



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 8-21-13

**Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Tuesday, September 3rd, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

- 1) Framework for our Energy Future
- 2) Community Participation Funding
- 3) Cedar Avenue Sidewalk Public Meeting
- 4) Five15 on the Park Project
- 5) Dinkytown Greenway Opens
- 6) Mayor's 2014 Budget
- 7) Ranked Choice Voting Video
- 8) Youth Cabinet
- 9) MPD Officers Suspended
- 10) Downtown East Redevelopment
- 11) Franklin Avenue Bridge Project
- 12) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The City has made a lot of great progress on meeting our energy goals since the Council voted to hold a public hearing on forming a municipal energy utility. CenterPoint Energy signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Energy Options campaign that commits to help the City meet our goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2025 and to assist all of its customers in reducing their energy consumption and the associated greenhouse gas emissions, through on-bill financing for residential energy efficiency investments, a pilot comprehensive residential retrofit program, a comprehensive multifamily retrofit program and more. Xcel Energy has also committed to help the City reach our goals, and has committed to specifics including implementing a community solar program, creating a standard contract for renewable projects, and sharing more information with the City about reliability issues and planned infrastructure projects. Xcel has also offered to work with the City on a plan to invest in renewable energy and use it to power City infrastructure, like street lights. It's good to see the utilities coming to the table. Now it's the City's turn to hold them to their commitments to be good partners in meeting our energy goals. Today, the Council's Committee of the Whole passed a resolution that commits the City to five important things:

- Developing a comprehensive energy vision through the Energy Pathways Study, which is to incorporate the Climate Action Plan goals and strategies and the recommendations of the Community Environmental Advisory Commission,
- Continuing to push at the Legislature for the flexibility we need to address our energy goals through our franchise agreements, or create a municipal utility,
- Continuing to study all of our energy options through the Pathways Study,
- Reaching a framework for our new franchise agreements that we hope will meet our energy goals by June of next year, which will keep the pressure on the utilities to make sure they deliver on their commitments to be good partners, and,
- Directing our staff to start working on negotiating franchise agreements that will meet our energy goals.

This is incredibly important work for the City to be doing. In order to stabilize carbon concentrations in the atmosphere, we need to reduce carbon emissions by 80% by 2050. Electricity and natural gas provided by Xcel and CenterPoint account for two-thirds of our carbon emissions. It's great that energy is finally becoming a priority issue for the City, because it needs that level of attention. I'm hopeful that the conversation that has begun – thanks in large part to the great work of the Minneapolis Energy Options campaign – will lead us to a cleaner, more affordable, more reliable energy future.

- 2) The Council is poised to approve the Community Participation grants to neighborhood organizations for the years 2014-2016. The West Bank is slated to receive \$252,361.

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.

- 3) The City of Minneapolis Public Works is planning on reconstructing sidewalks and related infrastructure on Cedar Av between 3rd St S and 7th St S in 2014. The project will include full removal of the existing sidewalks, curb and gutter as needed, reconfiguration of the automobile travel lanes, and streetscape elements as needed. The City will be holding an open house meeting to present the proposed project layout and gather input on **Thursday, August 29th**, at the Brian Coyle Center, from 4-6pm. Find out more here: www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/projects/cedarave.
- 4) The City has received a letter from Dr. Bianca Fine asking that we postpone the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) process. Apparently she is considering reducing the number of affordable units. Therefore, the public hearing on this TIF request will move from August 6th to sometime in October. The notice on the City's webpage (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/public/>) will also be updated shortly.
- 5) After years of planning, the Dinkytown Greenway is now open to bicyclists. The bike trail runs through the University of Minnesota's East Bank campus and, by connecting to the U of M Transitway, carries bike traffic from the northeast metro (Saint Paul, Falcon Heights, Lauderdale, Roseville) across the Mississippi River. Next year's Bluff Street Trail project will extend the Dinkytown Greenway under Interstate 35W and into downtown Minneapolis.
- 6) Today, the Mayor presented his 2014 budget. It calls for a 1% **reduction** in the property tax levy, an increase in police and fire staffing to deal with expected aging and attrition in those departments, and increased infrastructure spending, among other things. I look forward to hearing and sharing more details, but as it stands I am supportive of this budget.
- 7) The City has produced a new video demonstrating how Ranked-Choice Voting works. You can find it here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ct70K5la5qk> as well as on the new Elections/RCV website, at: vote.minneapolismn.gov. This website is where the most current, accurate information will be posted throughout the election period. I expect it to be available in other languages soon. Our Voter Ambassadors will be using this and other resources in the months ahead to educate voters about how Ranked-Choice Voting works.
- 8) In August I will be introducing a resolution that would formally create a Minneapolis Youth Cabinet. The cabinet would primarily be an internal workgroup charged with coordinating the City's role in implementing the Youth Coordinating Board Call to Action and Youth Compact, developing a framework for incorporating the needs of youth and families into more of the work of the City, supporting department efforts to incorporate youth and children in their goals, business planning and work, and fostering more opportunities for engaging neighborhood and community partners in supporting youth and families.
- 9) As you have likely heard, two Minneapolis Police officers, Shawn Powell and Brian Thole, have been suspended for recent behavior in Green Bay, Wisconsin. They are alleged to have used racist language after an incident involving two black men in a bar, and to have made "sexually offensive" comments about Police Chief Janee Harteau. It is worth noting that these particular officers are named in multiple lawsuits against the City of Minneapolis. These include the suit brought by Derryl Jenkins after he was beaten by MPD officers, which the City settled for \$235,000. I support the Chief's decision to suspend these officers. Racism and sexism have no place in the MPD or any other City department.
- 10) The City Council has approved a framework and directed staff to negotiate terms based on it for participation in a large 5 block, development project near the Stadium in Downtown East. The blocks, now owned by the Star Tribune, currently consist of surface parking lots and three buildings. Ryan Companies is proposing to buy the land and construct one million square feet of office space in two 20-story office towers, a parking ramp of approximately 1,300 stalls approximately 320 housing units, approximately 40,000 square feet of retail space and a large public park. City participation would include assuming a \$65 million dollar debt to help Ryan pay for the parking ramp and to purchase the park land from them. The debt would be paid back from parking fees. I will be watching this project very carefully and pushing hard to make sure that the investment results in a full service park that meets the needs of area residents first and foremost, including those who live in the densest areas of nearby Cedar Riverside and could benefit greatly from more park amenities.
- 11) Hennepin County is planning to substantially renovate the Franklin Avenue Bridge. The design process has begun, and designs have been presented to the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees. There are currently two layouts, one with buffered bike lanes and one with a physically-protected bikeway, which is favored by the Bicycle Advisory Committee. In both designs, the bridge will have one auto lane in each direction except at the east end, where it will widen to two lanes in each direction for the intersection with East River Pkwy and 27th Ave SE as it does today. The County will be reaching out for an introductory community meeting in the next few months, and I encourage you to stay informed.
- 12) Applications are now being accepted for open positions on the following City boards and commissions: Animal Care and Control Advisory Board, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Minneapolis Workforce Council, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Police Conduct Oversight Commission, Police Conduct Review Panel, Seniors Advisory Committee and Telecommunications Network. For a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions, go to www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings.