



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 7-21-10

Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Tuesday August 3, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave

Items:

- 1) Riverside Plaza Renovation
- 2) Dania Site
- 3) National Night Out
- 4) 2010 Climate Change Grants
- 5) Central Corridor Construction
- 6) Redistricting
- 7) Voices of the University District
- 8) 2010 Park Participation Survey
- 9) Diversity Audit of Boards and Commissions
- 10) Solar on the Convention Center Moves Forward
- 11) Institutional Food Ordinance
- 12) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) After a well-attended public hearing on July 13, the Council's Community Development Community voted, with my support, to recommend that the full Council give preliminary approval to the use of up to \$80 million in tax-exempt multifamily housing entitlement revenue bonds for the Riverside Plaza stabilization and rehabilitation project. The committee also recommended that staff be authorized to enter into an agreement settling the City's indemnity and access obligations, and project financing restructuring. "Preliminary approval" is an administrative 12-month hold on \$80 million of housing revenue bonds. The actions on the 13th will go forward to the Council for likely approval on the 25th. If the full Council gives its preliminary approval, "final approval" for use of the bonds will likely be considered in September at the earliest. There has also been a request for nearly \$2 million from the City's affordable housing trust fund. This request will be taken up by the committee in late summer or early fall. Over the months ahead I will continue to monitor this project closely and work with community organizations and other stakeholders to help ensure that the project benefits Plaza tenants as well as the neighborhood. I will also work with City staff to help ensure that there is a strong development agreement associated with City funding for this project.
- 2) CPED began installation of the fencing at the Dania Lot, 427 Cedar, last week. They are hoping that surveillance cameras will be installed simultaneously so any acts of vandalism can be captured digitally. This fence is a temporary solution to secure the lot while the City considers the application by the Cedar Riverside People's Center to develop the parcel.
- 3) Please join me in celebrating National Night Out this **August 3rd**. It is an occasion to celebrate past successes, discuss current challenges or issues, and re-dedicate to collaborative efforts with neighbors, police, businesses and others to improve the quality of life in our city. To register a block party, call **311**.
- 4) The City is once again offering grants to help save energy and find innovative ways to fight climate change. Nonprofits, neighborhood associations, businesses, and parks and libraries and others may apply. Grant amounts range from \$7,500-\$10,000 (no match required) and applications must be in by 4 p.m. Monday, July 26. To learn more visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sustainability/ (under "what's new," click "2010 Climate Change Grants".)

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

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

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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) During the month of July the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is asking the public how you would prefer they engage you when they make changes in the parks. This is your chance to weigh in. They are holding meetings but would be just as happy to hear from you online. The survey is on our homepage at <http://www.minneapolisparcs.org> just click on the box in the lower left hand corner marked **2010 Public Participation Survey**. If you do take the survey please make sure to include your zip code.
- 6) Construction related to the Central Corridor Light Rail project is already underway in the University area. The Central Corridor Project Office has taken steps to reduce construction-related impediments to businesses and property owners. These steps include: a contractor incentive program to encourage responsiveness, create a partnership between contractors and the community and promote cooperation, weekly emailed construction updates (sign-up to receive e-updates at: <http://tinyurl.com/29kjwm8>), public construction meetings for businesses and the public to get updates and a look ahead from project staff and utilities and a construction 24 hour hotline at **651-602-1404**. For current construction information you can also visit <http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/centralcorridor.asp>
- 7) The Charter Commission has voted to put a question on this fall's ballot that will, if passed by the voters, do away with the Redistricting Commission and empower the Charter Commission to draw Ward boundaries. While I do not believe the Charter amendment as proposed is perfect, it is a significant improvement over the Redistricting Commission process, which allowed a small group of unelected, unaccountable party insiders to draw maps based on an overtly politicized process. I hope that Minneapolis voters approve this amendment, and that we can have a fairer and more transparent redistricting process in 2012. I understand that there are some significant concerns being raised by good government groups such as Common Cause and the League of Women Voters, about both the criteria that will be used to draw ward boundaries and the transparency of the process that will be followed. I am working with the City Attorney's Office to see if there is any way for the Council to set these criteria by ordinance.
- 8) Voices of the University District is a project to collect stories from the people who "live, work, learn, and play" in the University District (the neighborhoods of Marcy-Holmes, Prospect Park, Southeast Como, West Bank/Cedar-Riverside, and the Minneapolis campus of the University of Minnesota). This is an opportunity to voice your community pride: what you like about living here, why you choose to work here, how you play and learn here. If you have a story or thought you'd like to share, visit <http://udistrictvoices.com> and submit online, send it in an email to submit@udistrictvoices.com, or leave it in a voicemail at 612-259-8424. Be sure to let us know if we may identify your quote by name. For more information, visit <https://www.myu.umn.edu/public/VoicesoftheDistrict.pdf>.
- 9) The Diversity Audit of the City's many boards and commissions that I initiated last year has been completed. While I wish we had had better participation (we got 194 of roughly 400 members of boards and commissions to complete the survey) it is good to have the results. The City has more than 50 advisory groups that it supports. The results seem to confirm that our boards and commissions need to be more diverse if they are to better reflect the diversity of our city. It will be interesting to see how this data compares to the forthcoming census data. You can see the survey results here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ncr/docs/2009boardsandcommissionsurvey.pdf>. Hopefully this audit will be a resource that we can use to help set goals, guide future outreach efforts and to measure ourselves against in the future.
- 10) The Public Utilities Commission unanimously approved the City's petition to be the sole recipient of the \$2 million Renewable Development Fund Grant for a major solar installation on the Convention Center. We had shared this grant with EyeOn Energy until the Council voted to move forward on our own because the company did not have the capacity to do the project. City staff are working on an agreement with a new solar developer, and anticipate beginning the installation in August. This is great news on an important renewable energy project that will be one of the largest solar installations in the Midwest.
- 11) I have introduced subject matter of an ordinance, written by Regulatory Services staff, that will create an "Institutional Food" license type. This license would apply to charter and private schools, food shelves that prepare food, shelters and employers with cafeterias. This license will be less expensive than the existing Food Manufacturer and Restaurant licenses. As proposed, it will not apply to community kitchens. I am interested to see if there is any way that we can use this new license type to support the goals of Homegrown Minneapolis, and will be asking the Homegrown Implementation Task Force to weigh in on the ordinance as written.
- 12) There are openings on the Latino Advisory Committee (open until filled), Pedestrian Advisory Committee (Open until filled – Priority given to applications received by July 23), Public Health Advisory Committee (open until filled) and Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Vacancy (open until filled). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.