



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

Cam Gordon
City Council Member
Second Ward

350 South 5th Street - Room 301M
Minneapolis MN 55415

Office 612-673-2202
Fax 612-673-3250
Cell 612-296-0579

Email:
cam.gordon@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward2/

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 5-19-10

Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Tuesday June 1, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave

Items:

- 1) NCEC Meetings
- 2) Buyer Interested in Dania Site
- 3) Two Major Victories on Pensions
- 4) Bike Walk Week
- 5) Great Streets Grant to ADC
- 6) Construction Beginning on Central Corridor
- 7) Redistricting
- 8) Free Energy Efficiency Workshops
- 9) New Civil Rights Director
- 10) Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- 11) Permeable Driveways
- 12) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Please join me, Marcea Mariani (8th District Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commissioner) and other community leaders, for a roundtable discussion on **Thursday, June 24th** 7–9pm at Matthews Park, 2318 29th Ave S, about the state of neighborhood organizations in Minneapolis today. We will look how changes in neighborhood funding will impact neighborhood work, explore strategies for influencing the development of new policies, and ways to improve and strengthen these critically important organizations through the new Neighborhood Relations Department and Engagement Commission (NCEC). Additionally, over the next several months, the NCEC and the Department of Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) are holding their own meetings to gather input before developing policy for future funding of neighborhood organizations. For Second Ward neighborhoods, the nearest meetings are **Thursday, May 27th** from 6-8pm at Van Cleve Park, 901 15th Ave SE; and **Wednesday, June 9th**, from 6-8pm at Powderhorn Park, 3400 14th Ave.
- 2) In response to the request for proposals the City sent out earlier this year, the Cedar Riverside People's Center (CRPC) has proposed to build a clinic at the vacant site of 427 Cedar Ave. The proposed project is a four-story, 20,000-square-foot building to be owned by the CRPC (a non-profit organization and the founder and operator of the People's Center Medical Clinic on Riverside). The developer and contractor of the new clinic is Minneapolis-based Master Engineering, Real Estate and Construction and the building will be designed by Minneapolis-based RSP Architects. A City staff team is currently reviewing the proposal and will more formally be bringing it to the Community and Coalition Land Use Committee for input soon. The City Council must approve the plans and sell the land to CRPC before construction can begin. According to information reported in the media, the first floor will feature commercial and retail space with a pharmacy, deli/organic foods co-op and an ethnic art gallery. The fourth floor will be used as a community and meeting room. If all goes according to plan, CRPC expects to the building to be complete in early 2012.
- 3) The legislature has granted the City's request to fold the Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund into a larger state pension fund. This means that beneficiaries/pensioners of now have assurance their benefits will continue and the fund will not fail. This is the result of years of work by staff and Council Members. We also won a major victory for Minneapolis taxpayers in Hennepin County Court. Judge Janet Poston has ruled in favor of the City of Minneapolis' position that two closed pension funds, the Minneapolis Police Relief Association (MPRA) and the Minneapolis

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Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

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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.

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Firefighters Relief Association (MFRA), must repay over \$52 million in overpayments of benefits that the funds have improperly paid out to members since June of 2000. The Judge has ordered that by early June, the funds must present to the Court and City their plans to pay the City back, and that they must start recovering the overpayments by July 1. This decision will ease a significant financial pressure on the City's budget, and represents the City's commitment both to pensioners and to taxpayers. It should be noted that this decision can be appealed.

- 4) This year's Bike Walk Week is **June 5-11**. Bike Walk to Work Day is **June 10**. Thanks to the Bedlam Theater for again acting as a celebration location on the 10th, from 7-9am and 4-7pm, and offering free Peace Coffee and hot breakfasts. To find a biking or walking convoy, go to <http://bikewalkweek.org>. Later that day, I will be attending the inaugural ride and ribbon cutting for the Nice Ride bike sharing system, which will go live on the West Bank as well. I'm excited to see this system roll out, and hope that it succeeds.
- 5) The City has approved a \$50,000 Great Streets grant to the African Development Center for programs they offer to small businesses, including technical assistance, business planning, workshops on bookkeeping and accounting.
- 6) Construction is beginning on the Central Corridor LRT line in Minneapolis. In September, the project will begin prep work to retrofit the Washington Avenue bridge to accommodate light-rail trains by reconstructing the bridge piers. They are also beginning work on the "advance traffic improvements" to the area around the campus. These improvements include new traffic signals and turn lanes in and around the University East Bank Campus. In December, they will start work to tie in the Central Corridor line from the Hiawatha LRT line just west of the Cedar-Riverside Station to Pleasant Street on the East Bank. The bulk of the work in Minneapolis will start in spring 2011. If you would like to receive weekly construction updates from the Central Corridor project, go here: <http://tinyurl.com/29kjwm8>.
- 7) The Charter Commission has put forward a proposed change to the redistricting process as laid out in the Minneapolis Charter. I am generally supportive of their proposals, which include a process for allowing minor parties which have elected a candidate to a local office to have representation in the redistricting process, scrapping an old provision under which a map could be drawn at random (in cases where the Redistricting Commission could not agree) and more. I would also support more comprehensive amendments, including reducing the power of all political parties in the redistricting process and requiring that the Charter Commission approve the final plan. The Charter Commission has scheduled two public meetings on this issue that I encourage you to attend: **Tuesday, May 25th**, at 6:30pm at North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave N; and **Thursday, May 27th** at 6:30pm at Washburn Library, 5244 Lyndale Av S.
- 8) The University District Alliance has organized a series of FREE workshops where residents of the Alliance neighborhoods, including Cedar Riverside, can sign up for customized home visits. I encourage all interested residents to take advantage of this great opportunity. The workshop on the West Bank is on **Thursday, May 20th**, 6:30-8:30pm in room 113 of the Oren Gateway Center, 610 22nd Ave S.
- 9) The Council has unanimously approved the Mayor's appointment of Velma Korbel as the City's new Civil Rights Director. I look forward to working with Director Korbel to increase the effectiveness of the Minneapolis Civil Rights Department, which I think plays a crucial role in making this a fairer and more equitable city for everyone.
- 10) The City is looking for more people to serve on our new and improved Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC has existed since 2006 and has recently been expanded to include more community members. The committee exists to help make our city more walkable, and I think it would be great for a pedestrian-rich neighborhood like the West Bank to be represented. For more information about this committee or to apply to serve, visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/open/index.asp. For appointments in the summer of 2010, priority will be given to applications received by May 28. Please contact Anna Flintoft at 612-673-3885 or Anna.Flintoft@ci.minneapolis.mn.us if you have questions.
- 11) I have introduced an amendment to the Zoning code that will allow residents to use more types of permeable paving for driveways and parking areas. Staff are beginning the process of bringing this through the City's approval processes, including meeting with our Environmental Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission. I look forward to communicating more specifics on this environmental initiative in the months ahead.
- 12) There are openings on the Latino Advisory Committee, Public Health Advisory Committee and Public Health Advisory Committee. All vacancies are open until filled. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.