

**Council Member Cam Gordon's
Report to Cedar Riverside, 5-21-08**

**Cam's next Cedar Riverside Office Hours:
Tuesday June 10, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

Items:

- 1) Central Corridor
- 2) More Shootings on the West Bank
- 3) Public Safety & Outreach Interns
- 4) Cedar Riverside Small Area Plan
- 5) Blue Goose Bonds
- 6) RFPs for City-Owned Land
- 7) Lurking and Loitering
- 8) Idling Ordinance
- 9) Free Speech and RNC
- 10) Pre-Employment Drug Testing
- 11) Air Quality Ordinance
- 12) Disparities Resolution
- 13) Climate Change Grants
- 14) Graffiti Grant
- 15) Sergeant Preston's
- 16) Crumbling Sidewalks
- 17) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) As you've likely heard, the State has put the \$70 million back into the Central Corridor Project. The University's preferred Northern Alignment does not, according to the work of their consultants in conjunction with the Project Office, fit within the federal government's Cost Effectiveness Index. There are a number of public hearings coming up, at which you can give your views on the proposed project: **May 29, 5-7pm** - Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Hennepin and Ramsey counties' regional rail authorities joint public hearing, Goodwill/Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Ave N, St. Paul. Open house at 4pm. **June 3, 1:30-3:30pm** - City of Minneapolis, City Council chambers, Room 317 City Hall, 350 S 5th St, Minneapolis. Open house at 12:30pm.
- 2) There have been two shootings over the past two days on the West Bank. I am working with First Precinct Inspector Janee Harteau, and will communicate any details when I receive them. These incidents strengthen my resolve to continue to push for more police response to the West Bank and to continue to work collaboratively with the MPD and the neighborhood, including the quarterly safety meeting.
- 3) My office has hired Annie Welch for another summer as a public safety and community outreach intern. She will be working to help organize neighborhoods in the ward around issues of safety and livability, distributing this year's Welcome Packets, and helping with community events. I am looking into possibly hiring other interns as well.
- 4) The Cedar Riverside Small Area Plan has unanimously passed the Council, after unanimous approval by the Planning Commission and Zoning and Planning Committee. This is an important step forward for the West Bank neighborhood, and will help produce better development in the years to come.
- 5) The Council has voted to finish the action begun last year to dedicate \$3,300,000 in Tax Exempt Multi-family Rental Housing Entitlement Revenue Bonds to Blue Goose Cooperative for repairs.
 - 6) I have encouraged CPED staff to move forward on putting out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Dania Hall site, and have heard that they are in the preliminary stages of this work. I have also encouraged staff to work with the Cedar Riverside NRP Steering Committee to find city-owned lots that can go out for RFPs for new owner-occupied housing units.
 - 7) The No-Heat / Low-Heat ordinance I cosponsored with Ralph Remington has finally passed the Council. The new ordinance simplifies regulations about when landlords must keep rental units adequately warm by basing them on date rather than external temperature. We are also raising the fine amount for no heat and low heat offenses, and writing language that will allow City staff to cite landlords who repeatedly violate this ordinance without 'reasonable notice.'

- 8) Today, the Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee considered my proposal to repeal the City's unjust and outdated Lurking ordinance. This ordinance disproportionately impacts homeless persons, people of color, and the poor. I believe that we must redirect precious law enforcement resources to behaviors that actually harm someone, and laws that carry meaningful consequences – only **9%** of Lurking citations in 2007 resulted in convictions. To accomplish this repeal effort, I will also be adding more behaviors to the loitering ordinance, making it cover crimes related to vandalism and theft.
- 9) The Council is considering an ordinance making it illegal to idle any gasoline vehicle for more than 3 minutes, or any truck more than 5 minutes. This builds on the anti-idling ordinance focusing solely on trucks that passed last year. I strongly support this ordinance. It is not necessary to idle modern cars for performance reasons, and idling significantly negatively impacts air quality. Additionally, a reduction in vehicle idling will help the City meet our sustainability goals regarding carbon emissions and air quality.
- 10) Council Member Ostrow's proposed mandatory registration process for protests in Minneapolis passed the Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee today. I strongly oppose this idea. I do not believe we should put ourselves in the position (that St. Paul currently finds itself in) of telling protestors where and when they can express themselves. I do not believe that most protest groups will participate in a mandatory process, and I fear that lack of permits will become a pretext for unnecessary and counterproductive law enforcement actions during this summer's Republican National Convention. I plan to move a substitute resolution creating a purely voluntary registration process on **Friday, June 6**. With it, I will also be moving a resolution clarifying police procedures during the RNC this summer.
- 11) I voted against a Human Resources proposal to require pre-employment drug testing for all City employees when it came before the Executive Committee earlier this month. I am unconvinced that this sort of policy would serve any purpose other than intruding unnecessarily into the private lives of City employees. It is unclear whether this will pass when it comes before the full Council on June 6th.
- 12) The Council has amended the City's Air Quality Ordinance to a) adopt the State's rules by reference, b) strengthen our regulation of commercial and industrial spray painting and c) include new regulations for all new coffee roasters. This last item responds to the overwhelmingly negative experience of the Seward neighborhood with a coffee roaster since 2005.
- 13) At my urging, the City's Economic Development staff presented a report on the employment and poverty gaps between white and minority residents to the Health, Energy and Environment committee on May 5. Despite many efforts to address poverty and unemployment in Minneapolis, our best data reveal some striking and disturbing racial disparities. Roughly 11% of white people in Minneapolis live in poverty compared to 43% of all black people (including African immigrants), 43% of Asian Americans and nearly 35% of American Indians. Additionally, the unemployment rate for whites is just over 4%; for blacks it is just under 14%. I co-authored a resolution with Council Member Benson that outlined this problem and created a joint Minneapolis/Hennepin County Racial Disparities Steering Committee to help address it.
- 14) Congratulations to all three West Bank organizations who have received City Climate Change grants: Cedar Cultural Center, who will use a \$1,500 grant to promote tap water over bottled water at their events; the West Bank Community Coalition, who will use a \$1,500 grant to plant and care for trees and translate energy conservation information to immigrant populations in Cedar Riverside; the Cedar Riverside Business Association, who will use a \$10,000 grant to get 20-25 small businesses an energy and lighting audit and help with related improvements.
- 15) Congratulations to the West Bank organizations that have received City graffiti prevention grants. I look forward to seeing your good work. Congrats also to the West Bank Business Association for receiving a \$40,000 Great Streets grant to improve the facades of local businesses.
- 16) Sergeant Preston's bar is working with City staff to downgrade their license from a Class B to a Class E. I am working with nearby residents, the owners and licensing staff to draft a new list of conditions for this new license.
- 17) Some of the sidewalks that were installed in the Second Ward last year were defective, and have begun to crumble. Public Works is aware of this problem, and have required that the contractors involved do removal and replacement of the spalling sections of sidewalk as warranty work. Staff are also systematically inspecting the sidewalk repair work done in the last two years and the contractors are making repairs as they are identified. If you are aware of new sidewalk panels that are crumbling, please email the location to dan.bauer@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.
- 18) There are openings on the Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights (closes 5/30/08), Latino Advisory Committee to the Mayor and City Council (closes 5/30/2008), Minneapolis Workforce Council (PIWC) (closes 5/23/2008), and Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities (closes 5/30/08). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.