

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood, 6-25-07

Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
Pratt School, Tuesday July 17, 9:30-11am

Items:

- 1) Second Ward Outreach Interns
- 2) Panhandling Ordinance
- 3) Climate Change grants
- 4) Community Engagement Task Force
- 5) Non-Motorized Transportation Grants
- 6) Unpaid Judgments Ordinance
- 7) Lead Safe Work Practices Ordinance
- 8) New CPED Director
- 9) Central Corridor Public Meetings
- 10) 29th Ave SE Pedestrian Oriented District
- 11) U of M Stadium Street Realignment
- 12) Wind Turbines
- 13) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) I'm pleased to announce that my office has hired four talented young people to serve as Community Outreach Interns this summer and into the fall: Annie Welch, Mustafa Adam, Paul Kristanovich and Adam Engleman. Paul, a Prospect Park resident, will be leading our efforts in Prospect Park, concentrating on starting block clubs, helping organize National Night Out events and working on problem areas as needed.
- 2) The Council has passed an ordinance proposed by Council Members Ostrow and Remington, which will make it illegal to ask for money within 10 feet of a crosswalk, convenience and liquor stores, within 50 feet of entrances and exits to a park or sporting arena, within 80 feet of an ATM, and at night. I voted against this ordinance. While I agree with Mayor Rybak and others that giving to panhandlers does not contribute to a real solution to the problem of homelessness, I am also convinced that attempts like these to further criminalize homelessness, poverty, chemical dependency and mental illness will never solve the problem either. We should be spending our limited resources on the 24-7 Homelessness Outreach workers called for in the unanimously-passed "Heading Home Hennepin" plan, not wasting them on the band-aid, arrest-and-release methods that have clearly not worked in the past. For more in-depth thoughts on this topic, please see my blog at <http://secondward.blogspot.com>.
- 3) The City of Minneapolis is taking applications for micro grants to help people in Minneapolis take steps to reduce global warming. The City has issued an RFP for **Climate Change Innovations Funds**, focused on meaningful, measurable climate change actions. Eligible applicants may request up to \$10,000. Applications are due July 10, 2007. To learn more about the grants, to get an application, and to see project ideas, visit the City's sustainability Web site at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/sustainability/. I encourage PPERRIA to apply for this grant.
- 4) The Minneapolis Community Engagement Task Force has been named, and began meeting weekly this Monday. I have been chosen as one of the Council's representatives on the Task Force. Two additional Second Ward residents, Diann Anders (Seward) and Mohammed Ali (West Bank) will also serve on the Task Force. I regret that we could not appoint all of the great applicants from Ward 2. The charge of the group is to help the Council define the following:
 - How the numerous neighborhood, community, cultural and business organizations in Minneapolis should participate in local government decision-making
 - What expectations these organizations and the City should have of one another
 - What role the City should ask these organizations to play in City decision-making
 - How the City can broaden and enhance community participation in decision making

- 5) I'm extremely pleased by the many bicycle infrastructure projects in the Second Ward that will be funded by the recently-announced Non-motorized Transportation Grants. The City will add bike lanes on E Franklin Ave from Riverside across the bridge, along the whole length of Riverside from Franklin to the Cedar Riverside LRT Station, Minnehaha from 31st to Franklin, 20th Ave S from Minnehaha to Riverside, 19th Ave S from Riverside across the bridge to 10th Ave SE, the University bike trench, SE Como from 10th Ave SE to St. Paul, and 27th Ave SE from E River Parkway to University. I'd like to acknowledge the good work of City staff members Don Pflaum and Shaun Murphy for their work on these grants, and my Aide Robin Garwood for editing drafts of the projects in the Second Ward. I think that this does represent a significant shift in how we think about transit in Minneapolis and throughout the country and shows that people really are making connections about how important it is to focus on, and invest in, making walking and biking more appealing and possible and ways to get around in Minneapolis. I want this to be a beginning and plan to keep pushing to improve our system of bike and pedestrian transit in the City and the region. If we consider what has been done in some areas of the world we still have a long way to go before we have the kind of bicycling-friendly walkable City so many of us hope for.
- 6) I have introduced an ordinance making it possible for the City to revoke or not renew a rental license for any landlord who has unpaid legal judgments against him/her. The City has this authority with all of the other licenses we give (restaurants, etc), so this ordinance will bring our regulation of landlords up to par with our regulation of other sorts of businesses.
- 7) I have introduced an ordinance requiring that anyone repairing chipped or peeling paint on a pre-1978 housing unit, as required by a City violation order, must have attended a Lead Safe Work Practices training. This is a small step towards reducing and, in time, eliminating lead poisoning among children.
- 8) Mayor Rybak has appointed Mike Christenson to take Lee Sheehy's place as head of the Community Planning and Economic Development department. Mike has served as Director of Economic Development since 2003, and I support this appointment.
- 9) The Metropolitan Council is holding a series of public meetings related to the Central Corridor LRT project to let the public know that they are starting Preliminary Engineering: June 27, 6:30-8:30 PM at the Central Corridor Resource Center 1080 Lexington Avenue, St. Paul; June 28, 6:00-8:00 PM at the Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church 585 Fuller Avenue, St. Paul; July 8, 2:00-4:00 PM at the Center for Hmong Arts and Talent, 995 University Avenue, Suite 220, St. Paul; July 17, 6:00-8:00 PM at the South St. Anthony Park Rec. Center 890 Cromwell Avenue, St. Paul. For more information see <http://www.metrocouncil.org/transportation/ccorridor/CCcalendar>.
- 10) The 29th Ave SE Pedestrian Overlay District rezoning study has been adopted by the Council. I believe that this overlay will help the neighborhood and the City better guide development along the University corridor, taking advantage of the Central Corridor LRT line to produce a more pedestrian-friendly environment.
- 11) The Council has authorized execution of the required documents to convey new street easements for Oak St SE and Huron Blvd SE to allow roadway realignments as required as part of the U of M Stadium project, and vacated portions of Oak St SE, 4th St SE and Huron Blvd SE.
- 12) The Wind Energy Conversion System ordinance I sponsored, broadening the applications of wind turbines in Minneapolis, passed the Zoning and Planning Committee last week. I expect it to pass the full Council.
- 13) There are openings on the Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People With Disabilities, Minneapolis Empowerment Zone Governance Board, Heritage Preservation Commission, Housing Board of Appeals, Public Health Advisory Committee, Senior Citizen Advisory Committee, Zoning Board of Adjustment. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us