



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 8-18-10

Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Tuesday September 7th, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave

Items:

- 1) Riverside Plaza Development Agreement
- 2) Riverside Ave Reconstruction
- 3) Digital Inclusion Grants Available
- 4) Solar on City Buildings
- 5) Mayor Presents 2011 Budget
- 6) Unisys Contract
- 7) Parade of Community Gardens
- 8) We Want you Back campaign
- 9) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) I commend the West Bank Community Coalition for working with neighborhood stakeholders to create a list of potential specific components of a development agreement for the Riverside Plaza renovation project. I am committed to working over the next few months with the Coalition, neighborhood stakeholders, the City's Community Planning and Economic Development department and Sherman Associates to help make the best possible development agreement for the neighborhood.
- 2) Public Works has organized a second round of public meetings to discuss the Riverside reconstruction project. Due to the diverse group impacted by this project, we have scheduled two public meeting times. Both meetings will present the same information and will be structured in the same way. Please feel free to attend either meeting. Both meetings are scheduled for **Tuesday, August 24th**. One is at **10:00AM** at Augsburg College, 2211 Riverside Avenue in the Oren Gateway Center – Room 111. The other is at **6:30PM** at the Seward Towers East Advantage Center, 2910 E Franklin Ave.
- 3) The Minneapolis Foundations' Digital Inclusion Fund is seeking proposals from eligible organizations in Minneapolis that are working to promote technology access and literacy throughout the city. The maximum grant size for this cycle is \$10,000. Preference will be given to funding requests that address one or more of the goal areas in a clear and measurable way with special interest in proposals addressing the needs of elders and people with disabilities. For information on the RFP process and instructions on how to apply for a grant visit the Digital Inclusion Fund website at digitalinclusionfund.tmfportal.org. Proposals must be received by 4:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 10. Grant recipients will be notified in December 2010.
- 4) The City is poised invest in solar energy thanks in large part to a \$1.35 million grant from the Minnesota Department of Commerce Office of Energy Security (OES) for solar power installations on public buildings from along and near the Central LRT line Corridor within what is being called "the Energy Innovation Corridor." The locations for the Solar installations include: Fire Station #1 (240 sq. ft. thermal), Fire Station #19 (15.5 kW and 160 sq. ft. thermal with Battery Storage), the Haaf Parking Ramp (40 kW), Royalston Maintenance Facility (100 kW) 2 Solar Electric Vehicle Charging Stations on the Parking Ramp across from the Guthrie, and the Brian Coyle Center (28 kW/400 sq. ft. thermal). Once the projects are completed in the fall of 2011 the City will get 63.5 kW of solar electric power for just \$108,000. At our current electricity cost, this is a payback of less than 8 years.

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

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Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneysa in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

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- 5) This week the Mayor presented his 2011 budget proposal to the City Council. The proposed budget increases expenses for all City funds to \$1.36 billion, an \$81 million dollar increase from 2010. The General Fund, which includes funding for the operations of nearly all city departments, increases from \$371.6 to \$393.6 million. The budget includes an increase of 6.5% to the total property tax levy. This will bring in \$17 million more to cover City expenses, including a \$17.7 million jump in pension obligations. In his budget address, the mayor indicated that without these pension costs he would have proposed to lower property taxes by 0.1%. There will also be an additional \$15 million in revenue coming from a recertification of a tax increment district dedicated to neighborhood revitalization purposes and paying off the Target Center debt. Additional increased revenue will come from an increase from the 2010 Local Government Aid to the 2011 certified level. The budget calls for over 80 positions to be eliminated. Many of these will likely be accomplished through attrition and not filling current vacant positions, but there will be some lay-offs. One new position, "a high-level coordinator of transit-oriented development to bring together private, public and foundation efforts around economic development on transit lines," will be added. The position will be paid for in part with foundation money. It also increases spending on street and other infrastructure improvements, including a new program aimed at more residential street improvements. The budget does count on the state following through with its \$87.5 million Local Government Aid commitment. Contingency plans may be needed if the State Government reduces this, as has happened in the past two years. You can see the Mayor's proposed budget at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/city-budget/2011recc/index.asp>. The Council will have the opportunity to amend it before final approval in early December. There will be public comments taken on the levy and budget of November 18 and also at the formal Public Hearing on the budget on December 13. I welcome your comments.
- 6) The City's Business Information Services staff brought forward a proposal to extend the City's contract for information services with Unisys Corporation for four years, for a total cost to the City of over \$45 million. Given the City's decreasing funds, I had concerns about moving forward on this extension without conducting an analysis of alternatives, including potentially going out for open bids on this contract, exploring moving some of this work back in-house, and investigating whether open-source software can meet some of the City's needs. I was able to get my colleagues to agree to a two-week delay on this action, but unfortunately the Council majority voted to move forward with a three year contract extension on an 8-5 vote. I thank Council Members Johnson, Goodman, Tuthill and Hofstede for joining me in asking for an exploration of alternatives.
- 7) I will be presenting a resolution honoring the City's many community gardeners, and declaring August 21st to be Community Gardening Day to celebrate the Parade of Community Gardens on August 21st, from 10-2. Thanks especially to the two West Bank gardens – the Augsburg Community Garden and 5th Street Community Garden – for participating again. To see other participating gardens and get more information, visit <http://www.gardeningmatters.org/events/2010parade/brochure.pdf>.
- 8) "We Want You Back" is a coordinated effort to identify, connect with and ultimately invite un-enrolled young people to complete their credits and get their high school diploma. If you'd like to help put teens back on track to success, consider signing up for the citywide door-knocking event slated for Saturday, Sept. 11. Teams of community and school district volunteers will fan out across the city to drop information fliers and connect young people with resources, support and information to help them return to school. Minneapolis Public Schools staff will be able to re-enroll students on the spot. The goal is to attract 200 youth back to school. To learn more or sign up, visit www.wewantyoubackmpls.org. If you know a young person who would like to re-enroll or learn more about Minneapolis school programs and services, contact Mary Barrie, Minneapolis Public Schools at (612) 668-0721 or mary.barrie@mpls.k12.mn.us.
- 9) There are openings on the Arts Commission, Citizens Environmental Advisory Committee (CEAC), Commission on Civil Rights, Civilian Police Review Authority, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC), Latino Advisory Committee, Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC), Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission, Telecommunications Network (MTN), Youth Violence Prevention Executive Committee and Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.