



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

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## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood, 11-22-10

**Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:  
Pratt School, December 21<sup>st</sup>, 9:30-11am**

### Items:

- 1) 2011 Budget
- 2) Bicycle Advisory Committee
- 3) Redistricting
- 4) Dero Bike Racks Moves to Southeast, Wins Award
- 5) U of M Trail Phase 3
- 6) Disparity Study
- 7) Community Participation Program Guidelines
- 8) Homegrown Minneapolis Community Meeting
- 9) Nice Ride's First Year
- 10) Met Council 2030 Transportation Plan
- 11) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The 2011 budget and financial challenges facing our City are the most difficult I have experienced since taking office. By now all property owners in Minneapolis should have received their notice for proposed property tax for 2011. Many, if not all, have seen increases over 2010. The second of three public hearings on the tax levy and budget was held in November and we heard many concerns about the proposed levy and budget. The biggest concerns we heard about related to a cut in funding for the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (from \$10 million to 8) and the dramatic increase in property taxes. The typical increase, based on the calls and emails I have received, is between 15–18%. My own tax increase is in that range. Several factors play roles in this years increase in property taxes, including: a decline in the overall tax base; a shift in the burden of property taxes from commercial and industrial properties onto residential properties; increased obligations to closed pension funds; decreases in Local Government Aid; and the recertification of Tax Increment Financing Districts. The site [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2011truthintaxation](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2011truthintaxation) answers many questions about the process and explains the City's different funding sources. One more public hearing on the City's proposed 2011 budget to give the public a chance to share their thoughts on the proposed budget and tax levy will be held on **Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>**, at 6:05pm in City Hall, 350 South 5th Street, room 317. I also welcome your thoughts and comments outside the meeting. I am hopeful that the actual impact on taxpayers may be smaller than predicted in the notices they received by mail this week. The notices were based on a maximum **7.5%** levy increase passed by the Board of Estimate and taxation. The budget proposed by the Mayor is based on a **6.5%** increase. There are also ongoing efforts to find cuts. One percent of the levy is equal to \$2.2 million dollars. With a general fund budget of \$372 million there may yet be places worth cutting, but more layoffs and lost services do often have undesirable consequences. Whatever we do this year, I am convinced that the annual property tax levy increases levied in the last few years are not sustainable. I will continue to work to make sure we are managing this difficult financial situation in a way that balances the need to keep taxes down with the need to avoid drastic cuts in critical services that would lead to more expensive long term consequences. There is a dire need for state tax and pension reform. My focus will be on making sure that City departments are investing our money wisely for the short and long term benefit of all our residents.

- 2) The Council has restructured the Minneapolis Bicycle Advisory Committee. For the first time, it will be made up of a majority of community members. My office was instrumental in pushing these changes forward over the last two years, and I am thrilled to see our work come to fruition. Each Council Member will appoint one member from his or her ward. If you or anyone you know are interested in representing Ward 2 on the new and improved BAC, please contact the City Clerk's office at (612) 673-3358 or [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact Matt Bower at (612) 673-2188 or [Matthew.Bower@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Matthew.Bower@ci.minneapolis.mn.us)

If you want help translating this call – Hmong– Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2188;

Spanish – Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2188;

Somali – Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' an wac 612-673-2188.

- 3) One bright point of an otherwise difficult election was the overwhelming support by the people of Minneapolis for a better way of changing ward boundaries after this year's census. By a vote of **55%**, the voters of Minneapolis rejected the old, overtly politicized process – in which our ward boundaries were drawn by a Redistricting Commission comprised of representatives of the Republican and Independence Parties, which hold no elected offices in Minneapolis at any level – in favor of allowing the Charter Commission to redraw the maps. There is work to do to ensure that the Charter Commission will include diverse voices and viewpoints (geographic, ethnic, and political) when doing their work, and to ensure that the process they use is open, transparent, and inclusive. But I am convinced that this is a major step in the right direction, and I am proud to have started the process a year ago with Council Members Glidden and Benson.
- 4) Congratulations to Second Ward small business Dero Bike Racks for receiving a 2010 Commuter Choice Award. They were honored for developing Dero ZAP, a solar powered, wireless, web-based application that allows organizations to reward employees who commute by bicycle. The program was launched inside Dero itself, and they now provide a cash incentive of \$3 per day to each employee who uses alternative commuting options. I also want to welcome Dero to Southeast Minneapolis; for years, they have been operating in the Seward neighborhood, and have just recently moved to SEMI.
- 5) The Council has approved an additional \$247,765 in funding to make completion of the bike trail in the Dinkytown trench possible next year. Known as The U of M Trail Phase III, it was conceived in the '90s to provide an off-street bicycle and pedestrian trail between downtown Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota's Minneapolis & St. Paul campuses. The project limits are the east approach of Bridge #9 to the intersection of 5<sup>th</sup> Street SE and Oak Street SE. The project will also provide additional trail access at East River Road and a pedestrian access at 17th Avenue SE / 5th Street SE. The entire project will cost over 3 million dollars.
- 6) The long awaited "disparities" study is now complete. It looked at the City's procurement process, the locations and ownership of companies that do business with the city and at the overall marketplace and experiences of women-owned and minority-owned businesses that seek contracts in both the public and private sector. It has confirmed that we continue to have a significant problem with racial and gender discrimination on all levels of the contracting and procurement ladder in the region. Institutional racism and sexism continue to pose serious obstacles in access to contracts in our marketplace. The study also made a number of recommendations to remedy the situation, including the enhancement of current City efforts to fight discrimination and the addition of new initiatives. These initiatives involve both race- and gender-conscious remedies as well as some race- and gender-neutral initiatives. You can view the study here: [http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/docs/NERA\\_Minneapolis\\_Disparity\\_Final.pdf](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/docs/NERA_Minneapolis_Disparity_Final.pdf). The City Council is now seeking public comments on the Disparity Study. E-mail comments to [cynthia.govan@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cynthia.govan@ci.minneapolis.mn.us) no later than 4:30 p.m. (CST) on Friday, December 3. Mail to: Minneapolis Civil Rights Department, Attn: Cynthia Govan, 250 S. 4th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415. The Council will likely act on any recommendations based on the report following the comment period. This is the second Disparity Study completed by the City. The original study was completed in 1995 and the new study is required if we are to operate a Small and Underutilized Business Program to address the effects of past discrimination in contracting and to promote equal opportunities for all to participate in contracts generated by the City.
- 7) After passing two amendments I proposed, a city Council Committee approved the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission's (NCEC) recommended Community Participation Program Guidelines and funding formula that outline how \$3,000,000 will be provided to neighborhood organizations in 2011. Preliminary allocations based on the proposed formula indicate that if PPEERIA applied for the funding they would receive \$39,281. Final approval of the guidelines and formula will come to the full Council in early December. For further information on the draft guidelines and allocations see <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ncr/>
- 8) There will be a community meeting on in December on the Homegrown Minneapolis effort I have been leading, which aims to bring more healthy and local food and urban agriculture in Minneapolis. The meeting will be **Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup>** from 5:30-7:30 pm at the UROC (Urban Research and Outreach Center), 2001 Plymouth Avenue North. Everyone is welcome. Look for more information here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp>.
- 9) This month, the inaugural season of the Nice Ride bicycle sharing program, which includes Prospect Park, came to a close. Nice Ride exceeded the 100,000-ride mark this year, and Blue Cross Blue Shield is committing an additional \$1.5 million to Nice Ride for Phase 2 expansion.
- 10) The Metropolitan Council is working on a 2030 regional transportation policy plan. The City Council has commented on the plan, advocating an additional emphasis on rail and calling for a regional bicycle master plan. You can learn more here <http://www.metrocouncil.org/planning/transportation/TPP/2010/index.htm>.
- 11) There are openings on the Commission on Civil Rights, Public Health Advisory Committee, Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, and Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).