



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

**Cam Gordon**

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# Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 4-15-09

**Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday May 5, 9:30-11:00am**  
**Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

## Items:

- 1) April Roundtable: Supporting our Small Businesses
- 2) Charter Commission Community Meetings
- 3) Street Cleaning Season Begins
- 4) Park Dedication Fee
- 5) Land Sale to Midwest Mountaineering
- 6) GreenPrint Report
- 7) Beekeeping
- 8) Board and Commission Diversity Audit
- 9) Teen Job Fair
- 10) Trader Joe's
- 11) New Police Feedback Tool
- 12) City Uses Twitter
- 13) Free City Wi-Fi for Nonprofits
- 14) Grants for Graffiti Prevention
- 15) Nominations for Best Public Art
- 16) Alliance Report
- 17) Domestic Violence
- 18) Sofa Ban
- 19) Opening on Boards and Commissions

- 1) On **April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 7-9pm at Joe's Market and Deli, 1828 SE Como Ave** I will be joined by Longfellow Business Association Co-Chair Scott Cramer, Seward Civic and Commerce Association President Jim Welna, and Southeast Business Association Executive Director Mike McLaughlin for a roundtable discussion about the vital role of small businesses and business associations in our local economy. Please feel welcome to join us.
- 2) Council Member Ostrow's proposals to amend the Charter, including the elimination of the Park Board and Board of Estimate and Taxation, and the creation of a new City Administrator, will be discussed at four open meetings organized by the Charter Commission: Thursday, April 23 at Minnesota Transitions School (Board Room), 2872 26th Ave S; Tuesday, April 28, at North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave N; Thursday, April 30 at Northeast Library, 2200 Central Ave NE; and Thursday, May 7 at St. Joan of Arc Church (lower level), 4500 Clinton Ave S. All meetings will take place from 6:30-8pm. If you have any opinions on these proposed amendments, I encourage you to attend one or more of these meetings and make your voice heard. More information is available at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/charter-commission/>
- 3) On Tuesday, April 14, Minneapolis crews began their annual effort to sweep some 1,100 miles of city streets and collect about 16,000 tons of debris. Street sweeping keeps neighborhoods cleaner and protects our water quality by removing sand and other winter debris before it can wash down storm drains and into our lakes and waterways. As lawn care season approaches, please remember that you can help protect our lakes and rivers by bagging up your yard waste for curbside collection. Please watch for "no parking" signs that are posted before the day before sweeping. You also can find out when your street will be swept by visiting the City's Web site at [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/streetsweep](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/streetsweep) and clicking on "schedule lookup."

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.

If you need disability related accommodations, please contact Matt Bower at (612) 673-2188 or [Matthew.Bower@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:Matthew.Bower@ci.minneapolis.mn.us). TTY: 612-673-2626.

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- 4) The Council passed a new Park Dedication Fee ordinance on April 10 that will require future developers to either dedicate land near their development site for public open space or to pay a Park Dedication Fee. State law requires that the same ordinance be adopted by the City Council and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The Park Board has yet to pass this ordinance. I was and am very supportive of this effort and worked for a fair compromise that will give us this tool (that is already in place in St. Paul and many suburban communities) to get needed funds to create new park space and make capital improvements to existing parks close to new developments. If approved by the park Board it will go into effect January 2011.
- 5) This week the Community Develop Committee approved the sale of a small portion of City owned land to Midwest Mountaineering. The parcel is located in the parking lot behind the store and has been rented by the store for many years. Pending full Council approval on the 24<sup>th</sup>, it will be sold for fair market value of roughly \$10,000.
- 6) The City of Minneapolis' 2009 Greenprint Annual Report was released on April 13. It provides a framework for measuring our progress towards improving our natural environment based on 11 key environmental indicators and goals. This year a new indicator that focuses on green jobs was added to the report. The Greenprint also identifies successes and challenges. Challenges include the need for increased solar power to meet energy goals; maintenance and growth of the urban forest while battling insects and disease; and improving air and water quality.
- 7) The Public Safety and Regulatory Service committee, with my support, has approved a new ordinance amendment that will (if approved by the City Council) allow and regulate the keeping of bees in Minneapolis. The proposed ordinance includes: an application process similar to that which is required for the keeping of chickens with the exception that 100% of the immediate neighbors must approve the request; an educational requirement; prescribed measures for location, standards of practice, construction, and density; enforcement provisions and new permit fees of \$100 for a new permit and \$50 for renewal of a permit.
- 8) At the last Council Meeting I opposed and spoke against supporting legislation that would allow Trader's Joes to get a liquor license in a location, 2309 Lyndale Ave. So., that does not conform with current City policies. Unfortunately, it passed (7 to 6) , so the City is now on record supporting state legislation to allow a liquor license at this address. It can still be stopped either at the legislature or when it returns to the Council when they apply for the actual license.
- 9) This month I am initiating a Diversity Audit project of all the City's Boards and Commissions that include individuals appointed by the Mayor and/or the City Council. Working with the City Coordinator's office my office will inventory the gender, racial/ethnic and age make up of over 40 Boards and Commissions. I expect this work to completed next fall.
- 10) The third annual Minneapolis Teen Job Fair will take place on April 25, from noon–4pm at the Downtown Central Library. Teens 14 and up will have an opportunity to attend workshops, meet employers, and get information about jobs, volunteering and internships. This event is sponsored by the Hennepin County Library, the City of Minneapolis Employment and Training Program, the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development, AchieveMpls and others. Contact Pat Behrend at 612-673-6220 for more information.
- 11) The Police Department has created an interesting new web page, [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/forms/mpd-citizen-report/](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/forms/mpd-citizen-report/), that makes it easy to share your feedback - positive or negative - on police officers and the work they do. It basically repackages in one place the intake forms for the Civilian Review Authority and Internal Affairs Unit, along with a new form that you can use to compliment an officer for a job well done.
- 12) You can now get info on news and events happening in City government through "twitter." When the City of Minneapolis sends out a "tweet," those who choose to follow the City will receive the headline of the story and also a link back to the full story on the City's Web site. To follow the City of Minneapolis on Twitter, you must first have your own Twitter account. Once you have one, click the "Follow us on Twitter" link on the City's home page, or visit [www.twitter.com/CityMinneapolis](http://www.twitter.com/CityMinneapolis) and click the "follow" button underneath the City of Minneapolis logo. Users can then set their preferences to receive alerts via Twitter's Web site, a cell phone, e-mail or even RSS feeds.
- 13) The City of Minneapolis is accepting applications for 100 "Wireless Community" accounts, which are free wireless Internet accounts intended for non-profit organizations that provide free computer access to the public. Accounts will be given to agencies that provide public computer access, technology literacy training, and/or technology support for underserved communities. Applications (available at

[http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/wirelessminneapolis/WirelessMinneapolis\\_WhatsNew.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/wirelessminneapolis/WirelessMinneapolis_WhatsNew.asp) are due by Monday, May 18, and will be reviewed by staff and the Digital Inclusion Advisory Board, which will make recommendations to the City Council on which organizations will receive free accounts in 2009. The accounts will be good through 2010.

- 14) Micro grants of up to \$10,000 per project are being made available to community-based organizations that target graffiti in innovative ways. These micro grants are intended to act as seed money for manageable projects that will eventually lead to larger, more ambitious initiatives. To get an application for micro grants, visit <http://www.blogger.com/www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/graffiti> Applications are due no later than 4:00 pm on April 24, 2009.
- 15) The Minneapolis Arts Commission (MAC) is accepting nominations for the best of the 2008 Minneapolis public art experiences to be presented at the first annual MAC Awards this June. To qualify, nominations must be of artwork installed or occurred in 2008 and located within Minneapolis. Works commissioned by Art in Public Places are not eligible. Nominations may be submitted by artists and art organizations for their own work, or may be submitted by a third party. For more information or to download nomination applications, visit [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dca/arts\\_home.asp](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dca/arts_home.asp) or call (612) 673-2597.
- 16) The University District Partnership Alliance's accomplishments were shared at a legislative Senate hearing on March 25<sup>th</sup>, and will be presented to the House in April. Major accomplishments include a Homeownership Preservation Program that has preserved at least 22 homes for long-term owner-occupancy, a Homebuyer Incentive Program that will attract at least 15 new homebuyers to the University District (including **100% forgivable loans of \$10,000 for new homebuyers in the West Bank**), a website featuring the benefits of living in the University District at [www.livenearyourwork.org](http://www.livenearyourwork.org), and a start on commercial district streetscape improvements in Cedar Riverside. The Alliance is looking for interested employers and partners to help promote and market the area for employee housing. The full University District Alliance Progress Report 2007 - 2009 is on the web at [www.community.umn.edu/alliance](http://www.community.umn.edu/alliance).
- 17) The City is launching a new citywide program designed to reduce domestic violence. Officers who arrive at a misdemeanor domestic violence call will now do more investigative work at the scene, giving prosecutors more information to prosecute a case. These new strategies have been successful in increasing the conviction rate of misdemeanor domestic violence-related cases from 54% to 76% in the 5<sup>th</sup> Precinct pilot program. I am very supportive of expanding this program, which offers the opportunity to protect spouses, children and elders from abusers and interrupt the cycle of violence.
- 18) I was supportive of part of the ordinance brought forward by Council Member Hofstede, which would ban upholstered furniture on yards. However, for a number of reasons I could not support the more far-reaching portion of the ordinance which would have banned all upholstered furniture "not manufactured for outside use" from porches that are not completely enclosed. When it was clear that a compromise was not possible, I voted against the proposal which failed on a 9 – 4 vote. I believe that public safety benefits when people spend time on their porches, and would hate to put something in place that would discourage this positive behavior. I also have concerns that this ordinance is redundant – couches on porches that are moldy, rotting, or habitat for wildlife are already prohibited. The evidence I have seen makes clear that couches on porches are not a significant fire risk. I am supportive, in general, of reusing existing manufactured goods as long as possible, rather than putting them into the waste stream. I am also concerned about the economic justice of this proposal, which would allow only those who can afford specifically-manufactured outdoor furniture to enjoy their porches. Lastly, I am uncomfortable telling people they can't do things that are not, in themselves, harmful.
- 19) There are current openings on the Minneapolis Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee (CLIC) Vacancy (open until filled), Minneapolis Workforce Council Vacancy (Closes 05/08/2009), and the Minneapolis Rental Dwelling License Board of Appeals Vacancy (closes 4/24/2009) To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).