

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 7-19-17

Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Thursday, August 3rd, 9:30-11:00am
Nabo Café, 2211 Riverside Avenue

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Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612- 673-3737;

Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612- 673-3737

Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612- 673-3737.

Items:

- 1) Minimum Wage Ordinance
- 2) Menthol Tobacco Ordinance
- 3) 10th Avenue Bridge
- 4) Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance Update
- 5) Renewable Energy for City Facilities
- 6) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) On June 30, on an 11 to 1 vote, the City Council approved a new minimum wage ordinance for Minneapolis. It lays out a timeline to get almost all Minneapolis wage earners to \$15/hour indexed to inflation by July 2024 - within 5 years for businesses with over 100 employees and 7 years for smaller businesses. It offers no tip credit but allows a 90-day "training wage" less than the minimum wage for people under 20 who are participating in a city-recognized employment training or apprenticeship program. It does not include school district, state, federal or University of Minnesota workers, because the city has no authority to regulate those employers. Some people may not be fully satisfied with the result, but I am hopeful that everyone will make a good faith effort to implement it as best we can. This will not only keep more money in our local economy and allow more parents to provide food and shelter for themselves and their children, but it will also directly address historic racial economic inequities that continue to plague our city and state. Of the City's 311,000 workers about 71,000 will be positively affected by the increase, and workers of color will disproportionately benefit. Of Latino workers, 54% will benefit from the increased wages. Of black workers, 41% will benefit. Of white workers, 17% will benefit. I see this as a commitment we are making as a community to both our workers and our employers. As we embark on this transition, let's support our local businesses more than ever and let's keep investing in our workforce to make our city one of the best places to do business in in the country. You can find the staff report, final ordinance and a wealth of additional information at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/minimumwage/MINIMUM-HOME>

- 2) With my colleague Lisa Bender, I have introduced an ordinance to change our tobacco regulations to include menthol tobacco products in among the other flavored tobacco products, the sale of which has been restricted to adult only tobacco shops. This ordinance will come forward for a public hearing on **July 24th** at 1:30pm in the Council Chambers. Health experts acknowledge that menthol masks the irritating effect of tobacco smoke which makes it easier to inhale, which facilitates experimentation and addiction by youth. The Food and Drug Administration has concluded menthol tobacco poses a public health due its association with youth smoking initiation and greater addiction. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention “Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States, accounting for more than 480,000 deaths every year, or 1 of every 5 deaths.” You can read more about the specific problems with menthol tobacco here: <http://beautifulieuglytruth.org/>
- 3) On May 30, the Governor signed a Capital Investment (bonding) bill and I was delighted to see that funding of \$31,875,000 for the 10th Avenue Bridge rehabilitation was included in it. This important and well used Second Ward bridge over the Mississippi needs major rehabilitation to remain safe and sound for the future. Two other City bonding priorities were also fully funded: \$25 million for the 35W/Lake Street Transit/Access project and \$1 million for the Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery Fence Restoration.
- 4) I was disappointed to learn that the state legislature and Governor approved a new state law preempting Minnesota cities from banning the distribution of single use plastic carry-out retail bags. The new state law preempts “bans” but not “fees.” So the fee section of the City's law remains unaffected and I know that some stores are implementing the portion of the ordinance requiring a fee for paper bags that was not preempted. I commend those establishments and all of you who are already doing more to bring your own bags. I am moving forward with an effort to amend the city ordinance so that a fee will be required for plastic as well as paper carry out bags so that it fits within the constraints imposed by the Governor and state legislative majority. I expect that the public hearing for this will occur in August and that the new ordinance will be approved by October 1st.
- 5) The Council has taken a major step towards getting all of our electricity for City government facilities from clean, renewable sources within five years. This includes all the electricity the city purchases, including for street lights, signal lights, all City-owned buildings as well as our water plant. As part of the approved motion, staff will report back by August 28, with a preliminary analysis and recommendations for how to meet this goal that will look at current and projected usage of electricity over the next 10 years and out best options for getting clean, renewable energy in the short and long term. Options could include larger scale solar photovoltaic arrays on City owned land and structures; participating in more community solar gardens; the purchasing of renewable energy credits; pushing legislation to allow us to purchase power on the wholesale market; and, building our own renewable energy power on property we don't own, including wind and solar power plants located outside the city.
- 6) Visit the City's website, <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions for City boards and commissions.