



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 3-20-13

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

Items:

- 1) 515 on the Park
- 2) Self-Managed Special Service Districts
- 3) New University Recreation Facility Proposed
- 4) Urban Scholar Program
- 5) Business License Conditions
- 6) 2013 Election
- 7) Downtown Garbage Burner
- 8) Bike Walk Counts
- 9) City-wide Street Sweeping
- 10) Utility Box Art Wraps
- 11) Interstate Mississippi River Bike Trail
- 12) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The City Planning Commission gave its approval to the Fine Associate's housing project on 15th Ave across from Curry Park, but only after it required them to maintain a public pedestrian walkway along old 5th Street from Riverside Plaza to the Brian Coyle Center. The sidewalk issue will come before the Zoning and Planning Committee on March 21 and I plan to support it. The other approvals, including a Conditional Use Permit and several variances, have been appealed. The appeal will be heard by the Council's Zoning and Planning committee (on which I serve) on April 4 or April 18. If it is held on the 4, unfortunately, I will not be present due to a prior commitment.
- 2) Public Works staff have presented a second draft of a City policy for self-managed Special Service Districts to the Transportation and Public Works committee. I expect a policy very similar to this to pass on March 29th, in time to allow the West Bank Improvement District to enter into the formal process.
- 3) The University is developing a predesign for a U of M recreation facility on the site of what is now a surface parking lot on the north side of Riverside Avenue, between 21st and 22nd Avenues S. I have concerns about the fact that this facility is proposed to have no active use on Riverside Ave, and that the University has chosen not to work with other institutions and the neighborhood to build a recreational facility that would be open to more West Bank workers, students and residents.
- 4) The City of Minneapolis is once again offering an internship program for college students interested in public service careers. The City is now accepting applications for the 2013 Urban Scholars program, which aims to help young people from diverse backgrounds build their skills for the future, with a focus on careers in public service. Interested students should apply online by Monday, March 25 at www.minneapolismn.gov/jobs/jobs_before. Students who are enrolled and in good standing at a two- or four-year college or university are eligible to apply. For more information, go to www.minneapolismn.gov/civilrights/one/urbanscholars.
- 5) The Council has amended our ordinances to allow the City to impose business license conditions on businesses with significant and documented violations that threaten public safety and community livability. In most cases when a business has violations, the City and business owner have been able to work together to negotiate conditions to correct the problems. However, a very small number of troublesome business owners have been unwilling to negotiate conditions. In those instances, the City's only course of action has been to begin the license revocation or denial process. This amendment gives the City an additional tool to correct problems. Among other things, it will allow the City to limit hours of operation, restrict where liquor can be sold, limit occupancy levels, limit the means of ingress or egress, and/or restrict where people under age 21 can be admitted.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email Ahmed.Muhumud@minneapolismn.gov

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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.

- 6) The Council's Elections committee has taken a number of actions regarding the 2013 municipal election to help insure successful elections and support the purchase of certified Ranked Choice Voting compatible voting equipment. We are also forming of a Polling Place Work Group to evaluate the City's polling places, and make recommendations about modifying the number of precincts and/or polling places. We are also moving forward with work on amendments to our ranked choice voting ordinance, to a) allowing the City to declare unofficial winners when one candidate gets more than 50% of the vote (without having to go through every write-in, etc.), b) only counting unique votes for registered write-in candidates, and aggregating the rest into a broad category of "write-ins," and c) allowing staff to keep more types of voter errors (skipped or duplicate rankings, etc.) in the count.
- 7) Hennepin County's application to increase the amount of garbage they may burn in downtown Minneapolis was discussed in February at the Zoning and Planning Committee. When this came to the Planning Commission over 3 years ago they denied the application. The County then appealed that decision and this has been stuck at the committee level ever since. It was clear at the committee that we had the authority to deny the appeal. I favored this position in part because of the long delay, but also, more importantly, because the evidence supports the findings of the Planning Commission that increasing the capacity of the garbage burner could be detrimental to public health, safety, that it could be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the vicinity and could impede the development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district. Despite my opposition, the committee supported a continued postponement until after the state's environmental review is complete. If and when new information is presented as part of that process I will certainly consider it carefully before taking another vote in the future. In general I support much more aggressive goals to move us to a no-waste city and county. It is worth noting that under the current practices, even as Minneapolitans reduce waste, increase composting and recycle more, the amount of waste burned at the downtown facility will not change because the county continues to bring waste in from other cities.
- 8) In February, Transit for Livable Communities released their counts of bikers and walkers for 2012. Counts at 40 locations indicate that bicycling increased 50.5% and walking 23.5% between 2007 and 2012. Between 2011 and 2012, bicycling increased only 1.8%, and walking 2.4%. Once again Ward 2 locations had some of the highest number of bikers. The top location was at 15th Ave SE with one of the highest shares of nonmotorized traffic of any benchmark location. From 2011 to 2012, the share increased from 67% to 74%, with an estimated 17,569 trips a day. You can see the full report here <http://www.bikewalktwincities.org/sites/default/files/bwtc-2012-count-report-final-web2.pdf>
- 9) On April 9 city crews will start cleaning all city streets and alleys. From April 9 through May 3, sweepers will take care of all 1,000 miles of city streets and parkways. In addition to the "No Parking" signs that will be posted the day before sweepers come through, the City will make about 3,500 automated phone calls each evening to let residents know their street will be swept the next day. Folks can also use the City's Web site to find out when the sweepers are coming go to www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/streetsweeping and click on "street sweeping schedule lookup," to find out which week a street is scheduled to be swept. The weekend before that week, they can revisit the Web site to find out which day of the week the street is scheduled to be swept. You can also view streetsweeping videos at www.YouTube.com/cityofminneapolis
- 10) The City of Minneapolis Art in Public Places program has announced a unique opportunity for local artists to submit designs for utility box wraps open to professional artists who live or work in Minneapolis. Selected artists will be paid an honorarium of \$1,000. The deadline for applications is Wednesday, April 17, at 4 p.m. There will be an informational meeting for interested artists on Tuesday, March 26, 5:30 p.m. at Reverend Martin Luther King Park, 4055 Nicollet Ave, Minneapolis. For more information visit www.minneapolismn.gov/dca or contact Mary Altman at mary.altman@minneapolismn.gov.
- 11) The City Council approved a resolution supporting the development of the Mississippi River Trail through Minneapolis. The route would be a part of a much larger interstate bike trail stretching from the headwaters of the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico. The Minneapolis section of "U.S. Bike Route 45" will follow existing on-street and off-street bikeways along both sides of the river. The project is being led and funded in part by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, which has asked local governments to adopt resolutions in support of the effort. With the council's vote, the City commits to maintaining signs along the proposed route through Minneapolis. The trail has the potential to promote bicycle tourism locally and throughout Minnesota. More information on the Mississippi River Trail is available at www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/mrt
- 12) Applications are now being accepted for 47 open positions on the following 10 City boards and commissions: Arts Commission, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Board of Commissioners, Minneapolis Workforce Council, Neighborhood & Community Engagement Commission, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Police Conduct Oversight Commission, Police Conduct Review Panel, Seniors Advisory Committee, Minneapolis Television Network. Applications will be reviewed beginning April 26, 2013. However, the positions are open until filled. For a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions, go to www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings.