-13

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

## Items:

- 1) Minneapolis Energy Options
- 2) Minnehaha Avenue
- 3) Ranked Choice Voting Ordinance
- 4) Street Lighting Policy
- 5) Climate Action Plan
- 6) New Initiative for Helping with Housing Violations
- 7) Minneapolis Creative Index
- 8) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) In the next few weeks, I will be working with my colleagues to begin the process to place a question on this fall's general election ballot regarding the City's energy future. If passed by the voters of Minneapolis, this question will authorize the City to form a municipal power utility. I view this as a necessary step to meeting the City's aggressive climate change mitigation goals. Approximately two-thirds of the greenhouse gas emissions in Minneapolis come through our existing electricity and natural gas utilities. A vote to authorize the creation of a municipal utility will not *require* the City to form one, but will give us that option – which I think will help in the ongoing electrical and natural gas franchise negotiations with Xcel and Centerpoint. Minneapolis will only form a municipal utility after we make certain that we can provide energy services as or more affordably and reliably as the incumbent utilities, and with a greater focus on renewable energy, energy efficiency and local generation. For more information, visit: <http://www.minneapolisenergyoptions.org/>.
- 2) As you may have heard, Hennepin County has delayed the reconstruction of Minnehaha Avenue until 2015. County staff are working to set a public meeting to present both the cycle track (or protected bike lane) layout and the standard bike lane layout. They may hold another public meeting later this year, and will likely be coming to the City Council for a layout approval late this fall. I continue to support the cycle track concept, and believe that it can be implemented without the impacts to trees and parking that the current County cycle track layout has. I would welcome a formal position from LCC on its preference between the cycle track and bike lane concepts.
- 3) I have authored, and the Council has approved, an amendment to our Ranked Choice Voting ordinance. The changes clarify how we determine voter intent when there is a skipped ranking, undervote, overvote or repeat candidate ranking. It also clarifies how we can use election night machine totals to determine winners in cases where the winner can be determined from the first-ranked choices only, and requires write in candidates who want the write-in votes to be individually recorded to file a written request with the chief election official no later than seven days before the election.
- 4) The Council has approved major changes to the City's Street Lighting Policy. Before the change, street lights on pedestrian corridors that are being reconstructed were 100% assessable, and could only be prevented by 70% or more of the affected property owners opting out. Under the new policy, the City will pay the whole cost for street lights on pedestrian corridor reconstruction projects. This is likely to add approximately \$1 million to the City's annual Capital Improvement budget. The change is retroactive to recent projects, including the Riverside Avenue reconstruction. The funding that was to come from assessments to Riverside property owners and institutions will instead come from the City. I supported this change, which I believe will make it likelier that we will have consistent street lighting on all pedestrian corridors after reconstructions.

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

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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, llama 612-673-2700;

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

5) On Monday, the Regulatory Energy and Environment committee unanimously passed the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan. It is set to come to the full Council on Friday June 28. The Plan, subtitled “a roadmap to reducing citywide greenhouse gas emissions,” offers goals and potential strategies to help achieve a 15 percent reduction in emissions by 2015 and a 30 percent reduction by 2025 from 2006 levels. The strategies are grouped into four categories:

- **Significantly improving the energy efficiency of our commercial, residential and public buildings.** Strategies are identified to improve energy efficiency in commercial and residential buildings 20 and 15 percent respectively from a baseline of growth by 2025. City and other public buildings should continue to lead the way by aggressively pursuing cost-effective energy efficiency strategies.
- **Increasing our use of local, renewable energy.** The plan calls for increasing our use of local or directly purchased renewable energy to 10 percent of the total electricity consumed in the city by 2025. The purchase of green power, and new approaches that make renewables more accessible and widespread, like solar gardens, will be pursued. Regulatory changes will be pursued to appropriately value and incentivize renewable energy.
- **Reduce vehicle miles traveled in Minneapolis while improving accessibility and building walkable, safe, and growing neighborhoods that meet the needs of all residents.** Improving access to transit, making walking and biking inviting and safe, and building diverse neighborhoods are priorities. We will identify and promote cleaner fuels for our transportation system.
- **Reduce our waste stream by reducing waste, encouraging reuse, and increasing recycling of both organic and inorganic material.** Improving recycling performance in the city, and expanding composting and the collection of organic material are priorities, with the goal of increasing our recycling rate to 50 percent by 2025. Residents will also have more information about the lifecycle impacts of their purchasing decisions, and we will strive for more efficient processing of our wastewater.

The Plan includes many intriguing recommendations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Among those that

- Use of property-assessed and on-bill financing to fund energy efficiency and renewable energy retrofits for residential and commercial building
- Encouraging net zero buildings
- Planning for more walkable “complete neighborhoods”
- Constructing 30 miles of on street, protected bike facilities by 2020
- Identifying products and packaging that are neither recyclable or compostable

This plan is a great step in the right direction and I look forward to helping implement many of its ideas and strategies in the years to come.

- 6) Two City departments have teamed up to help residents who are elderly, disabled, or low-income to address housing violations on their properties. The Housing Inspection Services division of Regulatory Services is dedicating a full-time employee to assist the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department in helping property owners navigate through the steps they are required to take when there are housing violations at their property. Housing Inspection Services plays an important role in making sure that housing in the city meets basic standards so everyone has a safe, quality place to live. Sometimes that involves taking enforcement action to require owners to bring their properties up to code. However, enforcement and fines can be a hardship for home owners when they are elderly, disabled, or low-income. The City wants to help folks avoid escalating fines and take care of serious problems so they don't lead to the condemnation of their property. That's why this position has been created within the Neighborhood and Community Relations department, effective June 17, 2013.
- 7) The Minneapolis Arts Commission hosted a presentation of the 2013 Minneapolis Creative Index report published by the Arts, Culture and Creative Economy program on May 20 at the Minneapolis Central Library. The Minneapolis Creative Index is an annual report on the scale and impact of Minneapolis' creative sector. The report uses data commissioned from Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) to measure the economic impacts of the city's creative sector and provide a baseline for annual reporting. For the first time it also allows the city to view the development of Minneapolis' creative sector apart from the greater metropolitan area in greater scope and detail by measuring creative employment, retail and non-profit revenue. For more information and to view the report prior to our meeting please go to: [www.minneapolismn.gov/coordinator/arts](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/coordinator/arts).
- 8) Applications are now being accepted for open positions on the following City boards and commissions: Animal Care and Control Advisory Board, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Minneapolis Workforce Council, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Police Conduct Oversight Commission, Police Conduct Review Panel, Seniors Advisory Committee and Telecommunications Network. For a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions, go to [www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings).