

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 11-19-08

**Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Tuesday December 2, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

Items:

- 1) Good News on Election Day
- 2) National Night Out – Minneapolis #1 Again
- 3) New Noise Ordinance
- 4) Grandma's Site Redevelopment
- 5) Bike Sharing
- 6) New Rental License Standards
- 7) Animal Care & Control Advisory Board
- 8) NRP Phase II Funding Increase
- 9) 17 New Police Officers
- 10) Planning Sector Teams
- 11) December Budget Meetings
- 12) Emerald Ash Borer
- 13) 2030 Transportation Policy Plan
- 14) Proposed New Air Quality Ordinance
- 15) Waste Hauling Contract
- 16) Torture Resolution
- 17) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) I was pleased with many of election results earlier this month, including three ballot initiatives that passed. Minneapolis voters chose to change the way that we elect school board members by passing the Accountable, Balanced, and Connected amendment. I actively supported this initiative throughout the year, and I'm thrilled that it passed. I believe that it will help us elect a school board that is more geographically, ethnically and politically diverse, and that will result in better policy. The **Strong Schools, Strong City** ballot initiative that also passed will provide a necessary funding increase to help us close the academic achievement gap, improve early reading skills, enhance math and science programs, provide up-to-date technology and textbooks, and keep class sizes small.
- 2) For the sixth time in the past eight years, Minneapolis had more people come together at National Night Out parties than any other large city. We continue to be a role model for how NNO events are planned and ways to increase community involvement. I'm proud of the role interns from my office played in helping the West Bank to organize the gathering at Currie Park, and I commit to helping similarly in the future.
- 3) The new noise ordinance I've sponsored will come before the Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee on **December 3rd** at 1pm for a public hearing. As proposed, it will give us the capacity to regulate indoor noise (which we can't currently do), and use a "C weighting" that will enable us to much better regulate bass-heavy noise from bars.
- 4) I commend the WBCC for working with Alatus partners to set up a community-centered design process for their redevelopment of the Grandma's site, and on asking the developer to help with Bluff Street Park and wayfinding signage. This project was approved by the City Planning Commission earlier this month.
- 5) The City of is working to bring bike sharing to Minneapolis. The West Bank will be within the proposed area of the system. *Stationnement de Montreal* and *8D Technologies* has brought the Public Bicycle System that they recently launched in Montreal to Minneapolis. This system is based on European bike share programs with new solutions for northern climates. I am working with Public Works and the Mayor's Office to help this great initiative move forward.
- 6) Minneapolis has learned that due to the downturn in the investment market, the City will likely need to pay an additional \$38 million on pension obligations. Payment of these obligations must be balanced with the need to maintain essential city services, such as public safety, continued investment in small businesses and commercial corridors, and the need to maintain streets and infrastructure that will only be more expensive to repair as time passes. Please consider attending the following meetings:
 - December 1, 5:00pm, City Hall, 350 South 5th Street, Room 317 – Truth in Taxation hearing (public hearing for all city residents to speak about the budget)
 - December 5 (9am – 5pm) – Budget Mark-up (Ways & Means committee members will move amendments to the Mayor's proposed budget)
 - December 11 (5pm) – Budget Adoption (full Council votes on the budget)

- 7) I support a proposed ordinance strengthening the City's capacity to revoke or not renew rental licenses when landlords fail to take appropriate actions to ensure that their tenants do not commit crimes and disrupt their neighbors' lives.
- 8) I am also supportive of a proposed ordinance creating an Animal Care and Control Advisory Board, which will help advise and assist our Animal Care and Control department in developing animal-related policies and processes, and do public education and outreach on such issues.
- 9) Phase II of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program is in significantly better financial shape than we expected. Total 2007 income was more than \$2 million over last year's estimate, and the total Phase II funding is more than \$8 million above last year's estimate. This is a result of a small increase in 2007 tax increment collections, significant interest savings related to 2006 refinancing of Common Project general obligation debt, and unexpected one-time revenues from a number of projects located in the Common Project. This puts NRP on track to fund more than 90% of the amount approved for all neighborhood Phase II plans.
- 10) 17 police recruits have graduated from the Police Academy. With the addition of these new officers, the Minneapolis Police Department now has 893 sworn officers.
- 11) The Community Planning and Economic Development Department has created five new geographic sector teams to enhance project coordination and make it simpler to solve problems and deliver services. Your team is made up of Haila Maze in Planning (673-2098), Jerry LePage in Housing (673-5240) and Kevin Carroll in Economic Development (673-5181).
- 12) If you're planning to get some wood for your fireplace this winter, please be aware that there could be a destructive stowaway in your logs. The emerald ash borer is an invasive pest that attacks ash trees, has already killed more than 40 million ash trees nationwide, and has spread as far east as Wisconsin. You can help slow the spread by:
 - **Buying or harvesting your wood near the area where you are going to burn the wood.** Avoid moving firewood from its area of origination; especially avoid bringing wood into Minnesota from out of state.
 - **Watching your ash trees carefully.** The earlier the emerald ash borer is found, the sooner it can be addressed. Residents should examine ash trees in their neighborhood for tree canopy thinning or small D-shaped exit holes left in the bark by the borer. If there is any suspicion that a tree is infested, residents can contact the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's "Arrest the Pest" hotline at (651) 201-6684 for the metro area or 1-888-545-6684 for greater Minnesota.
- 13) Working with Council Members Lilligren and Glidden, I helped strengthen the City's comments on the Metropolitan Council's 2030 Transportation Policy Plan. We incorporated many of the great comments from other transportation groups such as Transit for Livable Communities. In my role as the City's representative to the Red Rock transit corridor planning group, I successfully urged them to add several of these items to their comments to the Met Council's plan as well, helping to build a regional consensus that we need to more aggressively push for more environmentally friendly transportation.
- 14) I have introduced an ordinance amendment relating to Air Pollution and Environmental Protection that would delete outdated language, and add new sections relating to construction activities, permitting, enforcement and on-site remediation regulations. This has been referred for a public hearing to the Public Safety & Regulatory Services Committee.
- 15) The Council voted to contract with Minneapolis Refuse, Inc, and Aspen Waste System for trash hauling. However Aspen did not agree to sign the City's required Labor Peace agreement prior to the deadline so, MRI ended up getting the whole City contract again. I still support having gone out for open bids on this contract, and will push for the City to use the same open, transparent process in the future.
- 16) I am working with Council Member Glidden and the Center for Victims of Torture (which has been based in Minneapolis since 1985), on a resolution calling for a Declaration of Principles for an Executive Order clearly outlawing torture, inhumane treatment and cruelty towards prisoners of the United States.
- 17) There are openings on the Citizen Environmental Advisory Committee (closes 11/28/08), Housing Board of Appeals (11/21/2008), Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission (12/05/2008), Telecommunications Network (12/19/2008), Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (11/19/08), Public Health Advisory Committee (12/05/08), and Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee (closes 11/21/08). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.