

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood, 2-25-08

Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
Pratt School, March 18, 9:30-11am

Items:

- 1) March Roundtable: University District Partnership Alliance
- 2) Central Corridor
- 3) Stadium mitigation funds
- 4) Street resurfacing program
- 5) Bicyclist Protection Ordinance
- 6) Phthalate Resolution
- 7) Truck Weight Resolution
- 8) ABC School Board Election Referendum
- 9) Bridge 9 Extension
- 10) Results Minneapolis
- 11) Park Dedication Fee
- 12) Compost Bins Available
- 13) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The state legislature has appropriated \$750,000 to create the University District Partnership Alliance, a collaborative effort of the University of Minnesota, the City, and the neighborhood and business organizations that surround the Minneapolis University campus, and fund demonstration projects this year. If we can show that the Alliance is an effective tool for making positive change, we have a unique chance to leverage more resources and establish the Alliance as a lasting and effective organization for the future. The Alliance is currently collecting ideas for demonstration projects through February and will be deciding on what projects to fund in March. For more information see <http://www.community.umn.edu/alliance>. What should the demonstration project(s) be? How can the Alliance best address the challenges facing University-area neighborhoods? Please come learn more and share your thoughts at the next **Ward 2 Roundtable: The University District Partnership Alliance: What is it? What will it do? Monday, March 17, 7-9 pm at Van Cleve Park, 901 15th Ave SE.**
- 2) On February 27, the Central Corridor Management Committee and the Metropolitan Council are scheduled to make decisions about major aspects of the Central Corridor project, including the Washington Ave tunnel. It is looking less and less likely that the tunnel will be included in the project, due to strong political consensus in Saint Paul and Ramsey County, the projected cost of the tunnel, and the complicated Federal funding formula. This will mean the line along Washington will most likely be at grade. I am advocating that in any possible at-grade option, Washington be a designated transit and pedestrian mall, similar to Nicollet Ave in Downtown, which would be open to buses, bikes and emergency vehicles but not other traffic. I am very concerned about negative traffic ramifications in the area due to any at-grade alignment and I am working hard to ensure that any plan provides adequate mitigation for these potential negative effects on traffic in the area. I am also concerned about the proposed location of the 29th Street station and have offered to assist the Met Council in developing a location and layout that will be an effective neighborhood transit station and also meet the needs of the local businesses and the neighborhood. I do not believe that the specifics of this decision will be made on the 27th and I am hopeful that with extra time, continued input and concerted effort by Met Council staff an optimum solution will be found.
- 3) Neighborhoods that directly border the U of M campus can now apply for funds to address the new University stadium's impact on the community. Approximately \$69,000 in total funding will be available in 2008. Eligible applicants are member organizations of the Stadium Area Advisory Committee and their partners, and applications are due by April 1, 2008. For a complete list of eligible participants, fundable activities, criteria, and an application form, visit www.community.umn.edu/gnf. Funding announcements are expected to be made in July.
 - 4) Public Works has proposed a new street resurfacing program to help improve and extend the life of our streets. The cost and time for street resurfacing is significantly less than the present renovation and reconstruction programs. Resurfacing will extend the life of a street at least 10 years. Because Minneapolis has a policy to assess property owners for some portion of street repair work along their property line, it is important to note that assessment rates for resurfacing will be ½ those of rates for a street renovation project. **Franklin Ave from East River Road to Emerald** is on the list of 8 priority proposed resurfacing projects that could start this summer.

- 5) Inspired by a new Chicago ordinance creating fines for drivers' actions that put bicyclists in danger – including turning in front of bikers, opening doors without checking, and passing with less than three feet clearance – I am planning to introduce subject matter of a similar ordinance later this month.
- 6) Tomorrow, February 26, the Intergovernmental Relations committee will consider a resolution I've authored supporting bills in the State Legislature that would create a task force to look into Bisphenol-A and phthalates. This resolution passed the Health Energy and Environment last week.
- 7) Along with Council Members Schiff and Colvin Roy, I am supporting a resolution calling for a moratorium on increases to freight trucks' size and weight until the impact of these larger vehicles on our bridges and infrastructure can be conclusively determined. I believe this is especially important in the aftermath of the 35W bridge collapse, given the number of fracture-critical bridges in Minneapolis.
- 8) I am supporting a school board election reform proposal known as the **ABC** Referendum Campaign that will help make the Minneapolis School Board more **A**ccountable, **B**alanced and **C**onected. The proposal offers a way to improve representation, help hold elected officials accountable, make them more responsive, simplify Minneapolis' government structure, improve collaboration between jurisdictions and open up the system to political and geographic diversity. If enacted, it would change the School Board from the current 7 at large seats to 9 seats voted in with 3 at large seats and 6 district seats. The six districts would mirror the Park Board districts. Please vote **YES on ABC** on the 2008 election ballot.
- 9) This month, I convinced my colleagues to make a significant investment of up to \$1.2 million in the City's bike infrastructure. As part of the new I-35W bridge, a tunnel will be constructed that will allow the City to construct an extension of the bicycle and pedestrian path over Bridge 9 into downtown. When it's finished, this trail will allow bikes and pedestrians to much better use Bridge 9 to get from Downtown to the West Bank, the U, Southeast and even Northeast. It also promises to help make the case to the Park Board that they should be investing in Bluff Street Park. Some City staff and policymakers wanted to let this trail extension die, but I argued that it would be a major benefit to the bike infrastructure of the City. The Council supported this on an 8-3 vote. After construction, the tunnel will be secured until we find the funds to make it a safe, welcoming facility, including lighting, emergency call boxes, etc. This is slated to happen sometime between 2013 and 2020.
- 10) I am very supportive and excited about the new management tool the City has developed to measure and increase the effectiveness of all our departments. It is called **Results Minneapolis** and helps us systematically track performance toward achieving the City's goals. As part of the program, a review panel of City leaders meets with a different department head each week to track progress and discuss strategies on key performance measures. By regularly tracking performance data we identify areas where we are excelling, as well as opportunities for improvement. I encourage you to look at specific measures for different departments and more information about this new and promising tool at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/results-oriented-minneapolis.
- 11) The City Council recently reviewed a Park Board proposal to create a new Park Dedication Fee in Minneapolis. This proposal, which must be approved by the state legislature, would impose fees on new developments that could be used for new parks, improvements or expansions, but not for basic maintenance and repair. I supported this decision and the Council's added stipulations that it include commercial and industrial development, as well as housing, and that it requires that a "nexus" be established showing that the specific land development causes a need for the new park, improvement or expansion.
- 12) Hennepin County is announcing a great opportunity for county residents to purchase affordable compost bins for only \$35 through the program described below. Hennepin County has partnered with Bachman's, Lakewinds Natural Foods and The Reuse Center to sell compost bins. Residents must pre-order by April 1 online at www.hennepin.us/compostbinsale.
- 13) There are openings on the Latino Advisory Committee (closes 2/29/2008), Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC) (closes 2/29/2008), Rental Dwelling License Board of Appeals (closes 2/29/2008), Zoning Board of Adjustment (closes 2/29/2008). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.