

## **Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 7-16-08**

**Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:  
Tuesday August 5, 9:30-11:00am  
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

### **Items:**

- 1) Central Corridor
- 2) Non-Motorized Transportation Grants
- 3) 20<sup>th</sup> Ave S Resurfacing
- 4) Council Associates
- 5) Youth Violence Prevention
- 6) Good Jobs, Green Jobs Resolution
- 7) Fire Chief Alex Jackson
- 8) Farm Stand Permit Process
- 9) NRP Framework for the Future
- 10) Truck Size Resolution
- 11) Lurking Repeal Fails
- 12) Free Speech
- 13) Bilingual Election Judges Sought
- 14) Street Furniture Vendor
- 15) Pedicabs
- 16) Taxi Fare Rate Increase
- 17) Dogs in Sidewalk Cafes
- 18) Sergeant Preston's
- 19) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The City Council approved a resolution June 20 that grants approval of the Metropolitan Council's proposed layout for the Central Corridor Light Rail line, with an understanding that the Met Council will satisfactorily resolve several issues outlined in the resolution related to the preliminary design plan. The layout includes LRT at-grade on Washington Ave through the University East Bank campus and creation of a transit mall between Walnut and East River Road. The City is also continuing to work on a Memorandum of Understanding with the University, County and Met Council on traffic and other necessary mitigations to make sure that negative impacts to the surrounding communities are minimized. There will be an open house and public hearing on this project on **August 7, 5pm** at the Coyle Center.
- 2) Transit for Livable Communities has released the first list of funded 2008 Non-Motorized Transportation projects, and the pedestrian improvements on the West Bank (including improvements to the intersection of Cedar and Riverside, Seven Corners, and the 5<sup>th</sup> Street sidewalk) are not included. However, they are on a list of projects that TLC expressed interest in, but wanted to have more fleshed out before they would make a decision to fund them. I remain hopeful that these important projects will be funded, and will help Public Works come up with the best possible applications, to help increase our chances.
- 3) The Transportation and Public Works committee has approved the street resurfacing project for 20<sup>th</sup> Ave S, including assessments for properties along 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 4) Today, I supported AFSCME Local 9 by voting against a proposal to change Council Associates from civil service to appointed positions. I disagree with this proposal for a number of reasons, including concerns about completely politicizing this position, and the impact of this decision on the City employees currently doing this work. Most importantly, I simply do not believe that the Council can honestly make the findings that we are required by ordinance to make in order to create new appointed positions. Unfortunately, I think there are the votes to pass this proposal.
  - 5) The Health, Energy and Environment committee has passed a resolution I authored creating a Youth Violence Prevention Plan Executive Committee and a Youth Violence Prevention Citizen Advisory Committee for oversight of the implementation stage of the Youth Violence Prevention Blueprint for Action. I continue to be very involved in this critically important work.
  - 6) Last week, the Health, Energy and Environment committee passed a resolution I coauthored supporting the Good Jobs, Green Jobs initiative started in Mayor RT Rybak's office, and directing City staff to work towards establishing Minneapolis as a national leader in green manufacturing.

- 7) I am very supportive of Alex Jackson, Mayor Rybak's nominee to lead the Minneapolis Fire Department. He was unanimously supported both by the Executive and Public Safety committees, and I expect his nomination to pass the Council easily.
- 8) My office is working with the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy and the Brian Coyle Center to get the West Bank farm stand's permit, which has been delayed past their tentative opening day, through the City's processes as quickly as possible. I will also be following up with staff to ensure that similar delays do not occur in the future.
- 9) A report from the NRP Framework for the Future Task Force calls for the creation of a new Neighborhood and Community Relations Department that would be housed in department of the City Coordinator. It will both serve residents directly and support other City departments to improve neighborhood and community relationships. It also calls for the creation of a new 18 member Neighborhood and Community Advisory Board to provide direction to the NRP program; approve neighborhood action plans; advise the City Council on community participation policies; provide feedback to City Departments; oversee use of administrative funds and implementation of a community participation program; and advise the Mayor, City Council and City Departments on community issues and needs related to community participation. The report builds on several recommendations of last year's community engagement task force and suggests significant changes to the current structure of the NRP program. It is schedule to return to the Council for approval in September.
- 10) The Council passed a resolution I have been working on for some time, calling on the Legislature not to increase the allowable size and weight of freight trucks on our roads and bridges, unless and until they are proven safe. As the one-year anniversary of the I-35W bridge collapse approaches, it's important to recognize the damage that increasing truck sizes do to our roads and bridges. It's also essential that the State do more to help local units of government repair and maintain our infrastructure, which continues to deteriorate.
- 11) My proposal to repeal the Lurking ordinance failed in Council on a 6-6 vote. I am proud that I led this effort, which was supported by the City's stated goals and numerous plans, including the plan to end homelessness. The testimony provided by advocates for civil rights, for the poor, and for persons experiencing homelessness was extremely important for the Council to hear. Specifically, I'd like to thank WBCC board member Todd Smith for coming down to testify in favor of the repeal. It is my hope that this public discussion about the ways that our city criminalizes poverty, homelessness and racial minorities will lay a foundation for steering our policing model in a more constructive and effective direction in the future.
- 12) A mandatory protest registration process passed the Council in June. I and other free speech advocates were able to win a victory, however, by creating a "sunset" clause that means it will only be in place for the week of the Republican National Convention. I still voted against the proposed process. I continue to work to strengthen a resolution setting forth clear MPD policies for the convention this summer and other political demonstrations, getting a unanimous vote in the Public Safety committee today.
- 13) The City is seeking bilingual election judges. If you are eligible to vote and are fluent in English and a second language, please call Minneapolis 311 or apply on-line to be an election judge at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/elections](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/elections).
- 14) The City has selected Clear Channel Outdoor as the vendor for our Coordinated Street Furniture plan, which will increase the quantity and quality of street furniture. Staff will bring a proposed contract back to the Council.
- 15) I am excited to work with Council Member Schiff on reforming our outdated regulations regarding pedicabs, which are so stringent as to basically regulate them out of existence in our City. I hope to create an environment in which pedicabs are common, as they are in other large cities, and in which pedicab operators can earn a decent living.
- 16) I am supportive of a move to increase the fare rate that taxicab operators can charge in Minneapolis. I believe that rising fuel costs make this necessary, given the fact that most drivers are independent contractors who pay for fuel out of their own wages.
- 17) The Council has voted to create a new process for restaurants with sidewalk cafes to allow patrons to bring their dogs with them.
- 18) Sergeant Preston's bar in Seven Corners has received a downgrade of their liquor license to a Class E.
- 19) There are openings on the Civil Rights Commission (closes 07/31/08), Civilian Police Review Authority, Ethical Practices Board (8/01/08) and Workforce Council (7/25/2008). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).