

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood, 6-23-08

**Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
Pratt School, July 15, 9:30-11am**

Items:

- 1) Central Corridor
- 2) Safety & Community Organizing Intern
- 3) Booting and Towing
- 4) Good Jobs, Green Jobs Resolution
- 5) SEMI
- 6) NRP
- 7) Truck Size Resolution
- 8) 4am Bar Close During RNC
- 9) Malcolm Reconstruction
- 10) Dinkydome / Sydney Hall
- 11) Free Speech
- 12) Lurking
- 13) Dogs in Sidewalk Cafes
- 14) Pre-employment Drug Testing
- 15) Anti-Idling Ordinance
- 16) National Night Out Planning
- 17) U of M Farmer's Market
- 18) Street Furniture Vendor Chosen
- 19) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Governor and legislative leaders made an end-of-session deal that includes \$70 million in state funding for the Central Corridor LRT project. Lawmakers also passed a measure that will exempt the Central Corridor from state sales tax, which will save the project about \$9 million. It is also clear that buses will remain on the Washington Mall, rather than being rerouted through surrounding neighborhoods. The Council approved Municipal Consent on the project last Friday, identifying key areas that still need planning, including traffic mitigation. We are continuing to work on a Memorandum of Understanding with the University, County and Met Council on this and other outstanding issues.
- 2) In addition to Annie Welch, my office has hired University student Andy Lee as a summer outreach and organizing intern. Andy will be distributing student renter Welcome Packets this fall and helping to organize block clubs, as well as researching Student Ambassador programs in other college communities. I have heard hopeful news from Jerry Rinehart, the University's Vice Provost for Student Affairs, that he is interested in putting together a pilot Student Ambassador program this fall.
- 3) I supported a ban on "booting" vehicles in private lots, except in instances in which towing is not an option for the private property owner. I also supported a move to cap towing fees at 150% of what the City pays towing companies for public tows. Both of these actions passed the Council.
- 4) Today, the Health, Energy and Environment committee passed a resolution I coauthored supporting the Good Jobs, Green Jobs initiative started in Mayor RT Rybak's office, and directing City staff to work towards establishing Minneapolis as a national leader in green manufacturing.
 - 5) The Legislature approved \$3,500,000 in State bonds for infrastructure in a State Bio-Science zone in close proximity to a higher education research institution (SEMI). The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) has sent us a draft agreement that we are in the process of reviewing and expect soon to execute. I want to thank Carl Robertson and Michael McLaughlin for taking the time to testify in support of these funds at the Legislature. I'm expecting this summer to be a very busy one.

- 6) Thanks to great organizing by neighborhoods and our state legislators, the state legislature approved allowing the City to continue to use tax increment funds to pay principal and interest on bond obligations issued by the city of Minneapolis or the Minneapolis Community Development Agency for the Target Center, including payment of principal and interest on any bonds issued to repay bonds or loans and for neighborhood revitalization purposes. The legislation leaves it in the City Council's hands to determine what percentage of the tax increment goes to Target debt relief and what to neighborhood revitalization and we have yet to see how the City Council will respond to this, but clearly it makes an extension or continuation of NRP (reformed or not) possible. The Council heard a report back from the NRP Framework for the Future Task Force and City staff last week.
- 7) On Friday, the Council passed a resolution I have been working on for some time, calling on the Legislature not to increase the allowable size and weight of freight trucks on our roads and bridges, unless and until we do what it takes to rebuild our infrastructure.
- 8) I voted against the proposal to allow liquor establishments in Downtown to stay open until 4am during the Republican National Convention, responding to the concerns of residents and the lack of compelling reasons for taking this action. Unfortunately, the proposal passed.
- 9) The Malcolm Ave SE construction project has been approved by the Council. This is a first step towards the planned revitalization of SEMI and the construction of Granary Road.
- 10) My office has set up a meeting with Doran Companies and the University District Partnership Alliance Steering Committee Chairs to discuss the proposed Syndey Hall / Dinkydome project. This project will come before the Zoning and Planning committee this Thursday, June 26th.
- 11) CM Paul Ostrow's mandatory protest registration process passed the Council earlier this month. My fellow Free Speech advocates and I were able to win a significant victory, however, by creating a "sunset" clause that means the process will not be permanent, but in place just for the week of the Republican National Convention. I still voted against the proposed process, and I continue to believe that it is a mistake. I am continuing to work to strengthen a resolution setting forth clear MPD policies for the convention this summer, and other political demonstrations.
- 12) My proposal to repeal the Lurking ordinance failed on a 6-6 vote on Friday. Thanks to Prospect Park resident Robert Sykora for his eloquent testimony in favor of the repeal.
- 13) The Council, with my support, has created a system for allowing restaurants to get permits to allow dogs to accompany patrons using sidewalk cafes, subject to certain minimum requirements.
- 14) The pre-employment drug testing policy that I voted against in Executive committee has also failed in Ways and Means on a 4-2 vote. The policy has been sent back to Executive, where I will continue to oppose it.
- 15) The Council has unanimously passed the anti-idling ordinance I wrote about last month, with my strong support.
- 16) If you have NNO questions, visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno or call 311. NNO event registration and street closure application is free! There is no charge to request a street closure for an NNO event before July 22, and you'll be eligible for a door prize drawing. From July 23-July 31, there is a \$100 late fee. Applications for street closure will not be accepted after July 31.
- 17) Be sure to check out the new **University of MN Farmers Market**, Church Street Mall, East Bank Campus, Wednesdays from 11am-2pm, July 9 – August.
- 18) The City has selected Clear Channel Outdoor as the vendor for our Coordinated Street Furniture plan, which will increase the quantity and quality of street furniture. Staff will bring a proposed contract back to the Council.
- 19) There are openings on the Civil Rights Commission (closes 6/27/08), Ethical Practices Board (7/3/08), Heritage Preservation Commission, Workforce Council (6/27/2008), Public Housing Authority Board Truth In Sale of Housing Appeals Board (6/27/2008) Truth In Sale of Housing Appeals Board (6/27/2008) and Zoning Board of Adjustment (6/27/2008). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.