



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

**Cam Gordon**  
City Council Member  
Second Ward

350 South 5th Street - Room 301M  
Minneapolis MN 55415

Office 612-673-2202  
Fax 612-673-3250  
Cell 612-296-0579

Email: [cam.gordon@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cam.gordon@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)

[www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward2/](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward2/)

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)

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, llama 612-673-2700;

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

## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 12-15-10

**Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11:00am**  
**Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

### Items:

- 1) 2011 Budget
- 2) 620-624 20<sup>th</sup> Ave S
- 3) Riverside Reconstruction
- 4) MPCA Solid Waste Plan
- 5) Healthy Corner Stores
- 6) Draft Urban Ag Topical Plan
- 7) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) For the first time as Council Member, I voted against a budget. I do not take this vote lightly. In all past budgets, there have been things I would have liked to change and fights that I have lost. These issues have not been important enough for me to vote against the final budget.

This year's assault by the Mayor and Council majority on the already-allocated Neighborhood Revitalization Program Phase II funding is fundamentally different. I could not in good conscience vote for a budget that reneges on the commitments the Council unanimously made to our partners in neighborhoods this past June.

I am saddened that neighborhood organizations will no longer be able to rely on the commitments – or even the formal actions – of the Council majority. I am disappointed in my colleagues' decision that will, in my strongly-held opinion, fundamentally damage both the capacity of neighborhoods to serve Minneapolis residents and their capacity to collaborate with the City.

And we should be clear about one important fact: the action to freeze Phase II dollars has no impact whatsoever on the **2011** budget, the **only** action the Council was required to make this December. Rather, this decision improperly presupposes that the cuts in the **2012** budget will come from neighborhoods. Rather than taking the time to explore all options and work with our neighborhood partners, the Council decided on these cuts to neighborhoods this December.

City of Minneapolis leaders decry the decisions at the State level to renege on commitments made to local governments through Local Government Aid. Yet, when budget times get difficult, the Council majority makes clear that it will break its word just as readily as Republican governors.

It is very important to note that the neighborhoods most impacted by the freeze in Phase II dollars are among the poorest and most challenged in Minneapolis. This includes Cedar Riverside, which has had \$352,288 frozen, all of which is likely to be taken away due to the Council's decision. As such, this decision is inherently and unavoidably unjust.

I want to be clear that I am strongly in favor of cutting property taxes. But I believe that there are deeply unpopular and unsustainable decisions that the City has made and should do what it takes to reconsider. One major example is the Target Center. It is critical for every resident to understand that while the Council majority was voting to damage neighborhood organizations by freezing their funds, Target Center debt payments were held completely harmless.

I will note that the Council majority and Mayor also held **ourselves** harmless, even as we were forcing cuts to neighborhood organizations. Neither the Council nor Mayor took a dollar in cuts. In fact, the Council amended the Mayor's proposed budget to shift a proposed one-time cut to the Clerk's Office. I find this highly objectionable.

I am deeply disappointed to have to disagree with my colleagues and the Mayor on this fundamental decision. But I am more saddened by the prospect of the very real damage that this budget will have on neighborhood organizations.

- 2) I recently learned that the Cedar Riverside NRP staff and board members have been talking with the Greater Minneapolis Housing Corporation about cooperating on a plan to purchase and build housing on the city-owned lots at 620-624 20<sup>th</sup> Ave S. Subsequently, I encouraged city staff to follow through with the City Request for Proposal process, as previously planned. I was glad to hear about the progress that has been made, and it is not my intention to slow down any efforts to move ahead with the work that has been done in last few months. My aim is to make sure that the City will be ready and able to react quickly to any proposal that comes forward so that it may be evaluated in an open and fair way leading to what I think is a clearly widely supported goal to have these lots sold and developed to provide housing in the neighborhood. I have been reassured by staff that an RFP will be completed soon and am very hopeful that everything will be in place for construction to begin in the spring.
- 3) The Riverside layout, including the changes I had pushed for that I listed in last month's report, has passed the full Council. Responding to the WBCC's request, my office has organized a meeting to discuss the Riverside reconstruction project's impact on the intersection of Riverside, 5<sup>th</sup> St, and 20<sup>th</sup> Ave on **Monday, December 20<sup>th</sup>**, 7-8:30pm at the African Development Center, 1931 S 5<sup>th</sup> St.
- 4) I submitted comments on the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Metro area Solid Waste Plan. I commended the agency for several things, including calling for limits on the total waste going to landfills, instituting a 'floor' for recycling, composting, and reduction; as well as calling for extended producer responsibility and mandatory recycling programs for commercial, industrial, and institutional sectors. I also criticized the plan and called for the MPCA to adopt stronger and clearer organics recovery goals; to clarify that burning waste, even when it is converted to energy, is not a preferred solution; and to put forward a bold long-term zero-waste vision for a Metro area in which all waste is treated as a resource.
- 5) This fall, 10 corner stores throughout Minneapolis became part of a new effort to provide their customers with more healthy, fresh foods as part of the City's larger effort to combat obesity and chronic disease. The program arose from an assessment the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) staff made of 35 stores to determine availability and quality of fresh produce. Results showed that 36 percent of stores did not have any fresh produce in stock. In the other 64 percent of stores, produce was limited, expensive and often difficult to find in the store. The 10 stores that are part of the Healthy Corner Store pilot project include 2 Second Ward stores and were selected through an open application process. Working closely with the store owners and managers, MDHFS staff identified barriers they had in stocking and selling fresh produce. For more information, go to [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/ship-cornerstores.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/ship-cornerstores.asp).
- 6) The draft Urban Agriculture Topical Plan has been released. This is a major step forward in the work of Homegrown Minneapolis, and is poised to make recommendations such as allowing commercial growing of food in Minneapolis and allowing more community gardens. You can view the draft plan here: [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/urban\\_ag\\_plan.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/urban_ag_plan.asp). Two community meetings will be held to discuss the content of the plan: **Tuesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>**, 6:30-8pm at the Sabathani Community Center, 310 E 38<sup>th</sup> St; and **Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup>**, from 2-3:30pm at North Central Library, 1315 Lowry Ave N. There will be a public hearing on the plan in February at the Planning Commission.
- 7) There are openings on the Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Public Health Advisory Committee, Public Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee and Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).