



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, 7-20-11

Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Tuesday, August 2nd, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave

Items:

- 1) Riverside Avenue
- 2) 19th Ave S Repaving
- 3) West Bank Music Festival
- 4) National Night Out August 2nd
- 5) Commercial Recycling Ordinance
- 6) Riverside Plaza Renovation Meeting
- 7) Outdoor Areas Ordinance
- 8) Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off
- 9) Charges for Occupying Unlicensed Dwellings
- 10) Elections Department
- 11) State Government Shutdown
- 12) Director of Solid Waste and Recycling
- 13) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Reconstruction of Riverside Avenue has begun. In the first few days, Fairview Hospital worked with City Public Works staff to improve detour signage and complete the temporary ambulance access. My office is ready to help with any construction-related issues that arise. Staff are currently working on the lighting petition for the second phase (from 23rd Ave S to Cedar). Letters informing property owners of the voluntary assessment will be sent out soon.
- 2) Repaving of 19th Ave S started this week. This project is due to last about five days. It is funded by the federal government in response to the extra wear the streets took during the time that the I-35W bridge was inoperative. This project will also install bike lanes from Riverside to 10th Ave.
- 3) The West Bank Business Association has applied to close Cedar Avenue for several hours on Saturday, August 20th, for the West Bank Music Festival. Public Works staff has raised objections to this application, due to the construction occurring on Riverside, Cedar and Washington Ave. Given the support of both the WBBA and the West Bank Community Coalition, I am working to approve the street closure application, staff's concerns notwithstanding.
- 4) National Night Out is Tuesday, **August 2nd**. If you're planning a neighborhood gathering, there are important deadlines for registering your event with the City and for blocking off your street. There is a single online process to register your NNO event and apply to close your street. Until **July 28th**, there is a \$100 fee for blocking off the street. You need permission of 75 percent of your neighbors to be approved for street closure—please have their names and addresses with you when you apply. (You do not need their signatures.) Get started at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno. You can also register your event and apply for street closure by calling 311 (or 612-673-3000). For ideas for greening your NNO event, visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno/Green-Block-Party.pdf.
- 5) The commercial recycling ordinance I have been working on for over a year unanimously passed the full Council Friday June 17th. I was pleased that groups as diverse as the Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce and the Sierra Club supported of the new ordinance. It will go into effect September 1, and puts in place the requirement that all commercial properties in Minneapolis that have garbage service will also have recycling service. Soon, wherever you live, work or do business in Minneapolis, you will be able to recycle.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email Ahmed.Muhumud@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Attention: If you want help translating this information in language other than Hmong, Spanish or Somali, call 311

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.

- 6) Earlier this month, I helped convene a community meeting focused on the Riverside Plaza renovation workforce goals. City staff, representatives from the workforce training program Emerge, and the general contractor for the project, Knutson, were present along with the developer, George Sherman, to report on progress and answer questions. All reports indicate that the project is on track to meet the workforce goals as outlined in the Development Agreement's Memorandum of Understanding www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/docs/ProjectEnhancements_MOU_101220Final.pdf), although there are still job opportunities for skilled workers, youth and others. The well attended meeting also provided the chance to hear and discuss other concerns, including some about unhealthy, dusty conditions during construction, elevator troubles and other inconveniences. The most critical concern, however, related to creation of a new safety center as stipulated in the MOU. Many people expressed concerns about the safety center possibly displacing a valued youth program operated by the Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota. I share this concern and believe that it is essential that we do not allow the new safety center to force out any other community serving programs or services including the youth center, the East African Woman's Center, and charter school. I am hopeful that the Plaza tenants association, the confederation and the landlord can work together to find adequate space for the new safety center and all existing programs that wish to continue operating in the Plaza. For more about the meeting see <http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/news/2011/07/08/confrontation-cedar-riverside-over-planned-safety-center>.
- 7) Last month, the Council considered a new ordinance related to the regulation of outdoor dining areas. At the Council meeting on June 17th the author of the ordinance amendment, Meg Tuthill, moved to postpone it for five weeks to allow time for her to form a task force to explore alternatives. While I had planned to vote against the ordinance if it was moved forward, I supported the postponement and will be interested to see what the task force brings forward. In the meantime I continue to encourage city staff to better enforce current rules and local business owners to work with residents to address noise and other complaints related to their business operations.
- 8) Hennepin County has scheduled a short-term event to collect household hazardous waste from **July 21-23**, 9am to 4pm, at Dunwoody College of Technology, 818 Dunwoody Blvd. For more information, including a complete list of acceptable and non-acceptable items and directions to the temporary drop-off site, call Hennepin County Environmental Services at 348-3777 or www.hennepin.us/collectionevents.
- 9) The Council has voted to increase the fine for occupying a rental unit after the license has been revoked from \$500 to \$2,000. I expect this change to pass the full Council this Friday. This is yet another example of the City getting serious about addressing the issues caused by a few problem landlords.
- 10) In June the Council voted not to explore contracting with Hennepin County for elections responsibilities. The vote followed a report provided by a consultant that commended the election division for its work on the senate recount of 2008, the implementation of Rank Choice Voting in 2009, and the Governor recount of 2010. The report identifies immediate needs to purchase RCV-capable voting equipment and wrote that, "The City election staff, in partnership with the Secretary of State, Hennepin County and other counties in the State of Minnesota, should join arms to work cooperatively to develop required RFP specifications. There can be significant cost savings to all jurisdictions (cities and counties) through a joint effort to purchase new equipment." The vote by the Council will allow us to move ahead filling the position of Election Director that has remained vacant since mid 2009.
- 11) The shutdown of state government has had significant impacts on the City of Minneapolis. The City took on some functions normally provided by the state, including electrical inspections. More information is available here: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2011-meetings/20110722/Docs/2011StateGovernmentShutdownReport_final_draft.pdf. The deal struck by Governor Dayton and legislative Republicans leaves Minneapolis' Local Government Aid at \$64 million, the same level as last year. This is a substantially better outcome than what might have happened, had legislative Republicans gotten their way and cut us down to zero.
- 12) Solid Waste and Recycling Director Susan Young is leaving the City of Minneapolis. I have appreciated Susan as a knowledgeable, can-do City employee, and have worked with her on several projects, most recently the commercial recycling ordinance. This transition also offers an opportunity to restructure the Solid Waste and Recycling department to have a greater focus on policy. Over the next few years, the leadership of solid waste and recycling will be faced with some great policy questions: how do we expand curbside organics collection citywide? Should we transition from our current multi-sort recycling program to a dual-sort system? I wish Susan well, and look forward to working on these complicated topics with her successor.
- 13) There are openings on the Latino Advisory Committee and Planning Commission. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.