

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Cedar Riverside, 7-18-07

Cam's next Cedar Riverside Office Hours:
Tuesday August 7, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave

Items:

- 1) National Night Out
- 2) Sale of City-Owned Parking Ramps
- 3) Wind Turbines Ordinance passes
- 4) Bedlam gets Climate Change Micro Grant
- 5) Bina Encroachment
- 6) Downtown Transportation Action Plan
- 7) Bike Infrastructure Projects
- 8) Bike Mode Share – We're Number Two!
- 9) Unpaid Judgments Ordinance
- 10) Lead Safe Work Practices Ordinance
- 11) Infill Housing Ordinance
- 12) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) This year, one process makes it possible to register your **National Night Out** event and apply to close your street. To do one or both visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno, or if you don't have Internet call 311. If you register by July 24, you'll be eligible for a door prize drawing, and street closure will be free. **Mustafa Adam**, my office's intern for Cedar Riverside, is available to help anyone interested in hosting an NNO event this year. His goal is to organize three NNO parties east of Cedar, between Riverside and I-94.
- 2) The proposed sale of 7 City-owned parking ramps (including the Seven Corners ramp) goes before the Council on Friday. I am currently undecided on this issue, due to concerns about the City employees who may lose their jobs as part of this deal. If the developers and the employees' labor union can come to a compromise deal, I will support the sale of the ramps. I am confident that the sale of the Seven Corners ramp will not negatively impact local businesses, due in large part to the good work of the CRBA Parking Committee, which has worked very hard to get commitments from Alatus that the ramp will stay available for public parking for decades, and that local businesses will continue to have a good deal on parking validation. For more information, please go here: http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2007-meetings/20070629/Docs/08_Parking_Ramp_Set_PH.pdf
- 3) My proposed zoning code amendments that broaden and expand the allowable and conditional uses of wind turbines in the City passed the Council unanimously June 29. This is a small step towards increasing renewable energy in our city.
- 4) Congratulations to the Bedlam Theater on their successful application for one of the City's \$1,000 Climate Change Micro Grants. Their innovative idea for reducing carbon dioxide emissions is to give a two dollar bill to every attendee of Bedlam shows who gets to the theater via a mode other than an automobile (bicycle, foot, transit).
- 5) At my request, City staff are researching more alternatives for curing the Bina encroachment, including working with Bina to ascertain whether he would sell the building that is encroaching on the Dania Hall site to the City, and if so for what price. I am waiting for this report back from staff, and the neighborhood's reaction to it, before moving forward on any plan to cure this encroachment.

- 6) The Council has passed a 10-year Transportation Action Plan for Downtown. It includes plans for increasing transit capacity on Marquette and 2nd, turning a number of one-way streets into two-way streets (including Hennepin and First Avenues), as well as various bicycle and pedestrian improvements. I moved an amendment that passed unanimously, requiring staff to explore what I am calling the “Copenhagen Model” in downtown – including curbed bike lanes between sidewalks and parking lanes and bicycle signalization. This final Plan, along with a summary of public comments received, is posted at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/trans-plan/> under the project documents section.
- 7) I’m extremely pleased by the many bicycle infrastructure projects in the Second Ward that will be funded by the recently-announced Non-motorized Transportation Grants. The City will add bike lanes on E Franklin Ave from Riverside across the bridge, **along the whole length of Riverside from Franklin to the Cedar Riverside LRT Station**, Minnehaha from 31st to Franklin, **20th Ave S from Minnehaha to Riverside**, **19th Ave S from Riverside across the bridge to 10th Ave SE**, the University bike trench, SE Como from 10th Ave SE to St. Paul, and 27th Ave SE from E River Parkway to University. I want this to be a beginning and plan to keep pushing to improve our system of bike and pedestrian transit in the City and the region. If we consider what has been done in some areas of the world we still have a long way to go before we have the kind of bicycling-friendly walkable City so many of us hope for. For more thoughts on these projects, and a map of all funded projects citywide, please see my blog.
- 8) According to U.S. Census Bureau statistics released this month on the 50 cities with the most workers, Minneapolis has the second highest percentage of people who bike to work. The bureau said 2.4 percent of Minneapolis’ 189,294 workers (16 and older) pedal to their jobs, which is second only to Portland, OR, and several times higher than the national average of 0.4 percent. It is my hope that the infrastructure projects above can help us move towards our goal of doubling bicycle commuting mode share in Minneapolis. We still have a long way to go, however. I believe we need to implement creative ideas like the ones employed by Copenhagen, whose bicycle mode share is a stunning thirty-plus percent, and build a reliable, high-quality bike grid in the whole metro area.
- 9) The ordinance I introduced giving the City the authority to revoke or not renew rental licenses to landlords who have unpaid legal judgments against them has been referred to the City’s Rental Property Advisory Committee for review.
- 10) The ordinance I introduced requiring that anyone repairing chipped or peeling paint on a pre-1978 housing unit, as required by a City violation order, must have attended a Lead Safe Work Practices training, unanimously passed the Health Energy and Environment Committee last week. I expect it to easily pass the Council on Friday, and hope that this will be a small first step towards ensuring that people dealing with lead paint understand how to do so safely.
- 11) Council Member Betsy Hodges’ Infill Housing (or McMansions) ordinance passed the Council unanimously last month, with my strong support.
- 12) There are openings on the Minneapolis Empowerment Zone Governance Board, the Minneapolis Ethical Practices Board, the Heritage Preservation Commission, the Housing Board of Appeals, the Public Health Advisory Committee, the Senior Citizen Advisory Committee, and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us