



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

Cam Gordon
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Second Ward

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 7-15-09

Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:
Tuesday August 4, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave

Items:

- 1) Pedestrian Master Plan
- 2) Street Lighting Fee Meetings
- 3) Youth Violence Prevention
- 4) Sandwich Board Signs
- 5) Homegrown Minneapolis
- 6) Downtown Garbage Burner
- 7) Civil Rights Investigations
- 8) Tasers and Police Policy
- 9) Comedy in the City
- 10) National Night Out
- 11) Pool Cars
- 12) Najaf Sister City Relationship
- 13) Openings on City Boards and Commissions

- 1) Public Works has presented a draft of the City's first Pedestrian Master Plan to the Transportation and Public Works committee. You can read the plan here: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/pedestrian. This marks the first time that the City has taken a comprehensive look at how our infrastructure and planning affect the walkability of our neighborhoods. I'm hoping that it will help us improve on the existing strengths in our pedestrian system, and close some of the gaps that I know are out there. Staff has scheduled a public meeting **tomorrow, July 16**, at the Minneapolis Central Library, with the following planned events: 5:30pm Walking Workshops, 6:00pm Meeting, 6:30pm Presentation.
- 2) Public Works staff has scheduled two public meetings to gather input on a proposed street lighting fee. Currently, the \$3 million a year needed to keep the street lights on in the city comes from the general fund, which gets around 20 percent of its money from LGA, which has been cut by \$21.3 million. The remaining meeting is **tomorrow, July 16**, 6:30-8:30pm at Martin Luther King Park, 4055 Nicollet Ave S.
- 3) The City's Department of Health and Family Support has decided to devote \$40,000 of the \$75,000 in this year's budget for preventing Somali youth violence to a contract with Pillsbury United and the Somali Youth Neighborhood Council (SYNC) to create outreach jobs for Somali youth to engage youth at risk for violence in more positive activities. A Request for Proposals for has been issued that will make approximately \$35,000 available for the provision of Youth Violence Prevention services in the Somali community of Minneapolis between Aug. 1 – Dec. 31, 2009. The City is seeking a collaborative of experienced youth and violence prevention service providers to provide parent training and community building initiatives to reduce youth violence in the Somali community of Minneapolis. There will be a pre-proposal conference on **Thursday, July 16, 2009**, starting at **9am** at the **Humphrey Institute, Stassen Room 170**. The completed application is due by noon on **Monday, July 27**. Information is available on line at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/rfp.asp>
- 4) The Zoning and Planning committee has unanimously adopted a compromise amendment I introduced allowing sandwich board signs outside of downtown, but only where they don't impede pedestrian traffic. I'm glad we could find this middle ground, first crafted by my Aide Robin, which will allow Second Ward small businesses to let passersby know more about where they are and what they offer.

If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact Matt Bower at (612) 673-2188 or 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 dooneysa in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' an wac 612-673-2188.

- 5) The Council has unanimously passed a resolution I authored putting the City on record as supporting locally grown food, and creating a Homegrown Minneapolis Implementation Task Force. I will co-chair this group, which will focus on putting into action the recommendations of the Homegrown Minneapolis report: www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/homegrown-home.asp.
- 6) The City Planning Commission has denied Covanta Energy's application to amend the conditional use permit for the downtown's Hennepin Energy Recovery Center (HERC). Covanta has appealed this decision to the Council, and this will come before the Zoning and Planning committee on July 23rd.
- 7) It is becoming increasingly clear that it is neither wise nor necessary to eliminate the investigations unit of the Civil Rights Department in order to balance the City's budget. A report from a special Task Force formed to study this is expected to come before the Health Energy and Environment Committee on July 20. I am hopeful that they will recommend keeping this small but important staff team that investigates cases of possible discrimination and helps protect civil rights in our city.
- 8) In 2006, the City Council directed the Police Department and the Minneapolis Civilian Police Review Authority (CRA) to collaborate to develop a policy on the use of Conducted Energy Devices (or Tasers) before the release of funds to purchase them was approved. At the time I was very pleased with the process and the result, which appeared to provide careful guidance for the use of these dangerous devices, intended only to be used in place of more lethal force. Then, in 2007, the policy was significantly changed by the Police Department without any consultation with the CRA or the City Council. I am very concerned about both the process used to change this policy and the poor new policy that resulted from that process. Earlier this year, the Public Safety and Regulatory Services Committee voted to direct the Police Department to "report back no later than July 22nd with a report on the current procedure for changing the Police Policy and Procedure Manual; and propose a process for including input from the City Attorney's Office, Police Federation, MPD Staff, the Minneapolis Civilian Police Review Board, City Council and Mayor's Office." I plan to use this opportunity to push for greater oversight of the MPD by the Council and the CRA. The CRA has been leading this effort and is holding a public forum on Minneapolis Police Departments Taser policy tonight, at City Hall. More information about this issue is available at <http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/article/2009/07/08/reporters-notebook-tasers-minneapolis.html>
- 9) The Public Safety and Regulatory Services committee, on July 8, paved the way for more humor in the City. The City currently requires that an establishment have a class A license – the most expensive and difficult to receive – in order to feature live comedy. The proposed changes that passed the committee unanimously will allow solo live comedians to perform in venues with class D, C, B and A licenses. Class D licenses already allow solo musicians. I think this is a great move for both comics and the cultural landscape of Minneapolis. It also resulted in a rather entertaining committee meeting you can see on the web at: <http://www.ci.mpls.mn.us/webcasts/>.
- 10) **National Night Out** will be on **Tuesday, August 4**. The following are some important deadlines: You can close your street for free if you register by **July 21**. (It will cost you \$100 to close your street if you miss this deadline!) All registered NNO events will receive Mystery Point Passes for Nickelodeon Universe at the Mall of America and vouchers (each good for 2 tickets) for Minnesota Twins games to use as door prizes. There is a single online process to register your NNO event and apply to close your street. If you want to close your street for your event, you will need permission of 75 percent of your neighbors to be approved for street closure. Please have their names and addresses with you when you apply. (You do not need their signatures.) Get started at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/nno. If you don't have Internet access or you prefer to speak to someone, you can register your event and apply for street closure by calling 311 (or 612-673-3000).
- 11) The City has ended its pool car program. Instead, City employees who need a car for a short time will be able to use the HourCar car sharing program. HourCar offers hybrid Toyota Prius vehicles that average nearly 50 mpg, which helps the City fight air pollution and climate change.
- 12) I am working with the Iraq and American Reconciliation Project on an exciting proposal for Minneapolis and Najaf, Iraq, to become sister cities. I am lead coauthor, with Council Member Betsy Hodges, of the resolution creating this relationship. It will be the City's first such relationship in the Middle East, and help create a positive, peaceful, and non-imperial relationship between Najaf residents and Minneapolitans. Najaf's City Council has already signed on.
- 13) There are current openings on the Civil Rights Commission, (closes 7/10), Family Housing Fund Board of Directors (closes 6/26) and Public Health Advisory Committee (open until filled). To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.