

**News from Cam Gordon**  
**Council Member, Second Ward**  
**April, 2010**

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/ward2/>

**City Five-Year Goals.** This month the City Council unanimously approved and the Mayor signed a new set of five-year goals. These six overarching goals, along with their associated strategic directions and the departmental plans that will follow, will serve as our guide through 2015.

- **A Safe Place To Call Home** - People and businesses thrive in a safe and secure city;
- **Jobs & Economic Vitality** - A world-class city and 21st century economic powerhouse;
- **Livable Communities, Healthy Lives** - Our built and natural environment adds character to our city, enhances our health and enriches our lives;
- **Many People, One Minneapolis** - Inclusiveness is a treasured asset; everyone's potential is tapped;
- **Eco-Focused** - Minneapolis is an internationally recognized leader for a healthy environment and sustainable future;
- **A City That Works** - Minneapolis is a model of fiscal responsibility, technological innovation and values-based, results-driven municipal government.

We also approved 8 "City Values" indicating that we will strive to be Collaborative, Engaged, Results-driven, Informed, Accountable, Ethical, Inclusive and Sustainable in all the work we do.

**Community Garden Leases.** As part of the ongoing Homegrown Minneapolis process, the City has adopted a model lease for Community Gardens, taking the confusion and guesswork out of the process of establishing a new garden. We have also established a list of potential garden sites on City-owned non-buildable parcels. As the co-chair of the Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force, I was very supportive of this action, and hope that it leads to a substantial increase in gardening.

**Xcel Power Line.** On April 5<sup>th</sup> I testified before Judge Heydinger who will be making a recommendation to the Public Utilities Commission on the location of Xcel's proposed midtown-area power line and sub stations. I emphasized the real and perceived risks to health, the destruction of a treasured park and transportation amenity, the potential lose of good jobs and the detrimental effects the substations and above ground power lines would have on future development and property values. I am very impressed with the quality of all the groups and residents speaking out and organizing around this issue and I strongly support the bill at the Legislature that would require Xcel to do a full Needs Assessment on the line, which will allow a better discussion of the alternatives to new transmission lines, such as increased energy efficiency and renewable energy. If the line must be built, I oppose any above-ground route, and favor burying the line on 28<sup>th</sup> St E. I am also opposed to Xcel's preferred site for a substation on the east end of the line, right where the Greenway Bridge meets the LRT trail. I will continue to speak out on this project.

**Supplemental Budget.** In response to the projected \$10.9 million state cut to City's Local Government Aid for this year the Mayor presented a supplemental budget proposal to the Council in April. Fortunately, the City was in a reasonably good position to absorb these cuts. Due to good fiscal management we ended up with a positive fund balance at the end of last year. The Mayor's proposal includes department cuts totaling \$5.59 million, the use of \$4.5 million in contingency funds, and one time resources of \$6.46 million. He has also proposed a one time increase to the Public Works budget to provide funding for street maintenance. The proposed supplemental budget will go through the Ways and Means committee on April 26<sup>th</sup>, with final adoption by the Council set for April 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Pathways Out of Poverty.** The City's Employment and Training Program, in cooperation with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, has been awarded \$4 million by the Department of Labor for a Pathways Out of Poverty Grant, through the Renewable Energy Network Empowering Workers (RENEW) Project. This project will help provide training and employment for some 500

residents, while ensuring that area businesses have access to a well-trained workforce that is prepared to carry out the work of greening the local economy. RENEW will be a collaboration between the City of Minneapolis Workforce Council, Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board, neighborhood-based non-profits, labor organizations, education and training institutions, and the green business community. I am very hopeful that this will not only build the economic capital of low-income residents, but also build the workforce capital of the region's large green business base. Operational partners for the RENEW include: Guadalupe Alternative Program; MN Transitions Charter School; the Minneapolis North and South WorkForce Centers (DEED); Goodwill/Easter Seals; EMERGE Community Development; Resource, Inc.; HIRED; American Indian OIC; Minneapolis Urban League; Project for Pride in Living (PPL); Lifetrack Resources; Women Venture; Rebuild Resources; Summit Academy OIC; M&J Environmental; Minneapolis Community and Technical College; Dunwoody College of Technology; St. Paul College; Century College; St. Paul Adult Basic Education; Minneapolis Adult Basic Education; United Way; and Minneapolis & St. Paul Building Trades.

**New Central Corridor Committee.** I have been elected by the Council to serve on the newly formed Central Corridor Community Agreements Coordinating Committee, a cross-jurisdictional group of residents, business owners and elected officials from Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Hennepin and Ramsey Counties. The purpose of the group is to articulate a shared vision and set of development principles that draw from the community processes that have occurred to date, to coordinate commitments to invest in that vision, and to hold the various partners accountable to the commitments we've made. I am hopeful that this group will help the Central Corridor project result in the sort of positive, community-supportive changes that I believe everyone wants to see.

**U and Met Council Agreement.** I am pleased that University of Minnesota and the Metropolitan Council (with the help of a skilled mediator) have reached an agreement on Central Corridor Light Rail and how to address concerns about vibration and research at the University. For more you can see [http://www1.umn.edu/news/news-releases/2010/UR\\_CONTENT\\_185251.html](http://www1.umn.edu/news/news-releases/2010/UR_CONTENT_185251.html)

**Minneapolis Voted Best Biking City.** According to Bicycling Magazine, Minneapolis is the nation's best city for bicyclists. They specifically called out the hardiness of those cyclists who bike through the winter, our 120 miles of on- and off-street bicycle facilities and other cycling-friendly facilities. You can read the article here: <http://www.bicycling.com/topbikefriendlycities/slide2.html>. I'm proud that we've come so far, but we can and should do even better.

**Multifamily Recycling.** My amendment to the City's requirement that apartment building owners offer recycling has passed the Council unanimously. This measure will clarify and increase the enforceability of the City's mandate that recycling be offered for every resident of the Minneapolis, by laying out a defined fine schedule and removing the unused "waiver" system by which property owners can make the case that they cannot offer recycling services.

**Pedestrian Advisory Committee.** The Council has voted to change the composition of the City's Pedestrian Advisory Committee, to increase the proportion of community members on the board, allow the board to choose its own chair, and appoint members using the City's Open Appointments process. I support this initiative, and believe it bodes well for the changes to the Bicycle Advisory Committee that my Aide has been working on for some time.

**Parking Meters.** The Council has chosen three contractors for the next generation of parking meters. For high-traffic areas (such as downtown), we will be installing multi-space meters. For medium-traffic areas (such as Stadium Village), we will be installing upgraded single-space meters, many of which will be solar-powered. These first two types of meters will accept more forms of payment, including credit cards. For low-utilization areas, we will be installing upgraded "standard" meters. I have long believed that our meters could be both more environmentally

sustainable and more supportive of our neighborhood commercial nodes, and I'm thrilled to see the City moving in this direction.

**I-35W Bridge Collapse Resurfacing Projects.** Several streets in and around Ward 2 that served as detour routes following the collapse of the Interstate 35W Bridge over the Mississippi River are being resurfaced this year. \$2.3 million in Federal funding will help the City restore these streets, which sustained extra wear and tear for 13 months while a replacement bridge was built. They include 15th Avenue SE, 18th Avenue SE, Industrial Boulevard and 25th/26th Avenue South. There is a public meeting to discuss this project on **Wednesday, April 21**, 5–7pm, in the Central Library's Doty Board Room, 200 Nicollet Mall. The County is also working on some similar projects in the Ward, including Cedar Avenue from I-94 to Seven Corners.

**Civil Rights Director.** The Mayor has decided to appoint Velma Korbelt as our next Civil Rights Director. She has an impressive resume in the field, including serving as Commissioner for the Department of Human Rights since 2003, where she has enacted some significant improvements. I look forward to getting to know her better through the appointment process, especially the public hearing, which will be held at Committee of the Whole on **April 29<sup>th</sup>** at 10am in Council Chambers, room 317 in City Hall.

**2010 Census.** Approximately 72% of Minneapolis households have returned their 2010 Census forms. This great turnout is due to the efforts of the Complete Count Committee, made up of dedicated community volunteers supported by City staff. But we're far from finished, and the stakes are high: every **100** people we fail to count could cost us **\$1 million** in state and federal funding over the next 10 years. Please do what you can to encourage your friends and neighbors to fill out their forms.

**Mpls Youth Violence Prevention Gets National Recognition.** The Minneapolis "Blueprint for Action" has been positively reviewed by the National Center of for Victims of Crime in partnership with the federal Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. You can read the report here: <http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/files/RIC/Publications/e011027253-Minneapolis.pdf>

**Transit Oriented Development.** The City has applied for several Transit Oriented Development grants from the Met Council for projects in Ward 2. These include \$376,775 for pedestrian improvements on Cedar Avenue, \$168,000 for pedestrian and street lighting near the Franklin Ave LRT Station, \$500,000 for the Brian Coyle Community Center Expansion and \$500,000 for towards a substantial renovation of Riverside Plaza. I supported all of these projects, and hope that the Met Council follows the City's recommendation and funds them at the requested level.

**Riverside Plaza Awarded Funds for Rehab.** In April the City Council accepted a Metropolitan Council Livable Communities Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) grant of \$575,000 that was awarded to SA Riverside Plaza Limited Partnership. Livable Communities grants are intended to expand lifecycle and affordable rental and ownership housing development and preservation in the region. While this LHIA grant was not from a direct application from the City, it is awarded to the City and passed to the developer applicant via a sub-recipient agreement. Funds will be used to perform extensive rehabilitation throughout the eleven interconnected buildings. The LHIA funding award is a small of an \$87 million project.

**CRA Appointments.** I moved to reappoint Dave Bicking to the Civilian Review Authority because I believe he was a valuable member of the body. He worked hard, and helped the CRA accomplish some significant things, including a very professional and objective report on the Chief's performance related to the CRA. He also helped the Council and CRA track changes that the MPD had made to their policy manual – including removing the Council-approved policy on Tasers. None of my colleagues seconded my motion to reappoint Mr. Bicking, and the motion failed. I am disappointed in this outcome, but also pleased that several well-qualified people were appointed to the board, including Ward 2 residents Mary Pargo and Pramma Elayaperumal. I was impressed

with both at the public hearing, and I believe we are fortunate that they are willing to serve on this important body.

**Mobile Food Vending.** The Council has unanimously approved a new ordinance allowing more types of food to be sold by street vendors in downtown. I strongly supported this new ordinance, though I believe that it could have done more to incentivize healthy, local food and sustainable practices (such as recycling, composting, and the use of batteries or renewable energy). I successfully amended the ordinance to allow these vendors to connect to the electrical grid when they are on private property, because I am concerned about the proliferation of small gasoline generators and the impact this could have on air quality. I view this ordinance as a good first step and a “pilot,” and look forward to broadening it next year. I’m interested in allowing vendors to operate outside of downtown in certain commercial areas of the Second Ward, including the West Bank and Stadium Village. I’m also interested in addressing the health and sustainability issues that were not adequately considered as part of this first step.

**Farmers Markets.** An ordinance amendment authored by Council Member Schiff that will allow farmers markets to operate indoors has passed the Council unanimously. I have heard from many farmers’ market managers that they were concerned about this amendment, and about the state of the City’s ordinances regarding farmers markets more generally. My staff worked with CMs Schiff, Glidden and City staff to draft a staff direction – which also passed unanimously – directing our staff to work with farmers market managers on revisions to our ordinances. I expect that this work will start this fall, after farmers market season, and be completed around February of next year.

**Tree Advisory Committee.** My Policy Aide, Robin Garwood, has been appointed to the Tree Advisory Committee, a joint effort between the City and the Park Board. First Ward Council Member Kevin Reich’s Aide Shannon McDonough is his alternate. I look forward to getting more directly engaged in the City’s policies regarding trees.

**First Avenue Bike Lanes.** I have heard some concerns about the innovative new bike lanes on First Avenue, which during off-peak hours are shielded from traffic by parked cars. I am very supportive of these lanes and think that it would be extremely short-sighted to try out a truly groundbreaking and unique design, and then remove it before all road users – bicyclists, drivers and parkers – had a chance to get used to it. Many of the concerns with the lanes were due to snow maintenance issues. I will be advocating for the current design to be improved or maintained for at least a full year before being altered. I will also strongly object to removing these protected lanes without building a similar facility – not a shared-lane facility, but an actual bike lane – on a nearby parallel street.

**1101 E River Pkwy.** The Council has agreed with the Prospect Park neighborhood and denied the application for a variance at 1101 East River Parkway to reduce the minimum lot area to allow conversion from a single-family dwelling to a two-family dwelling.

**Prospect Park Street Resurfacing.** Public Works is proposing to resurface most of the streets in Prospect Park this year. My office has heard numerous complaints about the poor quality of the streets in the neighborhood, so I am generally supportive of this proposal. The City has set a public hearing for April 20, 9:30am, in City Hall room 317, for the proposed resurfacing of streets in Prospect Park, and the associated assessments to property owners.

**Streetcars.** The Council has received a Streetcar Funding Study, which makes clear which routes in Minneapolis are most appropriate for streetcars, and how the City should go about attempting to fund this new nonmotorized infrastructure. We’ve learned that the Obama Administration is radically improving the federal systems for funding streetcars, and that makes it much easier for us to pursue building them. The Council has adopted a list of seven long-term streetcar corridors that complement the Light Rail being built in the City:

- Northeast: Central Ave from downtown to Columbia Heights
- North: Washington Ave and Broadway from downtown to Robbinsdale

- Southeast: University Ave from downtown to Central LRT in Stadium Village
- Southwest: Hennepin Ave from downtown to uptown
- South: Nicollet Ave from downtown to 46<sup>th</sup>, and Chicago Ave from downtown to 36<sup>th</sup>
- Midtown Greenway from Southwest LRT to Hiawatha LRT

**Drinking Water Research Project.** The City has authorized an agreement with the Board of Regents of the U of M to conduct research in the use of powder-activated carbon in drinking water for taste and odor control.

**U of M Energy Resolution.** I am working on a resolution honoring the good work of the U students participating in the Campuses Beyond Coal campaign, and thanking the University for working towards carbon neutrality. I expect that it will come before the Regulatory Energy and Environment committee on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Wifi Nodes.** As part of the City's contract with US Internet, they will be installing some free wireless internet nodes in public areas around the City. Some of the Ward 2 locations include Matthews Park, Brackett Park, Luxton Park and two nodes near the University. I have asked the City's Business Information Services staff to advocate for a node serving Van Cleve Park in Southeast Como as well.

**Dania Site Fence.** Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) staff and the First Police Precinct made a decision to install cameras and fence off the rear of the Dania lot at 5<sup>th</sup> and Cedar following gun fire and an increase in other criminal activity. When this came to my attention, I asked that they present the plan at the Quarterly Community Safety Committee and at the West Bank Community Coalition's Land Use Committee. They did so, and it is clear that the community is not united on this issue. Many people do not want to have the Dania site fenced, especially where it connects Cedar to 5<sup>th</sup> Street. I am working hard to find a way to address both the serious safety concerns and the need for pedestrian access between Cedar and 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Seward/Cooper Solid Waste Pilot.** Thanks to new Seward Neighborhood Group Environment Committee Co-Chair Mike Trdan, the City has applied for County funds to start two exciting solid waste pilot projects in Seward. One part of the neighborhood will participate in a curbside organic collection pilot, and another part of the neighborhood will try out a "dual-stream" recycling program. Dual-stream programs are easier for residents to participate in, which has been shown in some communities to increase the total amount of material being recycled rather than landfilled or incinerated.

**East River Parkway/27<sup>th</sup> Ave SE/Franklin.** The Council has voted to participate in the County's project to improve this problematic intersection, in keeping with the results of last year's community process. I look forward to this work being completed, and increasing the safety and convenience of this intersection for all road users.

**U of M Trail.** The Council has approved moving forward this year on construction of the University of Minnesota Trail, a new off-street facility which will connect Bridge 9 to the intersection of 5<sup>th</sup> St SE and Oak St SE, near the Transit way trail. This trail will be a major improvement for people biking to or near the University, and I'm excited to see it finally getting underway.

**Emerald Ash Borer.** Unfortunately, but not unexpectedly, Emerald Ash Borer has been found in Minneapolis, in Tower Hill Park in the Prospect Park neighborhood. In response, the Park Board's Forestry Division will begin removing trees with the infestation, and an intensified search of all ash trees in the surrounding area will begin. This infestation is a major problem for our tree canopy, because approximately 20 percent of the tree canopy in Minneapolis consists of ash trees. The City and Park Board have been preparing for this anticipated challenge, developing policies for removing not-yet-infested but unhealthy or unattractive Ash throughout the city, so that the loss to canopy does not come all at once. My policy aide is the Council's new appointee to the Tree Advisory Committee, and Ward 1 Council Member Kevin Reich's policy aide Shannon McDonough

is the alternate. They will help us to coordinate between the City and the Park Board on this emerging challenge. Please continue to restrict the movement of firewood as much as possible, to help slow the spread of this infestation, and if you have an ash tree on your boulevard or private property that you would be willing to have removed so that a different species of tree could be planted, please call 311.

**Prospect Park Historic Preservation.** The Council has granted the Prospect Park neighborhood's appeal, overturning the Heritage Preservation Commission's (HPC) decision to extend interim historic protections in the proposed Prospect Park historic district for another six months. I am heartened by this decision, which is in keeping with the expressed desires of the neighborhood. I will be working to ensure that any sort of neighborhood vote on the proposed district is tabled indefinitely, while the report is finished by staff. I am interested in exploring a "conservation district" ordinance that could give neighborhoods a wider range of options for adopting historic protections that meet their needs.

**Capital Improvement.** The Capital Long-Range Improvement Committee has released its report on the capital requests for 2011–2015. If you're interested in reading it, go here: [http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/docs/2011-2015\\_CapitalBudgetRequests.pdf](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/finance/docs/2011-2015_CapitalBudgetRequests.pdf)

**Greenway Rezoning.** The larger rezoning and new Greenway plan has been approved and I believe I was able to help find a good compromise on the appropriate zoning for the Empire Glass and Star Tribune sites on the Greenway, near 34<sup>th</sup> Ave S. Rather than the staff's proposed light industrial zoning with the Industrial Living Overlay District, I moved to zone the parcels R3, a medium-density residential district.

**2nd Precinct Open House.** Please join me at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Police Precinct Open House on Monday, May 10, from 11am-2pm at the Precinct, 1911 Central Ave NE. There will be information displays from Bomb Squad, Minneapolis Fire Department, Horse Patrol, Ambulance and SWAT Team.

**Redistricting Task Force.** The Charter Commission's Redistricting Task Force is holding a public meeting to discuss the principles of a fair redistricting process and outcome, on Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, at 7pm in room 333 of City Hall.

**I-94 Sound Walls.** Unfortunately, the East River Mews area is not proposed as a site for a sound wall, due to the prohibitive cost of installing the sound wall on top of the freeway retaining wall.

**MPD Honoring Liaisons.** Congratulations to U of M Student Liaisons Sarah Santiago and Katy Cashman on being honored by the Second Precinct for their great work improving safety and livability in Southeast Mpls.

**Building Blocks Awards.** The MPD has honored the block club on the 800 block of 20<sup>th</sup> Ave SE in Southeast Como for being one of the best in the city. Congratulations to the organizers, and thanks for your work keeping the neighborhood safe and livable. The block club is a good example of how newer, student residents can work cooperatively with longer term residents.

**Honoring West Bank Safety Volunteers.** I was proud to be able to present four hardworking West Bank volunteers with official certificates of appreciation for their efforts to improve safety in the neighborhood. They are: Russom Solomon, owner of the Red Sea bar and longtime chair of the neighborhood's Safety Committee; Dave Alderson, Executive Director of the West Bank School of Music, Safety Committee participant and co-organizer of the highly successful West Bank Safety Walks; Ciise Ali, Somali elder and regular participant in the Safety Walks; and Lynn Johnson, longtime safety volunteer in the Riverside Park area. Thanks to these great volunteers for making the West Bank a safer, more livable neighborhood.

**Placemaking Signs on the West Bank.** The Council has voted to allow the West Bank Business Association to put their City-funded website address on their City-funded signs. By taking this

action, the Council has set the precedent that City-recognized neighborhood organizations and business associations may put their web addresses on signs in the public right of way. This was a great outcome not only for the West Bank, but for the whole city, and I thank the WBBA for bringing this appeal forward.

**Metropolitan Council Work Group.** The City Council has established a work group to develop recommendations about how we can work more effectively with the Metropolitan Council. I am very supportive of this effort because the Metropolitan Council's policies and programs impact many city functions including waste water disposal, transit and transportation, housing and development and comprehensive planning. Also, federal policies such as the sustainable communities initiative and the transportation reauthorization bill propose an expanded role for regional agencies in planning and allocating federal funds. In addition, the Metropolitan Council will be in transition with a new governor in 2011. Recommendations from the group will come to the Council by November of this year.

**Consolidation Timeline for NRP.** The City Council has approved a Consolidation Plan timeline, which provides a framework for how the Neighborhood Revitalization Program will be merged into the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Department in the months and years ahead. The full Consolidation Plan will be the basis for the MOU which, per the timeline, will be completed by the end of May, 2010. You can find more information here:

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/council/2010-meetings/20100416/CoW20100401Agenda.asp>

**Ward 2 Reps on City Committees.** Thank you to Second Ward residents Margot Imdieke Cross and Lee Perish for continuing to serve on the City's Disability Committee, for Lonnie Nichols for his service on the Civil Rights Commission and to Pam Franklin for her service on the Civilian Review authority. .

**Openings on Boards and Commissions.** There are openings on the Minneapolis Ethical Practices Board and the Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC).. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email [cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us](mailto:cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us).

In peace and cooperation,

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