



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

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## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 9-21-11

**Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11:00am**  
**Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

### Items:

- 1) October 15<sup>th</sup> Walk on 15<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>
- 2) Riverside Ave
- 3) Bike Lanes on 25<sup>th</sup> Ave
- 4) 2012 Budget
- 5) 2011 Budget
- 6) Minneapolis "One Read"
- 7) Managed Natural Landscape Ordinance
- 8) Food Policy Council
- 9) New City Domain Name
- 10) Tree Canopy Study
- 11) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Working with CPED staff, my office is organizing a walk on **Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>**, at 10:30am, on 6<sup>th</sup> Street, 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 4<sup>th</sup> Street, to note what works and what doesn't work for pedestrians and other road users. We will need the support of the West Bank Community Coalition and others to make this event a success. My hope is that it will produce information that can be used by the CHANCE program to help determine what sorts of improvements the City should make on 6<sup>th</sup> St with the \$30,000 from the Riverside Plaza project, and on 15<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> through the reconstruction planned for 2014.
- 2) Riverside Avenue construction continues. If you would like to sign up for a regular email update on City construction activities in the neighborhood, please email [Chris.Engelmann@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Chris.Engelmann@minneapolismn.gov) with Riverside Email Update in the subject line.
- 3) I organized a community meeting that was held this past Monday to discuss a proposal for bike lanes on the section of 25<sup>th</sup> Ave S between Butler Place and Riverside Avenue. This proposal came to my office as part of a request from the Seward Neighborhood Group for bike lanes on the 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> "S-curve" just to the south of I-94. This roadway is listed on the newly-passed Minneapolis Bicycle Plan. In order for this improvement to be made, approximately eight parking spaces will have to be removed: seven from the west side of the street and one from the east. I have heard from Augsburg College that they are willing to have these parking spaces removed, but want to hear from the broader neighborhood about this idea before making a decision.
- 4) The process to amend the City's 2011 budget is finally over. The Council passed a plan that would have kept all current firefighters on the job until the end of this year. The Mayor vetoed that action, citing the fact that it was not balanced through the end of 2012. Last Friday, the Council failed to override his veto by an 8-5 vote. I voted for the initial motion, and voted to override the veto. A compromise budget solution that saved 4 of the 10 laid off firefighters through the end of 2012, by taking 2011 funding for 13 other unfilled City positions, passed unanimously. Council President Johnson moved a list of four other unfilled positions from other City departments, including the new bicycle and pedestrian coordinator. I voted against all of these additional changes. In my opinion, we should not make decisions about the 2012 budget before and outside of that budget process (this was my point of disagreement with the Mayor's veto as well). Two of Johnson's motions passed on narrow 7-6 votes, one failed on an 8-5 vote, and the bicycle and pedestrian coordinator motion failed on an extremely lopsided 11-2 vote. You can read more analysis of last Friday's actions on my blog.

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](mailto: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.

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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.

- 5) Mayor Rybak has given his 2012 budget address. He has asked for a 0% property tax levy increase, and the Board of Estimate and Taxation has voted to approve this request. The levy is the total amount of property taxes we collect from all property tax payers combined. Last year's levy increase was 4.7%. Other highlights of his message included proposing that there be no salary increases and that he is using a new budgeting approach called "priority-based budgeting" this year. I am supportive of keeping property taxes down, but I eagerly await the details for the 2012 budget. I will be pushing to retain as many City jobs as possible, and for the City to continue to provide essential services to residents and businesses.
- 6) This fall the City is sponsoring a "One Read" effort that I hope will unite people by having many of us read the same book and start deeper conversations about race, family and the history of our City. The book, *The Grace of Silence* by Minneapolis native and National Public Radio host Michele Norris, describes Norris's experience as a child of the first black family on their block in a south Minneapolis neighborhood. Michele Norris and MPR News host Kerri Miller will be at the Guthrie Monday evening, Oct. 3 for a discussion of "The Grace of Silence" followed by a dessert reception. The event begins at 7pm, and we expect a lively conversation. Tickets: \$10 – general admission; \$5 – seniors, students, limited income. You can purchase tickets at [www.GuthrieTheater.org](http://www.GuthrieTheater.org) or by calling the Guthrie at (612) 377-2224. You can find the One Minneapolis, One Read event schedule, information and resources at [www.OneMinneapolisOneRead.com](http://www.OneMinneapolisOneRead.com).
- 7) The Managed Natural Landscape ordinance I authored passed the full Council unanimously. I see this as a major step forward in allowing and encouraging residents to use more ecologically sustainable plantings in their yards, with all the attendant improvements to storm water management, biodiversity, air quality and more.
- 8) The resolution I authored creating the City's first-ever Food Policy Council has passed the Council unanimously. This body will be a long term advisory committee that will be empowered to advise the City on all matters relating to food, especially local food issues. Formation of this group is one of the key recommendations of the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative, and it will take on the continuing work of Homegrown.
- 9) The City has switched to an easier, shorter domain name: [www.minneapolismn.gov](http://www.minneapolismn.gov). All City emails have changed accordingly (although emails sent to the old email addresses should still reach us). My new email is [cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov), my Policy Aide's is [robin.garwood@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:robin.garwood@minneapolismn.gov), and my Associate's is [nancy.olsen@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:nancy.olsen@minneapolismn.gov).
- 10) Earlier this year, the University and the City worked together on a study of the tree canopy in Minneapolis. The data from this study have now been made available via an intuitive and easy-to-use application on the City's website: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/mplsurbantreecanopymap.asp>. This application allows users to find the tree canopy percentages for individual parcels or for neighborhoods. The tree canopy coverage for the West Bank is **21%**, below the City's goal for citywide tree-coverage. The Minneapolis Tree Advisory Committee made five key recommendations for what the City can do with this data: study the effects of the recent north side tornado; make the data readily available; analyze it with other information to find the best places to plant trees for energy efficiency, storm water management and other City goals; do outreach to residents, neighborhood groups, businesses and others to encourage tree plantings in the most advantageous locations; and repeat the study at least every five years. I am very supportive of all of these recommendations, and pleased to report that progress has already been made on several of them.
- 11) In an effort to make it easier to learn about volunteer opportunities, ensure a more open process, and increase the diversity of the applicant pool, we now focus our appointments to boards and commissions once in the spring and once in the fall. **Applications are now being accepted for the over 80 open positions** on 16 boards and commissions that the City Council and Mayor will appoint this fall. Applications will be reviewed beginning September 30; however the positions are open until filled. For a full list of position descriptions see [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions). There are openings on the following: [Minneapolis Arts Commission](#), [Basset Creek Watershed Management Commission](#), [Board of Appeal & Equalization](#), [Civilian Police Review Authority](#), [Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights](#), [Minneapolis Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee \(CLIC\)](#), [Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities](#), [Minneapolis Ethical Practices Board](#), [Minneapolis Housing Board of Appeals](#), [Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission \(HPC\)](#), [Minneapolis Telecommunications Network \(MTN\)](#), [Minneapolis Planning Commission](#), [Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Board of Commissioners](#), [Senior Citizens Advisory Committee Vacancy](#), [Shingle Creek Watershed Management Commission](#). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov).